

✓ ^{Cooper House} Developers plan downtown Mall complex

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SANTA CRUZ — Renovation and remodeling of the landmark Cooper House on the Pacific Garden Mall should be done within two months, according to one of its owners.

Sheri Rushing — who with her husband, developer Jay Paul, recently purchased the down-on-its-luck Cooper House — said at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon Wednesday that they expect to complete the work in "one to two months."

Rushing also revealed that the couple is bidding on the adjacent Odd Fellows Building, also on Pa-

cific Avenue, with a plan in mind to link the two historic buildings.

Rushing said if they are successful in buying the Odd Fellows Building and installing walkways between the two buildings, they would convert the existing alley between the two into small shops and restaurants. This plan would carry over into the parking lot behind the Odd Fellows Building, said Rushing, and would provide an attractive backdrop to the planned art and history museum that could go into the old County Jail on Front Street.

A private task force has been working on plans to convert the 52-year-old jail into a museum/commercial complex. The

county has been putting the final details on leasing the jail to the museum task force.

The "Center for Art and History for Santa Cruz," as the organizers are calling it, could thus form a revitalized core of downtown Santa Cruz, if the Cooper House and Odd Fellows Building link is ac-

complished, said Rushing.

Rushing said a number of tenants have already been lined up for the renovated Cooper House, both new and existing businesses. These include an ice cream shop, a candy store, a flower shop, a store selling futons, and a Japanese-style restaurant; plus, outside, continuing

to permit street vendors to sell food and merchandise.

The popular jazz group, Warmth, also will return more often to the Cooper House patio, Rushing said. The group, whose melodies were a tourist attraction on the Mall for years, plays Sundays outside the Cooper House.