

VISION SANTA CRUZ STM 1-9-91 1B

Vision Santa Cruz unveils plans for a Shangri-La

By Paul Rogers
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Hoping to present design consultants and city leaders with a mental picture of how an ideal post-earthquake Santa Cruz would look, a non-profit advisory board of prominent Santa Cruz citizens Tuesday night unveiled plans for a Shangri-La by the Sea.

Vision Santa Cruz's eight-page document is the product of six months of debates, questionnaire-collecting and public input. Although general in tone, the "Vision Statement" is uncompromisingly Santa Cruzan in character. It describes a rejuvenated city with sweeping improvements in housing, cultural events, commerce and urban design, all the while emphasizing that the new downtown serve as "a living room for the entire city" that encourages people to get out of their cars and walk the streets with their neighbors.

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"If we don't have grand dreams, then we can't hope to achieve even the smallest parts of them," said Laura Perry, a city planner and housing expert who works as Vision Santa Cruz's only paid staffer.

According to the document, Vision Santa Cruz's rebuilt city would include:

- ✓ A pedestrian-oriented and economically vibrant central business district along Pacific Avenue, Church, Locust and Cooper streets, comprised predominantly of two and three story buildings but including several taller structures.

- ✓ Dense downtown housing up and down the Garden Mall that caters to low- and middle-income residents.

- ✓ Expanded cultural facilities, including

a Performing Arts Center on the banks of the San Lorenzo River; an Art and History Museum in the abandoned jail building on Front Street and plentiful outdoor art shows and concerts.

- ✓ A streetscape rich in native trees and flowers. Sidewalk cafes, street vending, outdoor performance areas, and other public conveniences such as benches, planters, abundant bicycle racks and public restrooms also are included.

Vision Santa Cruz is an advisory body

that was formed after the quake to collect citizen input and to make recommendations about how to rebuild Santa Cruz. Its 36-member board includes public officials such as Mayor Jane Yokoyama, downtown business owners, housing experts and representatives from the arts and social welfare communities.

The Vision Statement is available at the Vision Santa Cruz office, 1543 Pacific Avenue, and will be open for public comment at a downtown recovery citizen study session at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 15 at the Civic Auditorium.