

A monument to an earthquake

Santa Cruz to commemorate 1989's losses, recovery

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Now that downtown Santa Cruz is well on its way to recovering from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the city is considering a monument to commemorate all that was lost.

The city arts commission is seeking ideas from the public for a downtown memorial to remember the victims of the Oct. 17 quake and the heroes who have helped the city rebuild.

"Our downtown is the product of a natural disaster," Santa Cruz City Manager Mark Wilson said. "The earthquake was a life-changing event. It means a lot for a lot of people to remember."

Santa Cruz has \$10,000 set aside for a

monument. That money was part of the \$650,000 donated by people from around the world in the weeks after the quake.

No one knows yet what form the monument will take, nor has a location been selected.

"It's pretty wide open right now," said Susan Wandruff, a city recreation supervisor spearheading the project.

Wandruff said the arts commission will consider any medium — sculpture or other expressions. Deadline for submitting drawings or ideas is May 30.

The arts commission probably will select finalists and have the public vote on its favorites. A recommendation then will go to the city council, which will have final

authority on design and location.

Watsonville has had an earthquake memorial in front of its City Hall on Main Street for several years. The monument is a fountain surrounded by shattered bricks with decorative tiles depicting aspects of local culture. It was funded by Watsonville businesses, farmers and private donors with oversight from the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau.

Wandruff said Santa Cruz leaders have waited so long for a monument — nearly five years — because they wanted to see the layout and "personality" of the rebuilt downtown first.

"We're really anxious to see what the public comes up with," she said.

Downtown Santa Cruz sustained more widespread damage than any other city during the Loma Prieta earthquake.

The quake caused damage estimated at \$115 million along Pacific Garden Mall, destroying 30 commercial buildings, many of them on the National Register of Historic Places. Of 600 businesses downtown before the quake, 206 were destroyed or forced to move.

Three people died. Catherine Treiman, 75, was killed when portions of Ford's department store collapsed. Robin Ortiz, 22, and Sean McCormick, 21, died when a brick wall from Bookshop Santa Cruz fell into the Santa Cruz Coffee Roasting Co.

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED

Ideas and/or sketches can be sent to the Santa Cruz City Arts Commission, 307 Church St., Santa Cruz, Calif. 95060. For more information, contact Susan Wandruff at (408) 429-3778.