

# Santa Cruz Sentinel

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## Santa Cruz of tomorrow / Sprawling urban crawl or preservation?

□ A maverick tries to anticipate tomorrow's reality — **Page A3**

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**W**HAT DOES the future hold for this little California county of trees-and-sea-and-cities — this prize of conservationists and developers?

What will be the quality of Santa Cruz County's sunlit beaches and redwood forests at the end of another quarter century? The shape of its time-honored Boardwalk and the Arabeques motels and framework shops across the street; the Pacific Garden Mall, the city carelessly sprawling into Live Oak.

How will Capitola and Boulder Creek protect their identities, keep their distance and keep their differences?

Will urban sprawl crawl farther into the Santa Cruz Mountains? Can we manage to refresh the San Lorenzo River, dying each moment into a flowing sewer.

Will the variety of its people hang on? Its fashionable citizens and the street people, freaks and all of us regular folks? Will we be saying "Happy New Year" to each other by then?

How large will grow the university, that shining city on the hill. And, will it

have opened its academic treasury to the townspeople down below?

How are you going to look 25 years from now, Santa Cruz County?

How well will you age?

A dozen civic leaders and community activists were asked to consider that unanswerable question.

One of those leaders, a man with a dark vision, asked that his name not be used. He said that his view could compromise his work and reputation.

This is his vision:

Santa Cruz will become a commuter-powered Carmel with an economic umbilicus tied to Silicon Valley.

Highway 17 will be a freeway.

There will be a rail-line for commuter and tourist trains, laid up and over and through the Santa Cruz Mountains.

San Lorenzo River will be dead. Polluted beyond rejuvenation.

The county will fill up with upper middle-class citizens. Except Live Oak and other down-at-heel neighborhoods which will be housing areas for service workers and servants.

Many low-income neighborhoods will be bought up, torn up and marvelously resuscitated into enclaves of the rich.

Fewer traditional houses will be built. Condominiums and townhouses will proliferate until all the lawn-

mowers will be owned by professional gardeners.

The inflow of greater wealth will wash away our rainbow of people and we will all be better dressed, better behaved and better golfers.

The county's flatlands will fill with houses; an indivisible suburb where few of us know our neighbors.

A place to live where there are few strangers and fewer friends. A place to live where sense of community is weak.

A lousy future?

There are those who say it doesn't have to happen that way.

In their contrariness, they talk of "political will."

A continuing political resistance from the neighborhoods and the community to stop it from happening.

"If I were to set up the chess board for the future at this stage, I would have to look at it from the viewpoints of both a predictor and a prophet," says County Supervisor Gary Patton.

Patton is the supervisor from the city of Santa Cruz who in the 1970s was the elected representative of the environmental movement which went to great lengths to hold off full-scale development of Santa Cruz County's open lands.

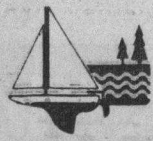
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Pete Amos/Sentinel

The look of today's Santa Cruz — what will it be like tomorrow?





## Santa Cruz tomorrow /

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His leadership in such regimens as the county growth-control ordinance has been an major influence the past decade. It appears it will continue to be a determining factor in the near to distant future.

"If I were to set up the chess board for the future at this stage, I would have to look at it from the viewpoints of both a predictor and a prophet," says County Supervisor Gary Patton.

Patton explains, "Prediction is the extrapolation of what now exists, and prophecy is a statement of what ought to be."

"As a predictor, I would have to say the movement and power behind the San Jose area is inexorable. Its power was expressed when a year or two ago it got 15 percent of the entire nation's investment capital. Perhaps it is the most dynamic urban area in the world."

"As a predictor, I would have to say your anonymous visionary is right. You have to predict and agree that the influence of San Jose will be overwhelming."

And when, and if it is, our protected unique county will be lost, for then there will be more major water projects, major highway projects, more major projects for other services.

"We as a people will be more polished, more sophisticated, more upper-income."

"We will be a great deal more like Monterey and Carmel with only vestiges of what once was."

**P**ATTON HAS another vision: a vision of what the future should be.

"As an ecologist, I and others are fighting that 'overwhelming' movement and as a prophet, I believe we will prevail."

My prophecy is not made as a scientist, but as a visionary and I believe we will remain geographically isolated.

"For we are going to find the words to articulate those principles that make us unique. And, those words will be such words as 'self reliance,' 'independence' and 'community decision-making.'"

"We will not open the highway to the movement from San Jose. We are not going to tie ourselves to the Central Valley Water Project."

"We are not going to lose the political battles of today and the future."

Santa Cruz Mayor Mardi Wormhoudt says the anonymous visionary's view of the future is nothing new. And it is wrong.

She says the visionary's prediction was written as the inevitable future in the 1964 city General Plan.

"It was all written over 20 years ago and it didn't happen."

"One would have thought looking at that plan that that future was inevitable. It projected 125,000 people in the city and environs by the year 1990. The university

a community that has a working class and students and never did get to be the flashy urban community that was planned then.

"It seems the best laid plans of planners get nowhere if people have the will and the belief that that will is enough to determine the future."

Nadia Bledsoe, an activist with Westside Neighbors in the early days and the president of American Federation of Service Employees, the non-faculty union on campus, says, "Santa Cruz has a hard-core group of activists and nothing is going to scare us off if it hasn't scared us off yet."

"I think over the next 25 years there will be the incredible push-pull of controlled growth and a push to save clean jobs. I don't think there's going to be an open stream between San Jose and Santa Cruz."

She said the presidential election "brought groups together that have not traditionally worked with each other and I think that coalition will continue."

"I think such groups as the Women's Health Collective, the Westside Health Center, the Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women and other prevention groups will flourish and expand and bring us together."

"I think the skyline will be modified. There will be a major convention center, or something, coming in. If we're going to keep money in the city, it's going to happen."

"I think the concept of a train, or some enhanced transportation, is inevitable. It would not be too bad to have San Jose and San Francisco more accessible, but on the other hand, it opens the door."

"There will always be a struggle to build out the greenbelt (open space rimming the city), but I don't think it's going to build out. We stopped it once with an initiative."

"I don't know how we'll stop it in the future, but interesting things happen in electoral politics."

"I think the downtown areas will be busier and more citified. I think the quaintness is something that everybody wants to maintain, but I think the convention center is inevitable, downtown or by the beach."

She says the neighborhoods will change, but the change will lead to greater neighborhood participation in determining the future.

"Lately the interest rate dipped low enough for some of us to buy houses and if that continues, and the trend to collective ownership continues, we'll see greater participation in stuff like traffic, building and developments."

She doesn't believe Santa Cruz will become a bedroom for San Jose.

"I can't imagine that happening. There's so many of us here who are willing to have a career with high pay to live



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

### GARY PATTON: 'We are not going to lose the political battles of today and the future'

affluent that will even encompass Live Oak, and the affluent usually pushout the less affluent and that generally brings conservatism."

He believes there will be large hotel facilities near the Boardwalk and would like to see a "dominant hotel on the site of the Pasatiempo Inn and a performing arts center on the parking lot in front of the County Center."

"Anything to cover up that building."

"What is going to happen is that a series of improvements on Highway 17 will slowly turn it into a freeway. I used to dream that someday we'd all wake up and all the green lights would go on and we'd realize we have a freeway; it's inevitable."

Pandolfi is a builder of houses, but has done only one project in Santa Cruz, mainly because there is comparatively little building going on here.

"Santa Cruz is going to change. It's in the economics. If we maintain the greenbelt and don't expand the city, the increase in the affluence is going to shift the less affluent to Live Oak, then Watsonville and ultimately out of the county."

"My bottom line is that I really love Santa Cruz. I want it to stay the way it is. But reality says we are going to grow and we have to make plans to anticipate that."

**C**ONSULTANT Stephanie Hauk, who has worked for State Sen. Henry Mello, Dominican Hospital and the Cowell Foundation, says Santa Cruz County's future lies in the process of planning thought.

"Change is inevitable and the real question is the quality of that change."

"The real trick is in how we will integrate the human needs with that sense of where we want to be and the kind of world

"negotiate conflicts" is a powerful process that serves as a resource and influence to elected bodies.

"The way I would like to see it worked out is through a negotiated process where people respect and give credence to other people's opinion, even if they don't agree with them, and work through community problems in a way that deals more with the facts than with emotion."

"I think that elections and the emotion that goes into them are part of peaking interest. The real decisions that have been successful have been made based on the facts that are available and the human needs of the community."

"I think that all groups have to be represented by the decision; you cannot cut out any group. Otherwise the decisions are not valid and are subject to immediate change."

Santa Cruz businessman Larry Pearson wants the diversity of Santa Cruz maintained, but thinks in these days, there's a bit too much of it.

"Street people stop a lot of people in the community from coming to the Mall. I don't think they're any threat, but to my way of thinking, people who hang out, bum spare change, lie around in the bushes, make offensive remarks to people, go through garbage cans, trash the downtown area, give nothing to the community and do not deserve our support."

But in spite of that problem, he sees an upward mobility in downtown businesses.

"Each shop that opens is better capitalized, offering a range of goods somewhat higher in price than the shop before."

It is the 'boutique-ization' of Santa Cruz that is practically inevitable.

"I don't see San Jose as the major influence, but it is an influence. People live here and work here for very specific reasons. They don't want the San Jose lifestyle; they want the diversity."

"Politically, the town is a reflection of this and that's exciting. Politically, what we've seen and hopefully will see is that people on both sides of the political reality have the interest of Santa Cruz at heart."

**A**NOTHER BUSINESSMAN, former Santa Cruz Mayor Norm Lezin, says, "This used to be a town where people lived and worked and fished and made things to use. Now, it's a town of the wealthy retired, tourist-service industries and a scattering of high tech on the fringes."

"I see the day when people who work for a living in Santa Cruz come here from Watsonville and Morgan Hill."

"I suspect that in 25 years we'll see most of the lower-middle class wiped out in Santa Cruz and unless something very dramatic happens, it will develop pretty much along the lines of Santa Barbara."

"In the absence of gigantic developments way beyond Santa Cruz' control, economic or thermonuclear, there will be a continued shift from a sleepy isolated lower- to middle-class into an upper-class coastal community."

County Supervisors' Chairwoman Robley Levy says that looking ahead is "to pose the conflict between the demographic splash of the planners' ink and the political will of the community."

"It's important that we use that political will to protect our air quality, our agricultural lands and our coast. It's important we reach a balance in our economy between agriculture and tourism."

"I think the political will is very strong here; it's the strongest force in the county. It seems to me that if you talk to the public, whether the people have been here 20 years, 10 years, three years, no matter what his or her occupation, income level, educational level, there is a strong concern that cuts across political lines that we must protect this land."

"I don't see any change coming in their desire to protect the neighborhoods and the coast. I think that consensus is strong and it is not fragmented."

Santa Cruz Councilman John Laird says that a look at the past 25 years shows the pitfalls of trying to foresee the future.

"From 25 years ago, there's been a complete and total change in Santa Cruz. We have a campus that's turned the town around. The 1960 county population was 80,000-some-odd people and it now tops 200,000."

"In 1960, agriculture and tourism were competing for the top spot and it looks like tourism will pull ahead now."

"Starting from where we are right now, in 25 years, I think that environmentalism will protect the north mountain areas."

"That means that there will be no dramatic development of water and energy. The trends will be in how to deliver roads, water, and services."

"I expect there will be a much more self-sufficient Santa Cruz County where hydro, solar and wind power will play a much more important part. Along with conservation."

Of the people and local governments in the future, he says, "It will be real interesting. I think we'll find a government in Watsonville that will be representative of the people there. Today, it's 50 percent Latinos and no Latinos on the City Council. I think that will change."

"I think we'll have a much more accepting and tolerant society than we have now and we'll be surprised at the changes. In the last 25 years, nobody would have predicted the sexual revolution, birth control and the fight over abortion."

"Remember it was only 25 years ago that Martin Luther King Jr. was doing the bus boycott and this year Jesse Jackson was running for the presidential nomination."

"I think there will be many more openly gay politicians running for office; they will be much more accepted along the same lines as the black movement."

"The university is saying they'll double in enrollment in 10 years. I don't believe that's necessarily the case, that they're overly optimistic. If it does happen, that will change the population a lot."

"The big fight of the 1990s will be whether Santa Cruz will build upward. The storms of the past few years have shown there's good reason for not developing in the rural areas. The north coast is closed off and the only option in 10 years will be either to not build at all, or to grow upwards."

"I can't predict how that political battle of the 1990s will come out; it's even money right now, but I tend to think there'll be some victory for growing upwards."

Along with taller buildings — a possible skyline for Santa Cruz — Laird fears the chasm between the people who have enough money to live and those in penury will widen.

"If we don't make gains in expansion of our existing resources and turn that disparity around, we could have a real revolutionary change, and that could happen within the democratic process with the rise of a strong third party."

"Two things I'm sure of: The status quo will not remain the status quo, and even though it seems a contradiction to that statement, I'm also sure the Boardwalk will still be in Santa Cruz."

"It's survived 75 years of conservative councils, then back-to-back socialist mayors, the 100-year storm and the 1906 earthquake."

Short of a nuclear explosion, I'm sure the Boardwalk will be here 25 years from now."



"It was all written over 20 years ago and it didn't happen.

"One would have thought looking at that plan that that future was inevitable. It projected 125,000 people in the city and environs by the year 1990. The university was planned for 27,500. Highway 17 was to be eight lanes going over the hill. It projected a city on the Wilder Ranch running up the open north coast and projected our city sprawling out all the way up Aptos Creek.

"The 1964 General Plan looked like the inevitable plan.

"But, it didn't happen, for despite the plan and the thinking of the movers and shakers then, the people of Santa Cruz decided they had a right to plan the future for themselves.

"What the people's plans included was hanging on to the autonomy that belongs to a community; hanging on to a community that was to be neither suburbia nor exurbia.

"No one then would have believed in 1964 that today we would still be looking at

ownership continues, we'll see greater participation in stuff like traffic, building and developments."

She doesn't believe Santa Cruz will become a bedroom for San Jose.

"I can't imagine that happening. There's so many of us here who are willing to forsake a career with high pay to live here and I think that's going to continue. It's a high price to pay, but we're willing to do it."

Architect Jim Pandolfi says the immediate key to the future is the proposed high-tech complex at UCSC.

"I think the research and development park is going to come and it will mean a shift away from the more liberal majority on the City Council to a more conservative majority.

"What we need is a conservative spokesman here in Santa Cruz. The liberals have two or three in their membership on the council. Perhaps the closest one we have is Charlie Canfield of the Boardwalk. But, my sense is that the conservatives are not as interested in listening to what other conservatives say as the liberals are interested in listening to liberals.

"When the R&D park comes, we'll see an economic shift. A greater influx of the

Mello, Dominican Hospital and the Cowell Foundation, says Santa Cruz County's future lies in the process of planning thought.

"Change is inevitable and the real question is the quality of that change.

"The real trick is in how we will integrate the human needs with that sense of where we want to be and the kind of world we want to live in here in Santa Cruz.

"We find a lot of people ignoring the fact that we have people here without homes and are hungry, in preference to talking about how we are to maintain the beauty of Santa Cruz.

"Some years back, there were two county supervisors' meetings held back to back. The first was held to protect the salamanders at in one location of the county and the meeting was absolutely packed.

The second meeting was on housing issues and only six people showed up. They were basically people who either wanted to build, or needed housing.

"We talk on two levels: the philosophical and what is really happening. But, we have to reach that compromise of a preserved, protected community and a community that meets its needs.

"I believe we can do it. When you bring people together, you realize there's not that much difference among us; there are not good and bad people, just people with different sets of concerns."

Hauk says the process of bringing together concerned and involved people to

But in spite of that problem, he sees an upward mobility in downtown businesses.

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Is it the 'boutique-ization' of Santa Cruz? It is practically inevitable.

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