

City Newsletter



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Prepared by the Office of the City Manager

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A Convention Center for Santa Cruz

A beautiful site on West Cliff Drive, with a sweeping view of Monterey Bay is being developed as a convention center.

In 1968 a Joint Powers Agreement between the City of Santa Cruz and the County of Santa Cruz was prepared enabling joint supervision of this project. An agency known as the "Santa Cruz City-County Community and Convention Center Authority" was created as a public entity separate from the County and the City. This Authority was charged with the responsibility for entering into contracts, to acquire, construct and operate buildings and incur obligations in the development of the convention center.

The Authority made a request to the Economic Development Administration for a grant of \$900,000 in 1968. However, release of the grant was held up pending a commitment for a hotel at the site, because the grant is contingent on an employee training program in conjunction with the hotel.

The Authority has recently entered into an agreement with an investment group called "Teachers Management Investment Corporation", a group of 1700 teachers who have syndicated to develop the private facilities. TMI has been successful in obtaining the Hilton chain to lease and operate a 12 story Santa Cruz Hilton Hotel on the site.

Meanwhile, the application for the grant has been reactivated, and plans are proceeding for the construction of the public convention and community center building.

The development of the convention center will assist the Santa Cruz area in lowering its high unemployment rate and giving year-round employment to many who are now employed on a seasonal basis. Both the City and County are cooperating in this project which will be of benefit to the whole community. The Santa-Cruz Chamber of Commerce spearheaded a study several years ago which showed the convention center to be economically feasible and a desirable asset. A site selection committee, after months of deliberation, chose 38 acres at Lighthouse Point as the home for the facility.

Years ago Santa Cruz was a popular convention site, but lack of facilities has lost most of this business to us during the years. Should development plans progress smoothly, the center should be under construction by early next year and completed in June of 1972 and Santa Cruz will be once again in the convention business.