

MALL STUDY TRIP

A great deal of concern and interest has been generated recently during discussions relating to the construction of a shopping street, or mall, in Santa Cruz which resulted in the trip which Mr. "Chuck" Abbott and the writer took to Southern California. Our objective was to tour the malls of the area to determine:

1. How they had been developed.
2. Who financed the projects and to what degree.
3. What type of design they felt was best for their situation.
4. How they attracted customers.
5. What major pitfalls they encountered.
6. What they would do differently if they had the chance.
7. Who supervised the various programs and operations of the mall districts.

The greatest value of this trip is that we feel we were able to determine what is necessary to build an outstanding mall while giving the merchants, property-owners and other financial supporters the most for their money.

We also recorded information about many elements of the Southern California malls and shopping streets which could be used to advantage in our design, as well as some of the things which should be avoided.

During our visit to each community, we interviewed the person or persons who were responsible for the development and operation of the local mall, asking, in part, questions sent with us by members of the Santa Cruz Mall Study Group. As would be expected, the answers to questions, such as "Why did you build a mall?" were of no surprise to us -- they built it because shopping centers were drawing off all of the retail shopping business, thereby killing downtown. However, many answers would never have been anticipated or made, save by a personal interview. The following are the noteworthy highlights of the interviews we made in the order of our visit.

SANTA MONICA

The most outstanding feature of this mall is its formal design. The planters, ponds and street furniture are equidistant, along the entire length of the mall. There appears to be no variation to the design, size, spacing