

# Earthquakes - City of Santa Cruz Last 2 quake-hit buildings to be torn down

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The last two buildings in downtown Santa Cruz still standing as reminders of the devastating 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake are set for demolition next week.

Crews are scheduled to start the wrecking of the Ferrari and Elks buildings next Tuesday, said Dick Stubendorff, Santa Cruz's

chief building official.

Familiar neighbors at Pacific and Soquel avenues for most of the century, the two unreinforced masonry buildings sustained major damage in the Oct. 17, 1989, quake.

They have sat condemned and boarded up for nearly four years during historical studies, government delays and financing prob-

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lems. Around them, 29 downtown buildings have fallen to the wrecking ball and, in many cases

have been replaced with new structures.

"I think it's significant," City

Manager Dick Wilson said Monday. "It marks the final transition from the demolition phase to the rebuilding phase."

The two buildings are being demolished at the same time because they share a common wall. The work is expected to take about two weeks.

City leaders have worried for years that the vacant buildings

could fall onto the street in another quake or could be accidentally set ablaze by transients who regularly sneak inside.

"These buildings are not structurally sound in any way, shape or form," City Councilman Louis Rittenhouse said.

Last week, the council approved a \$135,000 loan to speed

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MERCURY NEWS FILE PHOTOGRAPH

The earthquake-damaged Elks and Ferrari buildings in downtown Santa Cruz will be demolished beginning next Tuesday.

## Elks building awaits loan

### ■ ELKS

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up demolition work. Officials at the Federal Emergency Management Agency had refused requests for money to help with the \$150,000 demolition job.

Those hoping to see new buildings sprout up right away will be disappointed. Although the city council approved replacement plans more than a year ago for both sites, owners of the sites have not been able to secure bank loans to pay for replacement buildings.

David Pera, whose family has owned the Ferrari building since the 1940s, said he hopes to break ground on a new building by late fall, with work completed by next summer.

Plans for the new Ferrari building call for a two-story structure with an earth-tone finish, dark

green trim and awnings. Retail shops are planned for the ground floor, with offices above.

Projected cost: \$809,000. Engineers estimated it would have cost \$1.2 million to retrofit the old three-story building, which was built in 1886.

Progress in replacing the 1910-era Elks building will be slower.

Ruben Fuentes, who manages the property for its owners, the Kett family of Watsonville, said banks are requiring him to have the building 80 percent leased before they will provide construction loans.

"I couldn't really give you an assessment when we'll have a new building," Fuentes said.

The Elks' former partner to the south, the 1910-era Trust building, was torn down in March after being gutted by flames. The Ketts have not submitted replacement plans for that building yet.