

Increased Mall Police Patrol Not The Final Answer

By BILL NEUBAUER
Sentinel Staff Writer

The Santa Cruz City Council's action Tuesday night to crack down on panhandling, purse snatches, fistfights, trashing and verbal abuses along the Pacific Avenue Garden Mall was hailed Wednesday as a step in the right direction. But, it also signaled other efforts to effect the mall cleanup the council has authorized.

The council action included authorizing assigning two full-time police officers to the mall seven days weekly and requesting county law enforcement and health officials to handle more realistically persons booked for various offenses against city laws.

One business leader, Ken Marcus, said there should be strong follow-up at the county level to make sure that council requests for detentions, treatment of those with mental problems, and prosecution by the district attorney are carried out by officials.

Another business leader, Bob Fuller, termed the council actions "good" but asked why it had taken councilmembers so long to perceive and act on the problems more than 4,000 petitioners had called to its attention.

Generally, the downtown leaders were agreed that the council has finally come to grips with the necessity to do something about the mall before it deteriorates as a shopping center and tourist attraction.

But the mood of many citizens who were active in the circulation of the petitions that finally got council action is that more than the council action is needed, that people and other governmental agencies must work in support of the council to get the mall cleaned up.

Feelings were still strong Wednesday over the announcement by city police Tuesday night there were 807 "incidents" and 229 arrests on the

action "one of the most significant council actions in the past five years."

Marcus also said he was personally pleased to see people representing the diverse groups that use the mall appealing to the council for a crackdown against law offenders.

A huge turnout of downtown merchants and mall users representative of a broad philosophical spectrum came to the council meeting Tuesday ready to speak.

And they found Mayor Joseph Ghio and his six other council colleagues ready and willing to listen.

Some of the comments were: JIMMY CARTER - he identified himself as the owner of Carter Threads, and he said, in part:

"The mall is always close to me because I am from Kalamazoo, Mich., where the first mall was built. I have seen many malls, but this mall in Santa Cruz is the most beautiful."

"I have to speak the truth. I have been told by my friends the word is out for people to come here to get food stamps. They can go to live in Bonny Doon and on the beach and panhandle until they get the stamps.

"I have been taught not to judge, not to cast the first stone, but in the year and a half I've been here I have seen some panhandling.

"Music is love, and love is music, and that is Santa Cruz."

Carter made it clear he is opposed to hassling of anyone but that he was speaking the truth as he has been told it and has seen it.

ROBERT BOSSO - "The council has been given petitions with 4,202 signatures. It is significant that many people tore a piece out of the newspaper (an ad containing petition statements) and spent 13 cents mailing it to the city council.

"The problem is of criminal antisocial behavior on the mall. The petitions are not challenging the lifestyles of anyone

store. People come to the nearby parking lot, and I am amazed how many dart from their cars into the store to do business and leave without going to other places on the mall. In one, two-month period I caused six arrests. This takes time. You have to stick around and sign a complaint and this is not something the shoppers do."

Shockley said he is active in the Capitola-Soquel Little League and that the majority of adults he talks to said "they do not shop the downtown area except on special occasions because they don't like the environment."

PROJECT SCOUT SPOKES-

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Sentinel

MAN - "Many of senior citizens are accosted, pushed around a bit and even robbed here. They are afraid to walk around the mall even in the daylight. Many have asked us to address you and ask for protection."

MAX WALDEN - "You don't have enough patrolmen. You need them seven days a week,

one at night. I can't say I have never felt threatened..."

"But the city as a whole has never really taken care of the mall. We don't take care of the lights, if a tree dies we stick anything in, not the specimen tree that was there, we don't keep the streets clean. Two months ago you decided not to

clean the sidewalks and three months ago you decided not to water the plants. We have a parking district but the city has a cartel. You get two hours free, then tickets are given and this is punitive. I hear people say they are not coming back to the mall 'because I got a damn ticket.'

"If this is a garden mall it should be treated as one. I am not proud of the downtown. We don't take care of the plants, we don't provide management."

Walden cautioned against too much surveillance and against fear of different lifestyles.

LOWELL HUNTER - "The mall is inadequately staffed with patrols. If you had two pa-

trolmen on each side of the street at \$16,000 each or \$64,000 a year you would be surprised how much organized crime can be eliminated. I was in the police department the other day and a lady 60 years old came in because somebody had snatched her purse.

"We are coming to Christmas. There will probably be a lot of organized crime here next month because Santa Claus is coming to town.

"To eliminate crime you have to start in the realm of security."

JOSEPH FORTIER - "As a member of the Downtown Association I am heartily in support of the program and I make a strong appeal to you to do all you can to activate it."

DON ATKINSON - This member and officer of the Libertarian Party said he would like to see those who commit crimes brought to justice, but he cautioned against a witch hunt and seemed critical of allowing the Lions Club to collect money on White Cane Day while not allowing others to collect donations, too.

"The mall does need to be cleaned up," he said, "but I would hate to see citizens who are not doing anything being hassled by the police."

LES LEY - "I was here recently as the only person supporting the view that development of River Street is a necessity. The program called for in the petitions is desirable for all

the city and I am happy I am not here alone supporting this."

DON FULTZ - Speaking for the Santa Cruz Area Chamber of Commerce, Fultz said directors of the 600-member group had voted unanimously to support the petition. He said he feels very strongly the downtown is the focal point not only of the city but of the county. "The mall is the image." And in another context he asserted: "The success of the mall and downtown will in large measure be the success or failure of the community."

ROBERT HALL - He said there are many areas where all groups using the mall can cooperate. He called for the city to meet its responsibilities for repairing ruts and holes and broken tiles, for cleaning the sidewalks and maintaining plants.

Hall said also "we should be talking about a balanced community."

JEANNE EPPING - As owner of Santa Cruz Travel she reported on purse snatchings, on panhandling and added: "It distresses me when I am called at Santa Cruz Travel and someone orders a ticket but asks if they can pick it up at another of our agencies in the county rather than on the mall."

MICHAEL McCALL - "Enforce the laws on the book."

TOM LEONARD - "Parking is a real problem... Some who work at our office tell me they have a real problem with the street people."

Christmas Parade Shaping Up

WARNING: it really is not too early to be thinking Christmas... although the Bird ought to be given your primary attention this week.

The Third Annual Children's Christmas Parade is now shaping up to form to march from Cathcart Street along the Pacific Avenue Garden Mall to the North Pacific area on Dec. 3, a Saturday.

The parade is sponsored by the Santa Cruz Downtown Association, which is already filling a great big bag with prizes for children aged nine years and older who are dressed in the most interesting and original Christmas costumes.

When the merchants of the Downtown Association talk about prizes they're talking about such things as bicycles and cash.

There will be individual competition for children age 8 years and under and for children age 9 years and older. In each of these groups, a bicycle will be given to the three top winners.

Then in group competition, chil-

dren representing clubs and schools and the like will be awarded cash prizes. Again, the competition will be among children age 8 and age 9 and older. The first prize for each group in each class will be \$75. Second placers get \$50 and third placers get \$25.

These are group prizes, understand, not individual prizes.

The Downtown Association sponsors the children's parade annually to launch the full Yuletide shopping season in the downtown area.

Plans are for all retail stores in the downtown area to be open Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. on Dec. 4, 11 and 18, and all stores will be open until 9 p.m. weeknights commencing Dec. 5 and continuing through Dec. 23.

Note that regular store hours will prevail on all Saturdays, including Dec. 24.

Well over 1,000 free parking spaces for shoppers will be available at all times, including the day of the great parade.

Now about those costumes...

These should be appropriate to the Christmas season and whatever you think Christmas stands for. Hope is that you will exercise your imagination to put together costumes that will add to the beauty and joy of the event.

For the occasion the Pacific Avenue Garden Mall and the downtown area will be decorated with red and green "Noel" banners. Christmas trees on the mall will be decorated by school children and senior citizens.

Certainly there'll be Santa Claus... certainly the jolly fellow will be distributing free candy to the youngsters.

The parade will form between 9:30 and 10 a.m., and the judges will be examining the costumes and making their big decisions just before the parade begins. So it is important for all the children to report early.

Any parents with questions about the parade are invited to telephone Louis Rittenhouse Jr. at the Copper Flower, 427-1120.

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But the mood of many citizens who were active in the circulation of the petitions that finally got council action is that more than the council action is needed, that people and other governmental agencies must work in support of the council to get the mall cleaned up.

Feelings were still strong Wednesday over the announcement by city police Tuesday night there were 807 "incidents" and 229 arrests on the mall for law violations in the July 1-Sept. 30 period.

That these arrests represented 14.1 percent of the total arrests made in the city in this period was accepted by many petition signers. Wednesday that their requests to the council were long overdue and the council action long overdue as well.

The mall was defined in the police report as an 8-block area forming the core of the city's downtown. The 807 incidents recorded here in the three-month period represented 10.5 percent of all the incidents occurring throughout the city during that time.

Marcus termed the council

Felton Burglary

Sheriff's deputies reported Wednesday that a burglar broke into Montezuma's restaurant on Highway 9 in Felton and stole \$100 in cash.

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ROBERT BOSSO - "The council has been given petitions with 4,202 signatures. It is significant that many people tore a piece out of the newspaper (an ad containing petition statements) and spent 13 cents mailing it to the city council."

"The problem is of criminal antisocial behavior on the mall. The petitions are not challenging the lifestyles of anyone . . .

"Over 60 percent of the people involved in arrests are not living in the city, and 44 percent are not county residents . . ."

TED SCHIPPER - Schipper said that the good things about the mall are the mall itself and the downtown parking district and the upgrading of stores and business inventories. He said that his store, Schipper-Dillon has a wholesale inventory of more than \$300,000.

The bad things, he said, include an increase in competitive shopping centers, loss of property and sales taxes to the downtown community, loss of jobs in the downtown area, inadequate mall surveillance, broken mall fixtures. Then he asked:

"What reaction would the city council have if it was operating a business and dozens, not just one, of your customers came into your business and asked why you are not doing something about the mall?"

NORM SHOCKLEY - "We have no rear entrance to our

bicycles and cash.

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