

City vows to rebuild shattered downtown

Earthquake 1989 - City of Santa Cruz/Rebuilding

By MARK BERGSTROM

Sentinel staff writer 10-19-89

SANTA CRUZ — Several hundred downtown business owners, managers and employees spilled out of the City Council chamber into the City Hall plaza Thursday, hoping to hear when they could go back to work.

But the answer they had hoped for — "when can we go back" — was shrouded in uncertainty because of the tenuous state of the buildings on the Pacific Garden Mall.

The mall continued to be cordoned off Thursday over a wide area bounded to the north and south by North Pacific Avenue and Laurel Street and to the east and west by Front and Cedar streets.

A team of structural engineers from throughout the state has been swarming over the businesses in an effort to see what can be rebuilt and what must be torn down.

While Mayor Mardi Wormhoudt said the present remains uncertain, she said she is optimistic about the future of the mall.

"We are committed to rebuilding the mall," she said. "It won't be the same, but it will continue to be vital.

"I believe we can have a second 20 years on the mall as vibrant and wonderful as the first 20 years have been," Wormhoudt said.

She said she toured the mall Wednesday with U.S. Rep. Leon Panetta, D-Monterey, and said the city will press for all the help it can get in the rebuilding effort.