

PUBLIC ADVISORY REGARDING COVID-19 AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Pursuant to AB361 and the PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY dated March 4, 2020
the regular meeting of the

LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION (LAC)

On Thursday, November 14, 2022 at 6:30 PM

This meeting will be held via Zoom teleconference ONLY

Board Members and Library Staff Members will be participating remotely via videoconference.

Public Viewing:

The meeting will be broadcast through the Santa Cruz Libraries YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/user/SantaCruzPL> which you can access through the Santa Cruz
Libraries website by scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking on the YouTube icon.

Public Participation via Zoom:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89998848771>

Or Telephone:

Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

877 853 5247 (Toll Free) or 888 788 0099 (Toll Free) or
833 548 0276 (Toll Free) or 833 548 0282 (Toll Free)

Slowly enter the Webinar ID: 899 9884 8771

International numbers available: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89998848771>

The meetings will be recorded and posted for viewing after the meetings on the
Santa Cruz Public Libraries website <http://www.santacruzpl.org/>

Public comment: There are three ways to comment during this meeting. All comments must be received prior to the close of public comment on that agenda item:

1. How to comment on agenda items via email before the meeting begins:

Members of the public may provide public comment by sending an email to the Library Board Clerk at clerk@santacruzpl.org

- Identify the agenda item number in the subject line of the email
- Emailed comments should be a maximum of 500 words, which corresponds to approximately 3 minutes of speaking time.

- All correspondences received prior to 5:00 p.m. on the Friday preceding a LAC Meeting will be distributed to Commission members to review prior to the meeting. Information submitted after 5 p.m. on that Friday may not have time to reach Commission members, nor be read by them prior to consideration of an item.

2. How to comment on agenda items during the meeting and prior to the close of public comment on an item, using the Zoom Q&A feature:

- Type your comment using the “Q&A” feature found on the Zoom control bar
- Identify the agenda item first, then type your comment
- Your comment will be read aloud

3. How to comment aloud on agenda items, during the meeting and prior to the close of public comment on an item, via the Zoom “raise hand” feature:

If you are accessing the meeting using the Zoom app and using computer audio:

- During the comment period for that agenda item, use the “raise hand” icon found on the Zoom control bar
- The moderator will announce your name or the last 3 digits of your phone number when it is your turn to speak
- Unmute yourself using the microphone icon
- Identify the agenda item
- Introduce yourself using your first and last name
- You will have three minutes of speaking time

If you are accessing the meeting using telephone audio:

- During the comment period for that agenda item, press *9 to raise your hand
- The moderator will announce the last 3 digits of your phone number when it is your turn to speak
- Unmute yourself using *6 – to toggle the mute/unmute feature
- Identify the agenda item
- Introduce yourself using your first and last name
- You will have three minutes of speaking time



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14 at 6:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commissioners Lindsay Bass, Rena Dubin, Jennifer Mount, Mary Ripma, Mike Termini, Pamela Woll, and Tricia Wynne

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Any member of the audience may address the Board on any matter either on or off the agenda that is within the Board's jurisdiction. Note, however, that the Board is not able to undertake extended discussion or act on non-agendized items. Such items can be referred to staff for appropriate action which may include placement on a future agenda. If you intend to address a subject that is on the Agenda, please hold your comments regarding that item until it is before the Board so that we may properly address all comments on that subject at the same time. In general 3 minutes will be permitted per speaker during Oral Communication; A MAXIMUM of 30 MINUTES is set aside for Oral Communications at this time.

4. REPORT BY LIBRARY DIRECTOR

A. Library Director's Report – November 2022 (P4-8)

5. REPORT BY FRIENDS OF THE SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES

A. Friends of SCPL – Report (Oral)

6. MEMBER REPORTS

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

All items listed in the "Consent Calendar" will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion on these items prior to the time the Board votes on the action unless members of the public or the Board request specific items to be discussed for separate review. Items pulled for separate discussion will be considered following General Business.

A. Minutes of July 18, 2022
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve Minutes (P9-10)

- B. Recent Articles about Santa Cruz Public Libraries
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accept and File Recent Articles about SCPL (P11-198)
- C. Resolution Authorizing the Library Advisory Commission to Utilize Remote Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt Resolution No. 2022-04 Authorizing Remote Teleconference Meetings pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 (P199-201)
- D. FY 2023 First Quarter Workplan
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accept and file FY 2023 First Quarter Workplan (P202-212)

8. PRESENTATIONS

- A. SenSource People Counters Presentation by Gregory Yeh, Management Analyst
SenSource’s People Counting Statistics for Q1 FY 2023
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accept and File SenSource’s People Counting Statistics for Q1 FY 2023 (P212-214)
- B. Strategic Plan Presentation by Eric Howard, Assistant Director of Libraries
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Review and provide input on the draft 2022-2025 Strategic Plan (P215-260)

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

General Business items are intended to provide an opportunity for public discussion of each item listed. The following procedure is followed for each Business item: 1) Staff explanation; 2) Board questions; 3) Public comment; 4) Board deliberation; 5) Decision.

- A. Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2023
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Review and approve the LAC 2023 calendar (P261)
- B. Library Display Policy
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accept and File: Policy #305 (P262-271)

10. SCHEDULED UPCOMING MEETINGS

Date	Location	Anticipated Upcoming Agenda Items:
January 9, 2023	Virtual	•

11. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned to the next regular meeting of the Library Advisory Commission to be held on January 9, 2023 at 6:30pm via Zoom teleconference.

The Santa Cruz City-County Library System does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. Out of consideration for people with chemical sensitivities, we ask that you attend fragrance free. Upon

request, the agenda can be provided in a format to accommodate special needs. Additionally, if you wish to attend this public meeting and will require assistance such as an interpreter for American Sign Language, Spanish, or other special equipment, please call the Library Administration Office at 427-7706 at least five days in advance so that we can arrange for such special assistance, or email library_admin@santacruzpl.org.



November 14, 2022

Library Director’s Report to the Library Joint Powers Authority

Library Team

A big thank you and congratulations to our Library Assistant II’s who joined our team, combined positions and/or increased hours. Positions filled include: Management Analyst (1), Programmer Analyst (1), Information Technology Specialist (1), four half-time Library Assistant II, two fulltime Library Assistant II.

Current Vacancies

Number of Vacancies	Title	Full/ Part Time hours	Status
1	Volunteer Coordinator Assistant	.50	Held
6	Library Assistant II	1.0	Interviews ongoing
5	Library Assistant II	.75	Interviews ongoing
5	Library Assistant II	.50	Interviews ongoing
2	Library Assistant III (SV, Downtown)	1.0	Recruitment in Process
3	Librarian I/II	1.0	Recruitment in Process
1	Information Technology Specialist I/II	1.0	Recruitment Pending
1	Information Technology Specialist III	1.0	Recruitment in Process
1	Community Relations Specialist	1.0	Interviews Pending
1	Bookmobile LA II	.80	Pending Recruitment

Facilities

The Scotts Valley Library Branch Grand Re-Opening took place on Saturday, August 6. Approximately 700 people walked through the doors by 2 PM. Special guests included Fifth District Supervisor Bruce McPherson, Scotts Valley Mayor Donna Lind, and City Council Members Jim Reed and Derek Timm.

The Live Oak Library Grand Reopening took place on Saturday, October 1, 2022, from 10 AM-2 PM. Festivities included a bi-lingual Storytime, and music by the Ukulele Club of Santa Cruz County. The Live Oak Library Branch will house a circulating ukulele collection. The new lendable ukuleles encourage library users to learn a musical instrument and connect with other ukulele players. Each ukulele comes with a carrying case, chord chart, and tuner.

Live Oak will join Felton, La Selva Beach, Boulder Creek, Garfield Park, Scotts Valley, and Capitola in having a Local History collection. The materials in this collection will have a dedicated shelf location, circulate but not float, and a Local History spine label to identify the item as part of the collection. Work on the Live Oak Library Annex continues with an expected opening of June 2024.

The Branciforte Library Branch construction continues. The shutdown of the glass manufacturing facility and selection of a new vendor have created significant delays. The grand opening, is anticipated in early March.

Power outages at Boulder Creek resulted in delayed openings several times during the quarter. A big thank you to the Boulder Creek staff that opened the building and provided limited services until power restoration.

Construction at the Aptos Library continues. The walls of the Library went up in early September and we are on track for access to staff in July 2023 with the grand opening in the fall.



La Selva Beach Branch Library, redesigned by Jayson Architecture, received a Special Commendation Award in the Design for Change category from the California American Institute of Architects (AIA).

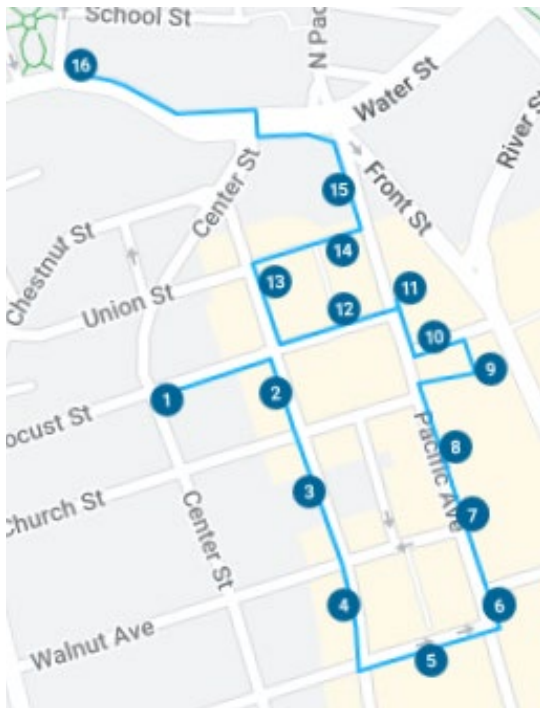


Featured Programs and Services

The Library Youth team distributed giveaway books and promoted the joy of Summer Reading through craft and STEAM programming to 2,112 youth, parents, and caregivers at seven meal sites throughout the county as part of our Lunch at the Library popup program.

After a successful Summer Reading program, our Youth Services Team resumed programming, including storytimes, Make and Explore STEAM, and Teen programming.

Youth and Adult services librarians collaborated on a Storywalk featuring the book, *When the Mission Bells Rang*, written by Judith Scott and illustrated by Lydia Gibson, with the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park. The opening event took place on October 8, 2022.



The storywalk begins at the Downtown Library branch (#1). It progresses through the city to the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park (16) with stops at the Penny Ice Creamery (2), Ecology Action (3), Yarn Shop Sana Cruz (4), Toadal Fitness (5), New Leaf Community Market (6), Pacific Trading Company (7), the Homeless Garden Project Store (8), the MAH (9), O'Neill Surf Shop (10), Bookshop Santa Cruz (11), Sockshop & Shoe Company (12), Atlantis Fantasyworld (13), Plaza Lane Optometry (14), Friends of the Santa Cruz State Parks (15).

The Storywalk is available for self-guided tours through the end of November.

Grants

The Library received a 2022-23 Pacific Library Partnership (PLP) Innovation Grant in the amount \$12,000 for a project entitled, *Engaging Employees Through Onboarding and Performance*. The grant provides funding for the implementation and first year cost of piloting the NEOGOV Onboard and Perform modules. Results will be shared with the City of Santa Cruz and other PLP Libraries.

The Youth Services Team Librarian Sandi Imperio applied for and received a \$20,000 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant for afterschool STEAM programs.

Library Information Technology Manager Carlos Silva applied for a \$114,625 grant toward technology hardware and the installation, configuration, and upgrades to inside wiring at the La Selva Beach, Aptos, Branciforte, Capitola, Downtown, Felton, Garfield Park, Live Oak, Scotts Valley, and the Library Support building.

CLA and State Library Relations

On September 12, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that every Californian can now access [free online tutoring](#) available 24/7 through a new initiative offering homework help in every K-12 subject and skill-building resources for adult learners.

The Governor also announced \$254 million in grants to public libraries in 172 cities across 34 counties to renovate and improve facilities across the state. Unfortunately, the City of Santa Cruz did not receive funding for the Downtown Library project. Additional funding for infrastructure projects will be made available in 2023 and 2024, and the City will resubmit an application for funding in round two of the Building Forward Infrastructure Grant.

Updates from the CLA Legislative and Advocacy Committee.

1. CLA Lobbyist Mike Dillon is retiring. Mike was recognized by the Senate and Assembly for his 55 years of service. We thank him for his dedication and years of service to California libraries.
2. The **Holden 1737 bill regarding Children's Camps**. After much opposition and discussion, the Department of Finance objected because of the costs associated with the revised version. The bill most likely will not come back next year.
3. **SB1183 (Grove) – the Dolly Parton Imagination Library bill**. The bill allocates \$68M to be overseen by the State Library, and be spent over several years. The program allows children ages 0-5 to have books sent to their home on a regular basis (English and Spanish). Because the Dolly Parton foundation has received a special non-profit mailing rate, libraries cannot participate on their own – they must work collaboratively with a non-profit agency to apply for the funds.
4. **SB490 (Caballero), the Buy American Food Act**, the Governor signed a bill that will require schools that receive federal funding for prepared meals to include a requirement in their bids and contracts that the agricultural food products purchased are grown, packed, or processed domestically, beginning in 2024.

There are exemptions for summer food service programs, Child and adult care programs, and department of corrections and rehabilitation programs if the domestic quantity available is insufficient to meet the needs of the public institution.



LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, JULY 18 at 6:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Lindsay Bass, Rena Dubin, Mary Ripma, Mike Termini, Pamela Woll, and Tricia Wynne
ABSENT: Jennifer Mount
STAFF: Library Director Yolande Wilburn and Assistant Library Director Eric Howard

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

RESULT:	APPROVED THE AGENDA
MOVER:	Mike Termini
SECONDER:	Rena Dubin
AYES:	Bass, Dubin, Ripma, Termini, Woll, Wynne
ABSENT:	Jennifer Mount

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

4. REPORT BY LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Library Director, Yolande Wilburn, provided a written report

5. REPORT BY FRIENDS OF THE SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Executive Director of the Friends, Bruce Cotter, proved an oral report

6. MEMBER REPORTS

Commissioners provided oral reports

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

RESULT:	APPROVED THE CONSENT CALENDAR
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- A. Approved Minutes of May 16, 2022
- B. Accepted and Filed Recent Articles about SCPL
- C. Adopted Resolution No. 2022-03 Authorizing Remote Teleconference Meetings pursuant to Assembly Bill 361
- D. Accepted and filed Policy #307, #308, & #311
- F. Accepted and filed Workplan for 4th Qtr. FY 2021/2022

MOVER: Tricia Wynne
SECONDER: Mike Termini
AYES: Bass, Dubin, Ripma, Termini, Woll, Wynne
ABSENT: Jennifer Mount

8. PRESENTATIONS

New Staffing Model by Eric Howard, Assistant Director of Libraries, and Laura Whaley, Facilities Manager

Member of the public, Judi G., made a comment.
 Member of the public, Elaine A. made a comment.
 Member of the public, Jean B. made a comment

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

- A. Resolution to Reaffirm the Library Advisory Commission’s Endorsement of the Downtown Library & Affordable Housing Project

RESULT: REVIEWEW AND APPROVED A RESOLUTION TO REAFFIRM THE LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION’S ENDORSEMENT OF THE DOWNTOWN LIBRARY & AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT AND OPPOSE THE OUR DOWNTOWN, OUR FUTURE BALLOT MEASURE AIMED AT STOPPING THE PROJECT

MOVER: Tricia Wynne
SECONDER: Mike Termini
AYES: Bass, Dubin, Ripma, Termini, Woll, Wynne
ABSENT: Jennifer Mount

Member of the public, Judi G., made a comment.
 Member of the public, Jean B. made a comment.
 Member of the public, Matt F. made a comment.
 Member of the public, Lisa E. made a comment.
 Member of the public, Lira F. made a comment.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Final Adjournment of the Library Advisory Commission at 8:13pm to the next regular meeting on Monday, September 19, 2022 at 6:30pm via Zoom teleconference.



SANTA CRUZ
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 14, 2022
TO: Library Advisory Commission
FROM: Diane Cowen, Communications Manager
RE: Media Packet

RECOMMENDATION

Accept and File Recent Articles about SCPL.

DISCUSSION

This Media packet covers the time period for June 16, 2022 through November 2, 2022.

In the News and Media:

June 16 – August 31, 2022

Santa Cruz Sentinel *News*

Photo | Agents of Change Poetry workshop, reading



By [SHMUEL THALER](#) | sthaler@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

PUBLISHED: June 16, 2022 at 12:51 p.m. | UPDATED: June 16, 2022 at 12:52 p.m.

Artist and poet Nikia Chaney, second from right, arrives at the community room of the downtown Santa Cruz library to deliver three pieces of her artwork as Santa Cruz County Poet Laureate David Allen Sullivan, left, directed the hanging of art on the walls. Agents of Change visual art and poetry show fills the room as part of Sullivan's initiative as poet laureate. An Agents of Change Poetry workshop and reading, which will include discussions of ways to approach writing about art followed by time for those present to write about one of the pieces displayed on the wall, will take place on Saturday and is open to members of the public. For information, visit <https://santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/9253613>. (Shmuel Thaler – Santa Cruz Sentinel)

Petition to halt construction of mixed use library project qualifies for November ballot

Proposed ballot measure to halt the construction of new Santa Cruz library approved by the county clerk

By [ARIC SLEEPER](#) | asleeper@santacruzsentinel.com |

PUBLISHED: June 17, 2022 at 12:29 p.m. | UPDATED: June 17, 2022 at 3:50 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ — A vote to halt the construction of a new city library with an attached parking garage and affordable housing project in Downtown Santa Cruz will go on the November ballot this year unless it's approved by the Santa Cruz City Council.

On Tuesday, the county clerk certified a petition created by the local grassroots organization, Our Downtown, Our Future, for a ballot measure to stop the city from building a new public library and mixed-use building on the lot that currently hosts the city's weekly farmers market. The group gathered 4,912 valid signatures, more than the 3,048 required to place it on the November ballot.

"We are energized by the public's response to our efforts and those of our volunteers who collected more than enough signatures to move forward," said Our Downtown, Our Future member Lisa Ekstrom. "I have met and had conversations with so many amazing people in the community and for that alone I'm grateful."

In addition to halting the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project, which has cost the city approximately \$2.5 million during the planning process, the ballot measure would alter the city's general and downtown plans. If passed this fall, it would prohibit the relocation of the farmers market and establish Lot 4 as its permanent home. The measure would also require the development of affordable housing on downtown city-owned parking lots, and designate surplus revenue gathered by the city's parking program to finance affordable housing projects and alternative transportation programs for people working Downtown.

"Instead of a larger, modern and highly sustainable library, the community would receive a smaller library that doesn't fully meet its needs," said Santa Cruz City Manager, Matt Huffaker.

"The Council has directed a study on the potential impacts, so we will soon know the true cost to the residents of Santa Cruz of what is being proposed."

With the petition's certification, the city's existing plan to use the funding allocated from voter-approved Measure S to build a new library, which would include a 310-space parking garage, and around 120 affordable housing units, will come to a grinding halt. The new ballot measure calls for the library to remain at its current location at 224 Church St.

"We are grateful that this will give people the chance to decide the future of Downtown for themselves," said Erica Aitken, organizer with Our Downtown, Our Future.

The City Council will vote on the proposed plan amendments in the coming weeks.

Photo | Boulder Creek Library reopens with upgrades



By [SHMUEL THALER](mailto:sthaler@santacruzsentinel.com) | sthaler@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel June 23, 2022 at 4:06 p.m.

Katie Bosserman-King reads to her sons Moses and Rupert at the remodeled Boulder Creek Library. The branch reopened on May 7 with a complete interior remodel including new infrastructure, accessibility upgrades, a complete re-do of the children's area, and new community spaces and meeting room. The design was done by Jayson Architecture, with CRW builders and was managed by Bogard Construction. (Shmuel Thaler – Santa Cruz Sentinel)

Remodeled Scotts Valley Library opens to public

Scotts Valley residents flocked to check out the newly remodeled Scotts Valley Library Saturday



Children gather for story time at the remodeled Scotts Valley District Library Credit: Aric Sleeper / Santa Cruz Sentinel

By **ARIC SLEEPER** | asleeper@santacruzsentinel.com |

PUBLISHED: August 6, 2022 at 4:10 p.m. | UPDATED: August 6, 2022 at 4:18 p.m.

SCOTTS VALLEY — Scotts Valley residents on Saturday flocked to the newly remodeled Scotts Valley Branch Library after its grand reopening was delayed for months due to supply chain issues, according to Santa Cruz County Public Library Director Yolande Wilburn.

“We’re thrilled about the space and happy to welcome the community back as it’s been a long time coming,” said Wilburn. “We thought we’d be open earlier this year, but supply chain issues continued to hammer at us. Actually, the circulation desk was one of the final pieces we were waiting on and that was delivered last week.”

The transformation of the library was funded by the \$67 million library improvement bond measure, Measure S, which passed in 2016. With those funds, the library experienced a number of substantial upgrades, such as strategic soundproofing structures that hang from the high ceilings in the redesigned areas for children and teens, new study and meeting rooms, self-checkout stations and a relocated circulation desk. Longtime residents may remember that the building once housed a roller rink, and the retro aesthetic of the remodeled space seems to call back to that era.

“I think the redesign is wonderful, especially the children’s area,” said Scotts Valley resident Shelby Schewe. “Everything is lower. It’s really tactile and engaging. Toddlers and young kids love to see what other kids are doing, and they opened up the space, which is great, and they moved computers to the children’s area.”

Two young patrons that were utilizing the computers in the redesigned teen area tucked away in the corner of the library were best friends and Scotts Valley residents Tomas Dauksa and Hayden Spierings. The two teens were stoked to be back at the Scotts Valley Branch Library after the long hiatus.

“I like the teen zone cause it’s really comfortable and it’s a place we can hang out,” said Tomas. “And we can come and do our homework here every weekday after school,” Hayden added.

One of the biggest draws for kids at the library reopening aside from storytime and the spacious children’s and young adult areas was celebrity robot replica, R2-SC, a Lucas Films-sanctioned, fully-functioning R2-D2 replica built by Steve Mead, or LEGO Steve as he is also known.



A group of kids examine the handbuilt R2-D2 replica at the Scotts Valley Branch Library. Credit: Aric Sleeper / Santa Cruz Sentinel

“I teach a robotics program and the best way to get kids involved in the program is to bring a robot,” said Mead. “I built this one from scratch. You can’t buy that. You have to build it.”

For local parent Mike Zwada, the reopened library is more than just a place to check out books, but a staple of their daily schedule, and a place that ties the community together.

“We are excited to have the library back open because it’s close to us. We can just walk here and enjoy it,” said Zwada who visited the library with his daughter Makenzie. “And having the library back means she and I can stop here and the park after school.”

With hundreds of patrons in and out of the library Saturday, checking out books, listening to storytime, messing with the R2-D2 replica and enjoying the live entertainment, it was clear that Scotts Valley residents of all ages were happy with their remodeled library.

“It’s so spacious and airy and modern. It’s just very fresh and inviting,” said Scotts Valley resident and educator Lisa Dilles. “It really is a jewel. Scotts Valley loves its library.”

IF YOU GO

What: Scotts Valley Branch Library.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, closed Sunday.

Address: 251 Kings Village Road, Scotts Valley.

Photo Gallery | Booking Bargains at Friends of the Capitola Library Bookstore



Hunter Bennett, 7, digs into the offerings in the sports section at the Friends of the Capitola Library Store. (Shmuel Thaler – Santa Cruz Sentinel)





By [SHMUEL THALER](#) | sthaler@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

August 10, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.

Nearly 15,000 items fill the shelves of the Friends of the Capitola Library Store in the Capitola Mall. Besides books, the 4,000-square-foot storefront made available through the generosity of the mall's owner, features DVDs, CDs, games and puzzles and has selections for adults and children. The venture is entirely volunteer run, and most items sell for \$2 or less. All funds generated are used to enhance the Capitola library on Wharf Road. The store, where masks and social distancing are required, is located Across from the Children's Museum of Discovery near the stairs down to the fountain. In terms of donations, the store accepts clean, gently used books, CDs, DVDs, games and puzzles, but no encyclopedias, English dictionaries, out of date travel or computer books, textbooks more than 8 years old, magazines or video and audio cassettes or tapes. To donate

customers can bring up to one grocery bag full of items to the bookstore. The store is open seven days a week. Check its website for hours: capitolalibraryfriends.org. (Shmuel Thaler – Santa Cruz Sentinel)

Photo | New Aptos library takes shape



By [SHMUEL THALER](https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/authors/shmuel-thaler) | sthaler@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel
August 29, 2022 at 4:09 p.m.

A crew from Rick Slater Construction is on site Monday as a new Aptos Branch of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries is beginning to rise on the same site as the old branch. The new 12,400-square-foot branch replaces the 8,800-square-foot library that opened in 1975. The project is expected to cost \$14 million and is funded by Measure S and community donors. Plans for the new building include access to traditional books and online resources for all ages, study rooms, a gallery, a children's garden, an outdoor reading area, and historic art and features in partnership with the Aptos History Museum. Measure S was a \$67 million bond measure passed by voters in 2016 with 70% approval, according to the Santa Cruz Public Libraries website. (Shmuel Thaler – Santa Cruz Sentinel)



Excessive heat warning issued in the Santa Cruz mountains

Excessive heat warning issued in the Santa Cruz mountains:

<https://www.ksbw.com/article/excessive-heat-warning-issued-in-the-santa-cruz-mountains/41047227>

The Central Coast is bracing for a heat wave in the coming days that could heat things up during the Labor Day Weekend.

Updated: 7:02 PM PDT Aug 31, 2022 [Phil Gomez](#)

SAN LORENZO, Calif. —

The Central Coast is bracing for a heat wave in the coming days that could heat things up during the Labor Day Weekend.

Santa Cruz County residents are going to have to deal with it. There's not a lot of air conditioning in Santa Cruz because we don't normally get temperatures like what's projected.

Over the next few days, sites are available for people who are looking to stay cool and chill out.

"Libraries are a good source. Libraries in Scotts Valley, Felton and Boulder Creek will be open over the weekend. Unfortunately, they're not going to be open Monday for the labor day holiday" said, Jason Hoppin, Santa Cruz County Communications Manager.

Another location that may help is located in Ben Lomond at Santa Cruz County Highlands Park Senior Center.

"We're also a community center, so we're hoping that the community, the whole San Lorenzo Valley uses this facility to its utmost and one of the things it is during the Summer specifically is very cool," said, Coco Raner Walter, Vice President of Highland Park Senior Center.

Air conditioning will be in high demand and the state's grid operator is asking Californians to voluntarily conserve energy. PG&E plans to station crews in the Santa Cruz Mountains during this heat wave.

Santa Cruz Sentinel *Editorials*

Editorial | Downtown library plans: Voters should make the decision

By [EDITORIAL BOARD](#) | editorial@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

PUBLISHED: June 24, 2022 at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: June 24, 2022 at 6:22 p.m.

There are enough residents in Santa Cruz who oppose the location and scope of a proposed multi-use library project that the matter should be put to a vote.

Which is what will happen in November.

In past Editorials in this space, we noted the community divisions over two matters: the plans for proceeding with plans for a commuter rail line along with a contiguous recreational trail on the county-owned coastal corridor, and the plans to move the central, downtown library to a new location that would include affordable housing and a parking garage.

Both, we said, needed to come before voters.

The rail-trail proposals just did – and backers of a plan that would make the trail the main priority and put future rail plans at least on a temporary hold saw their ballot measure suffer a resounding rejection county wide.

The library plans now may be headed for a similar fate, if community responses within the city of Santa Cruz are any indication of the will of a majority of voters.

To understand the opposition, go back to 2016's tax Measure S, approved by voters countywide, that provided for \$67 million in bonds to “modernize, upgrade and repair local libraries in Santa Cruz, Aptos, Live Oak, Scotts Valley, Boulder Creek, Capitola, Felton and La Selva Beach ... and construct/ expand facilities where necessary.”

But since that vote, the devil has towered over the details.

Rather than renovate the public library in its present Civic Center location, the city, backed by a number of past and present leaders, developed plans to construct a new library on a parcel known as Lot 4, downtown at the corner of Cedar and Cathcart streets, which is home to the Farmers Market.

This project, as it has developed over the years, would also include a 310-space parking garage, and around 120 affordable housing units.

Needless to say, almost since its inception, the “multi-use” library project has engendered intense opposition, which coalesced under an organized group, Our Downtown Our Future.

Earlier this month, the county clerk certified a petition created by this group for a ballot measure that, if approved will stop the city from the current plans to build a new public library, parking garage and housing on the lot that currently hosts the weekly Farmers Market. The current library would remain at its Church Street location.

Our Downtown Our Future wants to preserve Lot 4 and its trees with a goal of creating a future “Downtown Commons” green space. The group also seeks to “prioritize” affordable housing on other city-owned lots, including Front Street’s Lot 7 and to use parking revenue “saved from not building an unnecessary garage” for this housing and to supplement Measure S funds to pay for renovation of the Church Street library.

Advocates for the project say opponents are familiar NIMBYs whose true aim is to stop the parking portion of the project, and would kill off years of planning for affordable housing with no expertise in creating this housing at alternative sites.

Without going into the suitability of the proposed locations for housing, much less the need for more downtown parking (all of which will be intensely debated before the November vote), we don’t doubt the motives of backers of the multi-use project to create a modern library, add to much-needed affordable housing stock and to anticipate future downtown parking needs.

But if they had plans for such a project underway in 2016 when Measure S was on the ballot, opponents would not have felt misled or ignored.

A couple of notes on ballot measures seeking to reverse or overturn city or county planned projects: A decade before the Measure D vote, opposition to a proposed city desalination plant led to a ballot measure that essentially killed desal.

We also see the June 7 primary vote on a proposed increase in the sales tax in the city of Santa Cruz continues to trail in votes – a result that, if the trend continues, could be attributed to a lack of trust among voters who felt misled by post-Measure S plans.

At this point, only a new vote on library plans will start to end the divisions.

Stephen Kessler | Why I write so much about the library

July 9, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Reader, forgive me, but between now and November I’m going to be writing even more about the subject I’ve already written more about over the last six years than anything else: the city’s plan to abandon the downtown flagship branch of the Santa Cruz Public Library and build it from scratch a few blocks away as part of a parking garage — and when that idea was met with angry disbelief, the belated addition of affordable housing. What I derisively dubbed the Taj Garage I hereby rechristen the Taj Garage Towers.

As you know if you’ve been following this story, the grassroots coalition Our Downtown Our Future has qualified for the November ballot an initiative that would put a stop to the Mixed-use Downtown Library Project, renovate the library in Civic Center, develop affordable housing on other city lots than Lot 4 with its heritage trees and potential as a public plaza, and put what parking is needed on the lower floors of new apartment towers, most obviously on Lot 7 at Front and Cathcart, where the mixed-users want to move the farmers market.

Why was such a measure necessary, and why would a group of ordinary citizens be moved to organize and take the time and do the work to gather the signatures to put an initiative on the

ballot? It would not have been necessary if not for the politically dishonest process by which the Taj Garage Towers in all its monstrous glory was slam-dunked down the community's throat by city leaders — most notably then-City Manager Martín Bernal and then-City Councilwoman Cynthia Mathews, who had to recuse herself from council deliberations thanks to a conflict of interest, though that didn't stop her from organizing her own pro-mixed-use group, Downtown Forward — but the community gagged.

This is and is not personal. It is about the integrity of the democratic process, the abuse of power by government officials, and the future of downtown Santa Cruz as a desirable place to gather for social, cultural and commercial life. The ODOF measure is a defense of the soul of our city, a place where I luckily landed 54 years ago and whose future I feel deeply invested in. My enthusiasm for its quality of life, through all the changes I've witnessed, is undiminished. (I am not a member of ODOF and did not even sign their petition.)

Libraries mean a lot to me, and librarians, like schoolteachers and election workers and the municipal workers who clean the streets, are among the unsung heroes in my pantheon. A public library is a primary cultural and social and educational institution of democracy. A library, like a synagogue or a mosque or a church or a city hall, can be humble but must have a certain architectural dignity and autonomy. And it belongs not in a commercial center but a civic center, symbolizing its centrality to civic life.

When the library bond Measure S was on the ballot in 2016, voters overwhelmingly passed it with the understanding that its taxes would fund, among other things, the downtown library's renovation. Instead we were given, through a sequence of expensive and deceptive maneuvers, what has mutated from renovation in place to a displaced library-garage and now into the Taj Garage Towers.

It is a long, sad story with many moving parts, and while I've touched on most of them at one time or another, different aspects of this sorry saga — political, environmental, fiscal, architectural, social, ethical — must be explored in greater depth and detail before we vote in November. I can already hear the clicky-clack of letters-to-the-editor being typed by some of my favorite antagonists, and I look forward to a healthy, honest debate in this public forum. It could get ugly, gentle reader; you may wish to avert your eyes.

But I'm writing for a beautiful, renovated Civic Center library and a beautiful, tree-studded plaza in the commercial heart of Santa Cruz — and in search of an antidote to political malpractice.

Stephen Kessler's column appears on Saturdays. Next week: mixed-use red herrings.

Editorial | Three follow up opinions: Watsonville's hospital, Santa Cruz's failed tax hike, and more gun violence

By **EDITORIAL BOARD** | editorial@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

July 7, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Our elected officials deserve praise for coming through on the purchase of Watsonville Community Hospital.

While the purchase is not yet a done deal, the continuing work by state Sen. John Laird, Assemblyman Robert Rivas and the Newsom administration bode well for the hospital's future and for the greater Pajaro Valley community.

Laird (D-Santa Cruz) and Rivas (D-Salinas) secured \$25 million in the next state budget to help finalize the purchase of the hospital for the Pajaro Valley Healthcare District.

Newsom then signed Senate Bill 969, authored by Laird, which provides additional oversight of the healthcare district in its initial years. This was a necessary follow up to SB 418, also authored

by Laird, which formed the healthcare district, setting in motion the approval by a bankruptcy judge to allow the district to purchase the hospital.

The district still needs an estimated \$12 million to complete the \$61.7 million purchase. But local donors have continued to come forward, including the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, \$5 million; and Monterey County, which kicked in \$3 million. The Pajaro Valley berry company, Driscoll's, has said it will match up to \$1.75 million in local contributions.

Watsonville's hospital is the primary medical facility for a community that also includes northern Monterey County and is 84% Latino, where about 30% of households earn less than \$40,000 a year. The nearest full-service hospital, Dominican in Santa Cruz, is 20-50 minutes away, depending on traffic. Dominican's emergency room is the only other ER in the county besides Watsonville's.

- Santa Cruz's sales tax Measure F has now officially failed on the June 7 ballot. The margin was by a razor-thin 50 votes. F only needed a simple majority to pass.

The measure would have increased the sales tax rate in the city from 9.25% to 9.75% and was estimated to raise about \$8 million annually.

We did not endorse the measure, for several reasons, including that while the city noted a number of needs where the tax revenue might be directed, general tax measures like this one fail to have accountability and transparency on where the funds actually are spent. We also said the tax would be another burden on lower-income residents already dealing with rising costs due to inflation.

We also noted there has been a lingering distrust among many community members over the use of funds from a library tax passed by county voters in 2016, where some of the funds have been used for plans for a new, multi-use downtown library. The future of that library project now will come before city voters in November and the city will have to make a better case on that than was presented to voters last month on the sales tax.

- And yet another note on our country's insane gun policies. The violence that took place in Illinois over the Fourth of July was another deadly reminder, as if we needed one, that dangerous, deluded people continue to purchase guns and continue to slaughter innocent victims.

Yes, Congress and the Biden administration came together last month on modest gun legislation after the Uvalde massacre that offers incentives for states to pass so-called red-flag laws, and also requires more extensive background checks for gun buyers under age 21, but then the Supreme Court ruled Americans have a right to carry firearms in public for self-defense, which will result in more people legally armed.

The accused 21-year-old Highlands Park killer, an "internet rapper" and loner who has reportedly confessed to the murders, planned the attack for weeks, and had threatened violence online. In 2019 local police responded to his family home after he threatened to commit suicide then again after he was threatening to kill family members.

But, in a numbing repeat of previous shootings, none of this stopped him from "legally" purchasing four rifles (his father helped facilitate the purchase), including the one used to kill seven people and wound dozens at the July Fourth parade.

That same holiday weekend, in nearby Chicago, eight people were murdered over the weekend, and 60 more sustained gunshot wounds.

Guest Commentary | Kessler is writing with lipstick to gloss over library facts

By [DON LANE](#) | July 30, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

Sentinel columnist Stephen Kessler has gotten sloppier with his writing tools. He seems to have exchanged his keyboard for lipstick. It's not a good look.

In a July 16 column, his first lipstick moment came when he used the word “lipstick” to describe 124 genuinely affordable apartments that are part of the new Library and Affordable Housing project in Downtown Santa Cruz. (Rents will be legally held to levels affordable to a family or household of modest income.)

With two stories of library and five stories of affordable housing, the housing part seems like it’s a bit more than lipstick ... unless, perhaps, you’re a comfortably-housed Sentinel columnist.

Kessler’s use of the lipstick metaphor presents the opportunity for us to examine his use of lipstick to gloss over the facts. He tries to gloss over the affordable housing issue by claiming the current project can be scrapped and easily replaced with housing on other sites. He obviously doesn’t understand the very challenging realities of developing affordable housing.

Because I work in the field of affordable housing policy, I speak to many professionals who initiate and build affordable projects. They consistently tell me how complex the process is, how many obstacles there are, and how many years it takes. They also tell me what a waste of money, time, and opportunity it is to terminate a project after years of planning when our housing need is so serious.

One cannot just move a designed, approved and partially-funded project to a different site. You would have to start over. Extra years, extra money, new obstacles and more distress for those desperately seeking an affordable home.

Here’s something else he’s covering up with some kind of makeup in his affordable housing fantasy: he says he’s horrified at the prospect of cutting down the trees on the Cedar Street parking lot where the Library and Affordable Housing project will go. But at the same time, he promotes a fantasized housing project to be located on a nearby parking lot ... one that happens to feature a similar number of trees to the Cedar Street lot.

Kessler points us to an attractive artist drawing of their fantasy housing to be built on the alternative parking lot. But look closely and you’ll see it shows all the trees are removed and replaced by the imagined building in the drawing. For those of us of a certain age, this calls to mind a phrase from the Vietnam War era. The current version of this goes: “In order to save the trees we had to cut them.”

Then there’s his advocacy for a sub-par library, rather than the great new one that’s part of the Library and Affordable Housing project. I don’t know how he does it, but Kessler tries to put lipstick over the following statement about renovation of the old library: “The building is only improved to a low-medium quality facility and will lack many of the amenities the public has come to expect from a modern library.” Those are not the words of some political advocate, but rather are from the project architect Kessler relies on elsewhere in his writings to allege we’ll have an excellent library if we renovate the old one.

The Director of Santa Cruz Public Libraries in 2019 stated these concerns about the renovation approach: “It maintains an inadequate infrastructure.” “It reduces access to collections systemwide.” “It limits the long-term ability to expand or add green features.” She also noted concerns about the two-year closure for renovation and the inadequacy of facilities for youth Kessler trying to cover those two well-informed voices with lipstick is difficult, though he tries. However, at this point the rhetorical lipstick is smearing all over and making quite a mess. It’s starting to look more like clown makeup.

When we wipe the lipstick away, we can see that many community members have worked hard for six years to arrive at a truly excellent project ready to move ahead: housing for wage-earning families and seniors, a modern library to serve everyone in our community, a childcare center,

parking that doesn't add any more spaces than we have now, cost-effective use of limited funds, and a much greener building than the old library.

Very attractive. No lipstick required.

Don Lane is a former mayor and Chair of the Governing Board of Housing Santa Cruz County.

Guest Commentary | Another view from another tree Downtown

By [DON LANE](#) | August 13, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

I'm a very lucky guest columnist. The Sentinel has allowed me to write supportively about the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing project in response to Stephen Kessler's whimsical and/or mean-spirited musings from time to time.

There's much to be grateful for.

First, Kessler writes so many nonsensical things about the project that it's not difficult to debunk them. My work is easy. Second, I get to write about something that is actually visionary ... even as Kessler tries to fool readers into thinking there's something sinister going on when people who love great libraries and favor real affordable housing try to get something accomplished. Third, he offers up lines such as this one in his column: "Indulge my imagination for a minute." Or the line where he acknowledges that he is among "a few grumpy malcontents." He really seems to be inviting us to challenge him when he uses these phrases.

Let's dive in.

As you may recall from his most recent masterpiece of nonsense, he imagines himself sitting up in a tree in Parking Lot 4 downtown looking down on the gorgeous asphalt and parking stripes below, while typing away on his old typewriter. Not only does he bemoan the paving over of pavement, he bemoans the fact that his tree would be cut down to build the project. Actually, he doesn't just bemoan the cutting of the tree. It will be "assaulted" with a chainsaw.

Channeling Kessler's imagination, what he doesn't know is that I'm currently sitting in Parking Lot 7 (on Front Street, not quite two blocks away from Kessler's lot). I'm atop a mature heritage tree on that lot. I'm having a conversation with my tree. I mention that Kessler and his associates have selected this other parking lot as the site for their fantasy of a multi-story affordable housing project. (Kessler has highlighted a fanciful drawing disconnected from any actual planning to demonstrate a theoretical alternative.) I mention this alternative plan and my tree asks what will become of her and her tree friends on this lot. I take a deep breath and reply that Kessler seems to be willing to obliterate her and her friends for his alternative. (I chose "obliterate" because I'm trying to channel Kessler's hyperbole.) Between her sobs, my tree asks, "Isn't it hypocritical to wax poetic about trees on one lot while sacrificing trees like me on another lot?" I offer her a tissue and nod. (My tissue is made from recycled material — not trees.)

She has more questions. Why is the parking lot that Kessler picks the only one that could be used for a community gathering place? Couldn't her lot be the gathering space with the farmers market and more? Isn't her location — close to the riverwalk and transit center — a good one for this activity? I raise my finger to my lips to calm her. I remind her that, in the nonsensical world of Kessler, her wisdom is blasphemy.

From this parking lot, I mosey over to the popular restaurant around the corner. I chat with one of the staff there — a lifelong Santa Cruzan. I mention Kessler's recent mocking of affordable housing when he writes sarcastically "you can never have too much affordable housing." I ask the worker how he feels about this. With a sigh, he tells me he is about to move away from Santa Cruz because he can't find an affordable place to live here. He mentions the restaurant is already short-

handed because some co-workers have moved away for the same reason. (This matches what the medical assistant at my doctor's office just told me the week before.)

So, yeah, let Kessler keep mocking the idea of building more affordable housing. Let him keep offering up trees he doesn't care about to save his favorite tree. Let him keep pretending there's only one place that could possibly meet the open space needs of the farmers market and downtown residents. Let's chuckle as we read Kessler's nonsensical writings. While he's trying to fool us, he doesn't realize that what most of us do when we read his column is picture a fool sitting up in a tree with his typewriter. Kessler is no fool but he looks like one when he's up there.

Don Lane is a former Santa Cruz mayor and City Council member.

Stephen Kessler | Questions for Cynthia Mathews and city leaders

By [STEPHEN KESSLER](#) | Santa Cruz Sentinel

August 13, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

This is addressed to Cynthia Mathews — since 1992 a six-term, 24-year veteran of the Santa Cruz City Council, four-time mayor and arguably the most powerful politician in town, now officially “retired” though still as active as ever behind the scenes — and to the city's top officials: City Manager Matt Huffaker, Economic Development Director Bonnie Lipscomb, City Attorney Tony Condotti and current Mayor Sonja Brunner.

On the council's agenda, set by the mayor, for Aug. 9, in closed session, was an item concerning the possible purchase by the city of a piece of property owned in part by Mathews. It's a beautifully restored Victorian with a big magnolia in front, currently a six-unit (residential-commercial) apartment building adjacent to City Hall. I can't help wondering whether these apartments are “affordable housing” — an important selling point for Mathews' favorite development project, the mixed-use housing-library-parking complex intended for Lot 4 — or market rate.

The appearance of this item on the City Council agenda raises a number of questions that I hope one of the above-named officials, or Mathews herself, will answer with a response on this page. I expect I'm not the only citizen and taxpayer whose curiosity is aroused by such a prospective transaction, which I presume is not a form of “insider trading,” and yet it has a funny smell, so I'm counting on someone to clear the air.

Some other facts about this property: The house, originally built in 1873, was last purchased in 1976, by a local family, for \$65,000. Mathews acquired her share by affidavit in 2008, when she was a City Council member. “By affidavit” means that no cash was exchanged in the transaction (as by inheritance or when adding a family member to the title). On the 5,358-square-foot lot stands a 3,219-square-foot building.

According to a real estate professional I consulted who ran some comparisons, the value of such a property in the current market is around \$2 million. Mathews and her partners' asking price has not been made public, nor has what the city is prepared to offer in light of its \$11 million budget deficit. How much profit on zero cash investment Mathews would clear is equally unrevealed. Lipscomb has yet to respond to my email requesting information about “the public trust fund” for such purchases she is quoted as referencing in a story in the Aug. 10 Sentinel.

How common is it for the city to purchase such properties from private citizens, on or off market? And if, as reported, it “does not plan to relocate any existing tenants,” will rents be adjusted to make the apartments “affordable”?

Mathews is also the owner of another historic Victorian within 500 feet of the proposed mixed-use project on Lot 4, which originally was to be a garage-library because, as she told me four years

ago, “We need the parking.” Since then, the “parking component” has been greatly reduced (evidently unneeded after all) and above three stories of parking have risen some five stories of imagined “affordable housing.”

Whether or not this block-long, up to eight-story building, on which the city has spent six years of time and tons of money already, will ever be built remains to be seen. It depends on the result of the Our Downtown Our Future ballot measure in November. Mathews’ active promotion of this project as a private citizen, despite her conflict of interest as a then-council member (2016-2020), begs the question of where her connections as a politician leave off and her role as a civilian begins.

The same question applies to the transaction described above that is currently before the council. I hope, in the interest of transparency, that Mathews will explain to the readers of this page how much she and her partners are asking for this property, what her share of the proceeds will be and how she appears to have leveraged her decades of public service into such a potentially lucrative opportunity.

Stephen Kessler’s column appears on Saturdays.

Stephen Kessler | Politics as usual and a free press

August 20, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

Trigger warning: The word “library” appears twice in the following paragraphs.

Until the 2000s, for most of my time in greater Santa Cruz I had resided outside the city limits: Aptos, Ben Lomond, Felton, Bonny Doon, and about 17 years in the Soquel Valley. While editing and publishing *The Sun* in the late 1980s I had a news editor who covered city politics, and while I attended a few council meetings I never looked very deeply into that body’s machinations. It was only on returning to town after some years away and resettling on the Westside that I began to pay closer attention. It was the library bond measure in 2016 and its subsequent permutations that really aroused my journalistic curiosity.

Because that was an issue I took personally, and as a dues-paying member of Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries (until purged, Soviet-style, for my published opinions at odds with the those of the then-executive director), I started following much more closely the workings of city government, attending council meetings, speaking with officials and unofficials, elected and otherwise, reading documents and writing about what I was learning. If you are a regular reader of this page, you know that my essays have rubbed some local big shots the wrong way.

As someone with some experience running organizations (mostly as an editor or publisher, though I’ve also served on my condo board, which was truly a political education), I understand the urge to serve and to put one’s skills to work to advance a vision — of a publication or a building or a community — so I have a certain respect for people who run for office and win and have to sit through countless meetings, read tons of studies, bids, reports, budgets and spreadsheets, and listen patiently and respectfully to constituents, no matter how hostile or behaviorally challenged.

It’s the kind of work not everyone is cut out for — certainly not me.

So here’s two cheers for anyone willing to serve on a committee or a board or a commission or a council, with the understanding that most of them are in it with the sincere intent to make a positive contribution. If they find that they have a knack for it, they may wish to advance to the next level of leadership — in the case of the city council, perhaps to run for supervisor, or to serve the maximum two four-year terms, take a two-year break, and run again for another two four-year

stretch. In our city manager form of government, it has also afforded the chance to serve as mayor, in some cases multiple times.

Such seasoned political veterans, the longer they serve, learn more and better how the city works both politically and policywise, get to know staff and how they keep things running, and develop a sense, as in any profession, of confidence and, one hopes, competence. It might even be enough, after a while, to give them the notion that they know better than anyone else what's good for the community, whether the community knows it or not. Such expertise can go to one's head.

If you've been in office long enough, or been mayor enough times, you've cultivated relations with lots of people and organizations, and it's easy to believe, as you amass more and more leverage, influence and power, that you can do no wrong because you really do mean well — you just may not be fully aware of how abusively or unethically you wield your clout.

In the good old days when local newspapers could afford investigative reporters, the press served as a reality check on politicians' power. In recent decades it's all a local paper can do to report on meetings and official pronouncements, giving public officials the comforting impression that nobody's keeping an eye on how they operate. Which leaves it up to mere commentators to look more closely at what they're doing, and to make them uncomfortable.

Stephen Kessler's column appears on Saturdays.

Stephen Kessler | Comedy Nite at the Taj Garage Towers

PUBLISHED: August 27, 2022 at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: August 27, 2022 at 6:47 a.m.

Those mixed-use librarians, housing mavens and garage attendants are such jokers that they've added a comedy club to the childcare center and homeless hangout among the ever-mutating features of the visionary edifice they've imagined rising in downtown Santa Cruz on the last remaining square feet of open space. The club, whose comedians are hand-selected from auditions before the Downtown Affordable Comedy Advisory Committee, will showcase a troupe of naked emperors in a theater of burlesque cruelty.

One of their best jokes is that Measure O, the Our Downtown Our Future initiative on the November ballot, is a sinister conspiracy plotted "behind closed doors." That's hilarious because the nearly 5,000 signatures gathered for that measure were collected almost entirely out of doors in public venues like the Wednesday farmers market on Lot 4, which is where the jokers plan to build their mixed-use club.

Another feature of the venue will be a political gym where the city's most muscular ex-mayors will serve as personal trainers for anyone wishing to build up their strength in the art of backroom arm-twisting. This workout space will be visible from the street through a two-story wall of plate glass, proving their commitment to transparency.

Yet another of their jokes is that the Measure O conspirators have never built any affordable housing and wouldn't know an affordable house even if they could find one around here. Of course, the City Council has never constructed any affordable housing either, and that's what makes this joke so funny: The council has approved a housing project they don't even know how to build!

Here's another good one: The minimalist, bare-bones sketch of the Civic Center library renovation for \$25.5 million is not as grand or magnificent or "21st-century" as the shiny new sky's-the-limit \$42 million-and-counting library the Taj Garage Towers architects have designed. Do the math and you'll get the joke — after the \$17 million cover charge and two-drink minimum.

And here's another one: The housing-library-comedy-garage is a "green" building because it has "a green roof" perched atop its 12,000+ cubic yards, or about 25 tons, of concrete. That means

more than 22,000 tons of carbon emitted to produce the concrete and, at 10 yards per truckload, more than 1,200 trips from production to job site with health-in-all-diesel-fumes spewing from the exhaust pipes of those jolly green concrete trucks. Subtract 10 carbon-sequestering liquidambar and magnolia trees whacked to make room for the green giant's erection and the joke is on the climate, i.e., us.

Once the new mixed-use ziggurat is up and running on power generated by the blowhards who sold us that big green roof, the garage will serve as a valet parking lot subsidized by taxpayers for guests of the luxury hotel a few blocks away with just 15 parking spaces of its own — and that's no joke.

And with the old library abandoned, it can be repurposed as an indoor camp for the unhoused, who have always enjoyed hanging out there anyway. Sheltered across the street from City Hall, the happy campers can conveniently attend City Council meetings, where they can stage their own standup comedy routines.

But the biggest joke of all is that anyone really understands what “affordable housing” means, whose mathematical formulas are so byzantine that not even the funniest technocrat can translate them into language ordinary civilians can understand, or ordinary workers can afford if they don't earn too much income to qualify for. The joke's on them, just as it is on the people who voted for library bond Measure S expecting a renovated library and were offered instead a mixed-abuse metastatic theater of the absurd.

Stephen Kessler's column appears on Saturdays.

Santa Cruz Sentinel *Letters*

Letter | Vote on library relocation should be county wide

June 20, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The decision about changing the relocation of the downtown branch of our county library is headed toward a City Council decision on whether to bring it to a vote in the city (Ed note: A petition to halt the construction of mixed-use library downtown has qualified for the November ballot).

1. This is a county library with 50% of its circulation going to non city residents.
2. This is a library branch supported by county-wide taxes
3. Are you tired of city voters making decisions that affect everyone in the county?

If there is a vote, it should be county wide, not just for those who live in the city of Santa Cruz.

Send letters requesting a county-wide vote in November to: citycouncil@cityofsantacruz.com

and: Boardofsupervisors@santacruzcounty.us

— *Johanna Bowen, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Measure S: Renovation, not relocation of library

June 20, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

We know the Santa Cruz Library needs renovation. Measure S passed in 2016 just for that purpose – renovation, not a new library on Lot 4.

You just need to go online to ourdowntownourfuture.org/library-renovation to see Jayson Architecture's stunning renovation design. All the shortcomings are brought up to modern standards.

The advantages of a renovation are as follows:

Keeps the library in the downtown civic center area, gives us a fiscally responsible state of the art public library, eliminates the unnecessary building of a 300+ space parking structure, preserves our Lot 4 for use as a future downtown commons, keeps Lot 7 as a possible future low income

housing area with more units than multi-use project will provide, keeps the farmers market at its present location, and saves all the heritage trees on Church Street.

— *Micheal Saint, Aptos*

Letter | Library provides services for entire county

June 24, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

How sad and selfish that some 5,000 citizens of the City of Santa Cruz do not realize that the main Santa Cruz library provides services for residents of the entire county — it is all of ours to share! Living as I do in South County, by necessity, I use my car to visit the library. And where should I park when I get there? And how will I shop in Santa Cruz if city-owned parking lots are given over to housing projects? Traveling by bus is not an option for those of us in unincorporated areas. Please think beyond city limits!

— *Sonia Deetz, Watsonville*

Letter | Downtown library should be managed by county

June 28, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Excellent points and suggestions from a recent letter writer that voters across the county should have a voice in the future of the downtown branch library. I call and raise the ante: the library is, in fact, a county system (with the exception of Watsonville) with seven of the 10 branches located outside Santa Cruz city limits.

My “raise” is to suggest that fiscal and HR management currently contracted with the City of Santa Cruz instead be contracted with the county to more accurately reflect and respond to the range of community served.

— *Amy Chirman, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Why Downtown Library vote cannot be countywide

July 2, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

A letter writer asked, why not a county vote on the Santa Cruz Downtown Library? Some answers. Measure S allocates money for each library separately. Santa Cruz city voters don’t get a say on how Capitola library money is spent.

The City of Santa Cruz owns the land of both the Downtown Library and Lot 4, site of the Downtown Farmers Market. So how to use that land is a city decision.

Our Downtown, Our Future’s November ballot measure amends the city’s General Plan and Downtown Plan. Legally, county voters don’t get to vote on those plans.

When Our Downtown, Our Future circulated the petition to qualify its measure for the November election, well over a thousand registered voters could not have their signatures submitted because they live outside the city of Santa Cruz. Even if you can’t vote, we welcome county support for renovating and improving the Downtown Library.

— *John Hall, Co-chair,*

Our Downtown, Our Future,
Santa Cruz

Letter | Kessler column elevates truths about library

PUBLISHED: July 12, 2022 at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: July 12, 2022 at 4:51 p.m.

Thank you, Stephen Kessler. Yes, libraries are stand alone places of reverence. Thank you for lifting the debate with prose which embodies our most holy our free “dome” of knowledge.

Carnegie libraries, America’s bastion of democracy. Our “capitol” of democracy.

You among many are our Cassidy Hutchinson, taking the oath to tell the truth. Cassidy testified it is her patriot duty. She “stopped” the Lie. Measure S.

Your Mendocino Library success serves us well. Remind others from which you speak. Our cramped spaced west wing antagonists leaders drank the mixed-use funders' Kool-Aid, more bang for the buck, meaning well, but lost the forest for the trees. Stop the insurrection, Don't Bury the Library. Vote, vote, vote, November.

— *Lynn Dunn, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Why was library plan not on 2016 ballot measure?

July 12, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Where is the City of Santa Cruz liabilities in continuing the push for a library, garage, housing project that the voters did not vote for? Why did the City of Santa Cruz spend a large sum of money to evaluate the need for parking in downtown Santa Cruz and then ignore the study? Why is the library remodel money so important for the City of Santa Cruz to spend for unneeded parking (according to the parking study) and relocation of the library?

Why was the library plan with such massive changes not presented on the 2016 ballot "Measure S"?

Please visit Ourdowntownourfuture.org to donate for the future wishes of the citizens of Santa Cruz.

— *Tim Kensit, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Repercussions from failure of Santa Cruz sales tax measure

July 14, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The confirmed failure of the city's June 2022 sales tax measure is a clear blow to city-driven financing plans. The tax would have yielded \$8 million annually for the general fund – \$80 million over ten years.

The outcome may be the first victim of city power players' questionable maneuvering regarding the library bond project, Measure S. Opponents of the shenanigans warned that advancing a legally questionable and ethically dishonest redirection of 2016 library bond measure funds would negatively affect citizens' faith in local government. Why? Because voters can now correctly conclude that identified bond projects are really just a fungible list modifiable by the whim of political insiders.

The long-term consequences of this realization may be the success of future bonds or tax requests presented to city voters.

It is notable that both countywide levies on June's ballot passed.

— *Stephen Svete, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Not all library leaders support mixed-use project

July 21, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The author of a Guest Commentary, July 16, states that "the last four leaders of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries" are supportive of the library proposed as part of the Library/Housing/Garage project.

The project was proposed during the leadership of former Library Director Susan Nemitz in 2016. How could three other "leaders" of the library have been supportive of something that didn't even exist during their tenures? Former Library Directors Anne Turner and Theresa Landers are long gone. I know several local library administrators and librarians who have been opposed to moving the library (though reluctant to say so officially).

Regarding his statement that the Friends of the Library also wholeheartedly support moving the library, they have never been surveyed. The 15-member Board of Directors of the Friends may have formally voted on this, but they cannot say this represents the entire membership.

— *Judi Grunstra, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Sentinel favoring one side with Kessler columns

July 21, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

I have mixed views of the debate about the planned downtown library/affordable housing/garage project and the opposing initiative developed by Our Downtown Our Future, and I live near the recently renovated and reopened Boulder Creek library, so I don't use the downtown library much. However, I care very much about the news media (particularly fairness) and consume a lot of it, including subscribing to the Sentinel.

I find it improper for the Sentinel to run Stephen Kessler's weekly column, when he routinely and repeatedly uses it for the same purpose – to oppose the planned library and support the initiative. You are knowingly favoring one side of a contentious public issue by granting prominent and voluminous space to a columnist who you know presents only one side of the debate. Instead, you should use the editorial pages to let readers know the paper's position – once.

— *Peter Gelblum, Boulder Creek*

Letter | Library and Kessler: Lane should 'move on'

July 21, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

I find it ironic that Don Lane felt compelled to respond harshly to Stephen Kessler's opinions. As a long time Santa Cruz local I would like to emphatically say Don Lane does not speak for me. Don Lane was our mayor for quite some time. He has been involved with city politics for years. Millions of dollars supplied by tax payers and grants, for what? Non profits that last forever.

When I voted for the library bond there was no mention of affordable housing. Kessler was completely correct when he used his slam dunk analogy. If we had been transparent from the beginning our library renovation would have been completed years ago. Don, you have muddied the waters too long. Maybe it's time to move on?

— *Todd Hager, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Citizens of SC should have a say on new library

July 23, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

Don Lane's interest in a new library (Guest Commentary, July 16) that will move into a commercial space several blocks away from the civic center lacks understanding of what Stephen Kessler is attempting to convey. I feel the Kessler is only asking that the citizens of Santa Cruz have a say on the downtown planning. Don Lane brought up the wording of "Measure S" as clearly stating that a new library could be built. I have read and re-read that measure and I don't see how that wording is clear.

Our Downtown Our Future and Stephen Kessler in his editorials are asking to let the voters decide on new library away from the Civic Center in a commercial development or a remodeling of a library that I voted for in 2016. I would think that is what Don Lane would want as well.

— *Tim Kensit, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Kessler using column for misinformation on library

July 23, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

On July 9, Stephen Kessler asked us to forgive him for his continued assault on the approved plans for the new mixed use library. I completely agree with Don Lane that forgiveness is difficult. Mr. Kessler is using his weekly prominently placed commentary as a bully pulpit for misinformation re this project. Completed in 1969, the current library is not a beautiful heritage building that needs saving. The mixed-use project would provide not only a modern, multipurpose attractive library but also sorely needed low-cost housing. The parking, located behind (not over or under the

library as frequently implied) will not be adding but replacing spaces available downtown. The Farmers Market will be moved to a more functional convenient space.

Santa Cruz needs to change with the times just as we all must do as we grow and mature. Giving demeaning nicknames to a wonderful new library project is just the opposite.

— *Diane Sipkin, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Library project coalition has tried to gaslight voters

July 22, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Gaslighting has been defined as deliberately and systematically feeding false information that leads recipients to question what is known to be true. If that definition reminds you of the years long campaign to abandon the current downtown library location and relocate it and utilize Measure S funds to construct a parking structure, you are not alone.

The coalition determined to demolish the civic center located main branch and tuck it into a parking structure has changed the name of the endeavor to the “Downtown Library & Affordable Housing Project.” While the initial proposal included no mention of housing, affordable or otherwise, note the key element (parking structure) is no longer even mentioned.

As election day approaches, voters will do well to realize gaslights cast a very dim light.

— *Michael Funari, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Library: Looking forward to the November vote

July 26, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The Guest Commentary bemoaning the weekly column of Stephen Kessler leads to some flawed conclusions. When the “new” libraries were built in Capitola, Felton, and soon in Aptos, the location of all these new buildings is the same as the old one. Replacement in place. In the case of the downtown branch, the whole issue is the moving of “place,” disrupting heritage trees and eliminating open space. We of Our Downtown Our Future want the library to remain in the same place. Get it? We have rebuffed moving the location for years now (having asked Cynthia Matthews in 2016 why move it, she replied: “We need parking”). And we know some library leaders who support us but are reluctant to speak up. We are strong and we are looking forward to the vote in November.

— *Susan I Stuart, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Library commission overstepped their role

July 27, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

At their July 18 meeting, the Library Advisory Commission drafted and approved a resolution supporting the Lot 4 Library/Garage/Housing project. Apparently, bylaws mean nothing to the LAC, who over-stepped their role as an advisory commission to the system-wide Library Governing Board.

LAC Powers and Duties are clearly specified: “Act as a voice of the community to provide advice and feedback to the Governing Board and the Director of Libraries. Review Library System programs and services and make necessary recommendations as they pertain to the provision of these programs and services. Prepare an annual report for consideration by the Governing Board.”

Included in the LAC resolution, however, was opposition to a ballot measure that will come before voters in November. In doing so, the LAC excluded the voices of close to 5,000 city residents who support the measure enough to have signed the petition to get it on the ballot.

— *Judi Grunstra, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Examine elements of library project separately

August 3, 2022 at 8:00 a.m.

When considering whether or not to build the mixed-use facility on lot 4 in the downtown area, it seems like we should first consider each of the three elements separately: library, affordable housing, and a parking lot.

The majority of voters agreed to upgrade the existing library. Perhaps a new building is justified, but this needs to be discussed. Affordable housing is needed, but is putting it on Lot 4 the best approach? A consultant paid for by the city said a new parking structure is not needed. If the consultant's report was wrong, then the reasons it was wrong need to be brought out, not ignored by decision makers.

Only after each of the elements of the mixed-use building are examined separately can a reasonable decision be made about whether it makes sense to combine two or more of the elements into a single building on Lot 4.

— *Don Pearson, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Lane columns miss point on what is a public library

August 3, 2022 at 8:00 a.m.

Don Lane's recent responses to Stephen Kessler miss the point. The public character of our city must be visible and expressive of Santa Cruz. A library that is simply a part of a larger development is not and will never be a public library. It will be a place where information in all its forms is available, perhaps effectively and accessibly, but it will never be a public library.

We have only a few opportunities to create public spaces. We have city halls, civic centers, parks, possibly fire and police stations and very importantly libraries. Our library, the building we call our public library, must be part of the way we encounter ourselves as citizens of this particular place.

— *Stephen Brown, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Library: Look first at trees on both downtown lots

August 16, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Contrary to the impression given by Don Lane in his Aug. 13 column, all but one of the mature trees on Lot 7 behind the Del Mar Theater are right next to the sidewalk and could be preserved with construction of affordable housing on that lot. It leads one to the question, why wasn't the garage/library/housing proposed for Lot 4 (current site of the Downtown Farmers Market) designed around the very large heritage trees some of which are also next to the sidewalk?

With the worst of climate change looming ahead, the city must work harder to preserve carbon-sequestering heritage trees. Building housing on Lot 7 instead of Lot 4 and remodeling the existing library gives us a new library, affordable housing and preserves the heritage trees.

I invite readers to look at the trees on both downtown lots.

— *Debbie Bulger, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Measure S funds were misused, report shows

August 18, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The County grand jury recently issued their report "How a Community Center Became a Library." Some \$5 million of Measure S funds, meant to upgrade the 10 libraries that make up the Santa Cruz Public Library system, was funneled into the so-called Live Oak Annex, which is basically an expansion of the community room of the County Simpkins Swim Center complex. Voters never knew they were voting for an "annex" to the Live Oak branch. The responses by the Library Joint Powers Authority and the county Board of Supervisors disagreed with every one of the jury's findings, basically thumbing their noses at the jury's thorough investigative work and recommendations.

It is unfortunate that the grand jury has no power to mandate action or accountability. Take a few minutes to read the report and ponder how Measure S has played fast and loose with taxpayer money.

— *Judi Grunstra, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Child care reason to oppose downtown library measure

August 22, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

I'm a mom with three young kids who works at Mission Hill Middle School. I'm voting "no" on Measure O.

The new library that has been in development for many years has an aspect that I and many other young parents look forward to – child care. This is a vital service for working parents who need somewhere to let their children play while they study or work. Most parents have similar stories of struggling to find childcare for their children so that they can go to work. Many local childcare centers have long waitlists.

Having more childcare options that are affordable and accessible is necessary and greatly needed. Measure O will eliminate the possibility of having a childcare center at the library.

— *Carolyn Kelley, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Library project a white elephant: Yes on O

August 23, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Recent renovations of the Garfield Park and Branciforte branch libraries soared almost 50% over budget. Without demur, the Santa Cruz City Council blithely wrote a check for \$1.5 million to cover this enormous cost over-run. There is certainly no reason to believe that the far more complex Lot 4 library project will be exempt from this council's routine fiscal mismanagement. In fact, their customary cocktail of dewy-eyed budgeting optimism, chronic cronyism and financial misfeasance is already on prominent display. Big money badly wants this project because they plan to make big money out of it.

I urge all library lovers to look this white elephant in the eye and, come November, vote a resounding "Yes on Measure O." Then, finally, we can turn our attention to renovating our existing downtown library and, with some of the massive savings, increase wages and benefits for our wonderful librarians and library staff.

— *Anthony McNaught, Santa Cruz*

Letter | What if the Lot 4 project did not include parking?

August 23, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Not long ago in a Letter to the Editor I noted that on a very pleasant Friday evening there were 613 parking spaces available in just two downtown parking structures. I was told by some that was irrelevant do to the fact that parking was needed most during business hours. I recently took note of available spaces during business hours over several days and found an average of 666 spaces available at those same two structures. In recognition of parking abundance the mixed use proposal has been rebranded as the "library and affordable housing project." One might wonder if the proposed Lot 4 project, as the new name suggests, actually included no parking if there would be much, if any, political will to proceed with the proposed mega structure.

— *Michael Funari, Santa Cruz*

Letter | More to reveal about disenfranchisement

August 25, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Gary Patton barely scraped the surface of the travesty that is City Council's effective dictatorship in this county. City dwellers want to voice their opinions on proposed actions. I live in Live Oak

and many decisions made by the City Council have a huge effect on the whole county but the council never thinks about or consults non-city constituency. I believe the library vs. heritage trees should be a county-wide vote in November. The building in question is a branch of the county library. It is used as much by county citizens and funded by taxes paid by county citizens. We have been disenfranchised for years.

— *Johanna Bowen, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Kessler column made important points on library

August 30, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

RELATED ARTICLES

Stephen Kessler provided us with yet another humorous and informative editorial in Saturday's Opinion section yet it seems some readers have reached Taj Garage fatigue and are reluctant to read the whole piece so allow me to summarize some of the more salient points.

- The 5,000 signatures obtained to get Measure O on the November ballot were not gathered "behind closed doors."
- The Lot 4 library will cost about \$17 million more than renovating the existing site as passed by voters in 2016 with Measure S.
- The proposed new structure is not environmentally friendly as more than 22,000 tons of carbon would be emitted just to produce the concrete.
- The mixed-use parking structure will equate to a taxpayer subsidy to the developers of the proposed high rise luxury hotel that proposes to provide little if any parking.

— *Michael Funari, Santa Cruz*



GRAND JURY: HOW A COMMUNITY CENTER BECAME A 'LIBRARY'

written by [See Below](#) August 2, 2022

<https://tpgonlinedaily.com/grand-jury-how-a-community-center-became-a-library/>



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Editor's note: This is an edited and abridged version of the Santa Cruz County Grand Jury report. For the full report, see: www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/departments/grandjury.aspx#report

In 2016, residents within the Santa Cruz Public Libraries' system approved Measure S, a special tax that, over time, would raise \$67 million. As a special tax, Measure S funds were restricted for use in modernizing, upgrading, and repairing local library branches.



The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors elected to use Measure S funds to complete a Santa Cruz County Parks project they call the "Live Oak Library Annex."

The Annex (currently being constructed) is about one mile from the existing Live Oak Branch Library. The Annex is, in essence, a collection of study and education spaces with publicly available computers and internet that will be managed by County Parks staff.

Santa Cruz Public Libraries (SCPL) will not have librarians or books for loan at this

location.

This report explores the SCPL's development of a master plan for the improvement of its 10 library branches, which led to the need for a funding source, Measure S.



The SCPL's effort to obtain the cooperation of elected officials in urging their constituents to support Measure S led to a shift away from SCPL's priorities. The result was the County's unchallenged decision to use library funds to expand a nearby community center. The Grand Jury has concluded that the Annex is an expansion of the Live Oak Community Center and not an expansion of the Live Oak Branch Library. Following the State's elimination of redevelopment agencies, County Parks was left without a ready source of capital funds

needed to complete the vision of the Community Center.

Measure S filled the void.

The Grand Jury recommends the County Board of Supervisors reassess its decision to use Measure S funds to improve the Live Oak Community Center and restore the voters' trust.

The Grand Jury decided to investigate after reading an opinion letter published in the Santa Cruz Sentinel suggesting that this was an inappropriate use of library funds.

Measure S Ballot Language

In June 2016, the SCPL asked voters within its service area to approve Measure S:

To modernize, upgrade, and repair local libraries in Santa Cruz, Aptos, Live Oak, Scotts Valley, Boulder Creek, Capitola, Felton and La Selva Beach—replace failing roofs, outdated bathrooms, electrical systems, structurally damaged facilities; support growing use by children, seniors, veterans, and others; expand access to modern technology; and construct/expand facilities where necessary; shall Santa Cruz Libraries Facilities Financing Authority issue \$67,000,000 in bonds for Santa Cruz Libraries Facilities Financing Authority Community Facilities District No. 2016-1; levy a special tax annually on parcels within the Community Facilities District; establish an initial appropriations limit; and assure mandatory accountability?

Just over 70 percent of voters approved Measure S.

Property owners within the SCPL service area are assessed an annual parcel tax that will yield \$67 million in library funds. These funds may be used only for the purposes stated in the ballot question.

This limitation on use makes Measure S a special tax, requiring two-thirds voter approval.

For ballot revenue measures, the two-thirds voter approval requirement is risky. It is estimated that 25% of voters will vote "no" on any tax proposal, so a general tax requiring voter approval of 50% plus one is the easier path.

On the other hand, a special tax provides voters with assurance their tax dollars will be spent on the specific purpose stated in the ballot. If the proposed use of the tax is popular with voters, the risk is acceptable.

For Measure S, polling was favorable. The SCPL spent almost \$570,000 on consultants and legal advice to get Measure S on the ballot. The SCPL's investment in Measure S paid off at the ballot box, but some voters are left wondering what they agreed to pay for.

Facilities Master Plan

In 2013, the SCPL's operating budget was recovering from a significant funding loss from the 2008 recession. The SCPL was starting to restore services, hours, and staffing under a Compromise Service Model, which:

- Reduced library staff at branches to concentrate on moving materials and answering patron questions
- Organized library professionals with special knowledge to work in teams and float among branches (not dedicated to a branch)
- Assumes self-checkout service to reduce demand on staff
- Assumes only one service desk for patrons

Not all library branches had the facilities to support this model. Minimal staffing requires self-service stations and a centrally located service desk. An investment in facility upgrades to support efficiency could save operating funds over time. Addressing substandard building needs would redirect scarce operating funds to staff and programming, rather than leaky roofs and high utility bills.

The SCPL needed to formally assess its branch facility needs to estimate this financial investment. A 2013 assessment found most library branches were in disrepair.

From this assessment, the SCPL developed—and in April 2013 its governing board approved—the Santa Cruz Public Libraries Facilities Master Plan 2014–2023. The SCPL staff summarized its consultant's findings:

- Library facilities were, on average, 40 years old and there was a pent-up demand for capital repairs.
- The population served by the 10 library branches is very mobile and all branches are used by all patrons.
- Overall, the size of libraries was adequate, although some would benefit from additional space.
- The Downtown Branch Library needed major rehabilitation or replacement (this branch also houses SCPL's administration).
- Upgrades were needed in all branches under the new service model that would provide operational efficiencies.

Building & Operations Are Separate

The SCPL does not own any of the 10 library branches it operates, nor does SCPL collect or control the operating funds it uses.

The SCPL leases buildings from the city or County in which the branch is located (Member Agencies).

The SCPL uses funds from the Operating Authority to pay for operation and maintenance of its facilities.

The Live Oak Branch Library is an example of SCPL's dependence on its Member Agencies' building funds. In 1989, the County established the Live Oak Library in a local shopping center. This was one of the 10 libraries SCPL began operating upon its formation in 1996. In 1998, Santa Cruz County's Redevelopment Agency bought the former Albatross Restaurant for use as the Live Oak interim Library. In 2006, the Redevelopment Agency expanded the Live Oak interim Library to 13,500 square feet and it became the Live Oak Branch Library.

County redevelopment funds proved to be a flexible and ready source of funds that improved the lives of Live Oak residents. The SCPL benefited as well.

While SCPL commissioned the Master Plan as the blueprint for use of Measure S funds, the branch owner—the County—had discretion on how Measure S funds would be used to improve its library branches.

Although there is coordination between the SCPL and the Member Agency in library building features, ultimately the Member Agency, as the building's owner, dictates what will be built. If a Member Agency runs short of cash for construction, the Member Agency is expected to make up the difference.

The SCPL is expected to come up with operating funds.

Given the County Redevelopment Agency's expansion seven years earlier, the Master Plan called for relatively little work at the Live Oak Branch Library.

Annex: Concept & Vision

The SCPL's branches vary greatly in age and size, however, the Master Plan stated the number of branches was sufficient. It "confirmed that the current network of libraries will be maintained without adding, consolidating, or eliminating facilities in any communities."

One feature all 10 SCPL branches had in common when voters considered Measure S was the presence of SCPL library staff and books for checkout.

In the same year the County Redevelopment Agency relocated the Live Oak interim Library to its current location, the Redevelopment Agency completed a County Parks project, the Simpkins Family Swim Center & Live Oak Community Center less than a mile away.

The County affirmed the Live Oak Branch Library location with the 2006 expansion and renovation. These public investments, their distance and lack of synergy, will prove important to County use of Measure S funds for the Annex.

The earliest mention of a Live Oak Branch Library annex in a public memo we found is in a July 6, 2016 update to the Board of Supervisors on the Felton Branch Library—after the vote on Measure S.

The County did not share the Annex concept and vision until October 2017, over a year after voters approved Measure S.

County community outreach described it as "a new learning center-library annex."

A County staff memo to the County Board of Supervisors outlines the synergy the Annex would create among Shoreline Middle School, the nearby Boys & Girls Club of Live Oak, and "the County facility (Simpkins Family Swim Center & Live Oak Community Center)." All three of these facilities are next to each other.

The staff memo described how library funds might be used to improve the County's Park facility: Measure S funded facilities could include a flexible, centrally located space that could be used by both small groups and individuals for reading and conversation with access to a small collection of library materials and technology; a classroom program space for story time, meetings, trainings and classes; small group study rooms; access to a flexible outdoor space for gatherings,

performances and other classes; places for regular visits of the bookmobile and bikemobile ... It is also proposed that feasibility studies and planning for the library annex include other upgrades including the opportunity for an enterprise kitchen in the existing commercial kitchen, perhaps operated by the Boys & Girls Club, offering food at a small indoor and/or outdoor café; a child care center; a room for exercise equipment; covering the warm water pool; and covering the Boys & Girls Club basketball court. Staff proposes to develop funding strategies for these ideas as part of a feasibility study.

Except for the “small collection of library materials,” this concept underlies the Annex being constructed. The County’s Public Works website describes the vision for the Annex “to create a community gathering and learning hub.”

Public Works describes it as “flexible program space, a classroom, study rooms, public computers and laptop bar, and a new plaza integrated into Simpkins Swim and Community Center.”

The Annex project plans describe it as a library lobby, children’s area, library learning center, group study area, and an active learning room.

Even the SCPL Jan. 27, 2022, update calls the Annex “a new addition to the Simpkins Center providing a classroom and study rooms—a community learning center to complement existing uses.”

The Community Center’s total added area is about 2,000 square feet, which about the size of the Live Oak Branch Library’s remodeled children and teen area.

But, while the Live Oak Branch Library has library staff and books for checkout, the Annex will have Parks staff and computers.

Investigation

This investigation explored how SCPL communicated its vision to Measure S voters, and how that vision was derailed by political influence.

The Grand Jury identified SCPL’s limitations in embracing an 11th library branch, as well as the Live Oak Branch Library and Community Center’s limitations in meeting the needs of the Live Oak community.

The result is the County’s investment of library funds in a Community Center that is, in essence, a building addition providing technology and educational resources—not library staff or books.

Did Political Influence Change the Priorities of the Master Plan?

With the Master Plan complete, the SCPL polled voters to determine the tax voters would tolerate to yield the most money to support the Plan.

The SCPL’s next focus was getting the measure approved. This required the influence of elected officials.

There are strict rules about using public resources (staff) and funds to prepare a measure for the ballot. Public agencies may use public funds to test whether the measure might pass, craft ballot language that meets State law requirements, and obtain legal advice. But the Courts draw the line at using public resources for a campaign.

Once the County Board of Supervisors approved Measure S for the June 2016 ballot, SCPL staff could not campaign for Measure S.

The SCPL needed elected officials to urge their constituents to vote “yes” on Measure S.

To secure support, the SCPL JPA Board leadership reached out to elected officials.

The JPA’s request became what we concluded were essentially negotiations for the future use of Measure S funds. Library staff was not involved in these discussions.

One outcome of the discussions was that the County Board of Supervisors set aside \$5 million in Measure S funds for Live Oak.

This was not an expenditure identified in the Master Plan.

With Redevelopment's 2006 investment in the Live Oak Branch Library, the Master Plan called for only \$1 million of capital maintenance improvements for this branch.

On Dec. 15, 2015, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors approved the distribution of Measure S funds among the SCPL Member Agencies. The Board committed \$5 million of the County's share for "Live Oak."

The staff memo recommending this Board action offered no explanation as to how the sum of \$5 million was calculated, or how it would be spent in Live Oak. The Live Oak Branch Library was not called out as the target of the Board's decision. The Board did not reference or take note of the SCPL Master Plan, which did not propose this level of expenditure on the Live Oak Branch Library. This Board action posed more questions than it answered.

Master Plan As Measure S Guard Rail

If voters outside of Live Oak missed the County's Dec. 15, 2015, Board of Supervisors meeting, they would not have known of this dedication of Measure S funds for Live Oak.

The County's Live Oak commitment did not appear in the Measure S ballot materials.

Nor was the commitment referenced on the SCPL website, which notes the bond measure would address the "most urgent needs" of library branches and offers the Master Plan as the defining statement of those needs.

Should voters have reasonably expected Measure S funds might be used to expand a community center one mile from an existing library branch?

There were limitations in using the Master Plan as the Measure S spending plan.

The 2013 Master Plan's cost estimates were out of date by June 2016 due to rising construction costs. The Master Plan was developed without the community outreach. But the Master Plan was SCPL's vision to bring all library branches to a common service model.

And, the Master Plan was clear, stating SCPL's intention to modernize and improve its existing 10 library branches.

People feel betrayed when they see their voter-approved tax dollars being spent on something they did not anticipate.

A prime example is the ongoing and robust discussion in the Sentinel's Letters to the Editor regarding relocation of the Downtown Branch Library. While there are several aspects to that controversy—which are outside the scope of this report—all proposed alternatives for the downtown library would use Measure S funds on a structure to house library staff and books. Also, the library branch existed.

The Annex, on the other hand, will be a newly constructed space within an existing community center with no assigned library staff and no library books for checkout.

If voters understood the SCPL had no effective way to control its Member Agencies' use of Measure S funds, would Measure S have passed?

Importance of Librarians

Not only is the SCPL a bystander without direct say in how Measure S funds are spent, the SCPL is expected to staff and maintain whatever the SCPL Member Agency builds with Measure S funds. Because of the SCPL's short supply of operating funds, the Annex will have computers and wireless internet, but no library staff or library books available for checkout.

The traditional idea of a quiet library with professionally trained staff and books for checkout is expanding to include outdoor meeting space and books available through a computer application.

However, the role of the librarian in facilitating its patrons' learning is still needed.

Given the Annex's proposed synergy with nearby Shoreline Middle School, the Grand Jury takes note of a downward trend in schools being able to afford library teachers.

Research shows school librarians positively impact student achievement at all grade levels, but they are not as readily available as they once were.

Instead of librarians, County Parks staff will be responsible for day-to-day operations of the Annex, including public use of the computer equipment.

Library staff will be onsite only when they have a program in the building, just as SCPL sometimes uses the London Nelson Community Center in downtown Santa Cruz.

SCPL will have to use its limited operating revenue for the Annex's proportional share of the Community Center's utilities and janitorial services. Should the SCPL no longer wish to use the Annex (or cannot afford to pay for upkeep), a current draft agreement between the SCPL and Santa Cruz County Parks provides that either party may terminate the agreement and Santa Cruz County Parks will retain the benefit of Measure S improvements.

The Annex is still under construction, so SCPL is not yet incurring the Annex's operating costs. The same goes for other Measure S projects under construction.

The SCPL JPA has not discussed or dealt with the increased operating costs from all of the Measure S library expansions.

This failure is concerning as the 10 original branches are expected to have library staff.

The SCPL Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2022–2023 notes staff is just over 45 percent of the budget.

The JPA has not yet established overall branch staffing to meet the needs of the branches soon reopening.

These plans and impacts will fall outside the FY 23 budget process. Voters should stay tuned.

The Annex will likely improve the lives of Live Oak residents. The central location of the Community Center and adjacency to Shoreline Middle School offer a unique opportunity to address the after-school needs of middle-school students who have aged out of formal after-school care programs. The learning center can be used for adult education. The Annex will help bridge the gap for those who may not have internet access and computers at home.

But without librarians or library books, the Annex is a departure from the SCPL's other 10 branches.

The grand jury is of the opinion that the County did not have the discretion to use Measure S funds for the improvement of a County Parks facility.

Why Not Improve the Live Oak Branch Library? The short answer is location, location, location.

The Live Oak Branch Library site (by Schwan Lake) is limited by natural features that restrict the ability to increase the building or the parking lot size, which are both needed to allow for larger programming events.

The most limiting factor was the library's location relative to the primary intended Annex users: Students. While the library building may have scenic vistas, it is not close to the Community Center or the students who need continued learning opportunities after school.

The Live Oak Branch Library does have a separate area for children and teens that is almost the same size as the entire Annex (1,953 square feet) but Shoreline Middle School students would have to walk about a mile to get there.

It appears the County's main objective was to create an after-school study area and/or evening adult education space, not a library facility consistent with the rest of the SCPL system.

Redevelopment Impact on County Parks

In government budgets, there is an important distinction between money for one-time uses, such as buying land or constructing a building (capital funds), and money on an ongoing basis for operations (staff, utilities, maintenance.).

The County's Redevelopment Agency was a source of flexible capital funds that could be used for any public project within Live Oak. The Agency paid for an impressive array of good public projects that benefit the Live Oak community today. But, in 2012, California abolished redevelopment agencies.

With redevelopment's demise, County Parks was left without capital funds to remodel the Community Center to address the neighborhood's need for public computer and internet resources. The County used Measure S to fill the void.

The Board of Supervisors' December 2015 Measure S commitment to Live Oak has since grown. The Board delegated authority for the Director of Public Works to award the construction contract for the Annex based on these sources:

- Measure S: \$5,750,600

- County Library Fund: \$302,340

- County Parks: \$500,000

The total project cost is projected to be \$6,552,940.

Annex Impact on Operating Budget

The SCPL prepared for Measure S by taking stock of its branches and developing a model to provide system-wide improvements to all patrons using all branches.

Despite SCPL's intentions, political interests won out over the Master Plan without regard for the impact on SCPL's operating budget.

The SCPL will soon be responsible for maintaining a new location, and replacing lost or damaged equipment in the Annex. This responsibility will be competing with the costs of staff and operation for the 10 branch libraries. As noted, SCPL's operating budget challenges are yet to be resolved.

Conclusion

The Grand Jury acknowledges the Live Oak Community Center is ideally located to serve the Live Oak community. The resources the Annex will offer seniors, adults, children, and teens will fulfill the promise of the former Redevelopment Agency in creating the Live Oak Community Center by offering space and resources for after-school study and adult education.

That being said, the Annex has little in common with the SCPL's 10 existing library branches.

The Annex is also likely to become a concern for Santa Cruz County Parks staff that will be responsible for keeping the learning spaces, internet, and computer resources in the Annex operational and available for the people who need them.

Similarly, SCPL now has a new fiscal responsibility to pay for an 11th "library" branch.

The Board of Supervisors' use of Measure S funds for the Annex contradicts one of the conclusions of the Master Plan—that all patrons use all libraries—and focuses only on the neighborhood branch and voters.

Could this \$5.75 million have been used elsewhere in the system for improvement of an already existing library branch?

Probably so, but we may never know.

The SCPL could have offered more transparency on its website and in its voting materials as to how the Measure S \$67 million total was estimated and how it would be spent among the library branches.

The SCPL's lack of transparency could mean that the next call for a special tax may be rejected for lack of trust.

This would be an unfortunate outcome given the unique and special role that libraries, parks, and community centers provide. These public facilities improve our quality of life, and if left to compete for general revenue contributions, they may lose again.



Santa Cruz's parking garage mistake: It would undermine library project, make affordable housing harder



Jason Architecture's rendering of the renovated Santa Cruz library at its existing location.
(Courtesy Rick Longinotti)

BY RICK LONGINOTTI

Source: Lookout Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz voters delivered a historic “no” vote on Measure F last month. Rick Longinotti attributes this to mistrust in city government. Longinotti believes city staff buried a consultant’s downtown parking strategic plan to win city council support for a new parking garage to be constructed along with a new downtown library.

JUL 12, 2022 | 6:51 AM

City of Santa Cruz voters departed from historic election trends [in June by defeating Measure E](#), which sought to add half a cent to city sales tax. It is the first sales or property tax to fail in the last 40 years. By comparison, in 2018, 72% of Santa Cruz voters passed a sales tax increase. What explains this change?



Rick Longinotti, chair of the Campaign for Sustainable Transportation (courtesy of Rick Longinotti)

[A poll commissioned by the city before](#) the city council that placed the sales tax on the June ballot says, “33 percent [of respondents] said they would be much more likely to oppose the measure because ‘we cannot trust the city council to keep its promise to use the money properly unless the tax measure specifically says how the money must be used.’”

A Santa Cruz Sentinel editorial endorsed No on F vote, saying, “Many voters and residents are still angry over the 2016 Measure S countywide tax that has led to the multi-project library planned for downtown. We’ve called for a follow-up vote on this project, since the original measure said nothing about any such plan and many residents remain convinced they were deceived by the measure.”

The Sentinel is referring to the city’s proposal for a new downtown library with a 310-space parking structure and potentially over 100 units of affordable housing.

I agree with the Sentinel's assessment.

The city's promotion of the parking garage doesn't meet the standards of good governance. In December, 2016, city staff presented a proposal for a new parking structure to the city council without key information. Specifically, they presented a plan for a five-level parking structure without waiting for results of the [Downtown Parking Strategic Plan](#) – which Nelson\Nygaard consultants conducted under a \$100,000 contract with the city.

When Nelson\Nygaard did submit its report, city staff never brought it to the city council for review. The contract called for a presentation to the council. That never happened. Nor was the report ever part of the council's agenda packet.

I believe that's because the report did not recommend a new parking structure. Instead, it says, "The most fiscally prudent approach to accommodating additional demand: modernize parking management and better align parking prices to the cost of building and maintaining the system." On a 4-2 vote, the council approved the concept of a parking structure, without the benefit of this crucial information.

The lack of transparency about the garage continues.

The [city reports that the council could approve the mixed-use project in 2023](#), with construction beginning in 2024. However, there will be no construction unless the garage can secure bond financing. And there are no bond agencies that will extend credit to the city's downtown parking district if it cannot show annual revenue to pay the bond debt.

[The city budget](#) shows in fiscal year 2022, the pandemic-afflicted downtown parking district deficit was \$4 million, which is huge relative to the size of its expenditures of slightly over \$8 million.

For 2023, the city projects a deficit of \$2.6 million. There is no estimate for when the parking district will make ends meet, let alone generate the [\\$2.9 million surplus city staff say](#) is needed to make bond payments.

That surplus may never happen, as [parking demand is trending downward in urban areas](#) due, in part, to Uber and Lyft. Santa Cruz is no exception.

In 2019, parking consultant [Patrick Siegman](#) told the city council, "Downtown Santa Cruz parking demand is down 10% from its peak in 2008." The city council already doubled parking rates beginning in 2019. There is no quick fix to bring profitability to downtown parking.

I believe our community's best hope for getting housing built downtown anytime soon is the Our Downtown, Our Future ballot measure, which would [amend the General Plan](#) to "require, to the maximum extent feasible, that certain designated parcels situated within the City of Santa Cruz Downtown Plan area...be developed with permanently affordable housing, with parking permissible on the ground level..."

Those parcels are currently city parking lots. The General Plan would also recognize City Lot 4 (Cedar St. where the Farmers Market meets) as the "preferred long-term location of the Downtown Farmers Market as well as other fairs and public events...This policy priority shall specifically not preclude the development of affordable housing and associated uses on Lot 4." Without the millstone of financing a parking garage, the city's process of developing housing on these downtown lots becomes more straightforward.

Opponents of the Our Downtown initiative adopt the false premise that we can't have affordable housing while making a permanent home for our beloved Farmers Market on an improved community commons on Cedar Street.

Happily, we can do both.

Rick Longinotti is chair of the [Campaign for Sustainable Transportation](#), which seeks to reduce our community's dependency on auto travel by making it safe and convenient to get around without a private automobile. Rick is a marriage and family therapist and former electrical contractor. He has lived in Santa Cruz for 33 years.

Stick to Santa Cruz's downtown library and affordable housing plans: Don't fall for ODOF's two big mistakes

BY JANIS O'DRISCOLL, DON LANE, AND ZACH DAVIS Source: Lookout Santa Cruz



The new downtown library project, which the Santa Cruz City Council approved after years of study and public input, includes a new central library, 124 units of very low-income housing, a child care facility, and parking that consolidates current parking lots.

(Courtesy of Don Lane)

The future of a visionary downtown Santa Cruz project to deliver 124 units of affordable housing, a modern library and a childcare center is threatened by a misguided ballot measure built on falsehoods and half-truths. Three experts push back on arguments made by Our Downtown Our Future leaders, including Rick Longinotti.

JUL 17, 2022 | 6:00 AM

This November, voters will have an opportunity to decide the future of the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project by voting on a ballot measure. The visionary library project – which the Santa Cruz City Council approved following years of study and public input – includes a new central library with resources to serve all residents, 124 units of desperately needed low-income housing, a child care facility, and parking that consolidates parking lots that are an inefficient use of land.

It's an exciting, visionary project and deserves support. The ballot measure – put forth by the citizen's group Our Downtown Our Future (ODOF) – deserves to fail.

The new library project is located in downtown Santa Cruz at the site of the current Lot 4 parking lot, which is owned by the city and is bounded by Cedar, Lincoln and Cathcart streets. The library component of the project is funded by voter-approved Measure S and will replace the existing

downtown library. Two affordable housing developers are working on creative and innovative plans for the housing component.

The Downtown Farmers Market (that currently takes place on Wednesdays on Lot 4) will move to a nearby (but not yet determined) permanent location in downtown Santa Cruz.

It's a clear win-win for our community.

In his recent [Lookout commentary](#), Rick Longinotti, a leader of the ODOF campaign, disagrees. He also fails miserably to justify ODOF's misguided effort to block the new library project.

As three people who, collectively, have a deep understanding of libraries, affordable housing and our downtown economy, we'd like to examine two big mistakes the ODOF campaign has made.

ODOF's first mistake was overreach. The second was building its case on falsehoods and half-truths.

ODOF's overreach error is simple: its main objective originally was to stop a project that has already been supported by the city council, after years of public input and studies.

ODOF could have written a simple and more honest ballot initiative that said: "We the voters do not want the City of Santa Cruz to move forward with this project." Instead, behind closed doors, members wrote a 14-page measure that prioritizes a subpar library, abandons 124 units of affordable housing, and creates bad land use policy.

Now let's move on to the falsehoods and half-truths.

Affordable Housing

ODOF suggests its measure will generate more affordable housing. This is just wrong.

Much of the funding for the project is already secured. If ODOF wins, it's unlikely those funds can be replaced, especially since there isn't another site set aside for the project.

ODOF claims its plan will create affordable housing at multiple sites downtown. Affordable housing development professionals will tell you most of ODOF's sites aren't viable for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that several of the lots are way too small.

In sum, when ODOF promises affordable housing, the promise is empty.

Downtown Library

ODOF wants to renovate the existing library and has cherry-picked from the city-hired architect's design to make its case. The architect designed both a renovated library and a new library. ODOF wants voters to believe the architect's work shows a renovated library will be just as good as the new one. This is wrong.

Here's [what the architect actually said](#) about the design for the renovated library: "...the building is only improved to a low-medium quality facility and will lack many of the amenities the public has come to expect in a modern library."

ODOF's initiative disregards the input of both professionals and community volunteers who, over a period of years, developed a clear recommendation for a new library. The current director of Santa Cruz Public Libraries said the new library would be vastly superior to a renovated library. The retired director of Santa Cruz Public Libraries, who was serving while the plans were being considered, said a new library is clearly the best option. The highly-regarded nonprofit, Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries, and the citizen-based Library Advisory Commission, have said the same.

The Farmers Market

Many of us who encountered the ODOF signature-gatherers remember how the pitch focused on various versions of saving the Farmers Market. To put it bluntly, the Farmers Market did not ask to be saved and did not ask for any help from ODOF.

Here's what Nesh Dhillon, Santa Cruz Farmers Market executive director, said about ODOF's plans: "We have nothing to do with this ballot initiative." And, "We as an organization will figure out where we need to end up."

In fact, the Farmers Market is working productively with the city to identify a permanent home in downtown. Dhillon's biggest request is more collaboration with the city. "It's a successful weekday market, but it would be significantly better if we had some infrastructure to support it. Thankfully, the city has been in lockstep with our needs."

Downtown Parking

Longinotti, in his Lookout piece, argues [that](#) because city staff did not "bring" the city's parking consultant to make a presentation to the city council, there is a lack of transparency. He wants you to believe the city council didn't know about the parking consultant's report.

The truth is, the city council asked for a presentation of the report. The presentation happened – [slides of it are still viewable on the city website](#) – and [local media](#) wrote about it.

In fact, the report reveals a key point that ODOF ignores, one that directly undermines its core message. The consultant writes, "Infill development and rising opportunity costs of parking suggests that there is increasing demand for consolidated, structured parking facilities over time. As with future development, the most obvious opportunity sites for consolidated parking supplies are existing surface parking lots within the district."

Not only that, Longinotti implies the city didn't implement the consultant's recommendation for better parking management and pricing. Actually, the city has done exactly those things.

We believe voters need to see exactly what's going on here.

As we move closer to the November election, we hope voters will see the very serious shortcomings of the ODOF initiative and the myriad benefits the new library project will have for our city.

Janis O'Driscoll serves as board president for The Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries; Don Lane serves as board chair of Housing Santa Cruz County; and Zach Davis serves as board vice chair of the Downtown Association of Santa Cruz.

Letter to the editor: New library project deserves to be built

JUL 18, 2022 | 6:59 AM

Thank you for publishing the excellent [rebuttal](#) ("Stick to Santa Cruz's downtown library and affordable housing plans: don't fall for ODOF's two big mistakes") to the ODOF arguments against the proposed new downtown library and affordable housing project.

The project has been developed over many years with many opportunities for public input. I know because I have participated.

This project deserves to be built!

Dennis Hagen

Santa Cruz, CA

Building our green town squares: Nesh Dhillon talks growth, future of Santa Cruz farmers markets

August 25, 2022 Relevant excerpt only:

<https://lookout.co/santacruz/food-drink/story/2022-08-25/santa-cruz-farmers-markets-nesh-dhillon-talks-about-building-our-green-town-squares>

Now, Dhillon is about to guide the downtown market through a new era once again, as the new downtown Santa Cruz library is planned to be developed on its current home, Lot 4, bounded by Cathcart, Center and Lincoln streets, though that placement is now being [challenged](#) by a

November citizen initiative. Dhillon says he is hopeful about finding a new permanent home for the downtown market, but insists nothing has been decided. While Lot 7, which runs along Front Street, is a strong candidate due to its accessible location and viability as an event site, Dhillon says the discussion is still in its early stages and that obstacles, including the pandemic, have delayed the investigative process. The Church Street lot currently occupied by the downtown branch of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries has also been considered, but Dhillon says it won't be available for years. "There are too many unknowns for our attention right now," he says, summing up the questions.

GoodTimes

Santa Cruz to Include Library Measure on November Ballot, Pogonip Cleanup Approved

Santa Cruz's Mixed-Use Library measure heads to Santa Cruz polls; the Homeless Garden Project seeks permanent home in Pogonip's Lower Meadows

By [Aiyana Moya](#)

June 30, 2022



One of many renderings for a new mixed-use library building in Santa Cruz.

[An initiative](#) that would scrap downtown Santa Cruz's [mixed-use library project](#), which has been in the works for years, is headed to the Nov. 8 ballot.

[Our Downtown, Our Future](#), the organization behind the effort to halt construction on the new library, collected thousands of signatures to make its initiative eligible for the November election. At the June 28 Santa Cruz City Council meeting, council unanimously approved bringing the measure to voters.

If approved, the measure would bring the city’s plans to develop a new library and housing complex to a halt. Santa Cruz has been [working on building a new public library](#) since voters approved [Measure S](#) in 2016, an initiative that provided \$67 million in funding for library renovations across the county.

Current plans call for a two-story library overlaid by between 100-125 affordable housing units above. The project also includes a 310-space parking garage.

Our Downtown, Our Future hopes to restore the decaying Civic Center Public Library in lieu of pursuing the new complex. The group says that the community has a preference for updating the current building over constructing a “massive complex.”

The [Downtown Library Advisory Committee](#) explored updating the original library, but, after engineering and technical studies, [deemed](#) that the current facility has too many non-compliance issues and full renovation would be too expensive.

The measure also opposes the relocation of the Wednesday Farmers Market: the new library’s anticipated location would be City Parking Lot 4 at the corner of Cathcart and Cedar streets, which is where the Wednesday Farmers Market gathers.

Halting the city’s library plans would cost the public critical affordable housing, but the initiative promises to use some of the surplus parking revenue to promote affordable housing developments—although it’s unspecified how much money would go to affordable housing, as the surplus money would also be used for things like improving Lot 4, and “transportation demand management programs.”

[Critics of the initiative wonder](#) if the true intention of the measure is to stop plans for more affordable housing.

Multiple [members of the public wrote in](#) to support the initiative, and also called on the city to hire an analyst to create a report that would compare costs and benefits with the city’s Downtown Library plan. An impact report is expected to come in September.

HOMELESS GARDEN PROJECT

The Santa Cruz City Council also unanimously approved efforts to clean up lead contamination in Pogonip’s Lower Meadows, in an effort to find the Homeless Garden Project (HGP) a permanent home.

For more than 20 years, the HGP has been searching for a permanent location. In 1998, the City adopted the Pogonip Master Plan, which placed the garden in the lower meadows. Shortly after, it was discovered that the site was used as a skeet shooting range, and found that the soil there was contaminated with lead.

In 2021, the project issued a request for the council to consider the garden’s relocation to the upper meadows. The council first heard the proposal in August, and again in [October](#), during which its received [dozens of letters](#) from residents opposing the move.

Since then, HGP has [requested](#) that efforts to relocate to the upper meadows come to a stop, and for the city to concentrate efforts on cleaning up the lead contamination in the lower meadows. Consultants found that to render the area safe, the lead-contaminated soil would need to be disposed of at least 1 foot deep. Clean soil would also need to refill the space. For full remediation, the cost will be between \$5-6 million.

Thanks to a grant from the Department of Toxic Substances Control, costs of planning and permitting remediation of the Lower Main Meadow will be covered. The city hopes to use some of that money to cover the remediation costs, or to find alternative grants to help fund the project.

The city will continue to look into remediating the lead contamination in the lower meadow, which Parks and Recreation staff hopes can begin in the next few years.

Scotts Valley Library to Reopen Saturday

The third North Santa Cruz County library renovation has been completed thanks to Measure S By [Drew Penner](#) August 5, 2022

Over the past few days, contractors have been putting the finishing touches on the Scotts Valley



Public Library, which will reopen Saturday. PHOTO: Drew Penner

It's happening a few months later than initially hoped, but now, literacy fans and community boosters can rejoice—the Scotts Valley Branch Library is coming back to life.

The grand reopening will go from 10am-2pm on Saturday at its 251 Kings Village Road location. But former borrowers may find it unrecognizable.

“I know the community is excited,” says Yolande Wilburn, the Santa Cruz County Public Libraries director. “We’ve heard from the community members about how much they use the library and how much they depend on it.”

The event will feature guest speakers, a refreshment café hosted by the Friends of the Scotts Valley Library, storytime for children with Librarian Kari and craft-making.

The library even tapped magician James Chan—a teenager—to help unveil the space.

It's the result of a June 2016 countywide initiative approved by voters called Measure S that secured approval for \$67 million in financing to update branches system-wide.

Felton's library rework was completed in February 2020 (although most of the community didn't experience it until after coronavirus restrictions were loosened).

Boulder Creek's branch reopened in May, and Wilburn urges people to have a peek up there when they can.

“If you have not been to see it, I highly recommend you go,” she says, highlighting the uniqueness of its children's room. “It's almost like you're in a treehouse.”

On Wednesday, landscapers were planting the final ornamental grasses at the Scotts Valley site. Narissa Karthy-Dundas, a library aide, and Paul Williams, a library assistant, emptied the outside return bin of titles such as *The Shamans of Prehistory* and *Dylan Thomas: The Collected Stories*.

Some shelves remained empty. But they'd already stocked most of them.

"I just started a couple weeks ago," Karthy-Dundas says. "It's very exciting to be able to bring the resources that the community needs back to them."

Interim Branch Manager Heather Pereira, who's working here since her Aptos branch is under construction, says she appreciates the retro aesthetic that serves as a throw-back to the building's roller rink days.

Resident Helen Youmans says she's happy to see plans coming to fruition after months of construction.

"My daughter uses the online version a lot," she says. "We used it a lot when the kids were little." Her parents, who live in the U.K., even purchased a brick in honor of her daughter during an earlier library promotional drive years ago.

"I'm excited it's reopening," she says.

GOOD IDEA (August 24, 2022)

<https://www.goodtimes.sc/opinion-our-biggest-health-and-fitness-issue-ever/>

MAKE A SPLASH

Calling all artists: The county will be commissioning an artist to create public art on the new Live Oak Library. The artwork will be featured on the new library's annex at the Simpkins Family Swim Center. Interested artists should submit a proposal for artwork that is inviting, and incorporates Live Oak's identity and history. The budget for the project will be \$80,000. Submit your proposal by Sept. 30 at scparks.com.

Letter to the Editor: Irreversible Mistake

A letter to the editor of Good Times August 24, 2022

I was visiting Berkeley this past weekend, and as I rode the bus through downtown, I made a point of looking at the heights of existing buildings and new construction, in an effort to imagine the visual (and psychological) impact of the many new projects in the pipeline for Santa Cruz, a much less "urban" kind of city than Berkeley.

I don't think most folks here grasp what an eight-story building taking up the entirety of parking lot 4 will look and feel like. It will dominate everything around it. Regardless of the upper story "set backs," the mixed use/library/garage/housing is going to be an irreversible and very costly mistake. YIMBYS and housing advocates should think long and hard about the brute they want to release into our fragile environment. Let's leave that central location for a future town plaza, renovate the library where it is, build housing elsewhere, and acknowledge that adequate parking exists all over downtown. Vote Yes on Measure O in November.

As for the city's plans for 16-story buildings in an "extended" downtown, that's a whole other nightmare to contemplate.

Judi Grunstra





Over the past few days, contractors have been putting the finishing touches on the Scotts Valley Public Library, which will open Saturday. — Drew Penner/Press Banner

Scotts Valley Library Reopens Saturday

By: [DREW PENNER](#)

August 5, 2022

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The Grand Reopening is to go from 10am-2pm on Saturday, at its previous 251 Kings Village Road location. But former borrowers may find it unrecognizable.

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Narissa Karthy-Dundas and Paul Williams collect returns in advance of the library’s grand opening Saturday. — Drew Penner/Press Banner



The Friends of the Scotts Valley Library were responsible for beautifying the patio area. — Drew Penner/Press Banner



A series of different sound-dampening techniques have been included in the redesign, including this wave-like feature. — Drew Penner/Press Banner

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Local resident Helen Youmans, 50, says she’s happy, after months of construction, to see plans coming to fruition.

“My daughter uses the online version a lot,” she said. “We used it a lot when the kids were little.” Her parents, in the UK, even purchased a brick in honor of her daughter, during an earlier library promotional drive, years ago.

“I’m excited it’s reopening,” she said.



New Aptos Branch Library Breaks Ground In Santa Cruz

The reconstructed \$12.4 million library is 12,400 square feet.

[Sara Schaefer](#), Patch Staff

Posted Wed, Jun 22, 2022 at 2:50 pm PT | Updated Wed, Jun 22, 2022 at 2:59 pm PT



The new Aptos Branch Library was made possible by the 2016 passage of Measure S as well as by generous community donors. (Jim Bourne Photography)



The design-build team was joined by SCPL, Santa Cruz County Supervisor Zach Friend and County Administrative Officer Carlos Palacios, Aptos Library Friends, and the community to mark the occasion. (Jim Bourne Photography)

The Aptos branch will produce as much energy as it consumes and will require just half the energy of a typical library. (Jim Bourne Photography)

The library experience begins with improved access via multiple modes of transportation, more parking, and lush, inviting landscapes that offer a variety of spaces for reading, playing, or simply enjoy moments of natural tranquility. (Jim Bourne Photography)



News release from Anderson Brulé Architects and Bogard Construction:

SANTA CRUZ, CA — [Bogard Construction](#) (Bogard) alongside [Anderson Brulé Architects](#) (ABA) broke ground last week on the Santa Cruz Public Library System's (SCPL) new Aptos Branch Library. Following the demolition of the previous building, the reconstructed \$12.4 million, 12,400-square foot library will provide Aptos with a refreshing, modern and sustainably designed facility. The ABA/Bogard design-build team has decades of experience in Santa Cruz County and in library design and construction.

Aptos community leaders at the "golden shovel" event included Santa Cruz County Supervisor Zach Friend, who also chairs the County's Library Financing Authority, and County Administrative Officer Carlos Palacios. Also present were Library Director Yolande Wilburn, Jared Bogaard of Bogard, Mark Schoeman of ABA, and Gale Farthing of the Aptos Library Friends.

"We are excited to be here today on the ground floor — both literally and figuratively — of the wonderful new landmark that will rise on this spot," said Yolande Wilburn, director of Santa Cruz Public Libraries. "The County, the Library System and the many community stakeholders represented here today are eagerly anticipating a fabulous new home not only for the books and digital offerings that will bring the new structure to life, but also for the rich programming it will provide our community."

"As a builder with over 75 years of experience in Santa Cruz-area construction, including nine other SCPL libraries, we are delighted to begin giving form to the vision of the Aptos community with our team of local project managers and subcontractors," said Jared Bogaard, president of Bogard Construction. "Entering this next phase of the design-build process, we will continue working closely with ABA and SCPL to ensure that everything goes seamlessly."

Find out what's happening in Santa Cruz with free, real-time updates from Patch.

Let's go!

The project is made possible by Measure S and is supported by the Library Joint Powers Authority Board, the Library Advisory Commission and Friends of the Aptos Library. Guided by a vision for an up-to-date facility that supports modern functionality and technology, the design supports a variety of library and community programming while promoting occupant wellness and demonstrating responsible environmental stewardship. The Aptos branch will produce as much energy as it consumes and will require just half the energy of a typical library.

This will be achieved by orienting the building to maximize sunlight not only for generating solar energy but also to illuminate interiors from large windows and skylights, minimizing the need for artificial lighting. The building will also feature a small wind turbine to supplement solar-generated electricity. Gardens and terraces with drought-tolerant landscaping and rainwater collection features will aid water conservation efforts.

"It became clear throughout our listening sessions that the community desired a library building that serves both people and place," said ABA Design Principal Mark Schoeman, AIA. "In replacing the original 1975 library, we designed a structure that is 30 percent larger yet has a minimal environmental impact — a 'net-zero' sanctuary that celebrates Aptos' natural resources in the context of its history and culture. The library's site offers ample opportunity to create a lively dialogue between interior and exterior spaces. Altogether, the blend of natural and built environments will create an inspiring library experience that encourages curiosity and human connections."

Given its prominent location in Aptos' Soquel Avenue corridor, the team understands the library's role as a community landmark. This is why the library experience begins with improved access via multiple modes of transportation, more parking, and lush, inviting landscapes that offer a variety of spaces for reading, playing, or simply enjoy moments of natural tranquility.

The new Aptos Branch Library was made possible by the 2016 passage of Measure S as well as by generous community donors. Photo-like renderings and mock-ups of the new library are available [here](#).

About Anderson Brulé Architects, Inc.

Since its founding in 1984, ABA has been committed to sustaining people and communities through architecture, interior design, and strategic planning that balances social, economic and environmental needs. The firm's portfolio spans projects in the community, educational, and healthcare sectors, and reflects the commitment of staff from offices in San Jose and Claremont



to deliver enduring people-centered places imbued with purpose and meaning. To learn more, visit www.aba-arch.com.

About Bogard Construction, Inc.

Bogard Construction was founded in Santa Cruz in 1947, by Victor Bogard, Sr. Currently owned and operated by third- and fourth-generation family members, Bogard provides General Contracting, Design/Build, Construction Management and Project Management services throughout Northern California. Bogard's experience encompasses a wide array of project sizes and types — including multi-residential, healthcare, churches, retail, schools, office buildings, libraries and more. To learn more, visit www.bogardconstruction.com.

Email Newsletter August 18, 2022

ARCHITECT

Magazine

<https://www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/aptos-branch-library>

PROJECT Posted on: June 20, 2022

Aptos Branch Library

[Anderson Brulé Architects](#)

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[View all images \(2\)](#)

PROJECT DETAILS

PROJECT NAME

Aptos Branch Library

LOCATION

7695 Soquel Dr

[Aptos,](#)

[CA](#)

ARCHITECT

[Anderson Brulé Architects](#)

CLIENT/OWNER

Santa Cruz Public Libraries

PROJECT TYPES

[Community](#)

PROJECT SCOPE

[New Construction](#)

SIZE

12,400 sq. feet

SHARED BY

[Rebecca Elle](#)

TEAM

Mark Schoeman, AIA, Design Principal

CONSULTANTS

General Contractor: Bogard Construction

PROJECT STATUS

[On the Boards/In Progress](#)

COST

\$12

STYLE

[Modern](#)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Santa Cruz Public Library System’s (SCPL) new Aptos Branch Library has broken ground. Following the demolition of the previous building, the reconstructed \$12.4 million, 12,400-square foot library will provide Aptos with a refreshing, modern and sustainably designed facility. The Anderson Brulé Architects/Bogard Construction design-build team has decades of experience in Santa Cruz County and in library design and construction.

Guided by a vision for an up-to-date facility that supports modern functionality and technology, the Aptos Branch Library design supports a variety of library and community programming while promoting occupant wellness and demonstrating responsible environmental stewardship. The Aptos branch will produce as much energy as it consumes and will require just half the energy of a typical library. This will be achieved by orienting the building to maximize sunlight not only for generating solar energy but also to illuminate interiors from large windows and skylights,

minimizing the need for artificial lighting. The building will also feature a small wind turbine to supplement solar-generated electricity. Gardens and terraces with drought-tolerant landscaping and rainwater collection features will aid water conservation efforts.

Given its prominent location in Aptos' Soquel Avenue corridor, the team understands the library's role as a community landmark. This is why the library experience begins with improved access via multiple modes of transportation, more parking, and lush, inviting landscapes that offer a variety of spaces for reading, playing, or simply enjoy moments of natural tranquility.

The new Aptos Branch Library was made possible by the 2016 passage of Measure S as well as by generous community donors.

Reviews

Google my Business

Capitola received a 5 Star Rating with no review on June 19

Garfield Park received a 5 Star Rating with no review on June 29

Felton received a 5 Star Review on July 10

Beautiful space, games for kids and local environmental history book collection

Capitola received a 5 Star Review on July 11

Beautiful building with excellent resources. The jewel of the SCC library system.

Felton received a 5 Star Review on July 15

My wife loves it

La Selva Beach received a 5 Star Review on July 16

Best place on west coast. Hoops for years and relaxing spot

Garfield Park received a 5 Star Review on July 16

I love this cute little library!!

Downtown received a 5 Star Review on July 16

Wonderful library, helpful staff, great selection!! So glad to have a community space where spending time there doesn't require spending money!

La Selva Beach received a 4 Star Review on July 21

Small, simple library. Limited workspace. Very friendly and helpful staff.

Downtown received a 5 Star Review on July 31

A great library, with very helpful staff, and a great selection! I checked 6 recently published novels (including the latest by Susan Ehrenreich), and our grandkids checked out 49 kids books, including 3 in Chinese!

Capitola received a 4 Star Review on August 2

Love this library!

Capitola received a 5 Star Review on August 4

Library in Capitola is beautiful. Everyone there was so helpful and they had a pretty good selection. I can see it getting better and better!

Boulder Creek received a 5 Star Review on August 4

The Boulder Creek library was renovated and reopened in May, 2022. Now it's bright and airy inside with a community room that can be hired if you're a Santa Cruz county resident. The staff are friendly and helpful and will show you the ropes. And parking is great.

Garfield Park received a 5 Star Review on August 10

I love this little library. Its focus is on kids and young adult books but they have a small selection of general fiction and movies and a great selection of books about Santa Cruz and the central coast. The building itself is a historic Carnegie library building that has recently been renovated. It's a great little neighborhood library!

Downtown received a 4 Star Rating with no review on August 20

Capitola received a 5 Star Rating with no review on August 20

Felton received a 5 Star Review on August 24

Big, new, and beautiful.

Boulder Creek received a 5 Star Review on August 31

My kids and I love this place. Super cute, such a great resource.

Yelp

Garfield Park received a 5 Star Review on July 2

Historic (Carnegie Library) branch full of light giving windows in West Santa Cruz. Newly remodeled. On one hand, kind of small, on the other hand lots of patrons came in & found what they were looking for. Librarians were very helpful locating material, from central if needed. Nice audio book on CDs collection. Patrons said they liked the iPhone app to reserve books & order things delivered to this branch so they didn't need to go downtown. While I'm just visiting, this is a great little branch that the neighborhood is lucky to have.

Boulder Creek received a 5 Star Review on July 23

The staff are really nice and the new design is sleek! I do miss how it used to be cause it was way more cozy but they have this thing where kids can make paintings and they'll display them which kinda brings back a similar vibe. Very punk rock woo!!

Capitola received a 1 Star Review on August 3

I wouldn't go here unless you absolutely have to, this library is a joke. This library is ran as if your friend had just remodeled their home, you funded the whole thing, but when visiting they will watch you like a hawk and apply random made up rules.

Rule 1 - Common room (for everyone) - Probably sit 10 without Covid but with Covid everyone space out so probably sit 5. Which means if you're an adult it leaves you with very choices remaining.

Rule 2 - Teen room (only teens) - same as common in-terms of seating. They will card you if they think that you're not a teen and ask you to leave even when the room is completely empty.

Rule 3 - Kids area (kids only or if you have a kid with you) - Take up 60% of the library, empty 90% of the time, and no one is allowed in this area. Life hack - If you plan to visit this library best bet is to go rent yourself a kid, 100% you will always have a seat. However, if you're feeling bold, sit in the kid area and when they asks you point to a random kid and claim them. I haven't done this but they probably ask for a birth certificate or a DNA test (they probably have one of those in the back).

Rule 4 - No sleeping. Was in here one day and was tired I put my head down for 5mins and lady came by to say "no sleeping in the library.

I'm sure there are many other unwritten rules that I haven't stubbles upon but like I said before, best bet is to rent a kid and bring it in this library you will have VIP access.

From Libanswers:

A patron wanted us to know that our app is greatly admired and appreciated. A direct quotation: "I love the app! It's amazing how many features it offers".

Email:

July 29: Hello we are all hoping the outside will not remain as is. it appears as if it looks as a prison and is a eyesore to Scotts Valley.

Twitter:

@cyclelicious

Jun 15

The city of **Santa Cruz** plans to replace this parking lot with a **library**, 100+ units of low-income housing, & a parking garage. Residents are collecting signatures for a ballot measure to stop this development to save these non-native "heritage" trees.

cityofsantacruz.com/government/cit.....



@ElectConlan

May 19

It's mind-boggling that people showed up in Downtown **Santa Cruz** today to protest a project that would turn a parking lot into a **library**, daycare, and apartment complex with homes for 125 very low income families. One reason for opposition? A few magnolias will be cut down.



8/2/22 Facebook



Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services - ABOS

5m · 🌐



Happy Book Bike Week!

Pictured is the book bike from the [Santa Cruz Public Libraries](#) in Santa Cruz, CA.

"Efrén Hernández doing a story time with SCPL's Kermit at the Farmers' Market."



1 Comment



Like



Comment



Share



Comment as Santa Cruz Public Libraries



Santa Cruz Public Libraries

Happy Book Bike Week! Kermit is now famous! ...

Like

Reply

Commented on by Diane Cowen

1m



General



Lindsay Worrell
Aptos · 1d



Today This is Madelyn (5) Everyday she has me drive by the library to see the progress. Since day one when we drive by she yells out "thank you for making my new library " , But today she wanted to say it in person , with treats/drinks for them all (I wish it could go in the Aptos times) . I have one special girl, and she loves her Aptos ca.

Posted in **General** to **Anyone**

👍👍👍 623 Neighbors

👍 Like 💬 Reply ↻ Share



Diane Reymers · Cliffwood Heights
Awwwdorable! What a cutie patootie! And the guys are too! :-)
1d ❤️ 5 Like Reply Share



Karen Hinkle · Rio Del Mar Clubhouse Hill



Comment

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In the News and Media:

September 1 – November 2, 2022



<https://www.ksbw.com/article/commitment-2022-santa-cruz-tackles-measure-o/41716977>

Commitment 2022: Santa Cruz tackles Measure O

Updated: 10:42 AM PDT Oct 25, 2022 [Christian Balderas](#)

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. —

A measure on the November ballot, Measure O, will determine the future for one of Santa Cruz's largest and most contentious development projects: A new mixed-use building in the city's downtown area.

The project includes a new modern library, to replace the current, dilapidated downtown branch, 100-125 affordable housing units, a child care service and a parking garage with 240-230 spaces.

If Measure O passes, it would bring the project to a halt, while a vote against the measure would allow the project to continue as planned.

In June 2020, city council approved the project to move forward, citing a need for a new library and cheaper housing.

Now the project is awaiting the necessary permits and entitlements from the city's planning department and then one final approval from city council.

"I believe it's important because everybody deserves a place to live. This community is great in taking anybody that wants to come here," Rene Guerra, a 26-year-long Santa Cruz resident, said.

One of the biggest points of contention comes down to location.

The mixed-use building will be built on top of Lot 4, a vacant parking lot on Lincoln St.

Every Wednesday, the lot hosts the downtown farmers market, but if the development project moves as planned, the market will have to move to another downtown location.

One possible location is Lot 7, which is located on Front St. around the block from the current location. The lot is smaller and has more vehicle traffic.

A second option is on Church St., where the current downtown library is located.

But for some, the issue boils down to sentimentalism.

Established after the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, the downtown farmers market has been located on Lot 4 for 30 years.

"The city and the community has roots here. We feel it is an important place and important community gathering spot, and we don't want to see it smothered by an enormous project," Bob Morgan, a campaign volunteer working to get Measure O passed.

A 'yes' vote on Measure O would establish Lot 4 as the permanent home for the farmers market, renovate the Downtown Branch Library and prohibit construction for above-the-ground parking garages.

Measure O also authorizes affordable housing to be built on Lot 4 but doesn't require it.

Opponents say the farmers market has been unfairly politicized to stop the project, which has been in the works since 2016.

"It's [Measure O] purpose is to just kill this existing project," a campaign volunteer working to stop the measure said.

Aside from the location, proponents say the parking garage doesn't align with the city's mission to be eco-friendly and that the multi-million dollar project is too expensive.

But according to a fiscal analysis by the city, Measure O would cost the city millions of dollars that have already gone into the project.

"Should the proposed measure be approved by the voters, it will effectively prohibit development of the proposed Downtown Library Affordable Housing Project, preventing 124 units of affordable housing from being built on public parking Lot 4, and resulting in a loss of \$6 million secured to

date in state and federal funding for the affordable housing, as well as an additional loss of over \$2.7 million of local public funding spent or encumbered to date on project predevelopment costs," the city said in a [letter](#).

Meanwhile, the Santa Cruz Farmers Markets is trying to stay out of the politics.

"Regardless of what happen with that vote...we want the community to vote on Measure O and do what they need to do. Regardless, it has nothing to do with the farmers market," Sandra Ward, the president of Santa Cruz Farmers Markets, said.

Ward says her goal is to ensure the downtown farmers market is permanent, no matter what street it's on.

The city and the Santa Cruz Farmers Markets has a memorandum of understanding on the matter.



Nonprofit Hosting Meetings On Homelessness At Library Branches

Oct. 26, 2022

By Heather Allen

Bay City News Foundation

Beginning in November, innovative solutions to homelessness in Santa Cruz County might be found at local libraries.

Neighbors for Neighbors is a new program offered by Santa Cruz Public Libraries and local nonprofit Housing Matters that organizers say could give residents a chance to learn about local issues, identify and propose homelessness solutions and foster compassion to homelessness at the neighborhood level.

The program will consist of a series of in-person meetups at select library branches where Housing Matters will provide informational overviews and guest speakers about local homelessness.

Housing Matters' chief impact officer Mer Stafford said that education around the issue of homelessness is "foundational" to those who are interested in fostering change at the "neighborhood level."

"It is our goal with Neighbors for Neighbors to help people who want to take an active role in their neighborhood. By providing a framework for discussion and opportunities for engaging in meaningful activities in their own neighborhoods," Stafford said.

Garfield Park and Capitola will serve as the pilot branches for the meetup series in November. Additional branches are scheduled to begin hosting meetups in early 2023 but have not been announced yet.

Organizers say that meetup groups will work together to brainstorm activities that can help or reduce or resolve homelessness in their neighborhoods through facilitated neighborhood-focused discussions.

Housing Matters said some informational discussions may include housing stability, barriers to supportive housing, renters' rights, local initiatives and the Housing First model, a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing housing to unhoused persons.

Groups may also participate in volunteer projects like neighborhood food pantries or voter canvassing.

The Garfield Park meetup will be Nov. 10 from 4-5 p.m. People can register at <https://santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/9774575>.

The Capitola meetup will be on Nov. 22 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. People can register at <https://santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/9690444>.

Santa Cruz Sentinel *News*

Home & Garden Digest

September 8, 2022 at 12:00 p.m.

FELTON

Scarborough Gardens offers gardening workshop

Interested in gardening? Felton Library Branch is providing three free gardening workshops for teens and adults from 4-5 p.m. Wednesday. A local gardener and nursery manager at Scarborough Gardens, Jet Van Ausdall, will lead the workshops. Workshops will be held in the Felton Library

Community Room Located at 6121 Gushee St., Felton. The program is for teens and adults. Ages from 12 yrs old and up. Registration required. Email llamasi@santacruzpl.org or call 831-427-7700 ext 7752.

Measure O report spurs debate in Santa Cruz

City continues to pursue construction of a parking garage on Lot 4.



Conceptual design of the mixed use library development from the corner of Cedar and Lincoln Streets in downtown Santa Cruz. Credit: Santa Cruz Economic Development

By [ARIC SLEEPER](#) | asleeper@santacruzsentinel.com |

PUBLISHED: September 29, 2022 at 3:44 p.m. | UPDATED: September 29, 2022 at 5:06 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ — Public debate has intensified over Measure O after two reports examining the future of the library were recently released, one created by the proponents of measure and the other by the city of Santa Cruz. With Measure O on the ballot in November, the fate of the downtown branch of the Santa Cruz Public Library and the downtown farmers market will be determined by city voters.

A grassroots initiative that qualified for the November ballot, Measure O seeks to prevent the construction of a parking garage and mixed-use building on the lot where the farmers market currently calls home, known as Lot 4. Instead of a new, mixed-use building, which would house a new library, Measure O proponents seek a renovation of the existing downtown library at 224

Church St. and to establish Lot 4 as a permanent home for the farmers market. The measure also calls for multiple city lots to be set aside for the development of affordable housing developments.

Years in the making

With the passage of 2016's Measure S, \$67 million was earmarked to modernize, upgrade and repair local libraries in Santa Cruz County. The language on the ballot stated that the Measure S funds would be used to replace failing roofs, outdated bathrooms, electrical systems, structurally damaged facilities; support growing use by children, seniors, veterans and others; expand access to modern technology; and construct or expand facilities where necessary.

In 2016, the city created a Downtown Library Advisory Committee to examine the best way to use the Measure S funds, whether it was a partial or full renovation of the existing library, a new library on the existing lot or the construction of a mixed-use building on Lot 4. The advisory committee concluded that the mixed-use building, which did not contain a housing aspect at that time, was the best way forward, and the City Council voted to move forward with the library and parking garage mixed-use building.

However, due to pushback from the community, the project was put on hold in May 2019 by order of the City Council and another subcommittee was established, which consisted of councilmembers Justin Cummings, Sandy Brown and Donna Meyers to again find the best use of the Measure S funds.

After about a year, the City Council subcommittee concluded that the mixed-use building was the best option, but to shrink the parking structure from 600 to 400 spaces and add an affordable housing element. The council voted to move forward with that recommendation at the June 23, 2020 City Council meeting despite continued public opposition.

Many of the leaders of the opposition to the parking garage and mixed-use building went on to form the organization Our Downtown, Our Future, which authored Measure O. The measure was approved by the City Council in June to be put on the Nov. 8 ballot.

City analysis

To examine the potential impacts that the passage of the measure would have on the city of Santa Cruz, the city employed Keyser Marston Associates to create an impact report, which was presented at a special council meeting on Sept. 22. The report evaluated the development feasibility of eight city lots highlighted in Measure O as potential sites for affordable housing and presented a multi-faceted comparison of the library that would be a tenant of the mixed-use building and the existing library renovation.

After the city of Santa Cruz released the report Sept. 22, proponents of the measure quickly pointed out that one of the assertions in the Keyser Marston Associates report is not a component of Measure O.

The component in question is included in the city’s summary of the Keyser Marston report, which states “Measure O would prevent ground-floor retail, restaurant, and commercial uses as part of affordable housing projects on the lots identified as priority affordable housing sites in the measure.”

John Hall, UC Santa Cruz professor emeritus and principal analyst of the Our Downtown, Our Future impact report argued that Measure O does not prevent ground level commercial, retail, or restaurant uses at the affordable housing sites listed in the measure, and was never intended to. Hall told the Sentinel that the city’s allegation featured in the report is, “a demonstrably false assertion.”

“Measure O requires affordable housing on upper levels of the designated parking lots,” said Hall. “It goes out of its way to affirm that parking and public park space are permissible on the ground level. It does not prohibit or prevent ground-floor retail, restaurant, and commercial uses as part of affordable housing projects.”

The assertion that Measure O precludes commercial, retail, or restaurant uses on the ground floor in the city’s report despite that specific language not being included in the measure itself was made through analysis by the Planning Division of the Planning & Community Development Department at the city of Santa Cruz.

In its 17-page consistency analysis comparing language in Measure O to the city’s general plan, which was provided in the Sept. 22 special meeting agenda packet, and used as a foundation for Keyser Marston Associates analysis, the planning department states the reason it included the preclusion of ground floor commercial use in the Measure O analysis is due to ambiguity in the measure’s language.

The ambiguous language that the planners refer to lies in the wording of the measure’s section regarding proposed amendments to the city’s general plan.

The measure states that, “to the maximum extent feasible, that certain designated parcels situated within the City of Santa Cruz Downtown Plan area ... shall be developed with permanently affordable housing, with parking permissible on the ground level and not permissible on floors above the ground level, and public park space permissible, where appropriate.”

The consistency analysis explains why city planners came to the conclusion that commercial and retail uses would be precluded on the ground level of the affordable housing sites designated in the measure.

“While the language of the measure is vague, as detailed previously, it could certainly be argued that the development of permanently affordable housing “to the maximum extent feasible” would prohibit the inclusion of ground-floor commercial space in affordable housing projects, since commercial uses are not identified as permissible uses on the specified lots.”

Using that assertion and other criteria including lot size, shape and building height, Keyser Marston Associates concluded that three of the city-owned parcel highlighted for affordable housing projects, Lots 7, 8 and 9 were feasible building sites and could be developed for affordable housing immediately, with or without the passage of Measure O.

Paying for parking

The Keyser Marston report also addresses the loss of potential parking spaces if Measure O passes. These spaces are replacements for the surface parking lost due to city’s development projects past, present and future. The report states that funds will be used from the city’s Parking Enterprise Fund to cover the cost of the public parking in the project, which would include between 245 and 345 parking spaces, according to the report.

However, as Our Downtown, Our Future’s Rick Longinotti has pointed out, the downtown parking district has been running a deficit since 2020 with a loss of about \$4 million in 2022, and a projected loss of about \$3 million in 2023, according to the city of Santa Cruz budget.

So far, the city has spent about \$2.7 million on planning for the mixed-use library project, and recently spent about \$35,000 on the Keyser Marston report.

For the complete Keyser Marston report, visit [cityofsantacruz.com](https://www.cityofsantacruz.com).

For the report composed by Our Downtown, Our Future, visit ourdowntownourfuture.org.

Mayor's message | General election just around the corner



California voters will narrow their choices for November's ballot in the June 7 primary.

By [SONJA BRUNNER](#) | October 8, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.

We are one month away from our next general election on Nov. 8. There will be new City Council candidates running from the newly formed District 4 and District 6, a new mayor, plus some important local city measures on the ballot.



Sonja Brunner

Measure P is a revenue measure that would align the city transient occupancy tax (TOT) with the recently passed county rate which would allow the city more financial capacity to support the city services people rely on and the workers who do the work. Measure N establishes a tax on residences that are in use less than 120 days per calendar year with revenue allocated toward affordable housing projects

Measure O prohibits construction of the almost ready to build new main branch Library and affordable housing project downtown. I encourage everyone to read the arguments for and against, as well as any impartial

analysis and fiscal impact listed on the official votescount.us website.

Sometimes, in the midst of a passionate political campaign, we can lose sight of the fundamental values we look to advance as a community. There are often exaggerated claims, and sometimes even the demonizing of an opponent, which are ultimately activities that just interfere with our ability to recognize the common goals we have for our community.

I believe one of those goals is to have a vibrant, diverse, and successful downtown neighborhood at the center of our community. This is not just a goal any Santa Cruz mayor would have — it's a special goal for me because I have worked downtown for the last 30 years, day in and day out, boots on the ground, to help make our downtown work well for everyone. My “day job,” when not serving as your mayor, is to serve the community as the director of operations of the organization whose sole purpose is creating a great downtown, the Downtown Association of Santa Cruz.

Based on my experience, here's some of what we need to make downtown work well. A healthy diverse business community that provides goods and services and entertainment to both locals and visitors. A lot of public art. A strong supply of affordable housing so that people can live, and work, in the same neighborhood and reduce their car use. Amenities, music, and activities that bring us together downtown so we can experience a rich life together even as we come from different neighborhoods and backgrounds.

This also means things like a lively farmers market, innovative gathering places, an outstanding library, and places for people who use a variety of transportation modes to access all the great things we have downtown.

Measure O seems to have become the centerpiece of our community debate about our downtown. If it passes it would change the Downtown Plan and General Plan. I've received several inquiries and some people have let me know it's tempting to embrace some of the ideas suggested by the supporters of Measure O. We all want some of the ideas Measure O promises.

However, when we zoom out and look at the whole context, those promises don't hold up when we think about a thriving downtown and the cost to our community should it pass. Measure O would create a major setback by stopping the city's largest 100% affordable housing development, at the cost of the people and families waiting and eager to apply, as well as the community diversity and equity that comes with housing that really meets the needs of our local families and workforce, now rather than some time in the future.

It will also lead to the waste of millions of dollars of funding that has been secured and taxpayer money dollars we need to spend wisely and efficiently.

Measure O would also be a setback for many local businesses, residents and visitors because of unwise parking policies and impractical land use restrictions. Measure O will send a message that almost any innovation that comes forward downtown will be hindered and become a disincentive to the community and businesses wanting to revitalize our downtown post COVID.

As a person who has committed so much of my time and energy in having a great downtown, I urge you to join me in voting No on Measure O. We can explore some of the ideas, but not at the cost of 124 low income homes so desperately needed now.

With all of the current efforts underway, including two other 100% affordable housing developments coming to the parking lot where the Metro bus center is, we can have an even better downtown that supports our community in so many ways, and we don't need Measure O getting in the way.

Sonja Brunner is the mayor of Santa Cruz.

Real estate developers, agents continue to donate thousands to campaigns against measures

'No on N' campaign has raised about \$140,000 to date



(Photo by Getty Images/iStockphoto)

By [ARIC SLEEPER](#) | asleeper@santacruzsentinel.com |

PUBLISHED: November 1, 2022 at 4:45 p.m. | UPDATED: November 1, 2022 at 5:20 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ — Since late September, real estate agents and developers have continued to contribute thousands of dollars to the campaigns opposing measures N and O. Both of the anti-measure campaigns have exceeded \$100,000 in total contributions with proponents of the measures each raising less than \$40,000.

The disclosure period ranges between late September and ending Oct. 22, but total contributions cited are calendar year totals reported at the end of the disclosure period.

MEASURE O

The proponents of Measure O, the initiative to renovate the existing downtown branch of the Santa Cruz Public Library and preserve the site of the farmers market, have raised about \$37,000 in cash and non-monetary contributions total with about \$6,500 donated during the latest disclosure period.

Of the approximately 30 individuals or groups who contributed to the Our Downtown, Our Future campaign, the largest donation during the disclosure period of \$500 was given by Santa Cruz resident Douglas Mahone, and the second largest donation of \$400 was provided by Santa Cruz-based attorney Jane Becker. The campaign also received six donations of \$250 with the remaining being less than that amount.

The proponents of Measure O spent about \$14,000 during the latest disclosure period with the largest expenditure of about \$7,200 going to Community Printers of Santa Cruz. The next largest expenditure went to the U.S. Postal Service for postage and mailing.

The campaign that opposes Measure O, known as Santa Cruz for Real Library and Housing Solutions, has raised about \$117,000 in total and about \$23,000 during the latest disclosure period ending Oct. 22.

Of the approximately 30 donations made during the disclosure period, the largest donation of \$10,000 was made by Santa Cruz-based real estate firm Redtree Partners and the second largest donation of \$5,000 came from SCFS Ventures LLC, which is an applicant in the Cruz Hotel project. Two donations of \$1,000 were made by individuals and the remaining contributions were under that amount.

The largest expenditure for the No on O campaign of about \$15,150 was paid to Miller Maxfield for campaign strategy, electronic newsletters and Facebook advertisements. The campaign paid about \$4,200 to Community Printers of Santa Cruz for mailers and walk cards, \$4,500 to Maverick Mailing for mailers and about \$1,900 to campaign coordinator Grace Stetson.

MEASURE N

The proponents of Measure N, or the empty home tax, have raised about \$39,000 in total and about \$14,000 during the latest disclosure period. Of the 19 donations made to the Yes on N campaign during that time, the largest of \$9,900 was made by the Democratic Socialists of America, and the second largest of \$600 was donated by career coach Katie Spencer.

Of the nearly \$20,000 spent during the disclosure period, the biggest payment of about \$7,800 was made to Community Printers of Santa Cruz. The campaign also made a large payment of about \$7,500 to the Postal Service for postage and mailing.

The opponents of the empty home tax, called Santa Cruz Together, have raised about \$137,000 in total with about \$38,000 donated to the campaign during the latest disclosure period. The biggest donation of \$29,900 was given to the campaign by the Los Angeles-based California Association of Realtors, which has donated about \$50,000 to the campaign in total. A donation of \$5,000 was made by Long Beach-based corporation S.C. Beach Hotel Partners LLC. The other 15 donations made during the period were for \$500 or less.

Santa Cruz Together's biggest expenditure of about \$60,000 during the latest disclosure period went to San Francisco-based campaign consultants Rally Campaigns.

For the full campaign disclosure forms, visit public.netfile.com.

Coast Line | Downtown library to open at 1 p.m. Wednesday

September 20, 2022 at 2:35 p.m.

SANTA CRUZ

Downtown Santa Cruz Library to Open Late

The Downtown branch of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries will open late, at 1 p.m. on Wednesday. No reason was provided by the library for the late opening.

Stephen Kessler | Who are the real friends of the library?

PUBLISHED: September 10, 2022 at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: September 10, 2022 at 6:26 a.m.

A key tactical weapon in city management’s offensive to impose a library-garage on unsuspecting civilians who thought they had voted to renovate the downtown Santa Cruz Public Library was the creation of the Downtown Library Advisory Committee, a panel of about a dozen volunteers selected (recruited?) by then-Councilwoman Cynthia Mathews — despite her recusal from council decisions for conflict of interest — and then-Library Director Susan Nemitz to achieve their preordained outcome. This committee was tasked with “advising” the city as to what kind of library we needed.

In order to determine what people wanted in the way of a library, the DLAC sent out a survey about its desired features, for example a children’s area, a teen area, computers, internet access, genealogy section, local history, meeting rooms, perhaps even some books. Nowhere in this survey was there any mention of moving the library out of Civic Center and combining it with a garage — nor, as was added much later, a housing development. The rationale for this bait-and-switch maneuver was mainly fiscal: By being combined with parking (and concealing this decision from the public), the library would benefit in getting more bang from its budget.

The DLAC returned with people’s wish list of favored features, and only then was the public informed that the sole and exclusive way they could get the library they wanted was to move it to Lot 4 on Cedar Street and mix it with a gigantic block-long garage. When the public cried foul and, in email and comments before the City Council, came back roughly four-to-one against the city’s plan, the city added 125 units of “affordable housing.” So now, instead of a two-headed, five-story monster, the new building would be a three-headed, eight-story monster. People were told that

this was the best use of the money remaining from library bond Measure S, which would not be enough to renovate the seismically sound, if unmaintained, old library.

Bottom line: Only a new library-garage-apartment complex would pencil out according to the city's calculations, so whether you wanted a renovation or didn't want to move the library was irrelevant. It was a new library in a new location, combined with components you never asked for, or nothing.

Some citizens who objected to the devious, manipulative, pseudo-democratic process by which the mixed-use megalith was approved despite popular opposition took the initiative to gather nearly 5,000 signatures to place a referendum on the November ballot, Measure O.

Yes on O demands that the city mothers and fathers apply their political will — until now devoted exclusively to the garage-library (apartments) — and the same additional millions needed for their Taj Garage, to renovate the Civic Center library; save Lot 4 for a tree-studded public plaza and permanent home for the weekly farmers market; and build affordable housing on other city lots, most naturally Lot 7 at Front and Cathcart, where the city has decided to move the farmers market. Without a library, Lot 7 has much more space for housing, the artificial sweetener that's become the project's main selling point.

Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries recently sent a memo to its roughly 770 supporters urging them to vote no on Measure O for reasons you will no doubt be bombarded with in the coming weeks. That their 15-member board of directors — less than 2% — made this call without polling the membership (technically not members but mere donors) is in character with the top-down presumption of this whole campaign.

Half the lesson here is that when established powers put their mind to something, they won't let public opinion stand in their way. The other half is that people have the right to resist this kind of political coercion by offering voters a counterproposal — in this case Measure O, on which I will be voting yes.

Stephen Kessler is a four-time recipient of the California Library Association's PR Excellence Award for The Redwood Coast Review, which he founded and edited from 1999 through 2014 for Coast Community Library in Point Arena.

Guest Commentary | Housing and Library: Nothing funny about this needed project

PUBLISHED: September 10, 2022 at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: September 10, 2022 at 6:31 a.m.

In my recent exchanges in the Sentinel with Stephen Kessler about the Affordable Housing and Library project downtown, I've tangled with him on a "creative" level. I've tried to include some humor, as has he.

For me that ends today. Some readers have asked me just to stick to the facts. I'm good with that. I'll stop trying to be a comedian.

Here we go.

Kessler suggests that the only green feature of the new library in this project is its green roof. In fact, the new library will also be heated with non-carbon energy. Reducing the use of carbon fuel is one of the best things we can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It's also a fact that the renovated library Kessler favors will continue to use fossil fuels and therefore have a larger carbon impact in its day-to-day operation.

Kessler made fun of including a childcare center in the project. However, it is a fact that many people who live and work downtown need access to child care.

Kessler states correctly that there will be concrete in the new project. Here's another fact: renovation of the old library will require concrete. A renovation also requires major construction disruption, disposal of old building elements, and use of wood and steel.

Kessler said he has trouble understanding how affordable housing works. Here's how it works: in real affordable housing, the standard rent target is 30% of household income. A family can qualify for affordable housing if it makes less than a set percentage of the median income of our community. About half of households in our community are eligible. Unlike Kessler, most aren't confused about whether they qualify for affordable housing. They are confused as to where they can find housing. It's a fact that 124 of those households would find affordable apartments in the new building.

Kessler says that because many people in the community signed a petition, they participated in formulating it. However, the petition has 11 pages of city policies. Neither Kessler nor I can say how many signers actually read these. It's certainly fair to say that not very many read all those pages. And none of the folks who signed it, other than the handful who drafted it in private, contributed to its language. Though Kessler tries to minimize this, there were no public meetings to review the drafts of Measure O before the petition was finalized.

When the community has a serious participatory process for creating policies and projects, there are dozens of public meetings with many opportunities for input. This is exactly what happened with the five year process for shaping the Library Housing project. That's why it has changed and added new features. Many have celebrated the addition of affordable apartments, a better-quality library, a childcare center, and green public open space. Kessler is, in fact, making fun of those changes.

Kessler suggests the opponents of Measure O aren't accurate in cost comparisons related to the library alternatives. The latest numbers opponents use compare the costs of a new library to the

costs of a renovated library and the costs are very similar. But the new library version delivers a larger, more energy-efficient library with many more features for library users.

Kessler says that parking in the project is for valet parking at a luxury hotel. The simple fact is that the project's parking is just enough to simply replace the parking that is going away or has already gone away. There is no luxury hotel associated with the Library Housing project.

It appears that the most important feature of Kessler's recent Commentary is to ridicule the project, the people associated with it, and the issues around it. But the affordable housing challenges of our community aren't funny. Building the best library for the community is a serious effort. Parents rarely think of their need for child care as a joke. Can you recall ever laughing when having difficulty finding a parking space?

I'm done joking around about Kessler's commentaries. I'm just going to work with a fine group of community members that want real affordable housing, a great library, a strong farmers market, and a better Downtown. We are working together to defeat Measure O.

Don Lane is the Governing Board Chair of Housing Santa Cruz County and Vice President of the Board of Housing Matters.

Editorial | Yes on O, measure that will end multi-use library planning

By [EDITORIAL BOARD](#) | editorial@santacruzsentinel.com | Santa Cruz Sentinel

September 20, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

It's a classic Santa Cruz development debate.

It was spawned when a group of leaders in the city of Santa Cruz put in motion several years ago a plan to build a new downtown library along with a parking garage, and, in a subsequent iteration, affordable housing units, all worthwhile goals funded by a countywide library tax passed by voters in 2016.

But the proposal from the start generated intense opposition from many city residents, who felt the planned project was a violation of trust from 2016's Measure S.

Instead, they asked, why not simply renovate the existing downtown main branch library with the Measure S money and turn the parking lot where the multi-use project has been planned into even more of a community gathering space?

Without getting lost in the tall weeds of the arguments and studies around this project, including the removal of heritage trees, from the start we have felt that plans put in motion for the multi-use

project were not in the spirit of the 2016 measure passed by voters. We also have previously advocated in this space for putting the planned new project clearly before voters.

And Measure O does just this.

We thus urge a Yes vote on Measure O, the initiative on the Nov. 8 Santa Cruz ballot put forward by Our Downtown Our Future, a group calling for renovating the existing downtown library and ending the planning for the garage/affordable housing/new library project.

If you haven't been reading the back and forth debates about this proposal in these pages, the multi-use project would be constructed on city parking Lot 4, the home of the popular farmers market.

Measure O supporters would like to see the farmers market (whose organizers have not taken a stand on this issue) remain where it is and that Lot 4 become a community commons.

The Lot 4 proposal includes 124 units of affordable housing. Measure O proposes using other city parking lots for this purpose and backers say doing this would increase the areas designated for affordable housing downtown by approximately 2.47 acres. They say this would allow creation of between 305 and up to 433 units of affordable housing.

Backers of the Lot 4 project say that the Measure O projections are essentially fantasy, and that it would take many years to put together another affordable housing project to replace the units lost if Measure O passes. The Measure O proposed lots, they say, are not as suitable or well located as Lot 4, which they emphasize is a parking lot, not some sort of iconic open space. Even if O passes, city officials told the Sentinel Editorial Board, housing could still be proposed for Lot 4.

Regarding parking, the project as planned would create an additional 180 spaces, needed to support downtown businesses, supporters of the new library maintain. Our Downtown Our Future counters that at present many off-street parking garage spaces have remained vacant even at peak times and that increased parking rates will only further suppress demand.

For about the same cost, they say, the renovated Civic Center library would have interior space of 30,230 square feet versus 38,086 square feet in the proposed Lot 4 library building.

While this would be a smaller main branch library, the location is far preferable and the environmental impacts of renovation versus new construction would be significant.

Our Downtown Our Future has done its homework in their advocacy for Measure O including a detailed report released Monday intended to counter studies about the project prepared for the Santa Cruz City Council.

A reading of Santa Cruz recent history indicates that when significant community opposition arises to a project, said project usually is doomed. It will hardly be a surprise if Measure O, characterized by supporters of the multi-use library plan as classic Santa Cruz NIMBYism, is ratified by voters.

A majority of Sentinel Editorial Board members, though not all, support Measure O, citing the size, scope and tangled history of the multi-use project.

In that spirit and for the reasons cited above, we urge a Yes vote on Santa Cruz Measure O.

Guest Commentary | Why I can't support Measure O

September 21, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

By Andy Schiffrin

The passage of Measure O won't just stop the new library, it will kill the opportunity for 124 working families to live in Santa Cruz.

I cannot in good conscience support a ballot measure that will eliminate such critically needed affordable housing.

What are the key issues?

- A new library

As a regular user of the downtown library improving library services is important to me. The existing library building needs help and the proposed plans to rehabilitate the library will certainly make it better. But I also think the proposed new library will be a positive, attractive addition to the downtown providing enhanced library services.

The library in downtown Watsonville, which is built as part of a parking garage, is a good example of how a well-designed library can successfully fit into a downtown.

- Affordable housing

No matter what you think about a new versus renovated library, it is undeniable that Measure O will eliminate the development of 124 housing units affordable by low-income families struggling to make a living and survive in our outrageously expensive housing market.

The proponents of Measure O say that they aren't against affordable housing and, in fact, support it. Unfortunately, that will not be the outcome if the measure passes.

Measure O designates a number of downtown parking lots for affordable housing. However, nothing prevents the city from developing these lots for affordable housing without the measure's passage.

The proponents argue that the project's affordable housing could be built on Lot 4 without the mixed-use library project by simply changing the plans. But this just isn't how the development process works. The city would have to start from scratch to put a feasible new project together.

- The City Council

There are people mad at the current City Council majority and don't trust anything they promote. I share some of these concerns and strongly oppose several of the council majority's recent actions. Its willingness to move forward with a General Plan amendment that would allow a 17-18 story building in an expanded downtown is an example.

But this is not a good reason to oppose a project that will provide needed housing for 124 lower-income families.

The decision on the mixed-use project should not be based on who supports or opposes it, but on whether it is good for the community.

Also, it's important to remember that the affordable housing is integral to the entire project and the library and parking cannot feasibly be built without the affordable units.

- 300 parking spaces

There are also those who don't want more parking downtown and oppose the 300 parking spaces that are part of the project. However, these spaces will replace the ones lost on Lot 4 as well as partially meet the demand for parking from this and other housing developments downtown. I don't think this concern justifies losing 124 low-income housing units.

- Project feasibility

Measure O proponents argue that the mixed-use project isn't financially viable. But if the project isn't feasible, why is the initiative needed to stop it?

Responding to our community's severe affordable housing crisis is more important to me than whether the city renovates the existing library or builds a new one, or whether the project contains 300 parking spaces, or whether the farmers market moves a few blocks away, or even whether I like or support the City Council majority. With or without the passage of Measure O, we'll have a decent library, inadequate parking, and a Farmers Market downtown at a new, improved permanent home.

The critical question is – Do we want 124 lower income families to have the opportunity to live there? If Measure O passes, affordable housing for those 124 families will be lost.

For this reason, I can't support Measure O and urge you to vote "No."

Andy Schiffrin has been involved in local politics for many years. This commentary represents his personal views.

Guest Commentary | Support the downtown library project – Vote No on O

September 24, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

By Gretchen Regenhardt, Matt Farrell and Amy Newell

Many housing-related measures are on the ballot this year. Among the most important is the measure designed to defeat the downtown library and mixed-use housing development proposed for downtown Santa Cruz. Proponents of this measure (Measure O on the Santa Cruz city ballot) object to the location of the project, the project's inclusion of parking, the new library and, presumably, the 125 units of 100% affordable housing this project will produce.

The proposed new library in Santa Cruz has been in the works since 2016. In the six years since voters passed Measure S to provide funds for library infrastructure, the project has been studied from all angles to determine the best use of Measure S funds. The mixed-use housing and library project, already approved and funded, is the very best and highest use of the limited land downtown and will bring Santa Cruz County a state-of-the-art library (something impossible to achieve by renovating the existing library), 125 units of 100% affordable housing, and parking sufficient to serve the residents of the 125 units as well as those who will live in other residential projects downtown, those who must commute to work in Santa Cruz, and visitors or tourists.

Opponents of the project cite concerns about the Farmers Market, the availability of other potential sites for affordable housing development downtown, and concerns that the parking structure will somehow overwhelm the library or is not needed. These concerns are baseless.

- **Farmers Market:** There are many sites available for the Farmers Market downtown. A new permanent site at Lot 7 (behind Kianti's restaurant) is currently part of the city's plan going forward. The Farmers Market itself has not taken a position against the new library project and is working with the city on this new location.
- **Other housing sites:** We have an affordable housing crisis. There is limited land to accommodate our housing needs and it is essential to maximize available land for affordable housing development. A non-profit developer, Eden Housing, has been chosen, the plans have been drawn up, and the permitting and financing for these 125 units of affordable housing are well underway. These 125 housing units are desperately needed and are real – not just a possibility in some theoretical future. And, dangerously, many of the sites designated for affordable housing development in Measure O are not viable for affordable housing development due to small size, location, or configuration. Locking in those sites for affordable housing development only may doom them to no development at all. Is this actually the desired goal of Measure O's authors?
- **The parking structure:** The architectural drawings show an attractive structure with a bright, light-filled library, a childcare center, and affordable housing. The parking structure in no way

dominates the library. Anyone doubting that a mixed-use parking structure can be attractive need only visit Watsonville with its state-of-the-art library/parking garage/ courthouse/city government center covered in stunning local mosaic artwork, one of the jewels of downtown Watsonville. The proposed parking structure in the Santa Cruz library project is necessary to replace the parking that will be lost at Lot 4, to serve the patrons and residents of the new library and housing development, and to serve the future occupants of four residential projects that are already approved or under construction downtown, none of which will include parking. While we all hope for a time when reliance on cars is reduced, we are not at that point now.

Since none of the reasons given for opposing the new library and mixed-use housing project hold up, it can only be that those leading the campaign against it are opposed to change – even change for the better. The mixed-use library and affordable housing project is good for Santa Cruz. Vote No on O!

Gretchen Regenhardt is a housing advocate and former Regional Director of California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc, now retired. Matt Farrell is a former Santa Cruz City School Board Trustee, now retired. Amy Newell is the former Director of the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council, now retired.

Mark Primack | Measure O: Demand to be included in library plan

By [MARK PRIMACK](#) | Santa Cruz Sentinel

October 2, 2022 at 7:30 a.m.

At 92, the feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray is still going strong. Fifty years ago, she chastised the French intelligentsia for getting lost in the weeds of power and process. She reminded them that “It’s easier to be a parent than a person.” If you’ve been parent, child or both, you understand that it’s a lot easier to claim authority than to earn respect.

Do we need parenting? The anti-Measure O propaganda says we do. Their embrace of negativity and their willingness to deepen community polarization belie the flimsy logic of the library/garage project and the process that spawned it. When those who have relentlessly and unapologetically hobbled housing for decades start shedding crocodile tears for the project’s residential afterthought, it begs the question of what this whole plan was ever really about.

No doubt, aggressive negativity is a powerful weapon for a parent. Witness the Greenway opposition. Anger, fear and finger-pointing can get electoral juices flowing a lot faster than facts, and with greater finality than thoughtful discourse. But the library garage project was never based on sound urban planning principles, environmental sustainability precepts or even new trends in library facilities. It’s just what happens when city engineers and managers follow the money and then rely on veteran politicians — our aging parents – to convince us that it’s all worth swallowing.

That's why public engagement always feels like a well-orchestrated Easter egg hunt. Staff and their consultants — experts not of cities, not of substance, but of due process — hide their prescribed solutions in plain sight for all the little folk to discover. And then, mandatory hearings dotted and public concerns crossed, the city council ceremoniously rubber stamps the project and the money gets spent.

But what happens when a few people — not necessarily representative of the larger community, maybe just rival parents — make a fuss? Well, throw 'em a bone. Some housing, maybe, or a day-care facility, an eco-friendly bell here, a social justice whistle there, so they can applaud themselves and go home. They usually do, and that's great because staff and politicians alike can then hold up the finished grab bag as proof of an inclusive process and move on to the next event. We call this planning and community engagement. The results never fail to disappoint.

Denied direct civic engagement, we've resigned ourselves to electing politicians. Too mobile to appreciate the steady evolution of vibrant cities, we take shelter in the dead wood of zoning regulations. Discouraged from sheltering ourselves, we entrust our housing to corrupt and profligate building codes. Is it laziness, apathy, or have our lives become too scattered or self-absorbed?

The authors of Measure O don't have a better plan. That's not really their job. They've simply asked the essential questions that any sincere planning process would have asked upfront. They want to know what will make downtown a great place for this and future generations, and what will make it the go-to place for community and commerce and politics and culture and recreation. And they want to know where all the opportunity sites are for that better downtown before the wrecking balls swing, before the farmers' market is displaced and before our long-neglected civic center—library, city hall and auditorium—is diluted or dispersed. These simple questions put them miles ahead of those who have learned only to lower their heads and charge into the void.

The long path, from community support for modernizing our actual library to a referendum insisting that we do just that, is the measure of our own failure to be engaged and committed persons in a democratic society. We're the ones who didn't show up. We elected parents rather than persons, and they in turn sanctioned an administration that treats us like children.

In supporting Measure O, we will register a demand to be included — not patronized or parented. And we will acknowledge a systemic failure in both leadership and public service. If we can take that first step, face that first fact, we can move forward as one city.

Guest Commentary | Why the multi-use library project is vital for Santa Cruz

PUBLISHED: November 1, 2022 at 2:35 p.m. | UPDATED: November 1, 2022 at 2:48 p.m.

By Matt Huffaker, Santa Cruz City Manager

The Santa Cruz City Council recently received an update on changes to the proposed Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project. This is an exciting project — nothing in the city’s recent history has provided an opportunity to address so many needs in our community or evolved so much as a result of public participation and years of community input. The project continues to take shape, so there is much news to share about recent changes.

First, a quick explanation for why we at the city are so excited about this project. The Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project will address the housing insecurity that plagues our community; provide a beautiful, modern library with expanded services for our youth; replace critical parking that will be lost as city parking lots are used for higher and better purposes, including affordable housing projects; create desperately needed childcare space; and provide new green spaces for outdoor gatherings. In addition, the city has been working closely with the downtown Farmers’ Market to establish a permanent, year-round home.

So, what’s new?

The Farmers’ Market Board of Directors recently unanimously approved a formal agreement with the city to establish a permanent home for the market in the downtown. The new location will provide more amenities than the current spot, such as an open-air pavilion, space for food trucks, and a large commons for market-goers and the community to gather. The city has already approved \$1.775 million from capital funding for the project.

We’re happy to report that after working closely with the community and local affordable housing advocates, 100% of the project’s 124 housing units will be rented at deeply affordable rent, with all units priced for incomes below \$77,000 (30-60% of area median Income, or AMI).

Parking for the project has also evolved, thanks to input from downtown merchants and transportation advocates. Downtown is projected to lose 450 public, off-street parking spaces by 2030. While the parking lots will be used for important projects like affordable housing, it leaves the community with a big loss in parking downtown. Originally the library project looked to replace lost parking and then some, with 600 spaces included. But after hearing from the community, that number has been reduced to 243 spaces in a three-story garage, while bike parking and electric vehicle charging stations have increased significantly, including many “secure” spaces like bike lockers.

After several community meetings and workshops, a beautiful design for the library and the overall project building has taken shape, and design renderings can be seen on the city’s website.

A new Downtown Library branch brings important community connection spaces that meet the needs of the diverse inhabitants of Santa Cruz. The easy-to-access community room and first-floor

multipurpose room provide additional reservable space for library and community-led programming.

The second floor of the new library includes a dedicated teen area and study rooms, something currently lacking in the existing facility. The Life Literacies Center shifts to the second floor, providing space instrumental in delivering outreach services to anyone seeking educational and career assistance and drop-in services for veterans. The library's partnership with the genealogical society will continue in the Special Collections room, which will house information on local history.

Finally, project financing includes using Measure S funds, which will be used for the library component only, and federal, state, and Central Coast Community Energy grants as well as conventional housing loans, tax credits and other grants to fund affordable housing (including an earmark by Congressman Jimmy Panetta). The parking component will be funded by bonds and other financing support that will be repaid through fees paid by users of downtown parking facilities and on-street parking meters. The child-care component and amenities for the residents, including the residential open space, will be financed through state and federal funding applications and awards, as both of these elements are eligible for tax credits.

Much has been said about the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project, as one would expect with a project of this scope. It's the city's job to ensure the continued vitality of the community we serve, and we believe this project has the potential to serve as an anchor for our downtown and for the future of our community. We invite residents to learn the facts about the project by visiting our website at cityofsantacruz.com/mixeduselibrary.

Ed. note: We are publishing the columns today on state Proposition 30 and this one relating to Santa Cruz Measure O in the interest of fairness. The Sentinel has recommended a No vote on Prop. 30 and a Yes vote on Measure O.

Santa Cruz Sentinel **Letters**

Letter | Lane running out of justifications for project

September 13, 2022 at 6:00 a.m.

Don Lane (Guest Commentary Sept. 10) seems to be running out of reasons to justify the absurd marriage between an unneeded parking garage, the downtown library, and affordable housing. He says a renovated library would still use fossil fuels. The consultant's assessment of the existing library makes it clear that the existing HVAC system needs to be replaced. Speaking as an HVAC engineering professional, there is absolutely no justification for replacing the existing system with the same antiquated type of system.

Next, he decries the lack of public input in drafting Measure O, and praises the lengthy public input process for the current plan, neglecting that during that public input process, opposition to the project typically ran 3 to 1 or higher. In the case of Measure O all four community organizations involved in drafting it welcomed input from everyone on their respective mailing lists. O Yes!

— *Len Beyea, Santa Cruz*

Letter | A contractor weighs in on multi-use library project

September 19, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The greenest building is an existing one, remodeled to meet the desires of the owners. The Taj Garage debate hinges on values, money, and emotional manipulation.

As a contractor with 40 years' experience, I offer a fact check for the library debate:

- Asbestos abatement, a routine in today's construction, will occur at the existing library, regardless of remodeling or demolition.
- Asbestos abatement does not represent a large cost and is performed by an environmentally safe process.

The construction of the parking garage will devalue our environment:

- Excavation of 19,000 cubic yards of dirt for the garage, creates a giant hole.
- Keeping that hole dry for workers and the garage after, ground water will need to be pumped during construction and for the life of the building.
- 60,000 cubic yards of concrete, (conservative estimate), will be needed for construction, adding 24 million pounds of CO2 to the atmosphere.

— *Lee Brokaw, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Kessler has it right on garage/library 'fiasco'

September 20, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Thank you to Stephen Kessler for his columns on the garage/library fiasco. The City Council wants to keep us in the dark about the project, but Kessler keeps us informed. That's good journalism.

Also, thanks to a frequent letter writer who has been documenting the hundreds of empty spaces in just two of the existing parking garages on both a weekend evening and during business hours on a weekday. His work shows that consultants who said more parking garages were not needed were correct.

Those in favor of the garage/library resort to personal attacks when faced with opposition, calling Kessler a bad person or a bad journalist. That's what people do when the facts aren't on their side. Do they really believe we want a downtown full of huge buildings like the one going up on Laurel? Save a little of the charm of Santa Cruz. Vote yes on O.

— *Larry Millsap, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Measure O, Ukraine debates often polarizing

September 22, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The Opinion section has been abuzz with debate about many issues. Much of the debate has gotten tiring, combative, vicious. Locals often seem as polarized and unyielding as those in “other places,” those we ridicule and scoff at.

Debate over Measure O and the Ukraine conflict are examples of issues that evoke less-than-civil exchanges. Each issue is nuanced, complex, yet each “side” in the debates seem to have reasonable, valid arguments supporting their positions. Where we stand on either issue demands our open-minded attention and willingness to compromise.

But it's difficult to compromise knowing that when we voted for Measure S in 2016, the garage/library was not what we voted for! So, I'll vote to remodel the existing library, keep open space.

Valid arguments exist either supporting or opposing our efforts in Ukraine. But arming combatants so they can kill and destroy is wrong. I oppose our arming Ukraine. Peace.

— *Steve Bare, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Measure O and housing: Funds were for library

September 23, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

A Guest Commentary by Andy Schiffrin (Sept. 22 Opinion) proposed that if Measure O passes, “affordable housing for ... 124 families will be lost.”

Where is that housing? It's in a plan for affordable housing which is dependent upon funds which we, the people, voted to use for a library.

Nothing has been built. Housing for 124 families is an idea and not really houses at all. We cannot lose what we do not have. And the idea remains.

I could be persuaded to vote for Measure O, and I need reasonable arguments based on fact, not fiction.

— *Mary Offermann, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Keep library/housing project viable: No on O

September 23, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Andy Schiffrin, a longtime advocate for active transportation and transit, knows that we need to build housing for all incomes not just because it's good for our community – it also supports our goals to create high-quality effective public transit.

His recent Guest Commentary about his decision to oppose Measure O was informative. Let's keep the library affordable housing project going as part of our vision of abundant housing and effective transit. Vote No on O!

— *Kyle Kelley, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Don't be fooled by claims of Measure O opponents

September 25, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The proposed downtown library relocation, which would cut down the 100-year old Magnolia trees at the farmers market site (Lot 4), is now called the “Downtown Affordable Housing & Library Project” on new yard signs. No mention is made of the three-level parking garage — more parking spaces than housing units.

The misleading yard signs warn “Don't be fooled.”

Yes, don't be fooled. Keep the library in the Civic Center, save the heritage trees, stop the garage, fight climate chaos. Vote Yes on Measure O.

— *Debbie Bulger, Santa Cruz*

Letter | New study rebukes Sentinel support for O

September 25, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

On Sept. 22, the Santa Cruz City Council held a special meeting to hear the report of an outside specialist's study on the effects for downtown of Measure O, Our Downtown, Our Future. It was an impartial study. Please publish the findings which rebuke your editorial stance supporting Measure O.

— *Geri Lieby, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Not mentioned in library project: Staffing

September 29, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

As this saga unfolds, various questions have popped up. In Tuesday's Sentinel, it was a letter writer asking about the costs involved in demolition or repurposing of the present downtown library. Mine is — with the proposed increase in square footage, are the present librarians and staffing levels expected to stay the same or will the next detail brought to us be the fact that staffing has to be increased?

In one case, everyone has to work harder. Is staff onboard with that? In the other? What are the costs and how will they be paid for?

— *Sandra Cohen, Santa Cruz*

Letter | No on O: New library project is 'visionary'

October 5, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The case for the new library is clear: it would be a source of civic pride and serve as a space for learning, public gathering, and in this innovative case, affordable housing. It makes perfect sense in this day and age that affordable housing be included in a project that is focused on the public good. The rent for the 124 affordable units are legally restricted to low levels, with zero market-rate units because of the state funds involved in the project.

If Measure O passes, this incredible opportunity will be lost. The plans and funding are in place for this visionary community oriented project. Santa Cruz needs affordable housing now.

Don't buy into the invented nostalgia and misinformation peddled by the Measure O supporters. Santa Cruz is better than that. Vote No on O.

— *Elizabeth Cowell, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Measure O just affirms 2016 vote on library

October 5, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

There is no more compelling siren song to the disengaged voter than "Don't be fooled!" on the signs opposing Measure O, where a Yes vote simply affirms the voters' approval in 2016 for renovating the library where it is. No one wants to be a putz, so you vote "no" – and inadvertently affirm the City Council's bait-and-switch from what we actually approved.

Here's the new, previously undisclosed-to-voters plan: move the library to the farmers market site and demolish the heritage trees. Borrow to construct a parking garage which no one has been able to show we need. But the most manipulative twist? The addition of 120-some units of housing, the implication being that no one dares vote against housing! Never mind that there are

seven other city-owned lots that could support housing without acquiescing to this package which voters never agreed to. “Don’t be fooled?” Give me a break!

— *Nadene Thorne, Santa Cruz*

Letter | No on O: Smaller ‘saved’ library not the answer

October 6, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Measure O proponents claim they are saving the existing library but what they won’t tell you is the “saved” library will be 8,000 square feet smaller than the new library. Even worse, the smaller “saved” library will cost \$280 more per square foot because remodeling costs far more than new construction. Even worse, renovating the existing library requires the main branch to close for two years instead of just quickly moving into the new facility. Even worse, the smaller “saved” library only gets half the landscaping; will not have an integrated childcare facility and, will not be green certified.

Don’t be fooled. Stop the madness. For an 8,000 square foot, bigger, better library that will save energy and money, vote No on O.

— *Mark Mesiti-Miller, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Stop the ‘Frankenlibrary’ and restore existing library

October 8, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

Like the tragic monster, this so-called “library complex” has been cobbled together from assembled body-parts that will never form an organic whole. “Our” City Council is peddling a vast and inhumane, concrete-and-glass library combined with a massive, unneeded and unfunded carpark, with some “affordable” housing tacked on. With the smoke and mirrors gone, we see the real intention – making money for wealthy developers and their council skills.

The true carbon footprint of the Frankenlibrary will be far larger than restoring our existing, heritage library as the heart of a revitalized town center that will include our historic Civic center and our beautiful Spanish-Style City Hall and gardens. This is why Measure O is supported by so many responsible members of our eco-community, including SCAN, Santa Cruz for Bernie, the Sierra Club, the Santa Cruz Sentinel, and Spokesman Bicycles – and that’s just a few that begin with the letter ‘S’!!

— *Anthony McNaught, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Unfair to let only city voters decide library

October 11, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Every time I read that the “city residents” will decide the outcome of the Santa Cruz County Library system’s final and permanent location, I shout out loud or silently in my head: not fair, not fair, not fair. This sub group of our county residents have an overly large power to dictate what happens with county-wide resources. I live in Live Oak, my tax dollars support the county library. How on earth did we wind up with a tiny group of over-educated, under-responsive, elitist citizens making major decisions for everyone?

— *Johanna Bowen, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Let’s move on to a great new library with multi uses

October 11, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

I’m a long time Santa Cruz resident and a former school and public librarian with a special interest in children’s library services, computers and historical matters. I want Measure O to fail so we can move on with great new library in a multi-use building. Low-income seniors and families with children will be living in the adjoining affordable housing. They will be able to walk out their doors and become library users.

I see the parking garage as a climate mitigator with electric charging stations, secure bike parking and Zipcar and electric bike share rentals. Don’t forget needed downtown restrooms. Also, a parking garage will provide short-term parking for shoppers, restaurant goers and the many library patrons who are in and out picking up book and music requests and taking children to storytelling programs. When the new library opens, the current library area can become a Downtown Commons.

— *Nancy Lenz, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Hoodwinked by politicians again on library project

October 13, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

When we approved Measure S, we voted “to modernize, upgrade, and repair local libraries”— the exact language of the ballot measure. But we were hoodwinked by the politicians yet again. Instead of remodeling our library, we got another Soviet-style eight-story box with a parking garage, 124 “affordable” apartments, a “child care” center, bicycle parking, “space zoning by audience” with a “technology-rich teen area” and “engaging children’s spaces”— on the site of our farmers market. The renderings of this boondoggle on the city’s website show exactly one picture with a small shelf with — books.

In June, the Grand Jury report on Measure S stated, “The SCPL is a bystander without direct say in how Measure S funds are spent ... People feel betrayed when they see their voter-approved tax dollars being spent on something they did not anticipate.” You think?

— *David Emberson, Santa Cruz*

Letter | What Measure O proponents won't tell you

October 13, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Measure O proponents claim the Library and Affordable Housing project is an environmental disaster. What they won't tell you is that the project will reduce the need to drive downtown for library users and for those who now commute to downtown jobs from far away. The Library and Affordable Housing project will transform an inefficient parking lot into a brand-new library that is 25% bigger than the existing library and will build 124 affordable homes within a one-block walk of our downtown bus station. They also won't tell you the new project includes 258 bike parking spaces that will encourage cycling instead of driving, which is more bike parking spaces than car parking spaces. They also won't tell you the old library they want to remodel is about a half a mile away from the bus station, which rules out taking the bus for most people. Vote No on O.

— *J. Elizabeth Smith, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Brunner diminished office with column against O

October 15, 2022 at 7:00 a.m.

Was anyone hoping all the Red White and Blue “Vote” buttons above Oct. 8’s “Mayor’s Message” might herald inspiring words that would encourage everyone to get out and vote? No such luck! Sonja Brunner diminishes her office by furthering City Hall’s misrepresentation of “Yes on O.”

Certainly, low-income housing is essential, but let us craft it with respect for those who will be making their homes there. It should not be stitched onto a massive, concrete library/parking/housing/commercial juggernaut that will permanently blight our downtown. As Brunner, virtuously, repeats her mantra, “124 low-income units,” we see the bag of candy being dangled, enticingly, from the window of the circling van. Yes, the candy is real – but it is, unfortunately, being used as bait to tempt the unwary. If we climb in the van, we will place ourselves in the hands of predatory developers who have only one motivation – profit.

— *Anthony McNaught, Santa Cruz*

Letter | All county residents should vote on library

October 21, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Preserving, or not, the historic Santa Cruz branch of our public library system should be a matter for all county residents to decide. When the Scotts Valley library was closed for renovations, I frequented the Felton branch. I meet weekly with my ESL student at the Capitola branch. I'm eager to visit the Aptos branch once it is completed.

Having lived here for more than 45 years, I believe downtown Santa Cruz is the heartbeat of our coastal community. I believe we can renew and revitalize its character. We should all be able to have a say. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

I urge those of you who can to vote Yes on Measure O.

— *Carol Campbell, Scotts Valley*

Letter | Friends of Library should not be playing politics

October 25, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

The Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Library has come out against Measure O. As a long time supporter and donor, I am offended that the leadership should take a position on this measure, when it is patently clear that the membership would fall on both sides. I love libraries, I love books, I love my community. I cannot continue to support an organization that plays politics when it should not.

— *Jack Bowers, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Sentinel 'political bias' in evidence in Lot 4 article

October 26, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

I was disappointed, but not surprised, to see the Sentinel's political bias shine through last Sunday's front page headline, "Trees up for removal in Farmers Market lot." Already questioning the newsworthiness of removing nine non-native trees, it quickly became obvious that this "story" was actually a veiled endorsement of the controversial Measure O – a NIMBY effort to kill the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project. The advertisement makes its best effort to appeal to trending topics in Santa Cruzan groupthink – "Don't move the Farmers Market!", "Save the Trees!", "Stop San Jose Developers!".

The article makes no mention of the fact that the Sentinel has formally endorsed Measure O. Please reserve the front page for actual news, and not propaganda to achieve the Sentinel's political goals.

— *Mark Seelos, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Something wrong with plans for more housing

October 29, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Santa Cruz County is preparing to update its General Plan Housing Element. The state-mandated program “asks” for 4,634 new units to be built in eight years beginning in '23.

4,634 new units for a county of 270,000 citizens pencils out to about 672,000 new units in a state with nearly 40 million citizens, assuming building is mandated statewide. 4,634 in SC County and 672,000 new housing units in the state appear to be mandated.

There’s not enough space in this letter to address issues like liveability, water, local self-determination, pollution, over-crowding, sustainability, traffic, quality of life, corporate dominance, misinformation, exploitation, etc.

But in SC, we’re already faced with runaway building, proposed garage/libraries, luxury hotels on city-owned property, state mandates and now the prospect of three 17-story skyscrapers where the Warriors’ arena now stands.

Call me uninformed, cynical, misguided, obstructionist, or whatever, but something seems very wrong, exploitive and potentially harmful.

— *Steve Bare, Santa Cruz*

Letter | Yes on O means ‘yes’ on making correct decisions

November 2, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

Downtown is our entire city’s communal backyard, or rather, our heart.

Measure O fundamentally says Yes to many things in our heart — where they make sense — and where certain monied interests won’t make cents. Our land is valuable. This, being as central as Lot 4.

Yes to investing eight publicly-owned parcels downtown toward affordable housing. Yes to creating a public plaza in the ideal location for both the businesses and the community. Yes to tending our Civic Center, by beautifully renovating the library.

Measure O is more a sweeping “Yes in our backyard” sentiment as any in our local history. Where things are, matters immensely. So too is how decisions are made that will set things in concrete for generations.

— *Lira Filippini, Co-Chair, Yes on Measure O, Our Downtown, Our Future, Santa Cruz*

Details sharpen for Downtown Santa Cruz library, housing project

By Jesse Kathan|September 27, 2022|Tags: [downtown library](#), [downtown Santa Cruz](#), [environment](#), [Santa Cruz](#), [Santa Cruz City Council](#), [Santa Cruz Water Department](#), [water](#)



Santa Cruz city staff on Tuesday showed updated renderings of the Downtown library, housing and parking garage project. It would include 123 affordable housing units, a child care center and a commercial space. (Jayson Architecture)

SANTA CRUZ >> New details emerged Tuesday about the funding and proposed design of the Downtown Santa Cruz library, housing and parking garage project.

At a Santa Cruz City Council meeting Tuesday, Santa Cruz Economic Development Director Bonnie Lipscomb presented the most recent design plan. It includes:

- A 38,000-square-foot library with a 3,200 square-foot rooftop patio.
- A 1,900-square-foot child care center and play area.
- A 9,600-square-foot commercial space.
- A three-story, 243-space parking garage.

- Locked enclosures and racks for 258 bicycles.



A project at Cedar and Cathcart streets is expected to include a new library, housing, a parking garage, shops and a childcare center. (Jayson Architecture)

The affordable housing project will provide 124 units, including:

- 31 three-bedroom units.
- 31 two-bedroom units.
- 48 one-bedroom units.
- 13 studios.

Eighty units will be for renters designated as “very low income” who earn [50% or less of the area median income](#). The income limit for those units is about \$54,000 to \$78,000, depending on the household size. Rents would range from about \$1,294 to \$1,877 per month, city staff said.

Twenty-seven units will be allocated for “extremely low income” renters who earn [30% or less of the area median income](#). The income limit for those units is about \$32,000 to \$47,000, depending on the household size. Rents would range from about \$749 to \$1,068 per month, city staff said.

“Extremely low income” units are difficult to include in other kinds of affordable housing, such as inclusionary units in large developments, Lipscomb said. “We’re going lower because those are the most expensive units to build,” she said.

The 16 remaining units would be designated for renters who earn [60% or less of the area median income](#). The income limit for those units is about \$65,000 to \$93,000, depending on the household size. Rents would range from \$1,566 to \$2,281 per month, city staff said.

Garage and farmers market

The three-story parking lot with 243 spaces will cost an estimated \$14.5 million, financed by parking district bonds or direct loans, Lipscomb said. The city will use the money earned by the parking garage, and the rest of the city's parking district, to help repay the debt.

Councilmember Sandy Brown asked whether the parking district is in a financial position to finance the parking lot.

“As a whole, we do believe that we’re on solid ground when it comes to the parking district,” said City of Santa Cruz development manager Brian Borguno. “We’re kind of coming out of COVID and the revenues have rebounded.”

City staff are also working with the Santa Cruz Farmers Market to determine the future site of the weekly market.

- The farmers market uses city parking Lot 4, which is the site of the library project.
- In July, city staff submitted a draft memorandum of understanding to the board of the Santa Cruz Farmers Market to guide the future location and design of the market.
- The agreement includes a proposal for a new [permanent location on city parking Lot 7](#) at the corner of Cathcart and Front streets. The new 40,000-square-foot location would have covered market space.
- The farmers market board will consider the agreement in October.

The library's most recent budget estimate is \$42.7 million, down \$625,000 from the previous estimate. A slightly shorter first floor brought costs down slightly, Lipscomb said.

The affordable housing component of the project has secured \$7.39 million to date. The money includes:

- \$3.6 million from the Local Housing Trust Fund and \$1.55 million from the Permanent Local Housing Allocation. Both are programs of the California Department of Housing and Community Development.
- \$2 million in federal funding from a congressional earmark authored by U.S. Rep. Jimmy Panetta, D-Carmel.

- \$240,000 grant from Central Coast Community Energy.
- The city was not awarded any money in the first round of funding for a state library grant, but may receive a grant in the second round, Lipscomb said.

Developers will be able to apply for the rest of the funding needed in January if the Santa Cruz City Council approves the final plans for the project in December. Those funds include \$43 million in tax credits, \$78 million in loans, and an undetermined amount in state and federal grants, Lipscomb said. Construction is slated for May 2024 to May 2026.

But that timeline could stop if voter initiative Measure O passes in November. The measure would require the city to renovate the existing library, rather than construct a new mixed-use building. It would also designate Lot 4 as the permanent home for the farmers market.

Election Guide, Nov. 8, 2022: Measure O and the Downtown Santa Cruz library project

<https://santacruzlocal.org/election/2022-nov-08/measure-o-downtown-library/>



A project at Cedar and Cathcart streets is expected to include a new library, housing, a parking garage, shops and a child care center. (Jayson Architecture)

What is Measure O?

Measure O is a voter initiative in the city of Santa Cruz that would halt the planned construction of a new Downtown library, affordable housing and parking garage on city parking Lot 4 at Cedar and Cathcart streets. It also includes commercial space and a child care center. The Santa Cruz City Council approved the library project on the site in 2020.

This year, a group called Our Downtown, Our Future gathered more than 5,000 signatures to put Measure O on the ballot.

What would Measure O do?

Passage of Measure O would:

- Force renovation of the existing Downtown library at 224 Church St. rather than construct a new library at Cathcart and Cedar streets.
- Create a permanent home for the Downtown Santa Cruz Farmers Market at its current location on city parking Lot 4.
- Designate eight city-owned lots for future affordable housing development, partly funded by parking revenue. Measure O's authors and city consultants disagree on whether some parking lots could be developed for affordable housing.

What does a “yes” vote mean?

A “yes” vote would halt the development of the mixed-use library, garage and affordable housing project. Passage of Measure O would promote affordable housing development at eight other city-owned parking lots and create new rules about affordable housing projects on those lots.

What does a “no” vote mean?

A “no” vote would allow the Downtown library, housing, parking garage and shops project to continue as planned.

Things to consider

- [Background on the Downtown library project and Measure O](#)
- [Downtown Library renovation versus new construction](#)
- [Parking garage](#)
- [Affordable housing](#)
- [Downtown Santa Cruz Farmers Market](#)

Background on the Downtown library project and Measure O

In June 2016, 70% of Santa Cruz County voters approved Measure S. Measure S allowed the sale of \$67 million in bonds to upgrade and build new libraries in the Santa Cruz Public Libraries system.

Measure S has funded new libraries that have opened in Capitola and Felton and library renovations in La Selva Beach and Garfield Park. A new Aptos library is being built on its old site, and renovations continue in Boulder Creek, Live Oak and Branciforte.

In Downtown Santa Cruz, it was not determined that a new library would be built on a new site until after Measure S was adopted by voters.

A Downtown Library Advisory Committee formed in 2016 and held several public meetings with architects and library leaders about the future of the Downtown library. The group weighed renovation on the current site at 224 Church St. against building a new library on a new site.

The committee considered a partial and full renovation of the library. A partial renovation would be too small, and full renovation would be too expensive, [the committee stated in its final report](#). The committee unanimously recommended a new mixed-use library on Cedar, Cathcart and Lincoln streets.

Janis O’Driscoll, the former deputy director of Santa Cruz Public Libraries, closely followed the committee’s work but was not on the committee. “The question was, how are we going to support a growing population and growing demand for library services in a smaller building?” said “We looked at that and said, ‘Well, we can’t.’” O’Driscoll is now board president of the nonprofit Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries.

At a Santa Cruz City Council meeting Sept. 27, Santa Cruz Economic Development Director Bonnie Lipscomb presented the most recent design plan. It includes:

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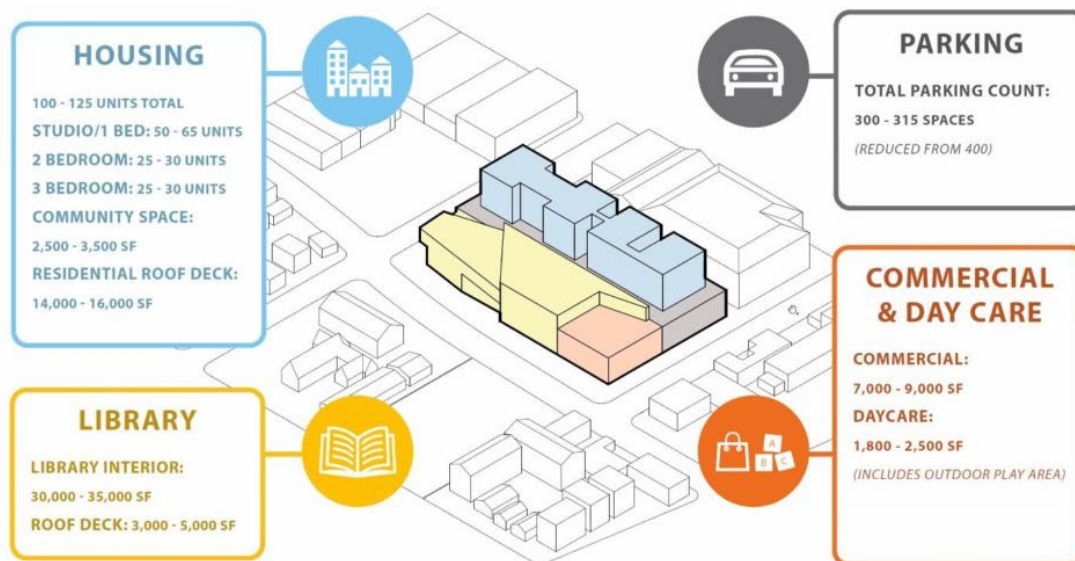
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PROGRAM SUMMARY



A December 2021 illustration shows the configuration of the library, garage, housing, commercial and day care project on Cedar and Cathcart streets in Downtown Santa Cruz. The library interior square footage is now planned to be 38,000 square feet and the parking spots have been reduced to 243. (Jayson Architecture)

Renovation versus new construction

When the Downtown Library Advisory Committee considered renovations to the current Downtown library, they found it would need many updates that included a new ventilation system and an updated floor plan with more meeting rooms. Those updates would also cut into the library’s existing square footage, meaning that a renovated library on the current site would be slightly smaller than the existing building.

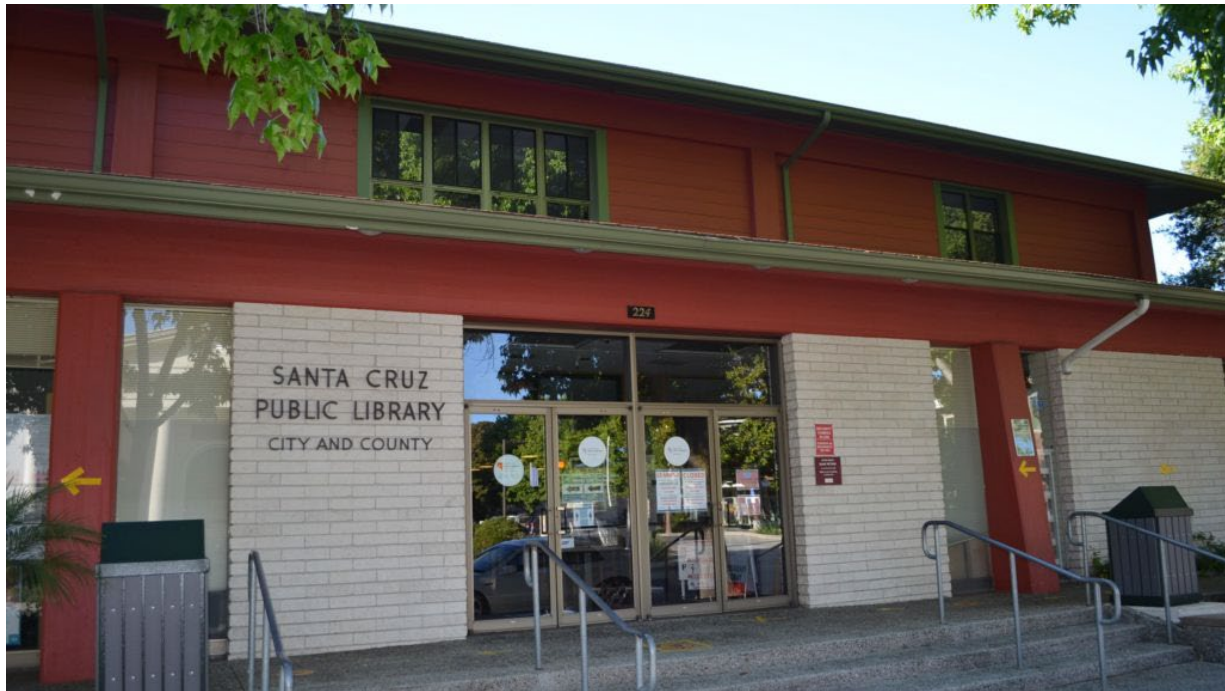
Based on the roughly \$40 million budget for the Downtown library, a renovated library on the current site would be 30,230 square feet. A new library on Cedar and Cathcart streets would be 38,090 square feet, according to a [report by the city-hired consultants Keyser Marston Associates Inc.](#)

2022 Comparative Downtown Library Analysis		
	Downtown Library Estimates	
	Renovate Existing Library	Downtown Library & Affordable Housing Project
Library Building Area		
Total Building Area (Square Feet)	30,230	38,090
Children's Area (Square Feet)	5,270	5,700
Teens Area (Square Feet)	760	800
Adults' Area (Square Feet)	9,710	11,280
Outdoor Program Area (Square Feet)	3,150	3,400
Community Room	Included	Included
Meeting Room	Included	Included
Group Study Rooms	Two	Six
Local History Room	Included	Included
Roof Deck	Not Included	Included
Sustainability		
Green Certification	None	LEED Gold Certified
Area of Planting (Square Feet)	6,570	12,170
Solar Power	None	270 KW (Net Zero)
Fossil Fuels	Natural Gas	No Reliance
Library Development Cost		
Total	\$40.3 million	\$40.1 million
Per Square Foot of Building Area	\$1,333	\$1,053

The Keyser Marston impact report for Measure O concluded that a renovated library on Church Street would cost \$200,000 less than a new building and it would be nearly 8,000 square feet smaller. (Keyser Marston Associates Inc.)

John Hall, an organizer of the Yes on Measure O campaign, said that a renovated library on its current Church Street site could expand to adjacent city parking Lots 14 or 16 if needed.

Supporters of Measure O have said that renovating the existing library would be more environmentally friendly than building a new library because it would involve less construction and carbon output.



The Downtown library at 224 Church St. in Santa Cruz. (Stephen Baxter—Santa Cruz Local file)



A rendering shows a planned three-story library and an apartment building above a parking structure on Cedar and Lincoln streets in Santa Cruz. (Jayson Architecture)

Parking garage

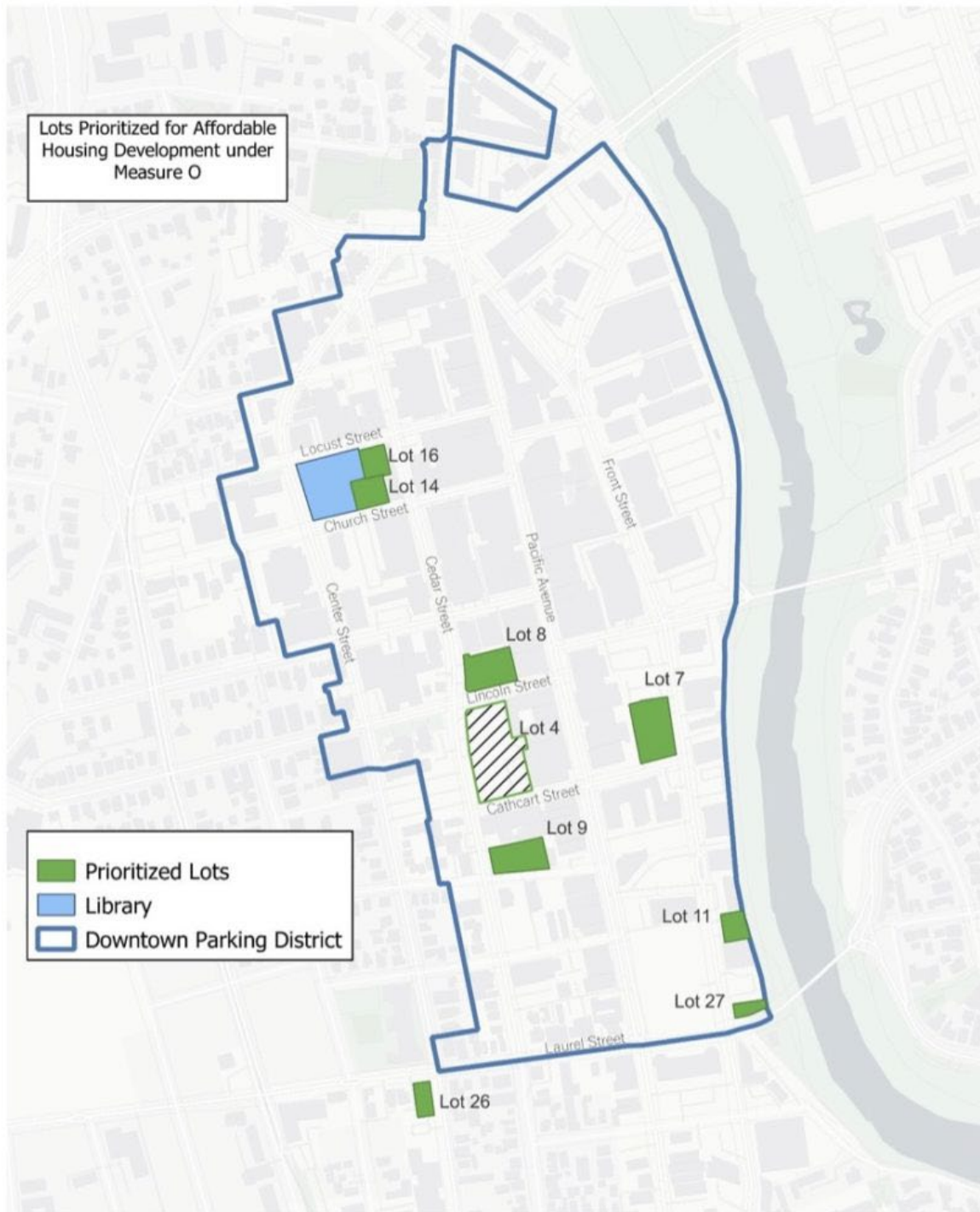
Leaders of the Yes on Measure O campaign have raised two arguments against the parking structure: That it is not needed, and that it is financially infeasible.

Initial plans for a new library structure in 2016 included a 640-space parking garage. When affordable housing was added to the plan in 2020, city staff proposed a four-level parking structure with one underground level. Now, there would be three levels, all above ground, and 243 spots rather than the [400 spots that were proposed](#).

City staff have said that the parking structure won't add new parking supply to downtown. Instead, it will help make up for existing surface parking lots that are expected to be demolished:

- Lot 4: the current home of the farmer's market, where the new library, housing and garage would be built.
- Lot 11: near Front and Laurel streets, where [a hotel could be built](#).
- Lots 14 and 16: Lots next to the current Downtown library, where [affordable housing and a civic plaza could be built](#).

Since 2018, 291 parking spaces have been removed from Downtown because of development and outdoor dining parklets, the Keyser Marston consultant report stated. If the mixed-use project goes forward and the current library site is redeveloped, it would result in a net loss of about 164 to 264 spaces, according to the report. Additionally, three city-sponsored affordable developments and four private developments are planned for downtown, many of which are expected to provide little or no parking.



Passage of Measure O would dedicate the city parking lots in green to affordable housing development. (Keyser Marston Associates Inc.)

Measure O supporters said that replacing lost parking spaces shouldn't be the city's goal. Measure O supporter Rick Longinotti said he supports using technology to better allocate city spaces, and pricing monthly permits higher to incentivise alternative transportation. "Building parking is a last resort," Longinotti said.

Longinotti pointed to a [report from consultants Nelson Nygaard in 2019](#). It concluded that Downtown had ample parking supply and recommended strategies to better use existing parking spaces. One strategy would create higher-priced “premium zones” of the most central, in-demand parking zones and lower-priced “value zones” for areas more likely to have open spots.

Measure O would change the city’s General Plan to prioritize that the city’s surplus parking revenue pay for free bus passes for downtown workers, pay for library renovations, and pay for affordable housing and improvements to city parking Lot 4 for public gatherings.

Longinotti, the Measure O supporter, said he did not believe the parking district can secure the money needed for the parking structure. The parking district has been operating at a deficit since 2020, and as of the fiscal year starting July 2022, is \$3.9 million in the red, according to city budget records. City leaders estimate that in Fiscal Year 2023-24 the parking district will [spend \\$2.9 million more](#) than it will [bring in](#). City staff said the dip in revenues was due to the early days of the COVID pandemic when parking downtown sharply dropped and some parking fees were temporarily waived.

Santa Cruz Economic Development Director Bonnie Lipscomb said in a Sept. 27 city council meeting that staff are “very confident” about the district’s ability to successfully use bonds or loans to finance the structure. City staff is expected to present an updated model of how the garage will be funded at a future city council meeting, Lipscomb said.

Lipscomb also discussed [funding for the affordable housing project](#) at the Sept. 27 meeting.

Affordable housing

Measure O would halt the production of 124 units of low-income housing and wipe away over \$7 million in grant funds secured, opponents of Measure O have said.

The measure identifies eight alternative sites for affordable housing in city parking lots across the city. Measure O authors and city consultants disagree about whether the alternative sites could feasibly be developed.

According to a supplementary report prepared by the Measure O campaign, the eight alternative locations [could support 305 to 433 affordable housing units](#). According to the Keyser Marston report, three of those sites could feasibly be developed:

- [City parking Lot 7](#) on 505 Front St. [with a potential 109 units](#).
- [City parking Lot 8](#) on 710 Cedar St. [with a potential 50 units](#).
- [City parking Lot 9](#) on 120 Elm St. [with a potential 50 units](#).

The development of 50 units on lots 8 and 9 may be “difficult” due to city height limits, according to the report. The city can develop affordable housing on these sites under existing rules. Measure O’s prohibition of above-ground level parking “could potentially constrain the development potential,” according to the report.

City parking Lots 11 and 27 on Front Street are expected to be sold to a [hotel developer](#) who owns the adjacent property. Measure O’s requirement to keep the current library building would also make developing housing on adjacent city lots 16 and 14 difficult, the Keyser Marston report stated.

The remaining three locations are too small and irregularly shaped to work as affordable housing locations, the report said.

The report’s analysis assumes that to be cost-effective for developers, sites for affordable housing must be able to fit at least 50 units within five or fewer stories of residential development. That requires about half an acre, larger than most of the sites proposed by Measure O.

Another aim of Measure O is to prevent construction of multi-level parking structures on city parking lots. If the lots are developed, only the ground level would be available for parking, and only affordable housing units could be built on above-ground floors.

There is disagreement about whether the passage of Measure O would allow shops on those parking lots.

Measure O’s authors, including Rick Longinotti, said the ballot measure language allows commercial development on the first floor if it shares the space with parking.

The Keyser Marston consultant report states that Measure O [wouldn’t allow ground-floor shops](#) in housing developments on the eight city parking lots specified by the measure. The new rules would conflict with the city’s General Plan and zoning codes, which promote mixed-use development with ground-level commercial use, the report states.

One of the proposed alternative sites is also in the coastal zone, which is governed by California Coastal Commission regulations that promote ground-floor businesses in new developments.

Farmers market

Measure O would require the Santa Cruz Farmers Market to remain in its current location on city parking Lot 4, according to the Keyser Marston consultant report. If the measure fails and the new Downtown library development is built, the market [may move to city parking Lot 7](#) at Front and Cathcart streets.

The city is in negotiations with the Farmers Market board to create an agreement about the potential move. The city has allocated \$1.8 million for the construction of a new farmers market facility with an overhead structure for year-round use.

The board of the Farmers Market has remained neutral about Measure O, and have not expressed a preference between remaining at Lot 4 or moving to Lot 7.

—Jesse Kathan

GoodTimes

What Measure O Means for the Future of Downtown

Proponents say the measure is about parking, while opponents say it will set back affordable housing and a new library

By [Aiyana Moya](#) and [Tony Nuñez](#) October 18, 2022



The passage of Measure O would bring a proposed mixed-use library project downtown to a halt.
PHOTO: Courtesy of City of Santa Cruz

Siri Rodoni polishes out remnants of dirt on one of her pumpkins and adjusts her table to hide the white parking lines on the pavement below.

It's Wednesday morning, and Rodoni is one of the dozen or so farmers arranging vegetables and produce on tables in an empty parking lot, preparing for the rush of the tote-bag-carrying shoppers who will show up in a few hours.

Every Wednesday for the past 15 years, Rodoni Farms has been selling products at Santa Cruz's downtown farmers market, located in a parking lot known as Lot 4 on Cedar Street. For six days a week, the nondescript blacktop is used for parking, but on Wednesdays, it transforms into a bustling space for vendors to sell their products.

Recently, the future of the unassuming lot has been catapulted into the local political spotlight, and is at the center of a debate that touches on two sensitive issues in Santa Cruz: affordable housing and community priorities.

The City of Santa Cruz plans to repurpose the lot to make way for a new library, a child care center, a parking garage with 243 spaces and an apartment complex with 124 units of housing, the majority of which will be set aside for low-income residents. The eight-story development known as the [Mixed-Use Library Project](#) has been in the works since 2016, and the city says it can break ground as early as 2024 if plans are approved by the City Council in December.

But the group [Our Downtown, Our Future](#) has taken aim at these plans via Measure O, which proposes different ways to achieve a new library and more affordable housing—ways that don't involve a new parking garage or moving the downtown farmers market.

Rick Longinotti, one of the major proponents of Measure O, says that the city's current vision for Lot 4 is shortsighted, and perpetuates local dependence on cars, even as [California lawmakers are taking an increasingly stronger stance against creating new parking](#) space. And, he adds, there is no indication that Santa Cruz residents want the farmers market to move, or that they thought their "Yes" vote on Measure S—a \$67 million ballot measure approved by voters in 2016 to upgrade the Santa Cruz Public Libraries system—would produce the towering downtown development.

"I think [the city] is hiding the ball—I think they're hiding the truth," Longinotti says.

If Measure O is approved, Santa Cruz's General Plan and Downtown Plan will be amended to keep the downtown library and farmers market in their current locations. The measure would also outlaw the construction of above-ground parking structures on various city-owned lots, which would instead be prioritized for affordable housing production. Importantly, says Longinotti as we stroll through downtown Santa Cruz on a sunny Monday afternoon, this includes Lot 4—Measure O authorizes, but does not require, the development of affordable housing there.

“It’s wrong to say that we’re not for affordable housing—we want affordable housing,” Longinotti says as we reach the corner of Lincoln and Cedar streets, “but [Lot 4] is an ideal spot for a public plaza.”

A few weeks earlier, standing in Lot 4 as the farmers market sets up for the day, former Santa Cruz Mayor Don Lane shakes his head in disbelief at the statement that Longinotti and other Measure O supporters are for affordable housing.

“It makes me crazy to think about that,” Lane says. “We’re making a parking lot and 120 affordable housing apartments with this project, and [Measure O] says they want affordable housing, but they’re stopping us. Measure O would literally stop hundreds of affordable housing units. How is that pro-affordable housing?”

Lane is part of a long list of former and current local politicians—and more than a few librarians—who support the mixed-use library project. They say the affordable housing units, desperately needed in a city recently named the [second-most expensive rental market](#) in the country, make the project worthwhile. And they add that the community has had its chance to mold the project through numerous public input workshops.

Yes, there’s a parking garage, Lane says, but it will replace the parking spots currently lost to other projects being built out around the city. And while the farmers market will move, Lane thinks the ongoing discussions between city officials and the farmers market association are the right way to give it a new permanent home.

“[Measure O] has preempted the farmers market itself,” Lane says. “They want the market to be where they want it, end of story.”

Parking and People

A small smile creeps onto Longinotti’s face when he talks about the city’s initial development plans for Lot 4. Back in 2016, the [first draft of the new library only included a 640-space parking garage](#), and he points out that Lane, now the co-chair of affordable housing think tank Housing Santa Cruz County, voted in favor of that project. The omission of housing units and a childcare facility at the onset of the project, Longinotti says, should serve as solid evidence of the project’s true aim.

“It’s about parking,” he says. “It always has been.”

Longinotti accuses the city of “[burying](#)” a [\\$100,000 parking study](#) that concluded there was no need for a parking structure. That study, conducted by Nelson/Nygaard, found that there was more than enough parking downtown, but that the city needed to better manage its lots. It was never publicly presented to the City Council after it was published in 2019, Longinotti says.

He questions why the city would elect to use parking revenue funds to build more parking rather than use that money to support affordable housing production. That's why Measure O also amends the general plan to prioritize surplus parking revenue from the Downtown Parking District for, among other things, the development of affordable housing on the smaller parking lots scattered across the corridor, as identified in the measure.

The question before voters, he says, is simple: "Would you rather spend public money on parking or housing?"

But downtown has changed dramatically since 2019, and with various housing and hotel projects in the pipeline chewing up other parking lots across the corridor, the outlook for public parking could be very different in just a few years, or months.

Just across the street from Lot 4, the old Calvary Church parking lot was recently fenced off as work on a 65-unit affordable housing complex began. And a few blocks over on Front Street, a handful of projects that will bring hundreds of housing units to Santa Cruz have broken ground or are on the verge of doing so. In addition, the City is in the midst of possibly adding another 1,800 units just south of Laurel Street through its [Downtown Plan Expansion project](#).

The forthcoming construction and [a new bill that does away with parking minimums on building projects](#), signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom a month ago, will put a squeeze on parking, Lane says. The loss of the Cavalry Church parking lot is already being felt, he says, gesturing toward the streets that are already lined with cars two hours before the start of the farmers market.

Over the past four years, 230 public parking spaces have been lost downtown to make room for the seven new affordable housing projects that have been authorized. The city forfeited another 61 spaces for outdoor dining.

The campaign against Measure O says Longinotti is only telling half the story. While the Nelson/Nygaard study points to poor management, it also recommends creating a new parking supply as the city fulfills other steps laid out in the report—key among them, downtown affordable housing projects. The report concludes that once affordable housing projects downtown implement off-site parking, there will be a need for more spaces.

"Measure O is just repeating their same arguments, even as they fall apart," says Lane. "It gets knocked down, and they repeat it anyway."

Nor is he impressed with the measure's suggestion of other sites for affordable housing.

"You can't just point to a lot and say affordable housing can go there," he says.

There are nine city-owned lots that the ballot measure suggests as potential sites for housing projects. According to real estate consulting firm [Keyser Martin](#), which the city hired to examine the viability of the lots the measure put forward, there are only three that could realistically be used for housing projects; the other suggested lots were found to be too small.

In line with city regulations, these lots are already available for city use as affordable housing sites. In fact, the ballot measure's stipulation that above-ground parking would be eliminated would actually reduce the chances for developing on these lots, according to the Keyser Martin report.

Whether a lot can be transformed into affordable housing is only one small piece of the puzzle, says Lane. It then takes several years to compile funding from various sources and to get enough public agencies on board to see the project to completion. So while the mixed-use library project still needs to secure more than \$120 million for the housing portion of the project alone, according to a report to the City Council in September, scrapping it would likely mean the city will have to go through another multi-year community visioning process just to get back to this point.

"They would basically say, 'Let's throw this project away and start from scratch somewhere else?' That's crazy," says Lane. "That's many years of delay, and no guarantee that it even has a good outcome."

But Longinotti says that the opposition's bird-in-the-hand argument is nullified because the Parking District is at a deficit, meaning the city won't be able to finance or issue bonds for the parking garage until it is in good financial condition. It could be several years before this happens, Longinotti says.

"And there's no guarantee that ever happens," he adds.

Santa Cruz's interim spokesperson Eileen Cross tells *GT* that the Measure O campaign's claims about the Parking District's financials are misleading. The district did, indeed, see revenues dip over the past two years, but Cross says this is because the city made the "intentional policy choice" to lower parking rates in downtown to aid businesses during the pandemic.

Cross says revenues have begun to bounce back as pandemic restrictions have waned, and that the city expects to "secure either bond or secure direct financing to complete construction."

Market Watch

Earlier this month, as voters were starting to receive their ballots, [Lookout Santa Cruz reported](#) that city officials and the Santa Cruz Community Farmers Market Board were honing in on an agreement for a permanent location for the downtown market—eyeng Lot 7, at the corner of Cathcart and Front streets, as the primary contender.

But Friday, just weeks before the election, the city and the market announced that, after five years of discussions, a site for the market to call home is still up in the air.

According to a press release from the city, the farmers market unanimously approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the city to find the market a permanent home. The city also announced that it has approved more than \$1.7 million to fund the construction of a physical structure for the market. A MOU is not legally binding, however, and Lot 7 has not officially been chosen as a new site.

Representatives for the market have said at City Council meetings that they are open to moving locations, and support the library project. But what some vendors have to say is slightly different.

Three of the vendors selling products at the market told *GT* that even if they supported the project, they were hesitant to support the move. The issue has become so divisive that two farmers declined to talk about it.

Rodoni, who also sells at farmers markets in Felton and Scotts Valley, says the location of the downtown market is not ideal. The downtown location caters less to families, which she says makes the market less community-oriented—and generally worse for business. Meanwhile, parking in downtown Santa Cruz is its own logistical problem. Some days, Rodoni has to park a few blocks away.

Even though she supports the library project, she is aware of the costs that moving the market's location will have on her own business, based on past experiences. The Scotts Valley farmers market has moved three times since she first started selling.

“Every time you move, it takes away from our income, because it's hard to get customers to know about the new location,” says Rodoni.

But the farmers market customers that *GT* spoke with said regardless of the location, they would continue to come out and support the market.

As Jackson Sales, a newcomer to the market, waits in the line at the Rodoni Farms stand, he says he comes to the market because he wants to support local farmers and buy his produce from the source—and that won't change just because the market moves.

“It's these people who make the farmers market,” Sales says, motioning to the various vendors passing vegetables and flowers to customers. “It's not the parking lot.”

Letter to the Editor: Low-hanging Fruit

A letter to the editor of *Good Times* October 26, 2022



The passage of Measure O would bring a proposed mixed-use library project downtown to a halt.
PHOTO: Courtesy of City of Santa Cruz

Parking has been the holy grail for lots of towns—more parkers, more business, more taxes. Our farmers market lot has been a target for many years, and the library bond money and the need for more housing and the expense to developers to provide their own parking all saw the lot as low-hanging fruit. With my adjacent business, I get no complaints about parking from customers or employees. I park in a structure a five-minute walk from the proposed structure, and it is never full at the bargain rate of five bucks a day.

Then there is the question of priorities. We do need a treatment center and public housing for our fellow human beings living in tents and vehicles with no facilities—not something we want in the middle of town. Are we really going to tear down the old library, described as a 100-year building by a prominent local architect? Are we not going to have to tear out all that asbestos anyway? Do we not need an event center? And how about some events?

And the question of urban architecture ... let's imagine the cities of Healdsburg or Paso Robles putting a parking structure in the middle of their plazas.

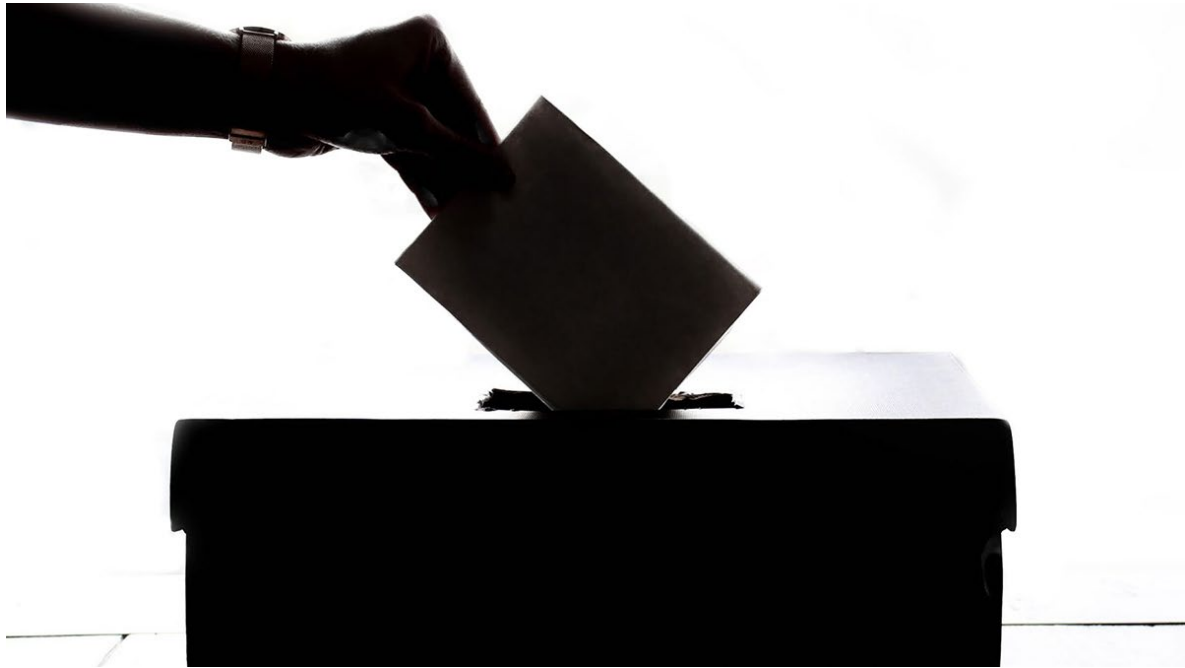
At least we finally got rid of the River Street sign. I fear that it is in storage. Vote yes on O.

Paul Cocking

Santa Cruz

Letter to the Editor: In the Details

A letter to the editor of Good Times November 2, 2022



Measure O is one of several contentious battles on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Measure O has many complicated details—*Good Times* (thank you) explored some of them, combining proponents’ and opponents’ comments with reporters filling in details. If voters want to understand what they are actually voting for, they should read the proposed measure and read the independent analysis “Report to City Council” by Keyser Marsten Associates. You may find the measure far from what proponents are claiming. The facts will convince you to vote no on O.

Tim Willoughby

Santa Cruz



EAGER FOR NEW APTOS LIBRARY

written by [See Below](#) September 19, 2022



Spread the love

Madelyn is 5, and she is a huge fan of the new Aptos Library, which is being built by Bogard Construction.

Her mom, Lindsay Worrell, says, “Every day, she has me drive by the library to see the progress. Since day one, when we drive by, she yells out, ‘Thank you for making my new library.’ But today she wanted to say it in person, with treats/drinks for them all.”

As a result, she got her photo taken with seven of the construction crew. Her mom says, “I have one special girl.”

Editor’s Note: Drive by the Aptos Library at the corner of Soquel Drive and State Park Drive to see the ongoing progress being made.

Photo Courtesy of Diane Cowen

Santa Cruz Public Libraries: Calling All Poets

The Santa Cruz Public Libraries with the County of Santa Cruz Department of Parks, Open Spaces, and Cultural Services, Arts Council Santa Cruz County, and Poetry Santa Cruz are accepting applications pleased for Santa Cruz County Poet Laureate through Nov. 9.

The Santa Cruz County Poet Laureate

is an honorary position. The Poet Laureate will elevate poetry in our community, educating the public about the value of creative expression, inspiring diverse voices to emerge, creating new points of connection among residents in the county, and increasing access to local cultural resources.

The Poet Laureate will be selected through a community panel process and officially appointed by the County Board of Supervisors.

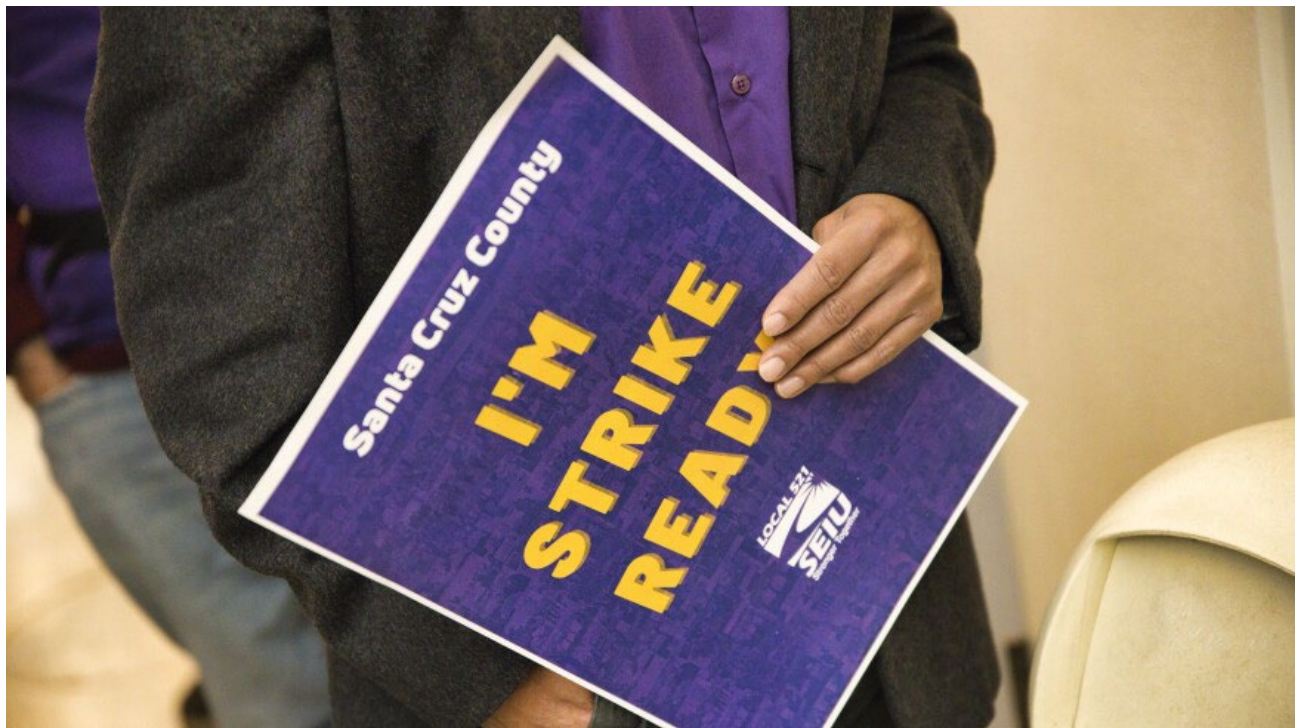
Applications and supporting files should be submitted at: santacruzpl.org/poetlaureate. The application form is in Spanish at santacruzpl.org/poetalaureado.

If you are unable to apply online, a PDF of the complete application is available for pick up at Santa Cruz Public Libraries branches.

•••

All supporting files must be included for the application to be considered complete.

www.tpgonlinedaily.com Capitola Soquel Times / November 2022 / 23



(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Both the City of Santa Cruz and its SEIU-represented members expect the strike to begin Monday with immediate impacts on city services. The negotiating impasse is largely about wages, job security and staffing, with the city pointing to a strained budget and the union to what it calls below-market wages.

SEP 30, 2022 | 3:16 PM

Have something to say? Lookout welcomes letters to the editor, within our policies, from readers. Guidelines [here](#).

Following [months of contract negotiations](#) between the City of Santa Cruz and city workers represented by the Service Employees International Union Local 521 (SEIU 521), the union announced its intention to strike starting Monday.

All city services staffed by SEIU employees will be affected. Per the City of Santa Cruz, residents should expect:

- police and fire to respond as usual;
- no residential or commercial trash or recycling pickup;
- all service and payment counters to be closed;
- all libraries other than those in Capitola and Scotts Valley to be closed, and all libraries to be closed Oct. 8;
- many parks to be closed and recreation programs to be canceled;
- most service phones to not be attended;
- most plan reviews, permit reviews and inspections to be unavailable.

The union initially authorized a strike, with 95% of its voting members rejecting the city's last, best and final contract offer, [earlier this month](#).

SEIU represents nearly 600 city workers in departments such as road and maintenance, sanitation, public safety and more. These workers perform services including trash collection, water treatment, parking enforcement and park maintenance. The union confirmed Friday that strike picket lines will go up at Santa Cruz City Hall at 7 a.m. Monday, followed by a news conference hosted by the striking workers and community allies.

“Santa Cruz residents are facing a strike because the city council has enabled management to engage in unfair labor practices while trying to force its lowest paid to accept raises far below

what it has offered top executives,” Santa Cruz SEIU chapter president and bargaining team member Ken Bare said in a news release.

The strike will continue until the city and the workers reach a deal, said Bare.

City Manager Matt Huffaker told Lookout late Friday afternoon that there was no progress to report and no meetings scheduled with SEIU. He previously told Lookout he was hopeful an agreement would be reached in the near future.

“We still have a need for additional ongoing revenue streams for the city’s fiscal health over the long term, but the city’s improving financial position in the near term allows us to address some of the immediate challenges we’re facing, including employee compensation, retention and attraction,” he said, adding that the city has reached agreements with four labor groups including fire local, fire management, middle managers, and department heads.

Downtown farmers market’s move provides challenge to Measure O’s campaign



(Via City of Santa Cruz) A rendering depicts a permanent home for the downtown Santa Cruz farmers market on Lot 7.

BY [LILY BELLI](#)

The 32-year-old downtown Santa Cruz market is almost ready to move to a new “permanent,” city-owned location a block and a half away from its current digs. Its new home offers a wider vision of the market anchoring a new community center — but seems to fly in the face of one of the arguments of Measure O proponents. How will the move — and its politics — play out?

OCT 4, 2022 | 5:42 AM

Where will the downtown Santa Cruz farmers market be located in a couple of years?

It’s not an innocuous question. The market’s location has become a political football in the increasingly volatile conversation around the siting of a new downtown library.

That conversation is set to get even knottier.

Within the next week, Lookout has learned, the Santa Cruz Community Farmers’ Market’s board will vote on whether to move forward on an agreement with the city to relocate the market. The move has been in discussion for years, but the timing of the board vote — just a month before city voters decide on Measure O — is already raising concerns, which are likely to only grow.

Currently, the market sets up on Lot 4 each Wednesday. Lot 4 is a city-owned parking lot along Cedar Street between Cathcart and Lincoln streets. The lot has also become the center of major contention as the group Our Downtown, Our Future put Measure O on the city’s November ballot, aiming [to stop](#) a long-planned new downtown library branch to be built on the lot along with new housing and a parking garage. Those proponents have made the downtown market a centerpiece of the argument, saying the market [needs to be “preserved”](#) on Lot 4. Meanwhile, as that political debate has increased in volume, Nesh Dhillon, the executive director of [SCCFM](#), which operates the 32-year-old downtown market, has continued to negotiate with the city to find the market a new permanent site.

Dhillon has steered clear of the politics and has been focused on finding a permanent home for the market, which has been on Lot 4 for more than 20 years. He says he’s feeling good about its future.

“I think it’s important for the public to know that no matter what, we’re going to be fine,” he told Lookout on Monday. “We’re going to be downtown. Ideally, we’d be able to operate with a really improved space so that we can deliver more services, but it’s not like we’re going to get displaced.”

In fact, the market is working on a memorandum of understanding (MOU), a good-faith agreement that's short of a legally binding contract, that could place the market on Lot 7, a block and a half away from its current home. That's the parcel that runs along Front Street, bordered by Cathcart Street and the parking lot behind New Leaf Community Market at Soquel Avenue. Beyond providing a new location, the vision for the block includes a new kind of community center, complete with a weather-protecting open-air pavilion, infrastructure like restrooms and lighting, places to congregate and eat, and permanent hookups for food trucks to feed downtown workers, residents and visitors.



Nesh Dhillon, director of Santa Cruz Community Farmers' Markets.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

The farmers market has been working with the city to secure and design a suitable site since 2016, says Dhillon. That's when the city began planning to develop Lot 4 into a mixed-use library and affordable housing project. County voters approved the massive overhaul and upgrade of the countywide library system that year with \$68 million in bond funding via [Measure S](#), and the new downtown library would be one of the final projects funded by it. Overall, the project, which could begin construction as early as next summer, includes a new, 40,000-square-foot library, including a 5,000-square-foot roof deck; 124 units of 100% affordable housing; 243 parking spaces; 258 bicycle parking spaces; and a child care facility.

The MOU is the result of years of back and forth between the city and the farmers market, and Dhillon said he believes the board will vote to move forward with it by the end of the week. Dhillon notes that while it is focusing on Lot 7, it remains open to considering other nearby locations.

The timing of the signing of the MOU coming mere weeks before the election is a coincidence, says Dhillon. It's the result of years of design and site analysis just now getting finishing touches.

Measure O's advocates are less sure.

Measure O would amend the city's General Plan to require adequate space for the farmers market to operate on Lot 4, and the marketing efforts behind the measure have emphasized keeping the market where it's been operating for years. Any deal between the city and the farmers market to move to Lot 7 would undermine Yes on O's messaging to keep both the market and the downtown library where they are now.

Yes on O leader Rick Longinotti said he would like to read the MOU before commenting specifically on the deal.

"The farmers market is too smart to tie themselves down to moving, when in fact my read on their sentiment is that (Lot 4) is a successful location for them," he said. "Lot 7 is on Front Street, which has three times the vehicle traffic as Cedar Street does right now. So I doubt very much that the farmers market would box themselves into a corner to have to move when we're about to vote on something that would allow them to stay."

Longinotti said he understands why the farmers market remains neutral on the question of Measure O: "They can't afford to alienate city staff that are working with them on a new location."

Measure O challenges the current library/housing/parking garage plan on Lot 4, saying it wants the market to stay there, and to add only affordable housing to the block. It opposes a new parking garage and favors renovating the current downtown library at Church and Center streets rather than building a new one.

Dhillon made clear that the MOU is not a contract and the market is still deciding next steps. He is not opposed to staying at Lot 4 should Measure O pass and make moving the farmers market more difficult, but said he isn't sure it's the right place for a permanent home, especially if a portion or all of the site is used for affordable housing.

"Regardless of whether Measure O passes or not," he said, "we wanted to finish the process because we know we can sleep at night knowing we've got a great location that we can go to at a future date when needed."



A possible layout of Lot 7 shows three rows of farmers market booths, a row of food trucks and several more food trucks on Cathcart Street, at bottom.

(Via City of Santa Cruz)

A new, expanded, vision of the downtown market

The proposed site on Lot 7 would feature more amenities and, if completed, would be a permanent home for the farmers market.

Via the Lookout Election Center, you can get alerts on the latest election stories, notice of campaign events overall and previews of Lookout candidate forums through election season. What do you want to ask the candidates? Send questions on candidates, races or measures — and use this new way to send letters to the editor. Send us a text, and we might feature it in our upcoming reporting. You can also email us questions at elections@lookoutlocal.com.

The current parking lot will be scraped, explains Dhillon; in its place will be a flat, open area for farmers market booths. An indoor-outdoor pavilion will shade the market in sunny weather and offer protection from rain during winter months. Also included in the design: a parklike area along Cathcart Street with picnic tables; permanent hookups for food trucks; and utilities, restrooms and lights, which would allow the market to be open in the evening. On market days, half of Cathcart Street would be activated for food trucks. “It’s similar to what’s happening right now, but

much cleaner,” Dhillon said. “There’s design; it’s architectural, as opposed to just setting up in a parking lot.”

Lot 7 is [slightly smaller](#) than Lot 4 — a little over 40,000 square feet, compared to 50,000 square feet — but is similar in size when the portion of Cathcart Street is included. The site would operate year-round and use will expand to include special events. There is \$1.77 million budgeted for the initial phase, and additional funds will be committed for future financial support as needed.

Going forward

Last week, an outline for the new site and vision was included in an [update](#) to the city council agenda, and it will be discussed at the council’s Oct. 25 meeting.

If both parties agree to the MOU, then both the market and the city will work together to hammer out details and timeline, which may lead to a contract.

That action followed the submission of a plan to the farmers market board in July. The board reviewed it and provided feedback in August and September.

While long in the works, the actual signing of the MOU will likely spark new political debate.

Santa Cruz City Councilmember Justin Cummings said it’s “a little shocking” that the city and farmers market are making an agreement, given the timing of the election and the controversy around the ballot measure. “It has the potential to have some pretty significant impacts,” he said.

He questions the prudence of such a move: “If we move forward with a permanent location for the farmers market on Lot 7 at this point in time, what are the implications if Measure O passes?”

Dhillon steps back from the controversy and puts things in perspective for the valued Santa Cruz institution. “We’re going to be fine,” he said. “You just gotta let the politics play itself out, and then we’ll figure out what we’ll do next.”

[**Lookout forum: Santa Cruz Measure N & Measure O**](#)

A lot of disagreement: Measure O galvanizes competing visions of downtown Santa Cruz



The downtown Santa Cruz farmers market at its current site on Lot 4.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

BY [WALLACE BAINÉ](#)

Source: Lookout Santa Cruz



Quick Take

Lot 4 could become one of the most significant downtown Santa Cruz construction projects since the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, with a new main branch public library, 120 units of affordable housing and a three-level parking garage. But if Measure O proponents win at the polls, the current library will be renovated and plans will begin for a new parklike space. No matter which way the vote falls, it's nearly certain that downtown Santa Cruz will get a new library and that the farmers market will continue to operate. The big questions are when and where.

OCT 11, 2022 | 5:57 AM

For six days a week, Lot 4 in downtown Santa Cruz is nothing special. It's a sizable but ugly urban parking lot on Cedar Street, just a block over from Pacific Avenue, a convenient place to leave your car perhaps while you meet a friend at Lupulo or pick up a gift package at Pacific Cookie Company, but certainly not a place you'd linger.

Oddly, this unremarkable, tired old parking lot is the latest battleground for the future of the downtown, in part because of what happens there that other day of the week.

Lot 4 is the site of the weekly downtown [farmers market](#), a beloved community touchstone and a can't-miss ritual every Wednesday for hundreds of people in and even outside Santa Cruz, as it has been for more than 20 years.

A measure on the November ballot in the city of Santa Cruz, Measure O, will decide the fate of this specific expanse of cracked asphalt.

If O passes, its proponents envision a new town square at Lot 4, a downtown commons still very much in the conceptual stage.

But if Measure O is defeated, the city government can move forward with its already-in-motion big plans for Lot 4, the roots of which go back 10 years.

In development parlance, it's a "mixed-use library project," a three-in-one project to include more than 120 units of affordable housing, a three-level parking garage, and a spanking new downtown public library to serve as main branch for the county library system. The new library would be the largest in the county and about a fifth larger than the renovation of the library that Measure O calls for. It would be financed in part by the \$67 million in bonds approved by voters in 2016's Measure S vote. (Overall, Measure S has led to the replacement or renovation of [all the branch libraries](#) in the county. The downtown branch would be the largest of those funded by Measure S.) The new parking structure's 243 spaces would replace the 139 surface-lot spaces now on the parcel.

The new showcase library, along with new housing, would transform the block in what would be one of the most significant downtown construction projects since the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The project would be expected to break ground by 2024. What would the new library, on Cedar Street between Lincoln and Cathcart streets, look like? Below is an architectural rendering that shows the plan.

A rendering of the proposed new library/mixed-use project, as seen from Cedar Street at Cathcart Street. A yes vote on Measure O would halt the project.



(Via Jayson Architecture)

Measure O, to put it starkly, is an effort to derail the mixed-use library project and to stop the building of a new library. In fact, it might be best understood as the “Keep Things Where They Are” referendum. If passed, [Measure O](#) would nix a new library and instead direct the city to renovate the existing main branch library on Church Street. It would also “maintain the farmers market at its current location,” although the market’s own management has been [less than embracing](#) of committing itself to that location. And, though it’s not explicit in the measure itself, O would also open the door for creating a new “[downtown commons](#),” though when this sylvan vision might come to pass is unclear. (O authorizes, but does not require, development on Lot 4.)

But O’s potential impact extends beyond Lot 4. The initiative, brought to voters by a group of citizens called [Our Downtown, Our Future](#), would require to the “maximum extent feasible” permanent affordable housing on eight existing city-owned parking lots downtown not including Lot 4. In essence, if passed, O could limit the city council’s ability to decide the location and nature of new development on those eight lots.

[Downtown farmers market’s move provides challenge to Measure O’s campaign](#)

What’s at stake, and what does it mean going forward, if O passes or if it fails? Both sides agree that the shorthand the public might have assumed, that this is a “save the library” or “save the farmers market” vote, is wrong. No matter which way the vote falls, it’s nearly certain that downtown Santa Cruz will get a new library and that the farmers market will continue to operate.

The big questions are these: when and where.

Supporters of the new library project, which include a critical mass of the city’s elected leaders over the past eight years, insist that Measure O is a desperate attempt to halt a process that has been in development for years, a plan that has broad public support, and is well down the road to groundbreaking.

They’ll often cite the “bird-in-hand” argument, that Measure O would waste funds already raised or spent for the new library, that O would result in a smaller, inferior library, and that it would be willing to trade away 123 units of affordable housing within reach in a couple of years for a vague plan to build an undetermined number of units on existing parking lots at some unknown future date.

Former Santa Cruz mayor Don Lane, a supporter of the new library and a staunch no-on-O vote, argues that the housing units included in the new library project represents real-world progress in what even Measure O backers say they want: more affordable housing.

O, said Lane, represents “an idealized image of what our town could be. It feels good, but it doesn’t work. And it’s not realistic. The change that people sometimes say they don’t want means that they’re forcing a different change. [They’ll say], ‘Well, we don’t want the buildings to change. We want all of this to stay the way it is. But in doing that, they’re basically saying the people who used to be able to live here don’t get to live here anymore,’” he said, referencing the increasing difficulty that low- and middle-income wage-earners have in finding affordable housing.



A rendering of the renovated main branch library at its present site at Church and Center streets.

(Via Jayson Architecture)

Measure O’s backers say the new library project represents a betrayal of the county’s Measure S, the 2016 referendum that passed with 70% approval to fund improvements to the 10-branch county library system. Though Measure S did allow for funding to be put toward a new library, O’s advocates insist that voters approved the bond measure under the impression that the funds would be used to renovate the existing library, as was the case at several other branches in the county. (Of the nine other branches funded by S, three have seen [new replacement buildings](#), including Felton, Capitola and Aptos, along with an annex to the Live Oak library to open in 2023, and six have seen renovation.)

“Our community voted to tax ourselves for what really seemed like a renovation campaign,” said Lira Filippini, the co-chair of Our Downtown, Our Future, the group spearheading passage of Measure O. “The campaign [for Measure S] really talked about improving, modernizing and repairing our branch libraries. And so when the campaign focuses on those things, and then, in the fine text of the measure, it says, ‘and build new facilities where necessary,’ most people aren’t going to see that.”

But the library plan has changed significantly since the passage of S in 2016, said Lane. After Measure S passed, a subcommittee called the Downtown Library Advisory Committee (DLAC), made up of library professionals and other community activists, spent about a year studying, with public input, various options for the main branch, including the new library on Cedar Street and renovation at the present site. After examining national trends in libraries, the projected needs of local library patrons in the coming decades and what would be needed to renovate the present site, the committee recommended unanimously to build a new library.



The downtown Santa Cruz farmers market at its current site on Lot 4.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

“The idea was, ‘Should we try and put the library and the parking [garage] together on this site?’, and that was the beginning,” said Lane. “At that time, it was way more parking, and it was a pretty modest library. Then, think about the sweep of five years. What has changed? Well, there was no housing [in the beginning], now there’s a huge amount of housing. The parking has gotten cut by more than half. The library itself got way bigger, and better. There’s a child care center now as part of this project. I can go on, there’s smaller details beyond that of how it’s changed. So, how did that happen? Well, it’s because there was all this processing going on, and people speaking up and saying, ‘Hey, it should be better than what you started with.’”

Measure O’s main support comes from a loose coalition of various groups and activated citizens — Downtown Commons Advocates, ReImagine Santa Cruz, Don’t Bury the Library, the Campaign for Sustainable Transportation and others — each of whom have different reasons for opposing the new library project.

The proposed parking garage especially seems to be a lightning rod for criticism. Much of the energy behind Measure O, in fact, comes from those who insist that building another parking structure downtown is unnecessary, expensive, and out of step with taking steps to mitigate climate change and make a stand against car culture.

Others simply don’t want the library to move, feeling that something would be lost if the library would stray from its spot across from City Hall and the Civic Auditorium, even if the new library would be only a couple of blocks away. Others are supporting Measure O for the sake of the farmers market, though the market’s board itself remains neutral on the issue. If O fails and the new library project goes forward, the farmers market could move to Lot 7, near Cathcart and Front streets, as the city and the farmers market [reached a non-binding agreement](#) to work through the potential of permanent infrastructure at the new proposed site. Though they are not involved in the management of the market, O’s backers say that Lot 7 is inferior to Lot 4 as a site for the farmers market.

No-on-O forces who support the library/mixed-use project represent a broad cross-section of mainstream political and economic interests including the Democratic Party of Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce, the Cabrillo College board of trustees, the Downtown Association of Santa Cruz, the Friends of Santa Cruz Public Libraries and many others.

No-on-O advocates who support the new library are particularly bothered by what they see as Measure O’s casual tossing aside of a carefully considered, detailed project in favor of what they see as vague projections and wishlists. Mixed-used projects, they say, are more efficient in terms of energy use and construction costs, and the new design will give Santa Cruz a showcase library in ways that a renovation of the old library simply would not.

“It’s just really so uninformed,” said Lane in reference to the affordable housing part of Measure O. “It just kind of misleads people into thinking, Oh, if you stop this project, you’re not really setting back affordable housing, but if this measure passes, we are stopping that project and it is a big setback. And it’s not easy to just restart it somewhere else.”

What would be the impacts if Measure O passes, given its broad reach? That’s still being parsed by all involved.



[On the Campaign Trail: Inside Election 2022 around Santa Cruz County](#)

Most agree that timelines on both the next library and the construction of new housing would be extended; how long would be in contention. Reconstruction of a new main branch would mean the closing of the main branch for months, and likely longer.

But Measure O’s backers are quick to add that whatever delays might result from the passage of O, decisions today on the fate of Lot 4 will influence and affect generations of Santa Cruzans for decades to come.

As we get closer to Election Day, Lookout Santa Cruz will look deeper into the issues surrounding Measure O, including the four main arms of what the measure entails: the library, the farmers market, the parking garage, and the affordable housing units. We’ll look closer at the competing visions of the new library, for instance. We’ll look at what the passage of O, or its failure, will do to the housing market, and we’ll examine the controversy behind downtown parking.

Both sides agree that O will not decide whether Santa Cruz gets a new library or whether the downtown farmer market will continue. Both of those things seem certain to happen. Everything else, however, is up for debate.

Could the downtown Santa Cruz library and the farmers market swap places?



Quick Take

If Measure O is defeated and the library/mixed-use project goes forward on Lot 4, then the downtown Santa Cruz farmers market's permanent home could be part of a larger plaza project on the old library block. It's not a new idea, but one some might have missed amid all the questions of downtown development.



A sketch outlines a possibility for the current downtown Santa Cruz library site.

(Via City of Santa Cruz)

BY [LILY BELLI](#) OCT 25, 2022 | 5:25 AM

Here's a twist you might not have expected in the continuing conversation about the future home of the downtown Santa Cruz farmers market: In one scenario, the library could end up where the farmers market is today — and the farmers market could end up at the current library site.

As voters consider [Measure O](#) on the Nov. 8 ballot, the visions of what downtown Santa Cruz could be and should be clearly extend beyond the question of what should happen on Lot 4, the current

home of the downtown farmers market. Though O's proposition is now before Santa Cruz voters, the city council, city planners, farmers market leaders and others have been sketching out a range of possibilities for a permanent home for the farmers market for years, as part of what many perceive as the [greatest change](#) in the downtown landscape since the aftermath of the 1989 earthquake.

There's one vision that's been in discussion for more than a year, and one that is useful for voters to know about as they go to the polls. That idea: transform the 59,000-square-foot site of the current downtown library lot at Cedar and Church streets into an outdoor community gathering space that's part plaza, part park. The farmers market would use this space — and perhaps expand to twice a week — in addition to it becoming a site for community gatherings like the Church Street Fair and Greek Festival. There is also the possibility of building affordable housing on the site.

"Its location adjacent to the civic center makes it an ideal location," said Bonnie Lipscomb, the city's economic development director. The idea emerged from a [library site revision process](#) conducted in spring 2021, during which time more than 700 community members weighed in with their thoughts and desires for the space.

Of course, that possibility is on hold until we see the results of Measure O. In fact, the up or down vote on O could have significant impact on multiple sites and projects downtown.



All the additions and add-ons that the city and the downtown farmers market have agreed to in a recent [memorandum of understanding](#), backed by \$1.77 million in city funding, would apply to

that site, should it move forward. Those include hookups for food trucks, which could serve the area on market and non-market days, protective covering for sun and rain, restrooms and cold storage for the farmers and vendors.

“It’s one more spot to look at since the reuse vision study showed strong support for a public plaza and market location. How the design could work has not been looked at but there is a lot of very interesting aspects to that zone which could include City Hall, the Civic and the adjacent streets,” said Nesh Dhillon, [executive director of Santa Cruz Community Farmers’ Markets](#), which operates the downtown Santa Cruz market.

To be clear, this isn’t a brand-new vision created in the wake of the Measure O initiative, but it’s one that hasn’t received much attention. It was openly discussed at the city council and through the community process at the time, says Lipscomb, but since the approval of the report last June it’s gotten lost in the shuffle.

“The reactivation of the current library site is some time down the road,” Lipscomb said, “and with the controversy around Lot 4 and the active opposition to the proposed affordable housing library project, focusing on what the current library site could become hasn’t felt as timely to some.”

The study was led by city staff and outside consultants, including [Group 4 Architecture Research & Planning](#) and [Project for Public Spaces](#). Lipscomb managed the project with Principal Management Analyst Amanda Rotella and Rachel Kaufman, the recreation superintendent at the Parks & Recreation Department, with input from city staff from the Civic Auditorium, the fire department, the planning department and public works. More than a dozen community and neighborhood stakeholders included the Downtown Santa Cruz Association and Ecology Action. The study was completed and presented to the city council in June 2021.

The Measure O vote now hangs in the balance.

If passed, Measure O would mandate that the library stay in its current location, meaning the current library site wouldn’t be open for redevelopment as a plaza/market.

If voters turn down O, the new library — part of the multiuse (library, housing, parking) project planned for the farmer’s market’s current home — would continue to move forward. That would open up the option for the plaza/market idea at Church and Cedar.

Dhillon has resisted taking sides on the Measure O debate, but acknowledges that if the measure passes, multiple options that the market is currently considering with the city would be off the table. “My understanding is O would designate Lot 4 for a commons and market site. The other public lots would not be available,” Dhillon said. “Through the MOU, we have an insurance policy that secures a permanent location and the funding necessary to make it happen regardless of how

the vote goes. If the public votes yes on O, we would work with Lot 4 since the other locations would be designated for different uses. If O does not pass, we continue to work on more site locations. Either way, we still need to establish a temporary or alternative location to go to if and when needed. We are currently working on that.”

It’s essential to understand that none of these market plans will be completed overnight; all would take several years to complete. In fact, if Lot 7 becomes the chosen site, the market could move to a temporary site while [nearby construction projects](#) on Front Street are underway.

“The market experience is pretty sublime and having major construction next door will be challenging,” Dhillon said. If Measure O passes and the market stays on Lot 4, it will also have to move temporarily when the site is developed into a downtown commons. “If we end up staying at our current spot, we would also incur disruption when the space was repurposed.” The new alternate location would be located in an area of downtown that was immune to construction and development, most likely a street closure.

Measure O and parking in downtown Santa Cruz: Counting the spots and the money



(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

BY [MAX CHUN](#) OCT 28, 2022 | 5:47 AM



A 243-space parking garage is at the heart of the Measure O debate. Here we look at all the moving pieces on the lots all around downtown Santa Cruz, and the dollars-and-cents questions that surround them.

[Measure O's](#) biggest flashpoints — the new downtown Santa Cruz library location, affordable housing, the [future of the farmers market](#) — have almost obscured one of its early concerns: parking.

The multiuse project planned for Lot 4, on which voters will decide through their vote up or down on Measure O on the Nov. 8 ballot, includes a new 243-space parking garage. Measure O proponents take serious issue with it. They say that another parking garage would be costly, detrimental to climate goals and simply unnecessary.

City planners say that the city has lost some public parking since 2018, is set to lose more as several projects come to fruition, and that more spaces are needed to support current and expected business activity and the influx of more residents as housing occupies more parcels.

Parking has long been controversial in downtown Santa Cruz. Despite some strides in public transit, cars remain a dominant mode of transportation to and from downtown. Is there enough capacity today? Will there be tomorrow? Those questions have driven many a city council meeting and other debates, and they are brought forward again with Measure O.

While the longer-term forecasts for parking downtown will undoubtedly be a hot topic for years, here we take a look at two big questions connected to Measure O: nearer-term parking capacity and the money surrounding the parking issue.

How does parking capacity change if O passes or fails?

In 2020, there were 2,950 public parking spaces in downtown Santa Cruz, according to City of Santa Cruz Transportation Planner Claire Gallogly. Since then, 264 more spaces have been lost to development:

- 108 spaces in Lot 5, next to Calvary Episcopal Church on Cedar Street;
- 49 spaces between Lots 22 and 23, across from Sesame Grill and Monster Pot on Front Street;
- 15 spaces in Lot 12, directly adjacent to the quickly growing Pacific Station South development;
- 32 spaces in Lot 27, at the corner of Laurel and Front streets.

Officials also expect about 60 street spaces to be removed for the city’s parklet program — the in-street outdoor eating areas people have come to appreciate amid the COVID-19 pandemic. If we factor those out as well, that leaves 2,686 spaces in downtown Santa Cruz without considering Measure O outcomes.



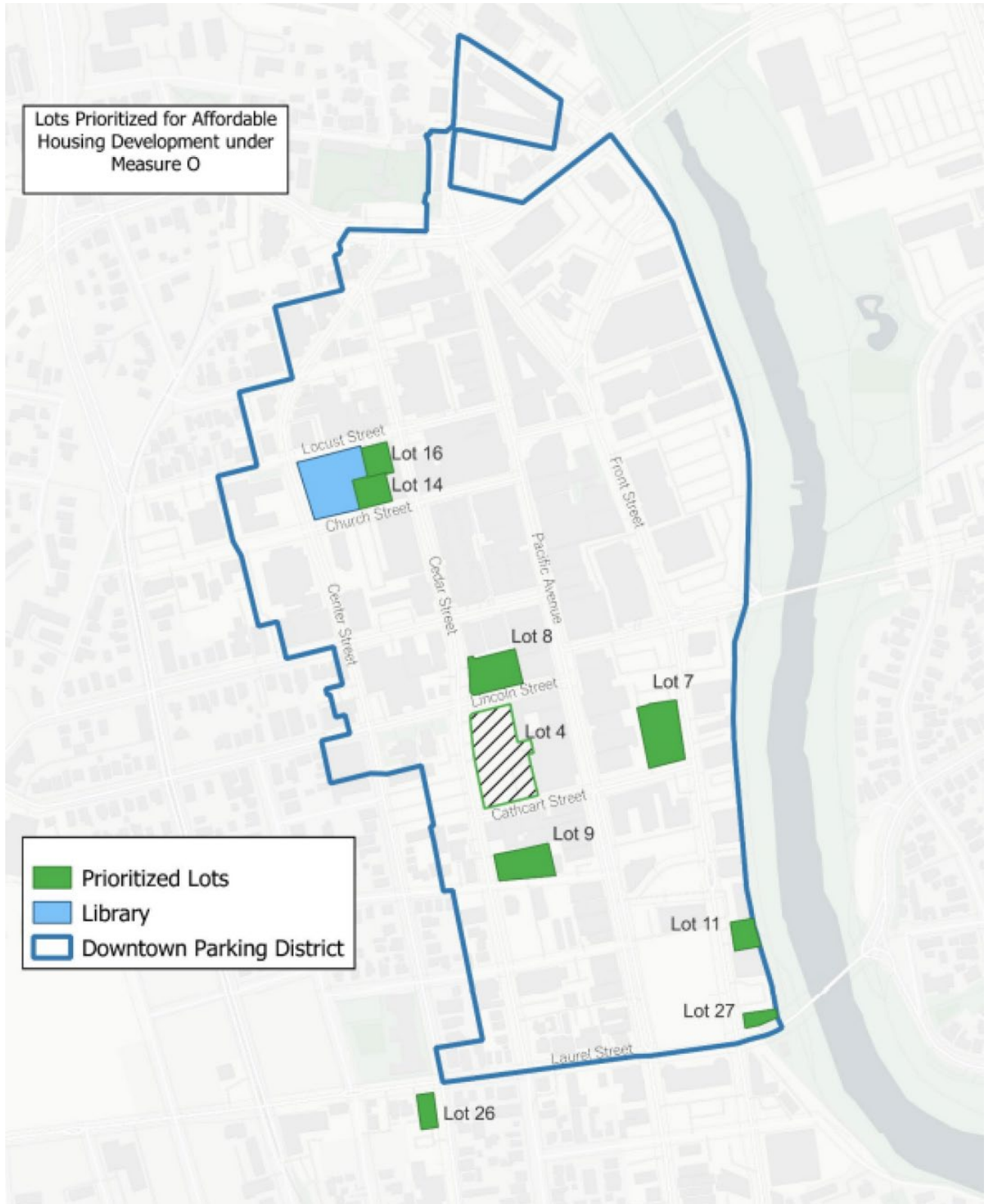
[Lookout forum: Tracking what was said for and against Measure N and Measure O](#)

According to a September Measure O report to the Santa Cruz City Council by California-based real estate economic advisory firm Keyser Marston Associates, 218 spaces would be lost if Measure O fails and the downtown library project moves forward, its current site is redeveloped, and the [Cruz Hotel project](#) is completed.

Per the City of Santa Cruz, those are:

- 134 spaces on Lot 4, where the library project would be built;
- 24 spaces on Lot 11 next to [Santa Cruz Community Credit Union](#), which would be developed into the Cruz Hotel project;
- 22 and 38 spaces on Lots 14 and 16, respectively, which are adjacent to the current site of the downtown library.

That said, the proposed 243-space parking garage would result in a net gain of 25 parking spaces in downtown Santa Cruz, or 2,711 total parking spaces.



A map of the downtown parking district, with the lots in question highlighted.

(Via Keyser Marston Associates)

If Measure O passes, some city-owned parking lots would be prioritized for affordable-housing development, which could result in spaces lost. Assuming all lots determined feasible for affordable housing by the Keyser Marston report are built upon, the lost spaces would be:

- 85 spaces in Lot 7, behind Pizza My Heart and Kianti's;
- 49 spaces in Lot 8, across the street from Jack's Hamburgers;
- 45 spaces in Lot 9, behind Lúpulo Craft Beer House.

The combined 60 spaces between Lots 14 and 16 could also be lost in this scenario, though the Keyser Marston report says those lots are unlikely to support affordable housing development.

If that all proves to be true, and the other three lots are developed into affordable housing projects while the 134 spaces of Lot 4 are retained, the passing of Measure O would result in a net loss of 179 spaces, leaving 2,507 total parking spaces in downtown Santa Cruz.

Measure O does, however, authorize development on Lot 4. Should that happen, some of its 134 spaces could be scrapped as well.

Where does money factor in?

Brian Borguno, City of Santa Cruz development manager and former parking programs manager, explained that the city plans to use "parking enterprise funds" to finance the \$14-16 million parking garage.

"We have some money dedicated to the project right now already in the project budget, but the anticipation is that we will be supporting debt service to either bond or finance the fully funded portion of this facility," he said.

Most public projects seek revenue bonds, or municipal bonds issued by state or local entities to fund revenue-generating projects. In this case, that would be a parking district bond.

Rick Longinotti, chair of the Campaign for Sustainable Transportation and Yes on O leader, said he doubts the feasibility of using parking district funds to finance the project, citing a running deficit since the pandemic as a key reason.

"There are a lot of boarded-up storefronts, and a lot of people who are now working from home, and that may continue," he said. "My guess is that the parking district will recover to some extent, but I have no idea whether it will recover to the extent that they'll be able to issue bonds. Anyone who says otherwise, I think is just blowing smoke."

For Longinotti, this raises questions of feasibility for the entire project.

“If we have to wait years before the garage can be financed, that’s a long delay,” he said. “If you can’t finance a piece of it, like the garage, then how are you going to build the housing?”

Don Lane, former Santa Cruz mayor and Measure O opponent, acknowledges the depleted parking fund of recent years, but points to hiked parking rates, the waning pandemic and future revenue from parking permits associated with new housing set for downtown as reasons that revenue outlook could improve.

Borguno added that there are other revenue sources the city can use to fund the garage.

“We increased our monthly parking fees for monthly permit-holders, as well as user fees on parking-meter revenues and hourly rates in the garages already built,” he said. “It doesn’t make sense to go with revenue bonds if we could look at other financial tools like leveraging the paid-off facilities that we already own.”

“Like that old saying, there’s more than one way to skin the cat,” said Lane.

However, if there is enough parking-district revenue to finance the garage, Longinotti said he believes that there should be enough to fund other things, like Measure O seeks to do.

“We don’t know when or if there will be a surplus, but to the extent that we do have a surplus, our choice is to spend it on affordable housing rather than parking,” he said. “If they think they can finance a garage, certainly there’ll be a savings then that can go for other purposes.”

Borguno says it’s not that simple.

“From my understanding, the uses are very limited, and it’s only after all other obligations have been met by the district,” he said. “If we currently had surplus, after operations were covered and all capital projects were completed, that would have to go towards any remaining debt service we currently carry before it can be spent on anything else.”

New Library vs. Renovated Library: What would Santa Cruz get?



Renderings of the proposed new library (top) and the renovated library in downtown Santa Cruz.

(Via Jayson Architecture)

BY [WALLACE BAIN](#) OCT 30, 2022 | 5:53 AM



Quick Take

Let's do a side-by-side comparison. The new downtown branch library will make a statement, and for a long time, about downtown Santa Cruz. Whether built new on a current parking lot or renovated where it's sat since 1969, it'll cost more than \$40 million for the best possible of each. Wallace Baine talks with architect Abraham Jayson, giving us a virtual tour of what each would be like.

[Measure O](#), on the ballot in the city of Santa Cruz in November, contains an array of different components, from trees to parking spaces to vegetable stands. It offers two contrasting visions of what downtown might look like in the near future.

But to library lovers, one question is primary. All other considerations are just accessories:

Which option gives us the best library?

Of course, there's a lot of wiggle room in that term "best." Does it mean the grandest, the largest, the least expensive, the most familiar, the most impressive architecturally, the most compatible to a voter's idiosyncratic vision of what Santa Cruz is or should be?

No matter if Measure O passes or fails, downtown Santa Cruz is certain to get a new library to serve as the main branch for the county’s 10-branch library system. There is about \$27 million earmarked for it, thanks to the passage of Measure S in 2016; either for brand-new construction or renovation, the city will have to spend additional funds. But the differences between those two ideas of a new library are enormous — different addresses, different sizes, different construction jobs, different price tags.

At the center of Measure O is what’s known as the “library/mixed-use project,” a proposed three-in-one complex featuring 123 units of affordable housing, a three-level parking garage, and a new library built from the ground up on Cedar Street in the parking lot that currently holds the [weekly farmers market](#). A “yes” vote on Measure O is, in fact, a “no” vote on that particular project going forward. Instead, Measure O proposes that the current library, at Center and Church streets across from Santa Cruz City Hall, be renovated on the same site.



[A lot of disagreement: Measure O galvanizes competing visions of downtown Santa Cruz](#)

So, in comparing the dueling projects, we’ll refer to the [“New Library”](#) and the [“Renovated Library”](#) — though, to be fair, both libraries, at least from the experience of community users, will feel new.

Time and money

Costs are, of course, a moving target. What’s true for a gallon of milk is true for a major construction project — today’s price is subject to change and likely to increase over time. Plus, for

each project, there is an estimated cost for a “base” model, and an “alternate” model, with more amenities. But according to the most recent estimates from Jayson Architecture, the San Francisco-based firm that has developed plans for both projects, the costs for the alternate (or best possible) version of each plan breaks down like this:

- for the New Library, including some extras like a roof-deck patio, costs would be \$42,573,876;
- for the Renovated Library, including extras like acoustic enhancements and other improvements, the price is \$40,305,883.

A rendering of the New Library project seen from Lincoln and Cedar streets.

(Jayson Architecture via City of Santa Cruz)

There’s also a significant difference in the square footage between the two projects. The New Library would come in at about 38,000 square feet; the Renovation at about 30,000 square feet. So by the per-square-foot calculations, the price per square foot is greater for the renovation. The Renovated Library would cost \$1,333 per square foot. The New Library would cost \$1,118 per square foot.

A crucial distinction in cost calculation, said Jayson Architecture principal architect Abraham Jayson, is time. Plans for the New Library are about a year ahead of plans for the Renovated Library, he said. That’s because plans for the New Library are closer to the “design & engineering” step of the process that would lead to construction to begin in 2024. The renovation plans, derived from a 2019 feasibility study by Jayson, are in the “cost assessment” phase, earlier on the project timeline.

The opening of a Renovated Library would then be a year behind new construction, with construction starting in 2025. Both projects would take roughly two years before they would open their doors.



A rendering of the Renovated Library at the site of the current library, looking from across Center Street.

(Via Jayson Architecture)

In both cases, any delay is going to increase costs. The estimates for the Renovated Library, at this point, already include the extra costs of that time lag. “The longer things go,” said Jayson, “the more expensive it gets, or the smaller the library gets, if you want to look at it that way.”

Another cost for the Renovated Library — one that is included in that \$40,305,883 projection — would be the construction of a temporary library that would be open during the two to three years of the renovation; such a cost isn’t necessary with the New Library.

These kinds of comparisons are complex and contain a lot of variables, said Jayson, and the differences between them is not only size and scale, but of kind: “These are two different projects. They do not contain the same things.”

What is a library in 2022?

The current downtown library on Church Street opened in 1969, obviously another era altogether in the Information Age. Santa Cruzans whose experience with libraries doesn’t go much beyond the downtown branch, or who are infrequent users of libraries in general, might not be aware of the revolution that has gone on in the arena of library design and use in the Digital Age.

Once primarily a repository for books, the library today has taken on several other different roles in a community: a place of discovery for kids, a hangout spot for teens and young people, a node of access to information beyond books, a gathering place for small groups or formal meetings, a

free and public place for relaxation and social interaction, even a reflection of a community's self-image in the same way that university libraries are an image of an institution's image of itself.



The recently renovated Garfield Park library branch.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

“Books remain really important,” said Jayson, whose firm specializes in library design. In Santa Cruz County, Jayson Architecture also did the recent library renovations in Boulder Creek, La Selva Beach, Garfield Park and the children’s annex of the Live Oak Library, all funded by the 2016 Measure S. “Books are a really important part of the knowledge ecosystem, but they’re only a part of that ecosystem now.”



Inside the recently renovated Garfield Park library branch.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Jayson, who graduated from UC Santa Cruz and lived in the area for several years in the early 2000s, said that libraries have taken up the role that old-fashioned “community centers” (like London Nelson in Santa Cruz) once held in the 1970s and ’80s. New libraries — like the recently opened [Capitola branch library](#), designed by Oakland-based Noll & Tam Architects — regularly include a big children’s section, a teens’ section, and separate meeting rooms that might have different open hours than the library itself. And libraries continue to adapt in their flexibility.



1/14

The main entrance to the new Capitola Library is close to where it was at the old building, but that's about where the similarities end.

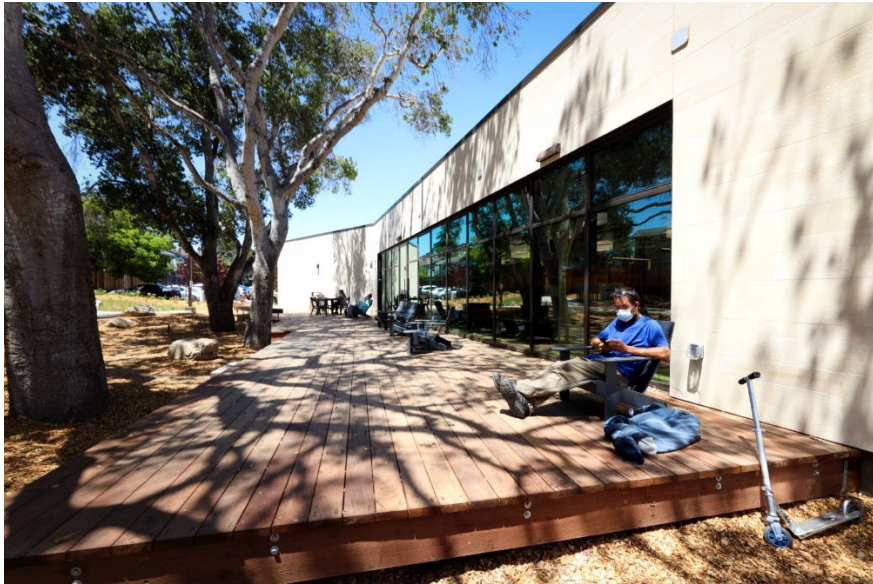
(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



2/14

The high ceiling in the new library is meant to evoke the bottom of a ship's hull.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



3/14

The deck area with Adirondack-style chairs adds space for reading and gathering, and allows parents and guardians to keep an eye on the nearby play structure, too.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



4/14

Eight-year-old Camilla Chavez settled into a reading nook during her first visit to the new Capitola library.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



5/14

Green plates on the ceiling that resemble the leaves of a very big tree in the children's section of the new Capitola library are actually designed as acoustic panels to help absorb noise.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



6/14

Aptos resident Patrick Hung reads in front of the fireplace during his first visit to the Capitola library. "I think it's beautiful but lacking a bit in books," he said. "It seems like they are filling up."

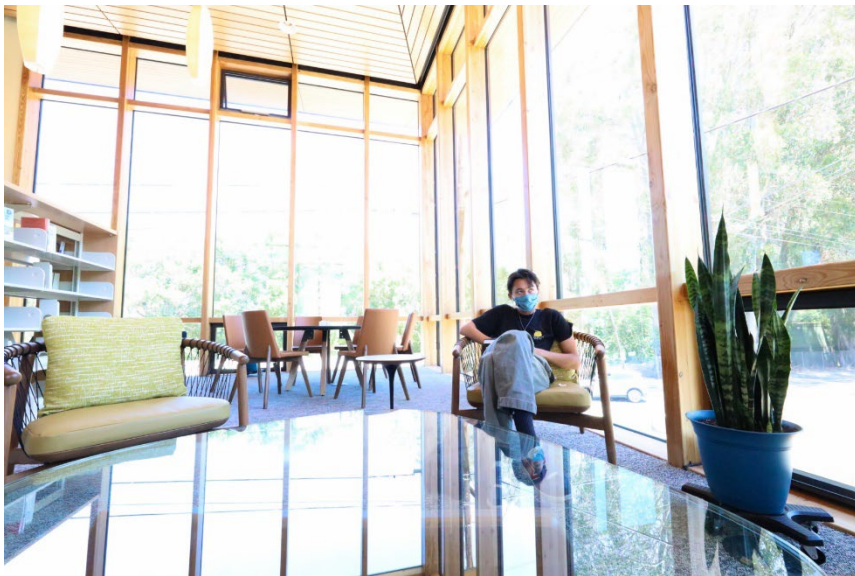
(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



7/14

One of the community rooms at the new Capitola library.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



8/14

There's no shortage of natural light at the new Capitola Branch Library.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



9/14

The glassed-in teen space at the new Capitola library.

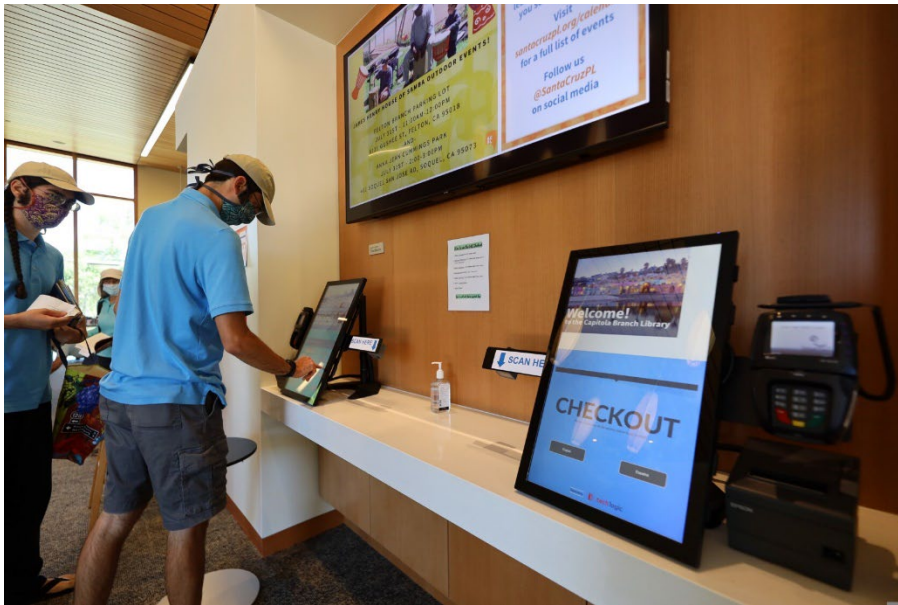
(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



10/14

The new Capitola Branch Library, at the corner of Wharf Road and Clares Street, cost more than \$13 million.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



11/14

Brothers Paul and George Ankeney use the Capitola library's new digital checkout system.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



12/14

Glass and wood run throughout the new Capitola library.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



13/14

The library's deck area overlooks the play structure at the Capitola library.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)



14/14

With a price tag of \$13.5 million, the branch library is the largest capital project the city of Capitola has ever undertaken.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

“We’re seeing now a transition in libraries,” said Jayson, “from fixed computers, in a computer zone in the library, to laptop checkout carts. So you don’t necessarily sit at a computer area, and instead you can check out a laptop, go find a comfy lounge chair somewhere.”



Inside the recently renovated Garfield Park library branch.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Modern libraries have also rediscovered the benefits of high ceilings, for instance, both as a functional way to maximize natural light and as a symbol of the library’s stature in its community. “We firmly believe that libraries should have a civic stature, that these are buildings that are representations of our society and what we value,” Jayson said. “And there should be a sense of grandeur when you walk into a public library. That scale, that sense of awe that draws the eye up, I do think there’s a sense of power and respect for what we value in society in that architectural decision.”

The New Library

Jayson said that the library proposal that is part of the city’s library/mixed-use proposal — the proposal that Measure O would stop — has more inherent flexibility than the Renovated Library plan simply because it is starting from scratch, not having to adapt to a preexisting structure.



Natural lighting through floor-to-ceiling windows will be a central component of the new Cedar Street library.

(Via Jayson Architecture)

The plan, as it exists now, calls for two main levels, plus a mezzanine level, covering the length of Cedar Street, between Lincoln and Cathcart streets. The first floor would have entrances on Cedar and at the back from the parking garage. The first floor would feature the library’s main lobby and entranceway, plus staff offices and the library’s ample children’s area, as well as a couple of meeting rooms, one with an outside entrance.

The second floor constitutes the library’s main room, with its fiction and nonfiction sections, a genealogy/local history room, info and reference desks, and a teens’ room. A mezzanine level overlooks the second floor in a kind of atrium design. On the mezzanine level would be a more informal, cafe-like room with lounge chairs, a small art gallery, even a piano. That room opens out onto an outdoors library deck divided into a shaded area and a sunny area, with a view of downtown from the corner of Cedar and Cathcart. Visible but not accessible would be a “green roof,” a gardenlike area of native plants and greenery.



The proposed roof-deck patio on the mezzanine level on the new library, overlooking Cedar Street.

(Via Jayson Architecture)

“This would absolutely be the most significant project we’ve completed to date, and it would be thrilling,” said Jayson, who worked almost a decade at Noll & Tam before founding his own firm in 2017. The design for the New Library, said Jayson, will allow for the continuing evolution of the library, with maximum flexibility.

“In the center of the space,” he said, “there’s nothing fixed. The stacks in the middle of the room, the information desk, all of that, it’s all on wheels so it can be moved.”

The design is meant to embrace many different ideas of what a library should be. “Currently designed libraries are not a place where librarians are shushing people,” said Jayson of the library’s most common lingering stereotype. “We think about designing the library in zones. If you want a place to go study and concentrate, there’s going to be a place for you. If you want a place to gather with your friends, and kind of be a little more social and bubbly, there’s a place for you, too.”

The Renovated Library

Measure O proponents say that the spirit of Measure S funds was to renovate the existing library, not to build a new one altogether in a different place, and indeed most of the improvement projects at other library branches have been on the same site as the older library.

The Renovated Library plan does not have the kind of detailed design as the New Library, because it is well behind it in the development process. That 2019 plan is more a feasibility study, calling

for a partial rebuild of the current library. By its nature, the architects will be working within limits they wouldn't have in new construction.



The lobby of the alternate (upgraded) version of the renovated library at Church and Center streets.

(Via Jayson Architecture)

“With an existing building, there are choices made that are beyond your control,” said Jayson. “Floor-to-floor height, for example, is outside of your control, which restricts ceiling height.”

The renovation would include the removal of asbestos that is contained in the old library, and a rebuild of sections of the library that are seismically unstable. The 2019 study included two designs, one which kept to the budget restraints of the Measure S funding. That design does not include things such as a new roof, new sidewalks, parking, new windows on the second floor, acoustic ceilings and landscaping, among other amenities. The “alternate” design — the one that costs \$40,305,883 — includes all those things.

“We did it to say, ‘Here’s what you can afford,’ which is going to be, I think, disappointing to the city and the community,” said Jayson. “And then, [in the alternate design], here are improvements within the constraints of the site, but not constrained by the budget that would make this a better project.”

Though the site and the basic structure of the Renovated Library would be the same, the design calls for entrances on both Center and Church streets. But the main purpose of the 2019 study was to determine whether it was feasible to renovate the library within the \$27 million budget of Measure S.

The study concluded that it was feasible, but “the community will have to compromise on program, quality, and sustainability.” The alternate design takes away many of those compromises, but brings the budget up to within shouting distance of the much larger New Library’s budget.

Abraham Jayson said he cannot comment on Measure O specifically. But whichever choice the community makes, and whichever library it ends up with, it’s important to note that libraries remain a critical reflection of the community it serves.

“The foundational mission of libraries is always about knowledge,” he said, “rather than being about something more limiting, like the sale of a certain type of thing. If the underlying mission is not oriented toward the public good, then it’s not going to survive and be adaptable. And libraries are one of the few spaces in this world that are free for all, for the community and for the greater good. And there aren’t too many spaces like that in this world.”

Eight lots: Debating the parking lots that Measure O would mandate for housing



Lot 7 along Front Street.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

BY [CHRISTOPHER NEELY](#) NOV 2, 2022 | 6:01 AM



Quick Take

The battle over Measure O is many things to many people, but at its base, it is an attempt by residents to push through their own vision for urban planning, one that contrasts against that of city staff. Sharing the stage in this struggle are a well-known library mixed-use project proposal and a broad outline of affordable housing on eight city-owned parking lots. Where are these lots? How large are they? What do they look like? Could housing realistically be placed on these sites as the measure promises? Lookout examines what we know.

Measure O, which rose to the ballot in the city of Santa Cruz through a citizen-led petition drive, pits affordable housing against affordable housing, and has split voters, organizations and locals who claim affordable housing development as their priority issue.

Though O's many [impacts](#) would affect the location of a new downtown library and of the [downtown farmers market](#), and offer a vision of a new “downtown commons,” it is that housing-versus-housing fight that might produce the greatest repercussions if voters approve O next Tuesday.



[A lot of disagreement: Measure O galvanizes competing visions of downtown Santa Cruz](#)

A “yes” on Measure O abandons the plan to build a new mixed-use library, parking structure and 124 affordable-housing units on Lot 4 downtown. If Measure O proponents value affordable

housing, why would they stop the building of those 124 units? They say the trading of those units — already midway through planning — for the enforced priority of housing elsewhere downtown is worth it.

To effect that trade, Measure O mandates that the city preserve eight city-owned downtown surface parking lots “to the maximum extent feasible” for future affordable-housing development.

According to the measure, if the city determines that a lot cannot feasibly host an affordable housing project, it must remain surface-level parking, without the possibility of building a parking structure on it. That’s as far as Measure O goes, offering no plans, process or funding for the housing.

Where did the “eight lots” idea come from?

That idea finds its roots in a parking battle that stretches back to 2020. Measure O leader Rick Longinotti’s group, the Campaign for Sustainable Transportation, was collecting signatures in March 2020 on a ballot measure that would have required any multilevel parking garage proposals to be first approved by voters. The petition drive was a pushback against the city’s original plan to put the new library as the first-floor tenant under a 640-space parking garage.

The pandemic canceled the original petition drive after only a few weeks. During that time, Longinotti said, the coalition expanded to welcome people who cared about the location of the library and farmers market. Longinotti said the idea to preserve the eight city lots came from a [Santa Cruz YIMBY](#) (yes in my my backyard) event in which demonstrators congregated on a city-owned parking lot, pushing for the city to use its own land for affordable housing projects.

“That was the inspiration in my mind,” Longinotti said. “We feel the city should be using public land to leverage affordable housing development. We were looking at parking lots that we thought would be practical for affordable housing, and we selected them based on size.”

How much housing the eight lots could individually and collectively produce, of course, is the key question.

The city’s response included calling for an outside, expert view. After it was clear Measure O would go on the ballot, the Santa Cruz City Council commissioned an analysis from Berkeley-based real estate consultant firm Keyser Marston Associates — and that report has been something of a political football. That report says only three lots could feasibly work for housing, and estimates the trio could max out at just 209 units. The city’s planning director, Lee Butler, told Lookout that the Keyser Marston report is the “key set of analyses that the city commissioned and recognizes.”

Yet even the feasibility of these lots as future sites for affordable housing has become part of political furor over the measure. An analysis by Measure O proponents, one they call “very

conservative,” says almost all of the lots could produce housing, and estimates that four of the lots could yield at least 433 affordable housing units.



[Lookout forum: Tracking what was said for and against Measure N and Measure O](#)

Throughout the Measure O campaigns, these eight city parking lots in question have drifted along in abstraction. Where are these lots? How large are they? What do they look like? Could housing realistically be placed on these sites? Lookout set out to describe them as best we could, and show you what they look like from the air, below.

Beyond those questions, there are weightier ones speaking to the underlying politics of this election. How voters stand on Measure O could depend on how they answer the following question: Who are you more likely to trust in making long-lasting urban planning decisions? The city’s planning staff in conjunction with democratically elected officials *or* organized citizen groups?

The Keyser Marston report, heavily relied upon by the city and Measure O opponents and heavily critiqued by Measure O’s authors, makes the case that the ballot measure would essentially trade the up to 125 units of affordable housing being planned with the library project for a maximum of 209 units on only three lots. Judging by the current pace of planning and financing affordable housing projects, the units might not come online for the better part of a decade.

Don Lane, former Santa Cruz mayor and current chairperson of [advocacy organization Housing Santa Cruz County](#), has been leading the campaign against Measure O. He trusts the Keyser Marston report, he said, because of the firm’s neutrality and history of analysis in Santa Cruz and across the state.

“Keyser Marston knows exactly what’s going on there,” Lane said. “I don’t have to do my own breakdown, I trust theirs.”



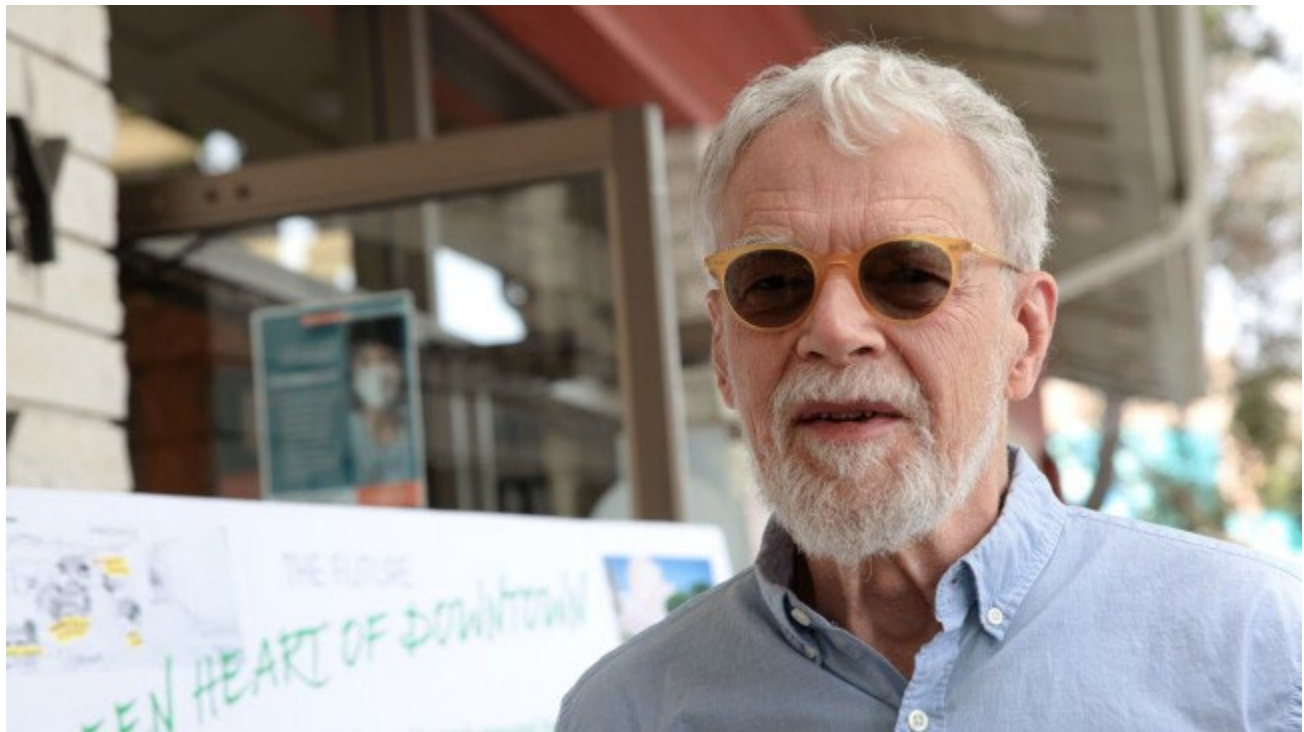
Lot 16 along Church Street, next to the downtown library.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

A project of at least 50 units was the critical mass for Keyser Marston in ensuring a project would pencil out for developers. Rectangular lots at a minimum of a half-acre that allowed for a height of at least 50 feet was the sweet spot in the report. The report cited a state government code that says a site smaller than a half-acre “shall not be deemed adequate to accommodate lower-income housing need” unless the city can show precedence within its boundaries. The rectangular lot shape, the report said, allowed for a more efficient building, and the project height was based on cost — keeping a project at five floors or lower of residential space means it could be built with a wood frame. Going higher and using material such as steel would enhance the cost so as to make it infeasible, the report said.

John Hall, [a leading proponent of Measure O](#), called the Keyser Marston report flawed in its assumption that a half-acre is necessary for a project to be financially feasible. He pointed to [Pacific Station South](#), the seven-story, 70-unit affordable housing project planned for Front

Street, which, with a footprint of roughly 15,700 square feet, will be built on land much smaller than a half-acre.



[John Hall on downtown library initiative: 'We are not about blocking things'](#)

In their own estimates, Measure O's proponents say six of the eight lots could yield housing, and four of those lots, together, could produce more than double the number of units calculated in the Keyser Marston report. If the projects on those four lots were to include seven stories of housing at 1,500 square feet of residential space per unit, the proponents' analysis says 433 affordable housing units could be built.

How conservative is that estimate? For context, the 70-unit Pacific Station South development comes out to 886 square feet per unit; the 124-unit library mixed-use project comes to 938 square feet of residential space per unit, compared to the 1,500 square feet per unit used by Measure O's authors.

"We wanted to make sure that no one could accuse us of exaggerating the amount of 100% affordable housing that can be created with Measure O," Hall said. "I have no doubt that a larger amount of units could be created."

Longinotti said two of the other lots could host smaller projects, but offered no numbers. However, he admitted that the situation on the final two other lots had changed since the measure was drafted and were unlikely to fulfill a vision for affordable housing (more on that below).

Lane said he does not trust the analysis.

“Where are their credentials on affordable housing development and financing? It’s a well-intentioned community group, but they don’t know very much about affordable-housing development,” Lane said. “You have one side presenting data and expertise and the other side just saying it because they want it to work that way. Politics may work that way; good policy doesn’t.”

Lane said if Measure O passed he would “work like hell” to get smart affordable-housing projects built on the city-owned parking lots. However, he urged voters to remember that if Measure O fails, those city-owned parking lots would still be candidates for future affordable-housing projects.

“In the meantime, we have something that could move forward in the next couple years,” Lane said. “Or we could wait nine years.”

THE EIGHT LOTS OF MEASURE O: AN EXAMINATION

Lot 7



Lot 7 sits at the corner of Front and Cathcart streets.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Address/size: Composed of five individual parcels:

1. 505 Front St. - 11,543 square feet
2. 511 Front St. - 4,312 square feet

3. 513 Front St. - 3,354 square feet
4. 515 Front St. - 8,668 square feet
5. 521 Front St. - 6,098 square feet

Total size: 33,975 square feet

Total current parking spaces: 66

Compatible for affordable housing according to the Keyser Marston report? Yes

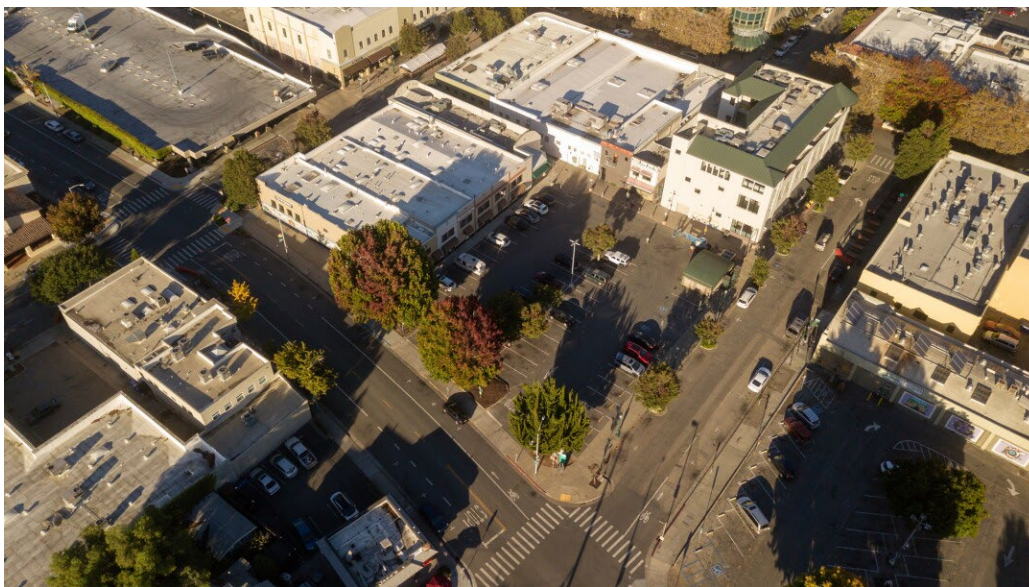
Measure O proponents estimated maximum unit yield, 1,500 square feet per unit, eight-story development: 176

Keyser Marston's estimated unit yield: 109

Why Keyser Marston says it's compatible: At 0.78 acres, the lot meets the half-acre threshold used by Keyser Marston. The parking lot also has two entry points: one on Front Street, another on Cathcart Street, which allows for a “well-designed circulation” for cars entering and exiting the ground-floor parking lot.

Additional notes on the lot: According to city planning staff, Lot 7 has been evaluated as the [potential future home of the downtown farmers market](#).

Lot 8



Lot 8 sits at the corner of Cedar and Lincoln streets.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Address: 710 Cedar St.

Size: 21,431.5 square feet

Total current parking spaces: 32

Compatible for affordable housing according to the Keyser Marston report? Yes

Measure O proponents estimated maximum unit yield, 1,500 square feet per unit, eight-story development: 96

Keyser Marston's estimated unit yield: About 50

Why Keyser Marston says it's compatible: Although it's slightly smaller than a half-acre, the parcel is rectangular, which allows for more efficient construction. Keyser Marston estimates about 50 units could fit on the lot, but says height limits restricting development to 50 feet would require development incentives and/or waivers.

Lot 9



Lot 9 sits at the corner of Cedar and Elm streets.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Address: 120 Elm St.

Size: 19,732 square feet

Total current parking spaces: 46

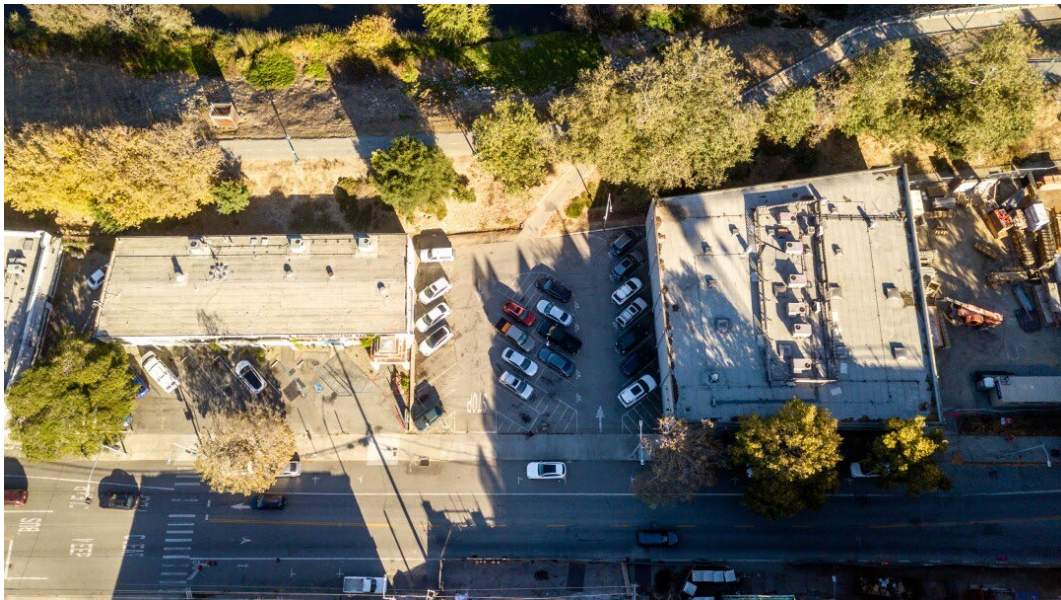
Compatible for affordable housing according to the Keyser Marston report? Yes

Measure O proponents estimated maximum unit yield, 1,500 square feet per unit, eight-story development: 91

Keyser Marston's estimated unit yield: About 50

Why Keyser Marston says it's compatible: Although slightly smaller than the half-acre threshold, the lot's rectangular shape makes development more feasible. Similar to Lot 8, Lot 9 is mostly restricted by 50-foot height limits, so fitting 50 units would require development incentives and/or waivers.

Lot 11



Lot 11 sits at 326 Front St.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Address: 326 Front St. (includes only the right half of the parking lot shown above)

Size: 4,399.5 square feet

Total current parking spaces: 24

Compatible for affordable housing according to the Keyser Marston report? No

Measure O proponents estimated maximum unit yield, 1,500 square feet per unit, eight-story development: No estimate

Why Keyser Marston says it's incompatible: Measure O proponents say the situation has changed regarding Lots 11 and 27 since the measure was first written, as the parcels between Lots 11 and 27 have sold to a private developer eyeing [a 228-room hotel](#). The Keyser Marston report

explains that the same developer is eyeing city-owned Lot 11, as well as Lot 27, for purchase. By themselves, the lots are not large enough to be feasibly developed for affordable housing. “The horse left the barn on those,” Longinotti told Lookout. Still, the lots are listed in the ballot measure. Voter approval of Measure O would, in effect, thwart the hotel plans and limit future use of Lots 11 and 27.

Lot 14 and Lot 16



Lot 16, with Lot 14 located behind it, is located at 224 Church St., adjacent to the existing downtown library.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Address: Composed of two parcels

1. Lot 14 (right half of back lot), 224 Church St. - 4,225 square feet
2. Lot 16 (front lot), 212 Church St.- 11,587 square feet

Total Size: 15,812 square feet

Total current parking spaces: 60

Compatible for affordable housing according to the Keyser Marston report? No

Measure O proponents estimated maximum unit yield, 1,500 square feet per unit, eight-story development: 70

Why Keyser Marston says it's incompatible: This one gets a little hairy. The Keyser Marston report explains that the two lots, when combined, are too small and too irregularly shaped to “efficiently” support an affordable-housing development. For Lot 14, the lot in the back, Measure O claims only the right half of the lot, which totals 4,225 square feet. Yet the left half of the parking lot is also owned by the city as part of the larger library parcel. To include the left half would have added roughly 5,500 square feet, bringing the total size of the two lots to more than 21,300 square feet — about the size of Lot 8, which O proponents estimate could fit 96 housing units. Without the additional square footage, Measure O proponents still estimate the parcels could fit 70 units in an eight-story development. The existing zoning would have to be changed, however, as the lot sits beneath an existing height limit of 35 feet.

However, if Measure O passes, the library, which sits left adjacent to the parking lots, would be renovated at its current location, rather than starting anew on Lot 4, potentially complicating the logistics for an affordable housing project.

Additional notes: According to city planning staff, Lots 14 and 16 were part of a larger evaluation of the existing downtown library parcels as a potential site for affordable housing and a public plaza. Butler said [the farmers market could end up at that site as well](#) if Measure O fails.

Advertisement

Lot 26



Lot 26 is the long parking lot sitting in front of the Santa Cruz Police Department.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Address: Composed of two parcels

1. 409 Laurel St. (front lot) - 3,528 square feet
2. 241 Center St. (back lot) - 3,528 square feet

Total size: 7,056 square feet

Total current parking spaces: 10

Compatible for affordable housing according to the Keyser Marston report? No

Measure O proponents estimated maximum unit yield, 1,500 square feet per unit, eight-story development: No estimate

Why Keyser Marston says it's incompatible: The two equally sized lots, which make up the airstrip-looking long parking lot in the photo above, are currently used as a mix of public parking and parking for the Santa Cruz Police Department. At 0.16 acres, the lot falls well below the half-acre threshold used by Keyser Marston. The report argues that development potential is “constrained” by its small size and the cost and logistics associated with having to replace parking spaces for the Santa Cruz Police Department, though the report does not estimate what that cost could be.

Lot 27



Lot 27 is the strip of landscaped area to the right of the parking lot pictured, along Laurel Street near Front Street. The city does not own the parcel with the parking spaces.

(Kevin Painchaud / Lookout Santa Cruz)

Address: 502 Front St.

Total Size: 5,053 square feet

Total current parking spaces: None

Compatible for affordable housing according to the Keyser Marston report? No

Measure O proponents estimated maximum unit yield, 1,500 square feet per unit, eight-story development: No estimate

Why Keyser Marston says it's incompatible: Although Measure O lays claim that it would preserve this entire parking lot for affordable housing, the city only owns the right sliver of the parcel, which is a landscaped area adjacent to the parking lot. As mentioned in the explainer for Lot 11, Lot 27 is being eyed by a private developer for purchase as the site of a future hotel. The Keyser Marston report additionally argues that the lot is not large enough to “feasibly accommodate” an affordable housing development.



E-Newsletter September 15, 2022

"Banned Book Week celebrates the freedom to read and spotlights current and historical attempts to censor books in libraries and schools." Santa Cruz Public Libraries.

The Santa Cruz Public Library's policy, last updated 8/2022, is impressive, for it goes way beyond banning books. PLEASE read it! [FREEDOM TO READ](#)

"The freedom to view, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression." [The Freedom to View Statement](#)

The library's message also applies to our high-tech-age entities which ban suppress, and propagandize. We have the right to unfettered access to read, view or listen to ALL information and perspectives and to speak our ideas... or we used to. . .

Is there a parallel position by the 21st century's ubiquitous, private, quasi-public social media and news entities? No. Do they violate the First Amendment? Yes. They practice censorship, suppression, banning opinions with which they disagree and pushing opinions they favor. Has technology grown so fast that we have lost sight of protecting our most essential First Amendment Rights?

If you ban, suppress or prevaricate about anything, you cause me to question what you are hiding and why. If you support unfettered access to ALL perspectives, I, John Q. Citizen, am willing and able to sift through it all, sort facts from lies, formulate opinions, engage in reasonable discussions with my family, friends, students, teachers and fellow travelers in this world. I have faith that when all ideas are aired, ultimately the best ideas will win the hearts and minds of good people.



Measure O: What is at Stake For Downtown Santa Cruz?

[Jade Diones, October 8, 2022](#) 7 min read 1032



Measure O seeks to renovate the Downtown Library and stop the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project. The entrance pictured would be one of the components

addressed in the renovation, as the renovation would provide an additional entrance alongside a more accessible entryway. Photo by Jeffrey Hopson.

Fresh produce surrounded by smiling vendors, warm red walls of buildings, and homes of longtime families line the street. Even the parking lots hold sentimental value as you scour for the perfect spot ahead of another memorable day strolling around the city.

This is Downtown Santa Cruz.

But these familiar images of Downtown could be subject to changes soon, changes which Measure O seeks to redirect.

Measure O would prohibit the proposed Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project (DLAHP). A Community Meeting on Sept. 21 revealed that the updated design would include a 41,039 square-foot mixed-use library, almost three-fourths the size of a football field, to replace the Downtown Church Street Santa Cruz Public Library.

This mixed-use library would feature four floors as well as an 1,905 square-foot child care facility. In addition to the library's amenities, the project proposes a parking space of 243 stalls, 258 bicycle parking spaces, and a new permanent home for the weekly Downtown Farmers' Market. As showcased in a Community Meeting presentation on Sept. 21, the DLAHP also aims to provide 124 affordable apartment homes for those making 30 to 60 percent of the area median monthly income.

When the project was first pitched in 2016 by the City Council-appointed Library Advisory Committee, it became a topic of interest to the community as the Downtown Church Street Santa Cruz Public Library and Downtown Farmers' Market would no longer reside in their regular spots.

The Yes on O campaign, "Our Downtown, Our Future," seeks to "preserve" the heritage of Downtown Santa Cruz by renovating the Downtown Library and maintaining the Downtown Farmers' Market in its current location.

Measure O advocates cite these locations as being historic — the library is close to the Civic Auditorium and Santa Cruz City Hall, and the Farmers' Market has been in Lot 4 since 1990.

In a memorandum of understanding (MOU) submitted to the Farmers' Market Board in July, the Farmers' Market plans to settle in Lot 7. This new location would accommodate the existing 67 vendors and allow year-round functionality.

The Farmers' Market does not endorse a specific stance on Measure O.

Based on Jayson Architecture’s conceptual design for the Downtown Library renovation, the renovated library would be 12,080 square-feet smaller in size, but have 22 percent more public space. The Downtown Library’s renovation concept designs feature a Children’s Garden, Community Patio, 90-degree parking, Community Room, and expansion for the existing Kids, Teens, and Adults Areas. The renovation would also include remediation of all asbestos issues, and address accessibility compliance issues as the existing facility’s amenities are not compliant with current accessibility standards.



If Measure O is passed, we would continue to see this towing sign in Lot 4, where the Farmers’ Market is held on Wednesdays. Photo by Jeffrey Hopson.

The Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries oppose Measure O as the renovation of the Downtown Library would not only be smaller with less amenities than the new mixed-use library, it would result in operation at a temporary location, which hasn’t been confirmed or proposed yet, until the renovation is complete.

The Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries is a non-profit organization that fundraises for the ten branches of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries and

advocates for programs that the library offers. Notably, the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries is one of the organizations in the coalition for the No on O campaign, “Santa Cruz for Real Library and Housing Solutions.”

Opponent Janis O’Driscoll, president of the board of the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries, explains her opposition to the measure.

“There are people who feel very strongly that’s where the library is supposed to be because that’s where it’s been for all these years, and it’s close to City Hall and [...] the Civic Auditorium. They think, ‘Well, no, that’s where the library corner is. That’s where the library ought to be,’” O’Driscoll said. “And maybe haven’t stopped to think about, ‘Where does the library need to be now in the lives that we are living now?’”

Measure O is also opposed by Housing Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz Congressman Jimmy Panetta, and the Downtown Association of Santa Cruz.

The Yes on O campaign uses the phrase “Measure O for Our Climate Crisis” in their promotion. Supported by The Sierra Club, Youth for Climate Justice, and Santa Cruz Climate Action Network, the campaign’s research concludes that the construction of the mixed-use library would result in intense production of embodied carbon.

[Embodied carbon is the specific carbon footprint of an individual building or infrastructure before it is operational.](#) This includes the carbon dioxide emissions from all materials used in manufacturing, producing, processing, and transporting, among other stages, of the building process.

In respect to the construction of the new library, Lira Filippini, co-chair of “Our Downtown, Our Future,” expressed concern over the sustainability of the new library.

“A lot of the decisions that are being made are not what’s best for a community,” she said. “Leading research on the environment shows that the vast majority of carbon having to do with buildings and building use is not actually the energy use of the building while it’s operating, it’s the construction of the building.”

In a City Council meeting on Sept. 22, real estate advisory firm Keyser Marston Associates prepared an impartial analysis report of Measure O. This report concluded that the measure was inconsistent with the policies aligned in the General Plan, a guiding document for the social and economic decisions of Santa Cruz.

From their comparison of the existing library renovation and new library construction, analysis proved that the new library has more green building features. The new library would be solar powered, include no fossil fuel reliance, and have 85 percent more planting area.

It was also determined that the specific language of Measure O in respect to preserving the locations of the Downtown Farmers' Market and Downtown Library would hinder its ability to develop feasible housing. The amount of affordable housing would be limited as Lot 4 would continue to house the Farmer's Market, and Lots 14 and 16, adjacent to the Downtown Library, are too small to support the construction of affordable housing even when combined.

Endorsers for the No on O campaign also zeroed in on the importance of affordable housing units.

Co-founder of Housing Santa Cruz County and former Santa Cruz Mayor Don Lane shared his thoughts on the housing components showcased in a recent community meeting presentation.

"The project that's being proposed downtown will have 124 truly affordable apartments for people in this community and Measure O is going to stop that project," Lane expressed, "The idea that we have this opportunity to get affordable housing built and that a ballot measure is gonna stop that, it just makes my heart ache."

City Attorney Anthony Condotti, who formulated the impartial analysis on Measure O, commented on what the measure would entail for affordable housing.

"The debate rages about whether or not Measure O would result in additional affordable housing or actually be an impediment to the construction of affordable housing in downtown [...] It doesn't actually entail any affordable housing," Condotti commented. "It states as a policy prioritizing the use of certain downtown city parking lots for affordable housing, but that in and of itself doesn't necessarily cause affordable housing to get built."

Edward Estrada, Supportive Services for Veterans and their Families (SSVF) Housing Navigator at Housing Matters and advocate for "Santa Cruz for Real Library and Housing Solutions," witnessed the urgent need for affordable housing firsthand.

"Everyone really loses out on the Measure O vision in one way or another," Estrada stated. "I think that we really need to center the people who would be tangibly affected by this project and who will have their lives materially improved."



<https://web.santacruzchamber.org/news/newsarticledisplay.aspx?ArticleID=1974>

Theory of Change and the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project

They say change is the only constant in life. In this highly competitive world and the onset of new environmental standards, organizations (businesses and even governments) that are reluctant to embrace change end up paying a hefty price for their rigidity.

Sustainable competitive advantage will require a clear vision of the bigger picture, breaking the norms and sometimes shaking an organization or community to its core. If a certain project/program is not yielding expected results, change becomes inevitable. If an organization or community is not meeting its objectives, change becomes paramount.

This past Tuesday, the Santa Cruz City Council received an updated quarterly report from City staff about the Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Project. The quarterly report, as requested by the Council in early January, would explain in detail an easy-to-understand overview and status of this project for both the City Council and the Santa Cruz community. You can review the report here:

<https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/home/showpublisheddocument/90833/637999527712036976>

For the past five years, the City Council has directed city staff on the various details of the project and has provided clarity on the significant changes and milestones at each step, taking into consideration the community's input along the way. Recent highlights to date include:

- Project Application submitted by Affordable Housing Developer For the Future Housing
- Community Presentation on Planning Application Design held on September 21, 2022
- Phase 1 Cultural Resources Inventory, Draft Report Under Review
- Phase I/II Environmental Site Work Completed, Draft Report Under Review Traffic Impact Analysis Underway, Near Completion
- Received Finalized Arborists Report and Report Addendum
- Library Design Team Completed 100% Design Development Set
- Received notice did not Receive round 1 funding for State Library Grant, round 2 forthcoming

As the project has moved from a conceptual design evolution to new schematic drawings by Jayson Architecture we can see the immediate results of community input. The design includes:

- A 38,000-square-foot library with a 3,200 square-foot rooftop patio
- A 1,900-square-foot childcare center and play area
- A 9,600-square-foot commercial space
- A three-story, 243-space parking garage
- Locked enclosures and racks for 258 bicycles

The affordable housing component of the project will provide 124 units, including:

- 31 three-bedroom units
- 31 two-bedroom units
- 48 one-bedroom units
- 13 studios

The report also includes updates about the parking structure — 242 spaces at an estimated cost of \$15.5 million financed by the parking district bonds or direct loans including money from the parking structure and the funds of the City's parking district. The number of spaces has continued to decrease as the project design goes through architect review and community engagement. These spaces will replace parking spaces in the downtown that will be lost to other development projects in process or in the pipeline.

The city staff also discussed the current status of negotiations with the Santa Cruz Farmers Market. According to City staff, in July it submitted a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) to the Santa Cruz Farmers Market board as a guideline for a future location and design plan. The new design would consist of 40,000 square feet with overhead cover. It should be noted that City staff and the Farmers Market executive director have been in discussion about the future of the market for the past few years.

The most important issue to the Chamber is about cost and the return on the investment for the community. Where will the financing come from for the project? I've already mentioned the parking structure costs above, so let's turn to the library and affordable housing components of the project. The library's most recent budget estimate is \$42.7 million, down \$625,000 from the previous estimate. A slightly shorter first floor brought costs down slightly, said Bonnie Lipscomb, the City's Economic Development Director, one of the staff leads on the project. And the affordable housing project estimated costs show that the City has secured \$7.39 million which includes \$3.6 million for the Local Housing Trust Fund, and \$1.55 million from the Permanent Housing Allocation which are overseen by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Congressman Jimmy Panetta was successful in securing \$2 million through an earmark in the current federal budget. And finally, Central Coast Community Energy has provided a \$240,000 funding grant for energy programs. These funds are like a downpayment on a home before the final purchase and escrow closes.

Once the City Council approves the project later this year according to the report, project developers can seek funding through tax credits (\$43 million) and an estimated \$78 million in loan and other state and federal grant programs.

The next steps:

- Project Design Application Planning Process
- Targeting December Council Meeting for Entitlements Approval
- Begin Next Design Phases
- Finalize Farmers Market MOU
- Finalize Farmers Market Design at Lot 7
- 2nd Project Community Meeting November
- Apply for Housing Funding January 2023

We have waited for this project to come to fruition since June 2016 when voters overwhelmingly approved the Countywide Measure S Library Bond. At that time, there was not the heightened public concern about the rising cost of housing in Santa Cruz County. With the increase in state mandates on local government to build more housing, the City Council has taken the necessary steps to utilize available City-owned land to create the best use of the site for the future.

One of the cornerstones for understanding the change theory is Kurt Lewin's Change Management Model, developed in 1940. It still holds true today. Lewin divided the process of change into three stages: Unfreeze, Change, Refreeze. The analogy is simple. Assume you have a huge cube of ice but then you realize that what you want is a cone of ice instead. So, what do you do? First, you must melt the ice to make it pliable to change (unfreeze). Then you must mold the iced water into the shape you want, in this case, the cone of ice (change). Finally, you must solidify the new shape (refreeze). Refreezing occurs when change is finally taking shape. Implementing theory of change starts with the end goal in mind. What is it that you want to achieve in the long run?

That is exactly where the City Council, City staff and the community have taken us: First, a modern library project that is the hub of the countywide system; then an affordable housing project to address our housing needs and a parking structure were modified to underscore the long-term benefits that a combined project will provide to the future of Santa Cruz.

In the face of turmoil (political upheaval and a ballot measure), change is inevitable. Avoiding change is tantamount to burying our community knee-deep into a swamp of uncertainty threatening its very existence. Change is the constant reminder that we must adapt and rethink how our future community needs are to be met. We are on the right track, so let's not back down.

Santa Cruz News

Date

10/24/2022 7:00:00 AM

ArticleType

Chamber

<https://web.santacruzchamber.org/news/newsarticledisplay.aspx?ArticleID=1978>

Downtown Library and Affordable Housing Needs your No Vote on Measure O

November 8 Election

Downtown Library and Affordable Housing

Needs Your No Vote on Measure O

Architects are very creative, innovative, and passionate professionals who know how to make a building design come to life. Architecture is both a combination of passion and profession, it is an alchemy of form, light, space, and people. Architects take a concept to create places of inspiration for people to live, learn, work and play.

The Downtown Library and Affordable housing project is: *"The combination of housing, parking, and commercial uses in the same structure as the library offers a wonderful synergy that benefits the library both financially and functionally. From a functional standpoint, the adjacency of the parking will provide easy access for the public, the relationship to the housing will create a built-in community, and the combination with commercial uses will contribute to a vibrant downtown. From a budgetary standpoint, the economy of scale allows for a larger and higher quality library than would be possible if the library was an independent structure. The estimated budget of this project is approximately \$42 million, significantly less than the cost of a standalone building which would be in the range of \$70 million. The combination of uses into a single building offers significant value to the community"* stated Abe Jayson, Principal, Founder, and Architect for the Santa Cruz Downtown Library.

By training, trade, and professional certification, an architect is not a politician or lobbyist taking sides in a political debate. Sadly, the actions and words of the Our Downtown Our Future campaign folks, place a professional in the middle of this public debate. Shame on these folks for misinterpreting the professional work of the City's contracted architecture firm, Jayson Architects. This architectural firm has designed dozens of award-winning buildings around the country, including eight libraries in our county.

Over the course of several years — in fact, dating back to 2013 when Santa Cruz Public Libraries commenced a comprehensive master planning process — the city council, city staff, an advisory committee, and the community have simultaneously worked together to create the most economical, efficient state-of-the-art library for the community. At each public community meeting since 2016 after the passage of Measure S — the county-wide library bond — the same issue of renovating the downtown library would be raised as a less expensive, more economical, and efficient option. But the facts don't support that argument — never have and never will — so the Measure O proponents continue to mislead the community. Don't be fooled by this sleight-of-hand card shark move.

In 2022, the City commissioned a comparative analysis of the costs and amenities associated with a renovation of the Downtown Library. The key differences are summarized in the table below. This and other comparable information are addressed in earlier reports by Jayson Architects as well as in the Keyser Marston Associates report requested by the community and by the City Council. The report was issued on September 23, 2022. Our local media outlets covered this report as a storyline between the proponents and opponents of Measure O. You can review the full report here: [Keyser Marton Associates 9-23-2022](#).

2022 Comparative Downtown Library Analysis

	Downtown Existing Library	Downtown Library & Affordable Housing Project
Total Building Area (Square Foot)	30,230	38,090
Green Certification	None	LEED Gold Certified

Area of Planting (Square Foot)	6,570	12,170
Solar Power	None	270 (KW (Net Zero))
Fossil Fuels	Natural Gas	No Reliance
	Library Development Cost	Library Development Cost
TOTAL	\$40.3 million	\$42.6 million
Per Square Foot of Building Area	\$1,333.00	\$1,118.00

I want to focus on the estimated fiscal impacts. The Chamber’s mission is the economic vitality of the Santa Cruz County community. A business person looks at the total return on investment when reviewing any business decision. The common-sense approach to that decision is based on many variable factors — entitlement costs, design, permit application & implementation, and most critically the financing of a project.

The City has been actively working on securing financing for the Library Mixed-Use Project. To date, the committed sources consist of Measure S funds, a congressional earmark, Local Housing Trust Funds awarded by the State, and a sustainability grant provided by Central Coast Community Energy.

The City’s development team has extensive experience developing affordable housing projects financed with a combination of funding sources. In 2023 the development team plans to apply for conventional mortgage financing and Low Income Housing Tax Credits (Tax Credits), estimated to total approximately \$120 million. We are advised, the City development team will

also pursue several state funding sources that are offered under one Notice of Funding Availability (Super NOFA). The proposed development scope, and the proposed income and affordability standards, were devised to maximize the project's competitiveness for these funding sources. All of these funding opportunities would vanish if Measure O wins. Santa Cruz deserves better than letting dedicated funding be thrown away.

Now let's turn to the people — those library workers who are caught in the middle of this political exercise. The Downtown Branch Library operates as both a local branch for the City of Santa Cruz and as the supporting hub for the nine other branches in the Santa Cruz Public Libraries system.

If the Downtown Branch is closed for two years, downtown residents would have to use the other two city branches or perhaps even drive to Capitola, Live Oak, or Aptos. Local schools such as Holy Cross or local organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club and Walnut Avenue Women's Center would not be within walking distance of a library during the renovation.

It is not only the City of Santa Cruz residents who would be losing services. As the main repository of the county's local history collection, any researcher or family with SC ties would not have access to these records. The Downtown Branch has the main business resources, the largest collection of children's books — the largest collection of adult fiction and nonfiction. These are collections that are used by residents who use all 10 of the branches, not just Downtown. To make them accessible during the renovation the Library would have to rent space somewhere to store them in a way where library staff and the community could get to them. This is an expense NOT currently included in the cost estimates of any renovation of an outdated library building. It would be an ADDITIONAL COST.

Space limitations at the other nine branches mean that these substantial collections could not be temporarily moved to existing facilities. The Library would make every effort to place the Downtown Branch staff in other locations during the closure, but there is uncertainty in that exercise.

There are two meeting rooms currently in use at the Downtown Branch and they are actively used for library programs and community meetings and events. This would be a loss to City residents unless the library could manage the additional expense of renting meeting space elsewhere.

The Downtown Branch is the site of a Life Skills Center. Here people can get connected to social services (for example: Encompass; Housing: Job Hunting; Health Needs) and staff from these social services actually hold office hours there because the Library is considered a neutral

space. This vital resource would be suspended for two years unless there is an extra expense of renting space elsewhere.

Because of these larger collections and system supportive spaces, renovating the Downtown Branch is not like renovating any of the other branches. While branches could step in to cover the closure of a smaller branch, none of the branches can step in and become the temporary hub of the system. In summary, the Downtown Library cannot be shut down or temporarily replaced for some of its services by adding funds to any renovation costs.

The theory involved in Measure O is based on a pipe dream and is just a novel concept with no plan and no money. If you really care about the future of downtown and the future generations of our next generation of leaders, their families, and children — the clear Fiscal, Efficient and Environmental decision is a solid NO vote on Measure O.

Reviews

Google my Business

Garfield Park received a 4 Star Rating with no review on September 16

Garfield Park received a 5 Star Rating with no review on September 23

Felton received a 5 Star Review on October 1

Small but amazing library. I love that it's not crowded and staff is super friendly. I love hanging out here with my grandson

Downtown received a 5 Star Review on September 9

Great location and quick pickup with the book I had on hold. Used books still hasn't returned after Covid-19.

Capitola received a 3 Star Review on October 5

Tang L, you don't have a clue what you are talking about when commenting about the Capitola Public Library! I have been with this library from the beginning from day one! It is a nice library, by the way, so be more cautious when leaving unintelligent comments like this!

Felton received a 5 Star Review on October 14

Great library. Very modern and quiet. Love it

Capitola received a 5 Star Review on October 17

Wonderful library. Lots of tables and chairs to do work.

Garfield Park received a 5 Star Review on October 18

Cute little library!

Capitola received a 5 Star Rating with no review on October 29

Live Oak received a 5 Star Rating with no review on November 2

Yelp

Downtown received a 1 Star Review on September 9

My close friend Justin Zuk got stabbed to death in their parking lot. They did a terrible job cleaning the blood off the pavement and I had to walk through it every time I went to the Red Room. It is likely filled with Santa Cruz homeless. RIP Zuk Purpz 215

Felton received a 2 Star Review on October 19

The new Felton branch is beautiful! Just posting this as a warning, though, that you might want to return your borrowed books to the front desk and confirm that they are processed as returned. I dropped a book in the return box, at Felton branch, a week ago and it still shows in my account as out on loan. I can't reach anyone by phone, to correct this. The Chat feature on the website is off. I have emailed them, but...I have little hope that will help. I should not have to go through this much trouble to make sure they note my return. I don't want to be charged for a lost book! BTW, this is a common-enough occurrence that the county library system has a procedure for it, and if they can't find the book you get a note in your account under "claimed and lost." So, apparently, you get blamed even if you don't get charged. What a circus!

From Libanswers:

Email:

September 15: I'm a direct descendant of Pio Pico. For Hispanic Heritage a month, call our your Californianos section in the downtown library.

Next to the library in Santa Barbara, the downtown is a great resource to learn.

Re: Service Worker Strike Affects Libraries (replies to newsletter)

Sep 30 – Oct 3 (each bullet a separate email)

- Why not word it “problematic working conditions affect city employees leading to a strike”? Framing a strike as an inconvenience to the public greatly undermines the demands of the working people who keep the city running. Language matters.
- DO what you need to do, we support you 100%!
- I am curious to know how and why the Scotts Valley and Capitola branches will remain open while no branches in Santa Cruz will be open.

- This is ridiculous! We just poured in \$3.5 MILLION dollars into the Scotts Valley Library alone! Now, employees want to STRIKE!
- Additionally, the libraries were CLOSED during the pandemic. Get onboard and real with this situation!
- Great news! I support the workers getting a fair contract that gives them a living wage and fair conditions!
- I fully support the SEIU strike and will not be using the library if a strike happens.
- Hi, my name is Jesse. I was attending library toddler programs with my son a few years ago. I would like to coordinate some simple woodshop projects and wondering how I can get involved with the community, please let me know, thank you

October 16 – October 21 (each bullet a separate email)

- Don't give into pension demands. The County poor can't afford it.
- We support you, your Union and the work of the good city workers in Santa Cruz. Make the world a better place
- I fully support the striking service workers and I hope that the library closures will spark community members who use our public libraries to do the same.
- Please forward this email to Santa Cruz County Library upper management.
- This year multiple libraries were shut down concurrently for "upgrades", including the Live Oak library, which was only recently completely rebuilt. -> Did anyone in library management think of the impact that had on the kids who frequent libraries and don't drive?

Yesterday I really needed a quiet place to work and went to the Live Oak library it was closed. There was a sign on the door that stated all libraries were closed that day for in service. -> Did anyone in library management think to have the in service in 2 shifts/phases so some of the libraries could stay open? This is what a private business would have done that cared about its customers. Have some consideration for your customers who need to use library resources.

Now the library workers are going on strike. This doesn't surprise me at all, it appears the library top management is out of touch with their customers, so it would be safe to assume they are out of touch with their workers. How often does the library organization offer cost of living increases? Perhaps money spent on needless remodels should have been partially distributed to library workers?



STAFF REPORT

DATE: Monday, November 14, 2022

TO: Library Advisory Commission

FROM: Stephanie Duck, General Counsel

SUBJECT: Resolution Re-authorizing the Library Advisory Commission to Utilize Remote Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361.

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution No. 2022-04 Authorizing Remote Teleconference Meetings pursuant to Assembly Bill 361.

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to AB 361 and as codified at California Government Code section 54953, legislative bodies may use modified teleconferencing rules to conduct public meetings during a proclaimed State of Emergency under certain circumstances, including that state or local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing.¹ The State of Emergency proclaimed by the Governor on March 4, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic remains in effect today. In February 2022, the Santa Cruz County Health Officer, together with eleven other Bay Area health officers, issued a press release announcing alignment with the California Department of Public Health's indoor masking guidance, which requires that all individuals wear face coverings indoors in specified high-risk settings, and strongly recommends that all individuals continue to wear face coverings while in indoor public settings.²

The Library Advisory Commission adopted its initial AB 361 findings at its meeting of April 18, 2022, and adopted subsequent findings at its meetings on May 16, 2022 and July 18, 2022. To continue teleconferenced meetings under AB 361, the law requires that the Library Advisory Commission adopt findings within thirty (30) days after its initial teleconference, and every thirty (30) days thereafter, that it has reconsidered the circumstances of the State of Emergency, and either (i) the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person; and/or (ii) state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social distancing.³

Attachment:
Resolution No. 2022-04

¹ Cal. Gov't Code § 54953(e)(1)(A)-(C).

² See *Press Release*, Twelve Bay Area Health Officers to Lift Most Indoor Mask Mandates on February 16 (Feb. 9, 2022), https://www.santacruzhealth.org/Portals/7/pdfs/Coronavirus/02.09.22%20ABAHO%20Masking_FINAL.pdf; See also CDPH, *Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings* (Updated September 20, 2022), <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/guidance-for-face-coverings.aspx>.

³ Cal. Gov't Code § 54953(e)(3).

**SANTA CRUZ LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION'S
FINDINGS PURSUANT TO ASSEMBLY BILL 361 AUTHORIZING TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS AS A
RESULT OF THE CONTINUING COVID-19 PANDEMIC STATE OF EMERGENCY AND HEALTH
OFFICER RECOMMENDATION FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING**

WHEREAS, the **Santa Cruz Library Advisory Commission (“LAC”)** is a legislative body under the Ralph M. Brown Act as defined under Cal. Gov. Code section 54952(b); and

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 361 (“AB 361”), urgency legislation effective immediately, that amended Government Code section 54953 to permit legislative bodies subject to the Brown Act to continue to meet under modified teleconferencing rules provided that they comply with specific requirements set forth in the statute; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to AB 361 and Cal. Gov. Code section 54953(e)(1)(A), a legislative body may meet under the modified teleconferencing rules during a proclaimed state of emergency, and where local officials have imposed or recommended measures to promote social distancing; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and which remains in effect; and

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2021, Santa Cruz County Public Health Officer Dr. Gail Newel strongly recommended that legislative bodies in Santa Cruz County continue to engage in physical/social distancing by meeting via teleconference as allowed by AB 361 and confirmed that she will regularly review and reconsider this recommendation and notify the public when it is no longer recommended; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to AB 361 and Cal. Gov. Code section 54953(e)(3), within 30 days of the date the legislative body first holding a teleconferenced meeting under the modified rules, and every 30 days thereafter, a legislative body can continue to hold such teleconference meetings provided it has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency and determined either that the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person or that local officials continue to recommend measures to promote social distancing; and

WHEREAS, on April 4, 2018, the **LAC** held its initial teleconference meeting under AB 361; and

WHEREAS, on May 16, 2022, the **LAC** held a subsequent teleconference meeting under AB 361; and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2022, the **LAC** held a subsequent teleconference meeting under AB 361; and

WHEREAS, the **LAC** has once again reconsidered the circumstances of the current state of emergency and finds that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to directly impact the ability of members of the public to participate safely in person and further finds that the Santa Cruz County Public Health Officer continues to recommend measures to promote social distancing, strongly recommends that all individuals wear face coverings in indoor public settings, and requires that all individuals wear face coverings in specified high-risk indoor public settings; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of public health and safety, and due to the emergency caused by the spread of COVID-19, the **LAC** deems it necessary for the legislative bodies of the **LAC** to continue utilizing the modified teleconferencing rules set forth in AB 361;

NOW, THEREFORE, the **Santa Cruz Library Advisory Commission (“LAC”)** makes the following findings by a majority vote:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct, and adopted as findings of the **Santa Cruz Library Advisory Commission** and legislative bodies of the LAC.

Section 2. Effective immediately, and for the next 30 days, the **LAC** and its legislative bodies will meet via teleconference as authorized under AB 361 and Government Code section 54953(e)(3).

Section 3. No later than thirty (30) days from making today’s findings, or at the next scheduled meeting, the **LAC** will reconsider the circumstances of the COVID-19 state of emergency and, if necessary, adopt subsequent findings to continue holding teleconference meetings in accordance with Government Code section 54953(e)(3).

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the **Santa Cruz Library Advisory Commission** in Santa Cruz County, State of California, this 14th day of November, 2022, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Chair, Santa Cruz Library
Advisory Commission

ATTEST: _____
Commission Clerk

Approved as to Form:

General Counsel



STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 14, 2022
TO: Library Advisory Commission
FROM: Yolande Wilburn, Library Director
RE: FY 2023 First Quarter Workplan

RECOMMENDATION

Accept and file FY 2023 First Quarter Workplan.

DISCUSSION

Attached, please find the first quarter workplan. The first quarter plan runs from July through the end of September and the report attempts to capture the Library's work and programs/services that provided or supported a high impact in the community across five areas: 1. Learning 2. Digital Inclusion 3. Transformative Spaces 4. User Experience 5. Organizational Capacity.

The summer months, captured in this report, represent some of the most robust programming that the Library provides during the year. In addition to those services, and of note during this quarter, the Library reopened the Scotts Valley branch library. Just prior to the first quarter and in time for the Summer Learning Program, the newly reopened Garfield Park branch library had opened in June.

workplan:

<p>1. LEARNING</p>	<p>Adult Programming: <i>Creative Aging and Life Skills</i></p> <p>Youth Programming: <i>Kindergarten Readiness</i> <i>Student Success</i> <i>Safe Afterschool</i> <i>School Partnerships</i></p> <p>Outreach: <i>Bookmobile</i> <i>Jails</i> <i>Kermit</i> <i>Events</i></p>		
<p>2. DIGITAL INCLUSION</p>	<p>Tools</p>	<p>Resources</p>	<p>Innovation</p>
<p>3. TRANSFORMATIVE SPACES</p>	<p>Aptos Boulder Creek Branciforte Capitola Downtown</p>		<p>Felton Garfield Park La Selva Beach Live Oak Scotts Valley</p>
<p>4. USER EXPERIENCE</p>	<p>Staffing Convenience Localization</p>		<p>Collections Security</p>
<p>5. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY</p>	<p>Administration Volunteers Succession Planning</p>		<p>Friends of the Library Staff Training</p>

1. Learning Accomplishments:

Quarter 1

ADULT

“This was a wonderful event, and I'm so appreciative of the extra work that went into making it hybrid.”

“Many UCSC alums who've moved out of the area are still connected to people in Santa Cruz, and we are happy to encourage our SCruz family/friend community to use the public library and other wonderful resources that we miss (and in my case, completely lack where I live now- so sad). When I saw the event info, I signed up immediately, and then promptly shared the link with my local SCruz friends to express my excitement about the event; they in turn shared the event link with many other locals (most of whom don't even know). That promotes the event, of course, but also SCruz Shakespeare AND the public library.”

- **Patron feedback on the Library's Shakespeare talk.**

“Wonderful! Learned so much! In-person rocks!”

- **Patron feedback on the Library's Tech Talks**

1,738 adult patrons attended 268 programs this past quarter. The following are some of the highlights:

Culture:

- Started the first all-ages reading challenge program to celebrate Latinx Heritage month (September 15-October 15). The “Lea Latinx/Read Latinx” reading challenge encourages readers to read and listen to a wide variety of books written, illustrated by, and about Latinx people. This program was sponsored by the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries.
- Hosted the annual Santa Cruz Shakespeare talk with Professor Michael Warren, simultaneously offering both an in-person at Downtown and an online option for attending with 38 attendees in person + 76 attendees virtual on Zoom.
- Collaborated with County Department of Parks & Rec, Arts Council, and Poetry Santa Cruz poets to achieve the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission's recommendation for an official Santa Cruz County Poet Laureate program.
- Began 6-week series of “Animate Your Life Story” for adults at Capitola in partnership with the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries and Community Television of Santa Cruz. Participants learned how to create their own stories with scene, setting, dialog, and narration, and then create an animation to be broadcast on local TV.

The Library Advantage (Civics, Society, Health, Career Advancement, Safety):

- The Library introduced “Medicare and You.” These educational presentations at Capitola from the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) in partnership with Senior Network Services, a local non-profit agency, help patrons learn how to compare plans and hear what is new with Medicare in 2022. HICAP provides unbiased Medicare Insurance information throughout California.
- The Library introduced Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Intake in both English and Spanish at the Downtown branch's Life Literacies Center in partnership with Goodwill Central Coast to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market.

- Started a new season of Tech Talks with a return to in-person classes at Scotts Valley. The first classes focused on new technologies of growing interest, including a preview of the new iOS 16 operating system for mobile devices and an introduction to the Apple Watch.
- Hosted a class on “Steps Towards Making Your Home Fire Resistant” at Felton where participants learned about the topic through a talk and a real-life demonstration of how to include fire resistance as part of home and yard maintenance. This program was brought to the community by the Felton Library Friends with the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County.
- Partnered with National Voter Registration Day staff and our local Santa Cruz County Elections Department to provide voter registration at our libraries on September 20 National Voter Registration Day
- Co-sponsored author event with Bookshop Santa Cruz and the Museum of Art & History to bring journalist Katherine Blunt to Santa Cruz for a discussion about her new book, *California Burning: The Fall of Pacific Gas and Electric—and What It Means for America's Power Grid*. The book explores the decline of California’s largest utility company that led to countless wildfires — including the one that destroyed the town of Paradise – and the human cost of infrastructure failure

Community Learning:

- Held free Gardening Basics workshops at Felton for teens and adults in partnership with Scarborough Gardens.
- Hosted Bookbinding class series taught by San Lorenzo Valley resident and expert bookbinder Beth Thomas at Felton to teach the history of bookbinding, styles of bindings, and the tools used for hand bookbinding. Participants learned how to complete a Coptic Binding- a hard bound book with decorative covers, eight signatures, and external sewing. This was the first Community-led art class series sponsored by the Felton Library Friends.
- Hosted the annual Our Community Reads kickoff voting party with the Aptos Library Friends, this year with attendees both in person at Capitola and virtually on Zoom. Holding a hybrid in-person/virtual event allowed more members of the community to join in and participate in choosing the book.

Beyond the Library’s Walls:

- Represented the Library at the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History’s Birthday Bash event.
- Librarian Jesse Silva was interviewed by KSQD radio about community engagement and outreach to historically marginalized populations through the library’s County Correctional Facilities program <https://ksqd.org/jesse-silva-community-engagement-and-library-outreach/>.

- Two Milestones were awarded to participants in the County Correctional Facilities “People and Stories” reading program who completed all 12 classes. Milestones can be counted toward early release.
- Two librarians joined Santa Cruz County Commission on Justice and Gender subcommittees.
- Participated in the Homeless Garden Project’s Day of Dirt & Digging.

Quarter 1

YOUTH

Student Success

- The Library’s 2022 Summer Reading Program theme was Oceans of Possibilities. To encourage participation and offer fun learning opportunities during the summer, the Library presented live performers, storytimes, and craft/STEAM programs outdoors at open library branches, parks throughout the County, and at a low-income housing site in South County. Overall, the Library offered 146 in-person programs attended by 4,916 youth and also 2 virtual programs attended by 78 youth.
- The Library promoted the Summer Reading Program at school and community outreach events, food distribution sites, county correctional facilities and juvenile hall and distributed 4,834 grab and go craft and STEAM kits at branches and food distribution sites.



Perry Yan the Magician had a turnout of over 75 in attendance at the newly reopened Garfield Park branch at the end of July. The patrons really enjoyed his performances and hope he returns for more programs next year.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

1,615 children and teens signed up for the Summer Reading Program, receiving a certificate for a free graphic novel from Atlantis Fantasyworld. The reading challenge of 5 hours was achieved by 687 children 0-11, who received a book to keep, and 138 teens, who received a teen goody bag. The 20 hour challenge was achieved by 561 children and teens, who earned a free scoop from Penny Ice Creamery. The Friends of Santa Cruz Public Libraries provided support for SRP by providing funds for incentive books, performer programs, and craft supplies and books given out at food distribution sites.



"I spoke with a mother and she said how much the Summer Reading Program meant to her and her two boys. Her eldest son has serious vision problems and had difficulty reading and by the age of five was behind other children in his class. It was very discouraging for him. He was able to get special lenses in his glasses to assist him and now he loves to read. This current past summer his mother said he enjoyed the challenge of reading with a goal and incentive and his reading ability went up two reading levels this summer. She is so happy to have this program available during summer break. Her youngest is just

*beginning to read and is very selective in his books and already has favorites to read. He was busy mulling over which Otto the robot books by David Milgrim to read. He also loves Elephant and Piggie series.” - **Library Information Specialist Patty Webster***

SRP Participants 2022 Compared to 2021				
	Participants Signed Up		Minutes of Reading	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
Kids 0-11	1,362	1,451	979,152	1,060,452
Teens 12-18	253	282	220,770	214,550
Adults 19+	571	621	600,117	582,621
Total	2,186	2,354	1,800,039	1,857,623

Early Literacy/Kindergarten Readiness

- The newly reopened Scotts Valley restarted its Story Time programs for toddlers and preschoolers with weekly attendance ranging from 25-35.
- Systemwide, 385 kids have signed up for the Library’s newest initiative: 1000 Books Before Kindergarten.

Safe After School

- La Selva Beach has re-started Lego Not-So Simple Machines and EV3 Robotics programs after the long COVID break. Participants make devices that use simple machines, then program motors to run their creation.
- Make and Explore programs restarted in September at multiple branches.

Teens

- The Teen Zine Program has begun at Scotts Valley.
- Advisory Council for Teens (ACT) @ North County has moved to Scotts Valley. We had our first meeting in September and it went great. We added two more teens to the group. At this moment, we have at least 3 teens show up for every session. ACT is providing feedback to the Library for the Felton Teen Room remodel and the Scotts Valley Teen Room.

- Princeton Review held its second virtual workshop. Crafting your College Application Essay was August 17. An in-person viewing was offered at Capitola.
- CHP and IMPACT held a teen driver safety class July 6th at Capitola.
- The Mid/South County Advisory Council of Teens members continued to assist with the Afternoon STEAM programs at La Selva Beach. They also assisted with the Friends raffle and crowd control for the Taiko Drum performance at the LSB Books & Brews event on July 30.
- ACT members also added [links](#) to the SafeSpace site in the Teen Self Help section of the Library's Teen Page on the website. SafeSpace offers Teen-curated resources to support mental health.

Beyond the Library's Walls

- Staff tabled at the Live Oak School District's Back to School BBQ
- Library Staff visited Scotts Valley Farmers Market. More than 50 people came by and check out Kermit (the Library's Bikemobile seen below).
- Latinx Bingo Cards: Staff created interactive bingo cards for all ages for them to explore Latinx literature. The program is running all through Hispanic Heritage Month and the last day will be October 31.



- Staff spoke with 150 people at Fiestas Patrias, on Saturday, Sep 17, 2022 in downtown Santa Cruz.
- At the Museum of Natural History Birthday Bash, staff put together a “Making salt-dough fossils” craft using seashells, leaves and rocks. Children and their adults could make a fossil like the samples from the Museum rocks and fossils display.

2. Digital Inclusion Accomplishments:

Quarter 1

- The Library deployed Meeting Owl 3 hardware to the currently open branches for the library's in-person/virtual hybrid programs to successfully create immersive experiences for both in-person and virtual attendees alike. This hardware was funded by a grant from the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries
- The digital literacy team created a new subsection in the library website's Digital Learning section, the "[Immunity Lab](#)," as an accompaniment to our Tech Talks hands-on classes on mobile device literacy. This digital literacy learning tool explores the downsides of using mobile devices and how to protect yourself by defining what a healthy relationship with technology looks like. The evolving content seeks to answer the question, "How can we reduce risks and use mobile devices to benefit our lives?" Topic areas include mobile device proficiency basics, privacy & security options, and media navigation in a world full of misinformation. Each topic area includes solutions, actionable steps, and resources.

3. Transformative Spaces Accomplishments:

Quarter 1

- The Library celebrated the reopening of its Scotts Valley Branch on August 6th.
- Scotts Valley Teens voiced their concerns that the use of the space by adults makes them uncomfortable. Library staff listened to their concerns and created signage stating that the space is only for teens and established times for only teens hours.

4. User Experience Accomplishments:

Quarter 4

- Updated and refreshed the Scotts Valley library collection, including a local history collection.
- Updated Get Out & Explore Kits, merging the Ocean and Mountains kits into one type of kit, with renewed parks passes.
- Updated holdings with OCLC, resulting in a complete refresh of the WorldShare holdings, making the Library's holdings more accessible to the library world.
- The Library installed PeopleCounter into its branches. The technology permits more user-friendly gate counts, including hourly usage reports of the branches. This information can be used to directly inform staffing levels.
- The Library upgraded its UPS (Uninterruptible Power Equipment) within its data center.

5. Organizational Capacity:

Quarter 1

- The Youth Services Team hired a new reading comprehension teacher for Felton R.E.A.D. They also hired two Homework Help site supervisors for Scotts Valley and Capitola.

- Emily Bresett was promoted to Librarian and joined the Youth Services Team in the North Region. She is based at the Scotts Valley Branch.
- Lauren Wysham was promoted to branch manager of the Boulder Creek Branch Library and Phil Boulton became the Felton Branch Library's new manager.
- Gregory Yeh was hired as the new Management Analyst
- The following Library Assistant IIs joined the system as benefited staff: Damari Nelson at Branciforte, Odessa Cross at Felton, Cami Newton at Boulder Creek, Danielle Zaragosa-Edler at Scotts Valley, and Katherine Craig at Downtown.
- Miguel Rodriguez was hired into the Library's IT division as a Network and Systems Administrator.
- Filiberto Garcia was promoted to Network and Systems Administrator.

Volunteers

- The youth team was very fortunate to have the help of a Volunteer Intern, Lily Garcia, who assisted with Lunch at the Library and SRP programming as part of an internship through Smith College. She prepared craft kits, helped with set-up and distribution at lunch sites, updated bibliographies, and helped with Make and Explore Programs
-



STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 14, 2022
TO: Library Advisory Commission
FROM : Yolande Wilburn, Library Director
RE: SenSource's People Counting Statistics for Q1 FY 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Accept and File SenSource's People Counting Statistics for Q1 FY 2023

DISCUSSION

In early FY 2023, the Santa Cruz Public Libraries began tracking people counts with sensors from SenSource Inc. The SenSource's people counting system uses a proprietary technology to tally people count in real-time. At the time of this report, the sensors only tally the entry and exit of people at entranceways in seven branches.

The data collected from this system can help address community needs and optimize staff scheduling. In the first twenty days of October, for example, the Boulder Creek Branch Library experienced an unusual spike in the people count on Wednesdays. To illustrate, the branch experienced a 100% increase in the average count of people going into the branch from Tuesday, 10/11/22 to Wednesday, 10/12/22. A closer examination of the data revealed the spike of people occurred on Wednesdays between 2:00pm to 4:00pm. Boulder Creek Library's weekly event, Make & Explore @ Boulder Creek, on Wednesdays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm likely contributed to the increase in the people count. As more data is collected in the system, our managers will be able to use the data to effectively plan community programs.

Attachment

- Commission dates of each active sensor and statistics from the system

Prepared by: Gregory Yeh, Management Analyst

Reviewed and Approved by: Yolande Wilburn, Library Director

Data from SenSource's People Counter System Commission
 Dates and Location of Each Sensor

Name of Sensor	Location of Sensor	Commission Date
Garfield Park Door 1	Main Entry Door	9/13/22
Garfield Park Door 2	Side Entry Door, Next to Reference Desk	9/13/22
Scotts Valley Main	Main Door	9/13/22
Felton Door 1	Main Door	8/3/22
Downtown Door 1	Main Entry Door into the Branch	8/2/22
Downtown Door 2	East side entry door, closest to 2 nd floor stair access to community room	8/2/22
Capitola Door 1	Main Entry Door	9/20/22
Capitola Door 2	Children's Area Exit Door	8/2/22
Live Oak Door 1	Main Door	9/13/22
Boulder Creek Door 1	Main Door	8/3/22

The following datasets exclude closed hours and days:

Daily Average of Traffic into Branch: 10/1/22 to 10/20/22

	Boulder Creek	Capitola	Garfield Park	Felton	Live Oak	Scotts Valley	Downtown
Sat, 10/01	57	288	73	188	347	318	369
Sun, 10/02		275					287
Mon, 10/03		543		274	87	178	441
Tue, 10/04	76	539	100	272	96	209	495
Wed, 10/05	104	563	156	225	87	239	405
Thu, 10/06	58	541	109	283	115	186	484
Fri, 10/07	37	388	64	204	124	160	364
Sat, 10/08	40	299	105	220	113	134	364
Sun, 10/09		241					267
Mon, 10/10		426		267	112	197	490
Tue, 10/11	66	549	98	266	155	245	495
Wed, 10/12	132	514	150	238	119	231	529
Fri, 10/14	59	411	100	299	160	158	458
Sat, 10/15	34	338	86	238	124	127	434
Sun, 10/16		242					291
Mon, 10/17		474				212	
Tue, 10/18		564				203	
Wed, 10/19		524				185	
Thu, 10/20	55	363	128	216	78	154	398

Monthly Comparison of Total People Count into Branches

Branch	Date Range	Aug	Sep	Oct	Total
Garfield Park	9/14 – 10/20		1,534	1,169	2,703
Scotts Valley	9/14 - 10/20		2,888	3,136	6,024
Felton	8/4 - 10/20	5,689	5,974	3,190	14,853
Downtown	8/3 - 10/20	13,213	12,986	6,571	32,770
Capitola	9/21 - 10/20		4,512	8,082	12,594
Live Oak	9/14 - 10/20			1,717	1,717
Boulder Creek	8/4 - 10/20	1,223	1,453	718	3,394
Totals		20,125	29,347	24,583	74,055


Example from Discussion: Analysis of People Count at Boulder Creek Branch Library

Day Hour Heat Map: Daily Average 10/1/22 to 10/20/22

	9a	10a	11a	12p	1p	2p	3p	4p	5p	6p	7p
Su											
Mo											
Tu		8.5	4.5	9	11.5	8	11.5	11	7		
We		12.5	7	9.5	11.5	29.5	24.5	13	10.5		
Th		5	6	7	7	7	13.5	6	5		
Fr				13.5	6.5	12.5	9.5	6			
Sa				14.33	8	8	4.33	9			

Weekly Event: Make & Explore @ Boulder Creek

Santa Cruz Public Libraries / Library Calendars / SCPL




STEAM

Make & Explore @ Boulder Creek

Make and explore STEAM possibilities at Boulder Creek Branch Library!

Every week we will have a new project idea for you to build or explore. Projects will include Science, Arts & Crafts, including model building, and exploration of the environment around us.

Best for children 6+. Children under 6 yrs old will need an adult present to help them. Expect to get messy! The program will take place in the Boulder Creek Library Community Room and / or amphitheater.



Date: Wednesday, October 26, 2022 [Show more dates](#)

Time: 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Location: Boulder Creek Community Room, Outdoor Amphitheater

Branch: Boulder Creek

Audience: Kids 6-11 years

Categories: STEAM

Source: <https://santacruzpl.libcal.com/event/9550811>

The branch's weekly event, *Make & Explore @ Boulder Creek*, likely contributed to the increase of people count between 2:00pm to 4:00pm on Wednesdays in October 2022. Additional data such as circulation or meeting room bookings will be examined by managers before adjustments are made to staffing or branch hours.



STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 14, 2022
TO: Library Advisory Commission
FROM: Eric Howard, Assistant Director of Libraries
RE: Draft 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and Workplan

RECOMMENDATION

Review and provide input on the draft 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.

DISCUSSION

On November 10th the Library presented the attached draft Strategic Plan to the Library Joint Powers Board for their input. In October, the Library received input from the Library Advisory Commission's (LAC) subcommittee on the Strategic Plan. That input from the subcommittee has been incorporated into this plan and among the feedback, it included drawing more attention to the need for enticing non-traditional users by being more intentional around promoting the Library's resources, such as its program space. Input from the LAC also included the need to capture feedback from the public on accessibility of materials, such as how long holds may be available and when items might become available to patrons.

At the Library Advisory Commission meeting on September 20, 2021, Eric Howard, then the Interim Library Director, presented a proposal to create a LAC subcommittee on the Strategic Plan. Commissioners Tricia Wynne, Jennifer Mount and Rena Dubin formed the subcommittee and would later participate in community conversations, a community workshop and most recently, in a meeting to review the final draft.

Prior to September 20, 2021, the Library had presented a Plan for the Plan on May 17, 2021 and began working with an internal team of eleven staff to lead the effort in creating a new Strategic Plan. The team's work was coordinated by SCPL Librarian, Diane Cowen. The group then surveyed the public through the Library's website. Additionally, it developed a list of 17 prioritized groups and surveyed and interviewed members of those groups by trained facilitators on the Harwood approach. The Library then worked with Applied Survey Research (ASR) to code and analyze the community data.

The prioritized groups included City Staff from Capitola, Santa Cruz, and Scotts Valley, County Government Staff, educators, families with young children, frequent library users and Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries, infrequent or nonusers of the Library, the Library Advisory Committee, library partners and their clients, library staff, members and partners of the BIPOC community, members and partners of the disabled community, members and partners of the Spanish speaking community, people without housing, seniors and teens.

At the Library's All Staff Training Day in October 2021, the Library conducted a strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) exercise with staff. The exercise was led by former San Jose Public Library Director, Jane Light. Staff also engaged in activities that helped define the organization's values. In addition to those staff exercises, the Library's internal Equity Team began developing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan in 2020 with a goal that its work would be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

Following that work, a Community Partner Dialogue took place in February 2022 to gather additional input from the following groups: The Friends of the Library, the Library Advisory Commission, the County Office of Education, Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz City Schools, the Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation/Rise Together, the Diversity Center, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, NAACP, United Way, and the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office.

After the completion of the Community Partner Dialogue event, Library Director Yolande Wilburn led the Library's senior management through a workshop to analyze the information gathered from the staff and community input and the work achieved by the Library's Equity Team. Those workshops resulted in the final goals presented in this report.

The goals for the Strategic Plan evolved out of the following three focus areas:

1. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Needs
2. Santa Cruz County Community Needs
3. Staff Values and Organizational Needs

Also included for review in this report is the workplan that will be used to support the goals within the Strategic Plan.



**SANTA CRUZ
PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

**STRATEGIC
PLAN**

**2022
- 2025**

Santa Cruz Public Libraries
117 Union St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

santacruzpl.org
831-427-7713

The new Strategic Plan for the Santa Cruz Public Libraries is the culmination of its year-long work and examination of the following three critical areas:

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Needs

2. Santa Cruz County Community Needs

3. Staff Values and Organizational Needs

The Plan aspires to ensure that the Library remains adaptive and continues to provide outstanding service that meets the community's needs. The goals evolved from community engagement and included surveys, organized community conversations, and workshops with the Library's partners, staff and senior management.



METHODOLOGY

The Santa Cruz Public Libraries began the Strategic Planning process in August 2021. The Library convened a team of eleven staff members to lead the effort. The group reviewed the previous Santa Cruz Public Libraries' strategic planning process along with strategic plans from other organizations. The group then surveyed the public through in-person and online questionnaires. Additionally, it developed a list of seventeen prioritized groups and surveyed and interviewed members of those groups by facilitators trained in the Harwood approach. The Library then worked with Applied Survey Research (ASR) to code and analyze the community data.

THE PRIORITIZED GROUPS INCLUDED



- City Staff from Capitola, Santa Cruz, and Scotts Valley
- County Government Staff
- Educators
- Families with young children
- Frequent library users and Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries
- Infrequent or nonusers of the Library
- Library Advisory Commission
- Library partners and their clients
- Library staff
- Members and partners of the BIPOC community
- Members and partners of the disabled community
- Members and partners of the Spanish speaking community
- People without housing
- Seniors
- Teens

At the Library's All Staff Training Day in October 2021, the Library conducted a strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) exercise with staff. The exercise was led by former San Jose Public Library Director, Jane Light. Staff also engaged in activities that helped define the organization's values. In addition to those staff exercises, the Library's internal Equity Team began developing an Equity Action Plan in 2020 with a goal that its work would be incorporated into the Strategic Plan.

Following that work, a Community Partner Dialogue took place in February 2022 to gather additional input from the following groups: The Friends of the Library, the Library Advisory Commission, the County Office of Education, Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz City Schools, the Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation/Rise Together, the Diversity Center, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, NAACP, United Way, and the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office.

The logo consists of the letters 'S', 'O', 'A', and 'R' arranged in a 2x2 grid. The top row contains 'S' and 'O', and the bottom row contains 'A' and 'R'. The letters are a light blue color and are rendered in a bold, sans-serif font.

After the completion of the Community Partner Dialogue event, Library Director Yolande Wilburn led the Library's senior management team through a workshop to analyze the information gathered from the staff and community input and the work achieved by the Library's Equity Team. Those workshops resulted in the final goals presented in this report. The Library then sought further input on the Plan from the Library Advisory Commission and the Library Joint Powers Authority (LJPA) before seeking final approval by the LJPA.

YEAR ONE 2023-2024

A focus on staff well-being, diversity, equity and inclusion.

YEAR TWO 2024-2025

A focus on measuring impacts.

YEAR THREE 2024-2025

A focus on lessons learned and adaption.

Adaption is central to this plan. Each strategy in this plan follows the same process:

- Identify needs
- Collaborative solutions
- Implementation
- Analysis & revisions



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Focus:



GOAL

Ensure that the Santa Cruz Public Libraries create an organizational culture of equity and inclusion, providing equitable and relevant services to all.

STRATEGIES:

- Initiate the Equity Plan's three-year goals for advancing the objective within the Library's Collection, Services and Programs.
- Initiate the Equity Plan's three-year goals for advancing the objective within the organizational culture of the Library.
- Initiate the Equity Plan's three-year goals for advancing the objective within the practices of the Library for recruitment and hiring.
- Apply the newly developed tools for measuring the success of the Equity Plan.

*Please see the entire Equity Plan at the end of this plan.

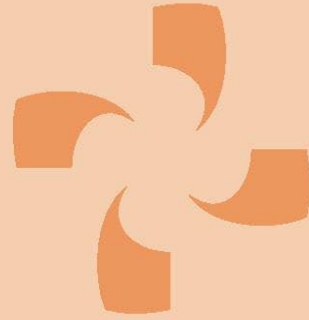
1st

Community Focus **GOAL**

THE LIBRARY CREATES
AND SUPPORTS SAFE
& FRIENDLY PLACES.

STRATEGIES:

- Create welcoming spaces with cultural and physical accessibility, including bilingual signage.
- Create programs that explore polarization, conflict resolution, and healthy communication.
- Create programs that engage the public on empathy, working through conflict, cross-cultural communication, cultural awareness, and de-escalation.



- Create programs and services that explore the intersection between digital literacy and democracy.

- Create opportunities for diverse groups to connect, have fun, and gain understanding through art, history, and humanities programs that celebrate diverse cultures and identities.

- In collaboration with our partners, create programs that bridge cultures, generations, lived experiences, and communities.

Leverage the Library's new spaces and program rooms to entice traditionally excluded Library patrons into the Library.

1st Community Focus

2nd

Community Focus

GOAL

THE LIBRARY FOSTERS AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY.

STRATEGIES:

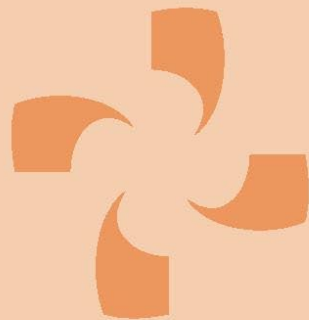
- Implement the Library's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan and ensure that library services, programs, and collections are accessible to everyone.
- Continuously evaluate processes, decisions, and policies with participation from marginalized groups to reduce barriers and increase access to all that the Library offers.
- Deepen relationships with partners serving marginalized and vulnerable populations to invite their participation in policy decisions and program plans.



- Invite participation and feedback about library services, programs, and collections from traditionally excluded groups.
- Develop communication strategies that connect vulnerable and underserved groups to services.

- Increase communication, collaboration, and outreach to underserved communities and ensure their input is genuinely incorporated into Library decisions.

- Library staff will participate on boards of community organizations.



2nd Community Focus

3rd

Community Focus

GOAL

THE LIBRARY NURTURES
A COMMUNITY THAT
SUPPORTS ALL
MEMBERS OF SOCIETY.

STRATEGIES:

- Collaborate with partners to improve positive health outcomes for all Santa Cruz County residents.
- Create programs and services that support the mental health of patrons by partnering with and by following the City of Santa Cruz's goals as developed within its "Health in All Policies" (HiAP).
- Develop programs that support the socio-psychological wellness of youth and teens and provide regular mechanism to provide ongoing feedback. Further align the Library's work with the schools.



- Collaborate with schools to develop programs that focus service to underserved children.

- Further develop the library as a platform for patrons to access social services.

- Remove barriers so that vulnerable groups have access to knowledge, information, and services that result in positive life outcomes.

- Develop programs that support incarcerated and decarcerated individuals.

- Collaborate with community partners to develop programs that provide positive experiences and that continue to support social services for the unhoused and individuals with mental health issues.

3rd Community Focus

1st

Staff Values and Organizational Focus:

GOAL THE LIBRARY WILL MEASURE HOW IT HAS CREATED CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY AND WILL CONTINUALLY ADJUST THE LIBRARY'S WORK TO MEET ITS GOALS.

STRATEGIES:

- The Library will develop a new and transparent assessment that evaluates the effectiveness of the Library's work to address the community goals, the Library's Equity Plan and the Library's strategic directions for collections, technology, learning and staff training.
- The Library aims to provide a system that identifies outcomes and new metrics for measuring the Library's success at meeting them.

2nd

Staff Values and Organizational Focus:

GOAL THE LIBRARY WILL CURATE A RELEVANT AND ENGAGING COLLECTION OF MATERIALS DIVERSE IN CONTENT AND FORMAT TO SATISFY THE CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED READING, LISTENING, VIEWING, AND LEARNING PREFERENCES OF THE COMMUNITY.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase collaborations and partnerships with organizations that serve prioritized communities and provide regular mechanism to provide ongoing feedback.
- Create systems for regular input from prioritized groups on material in the collection and its accessibility.
- Increase the diversity of local collections such as local history, local music, and art.
- Collaborate with regional partners to review and collect genealogical and historical information of importance to Santa Cruz County.

3rd

Staff Values and Organizational Focus:

GOAL THE LIBRARY WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY FOR THE COMMUNITY AND BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

STRATEGY:

- The Library will develop a technology plan that provides for a resilient infrastructure, includes patron feedback and provides transparency around its policies for replacing obsolete systems.

4th

Staff Values and Organizational Focus:

GOAL THE LIBRARY WILL CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN AND SUPPORT LEARNING.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop and apply meaningful measurements for determining successful impacts of Library services on learning needs within: The County's jails, early literacy, job training and career advancement, life skills, civics and digital literacy.
- Use community conversations to specifically identify the learning needs within the Santa Cruz County community.
- Identify opportunities and best practices for nurturing curiosity.
- Apply new measurements for determining Library impacts on learning for grades K-12.
- Pilot new programs to identify scalable services that address inequities among early learning.

5th

Staff Values and Organizational Focus:

GOAL THE LIBRARY WILL SUPPORT AND PREPARE STAFF TO SUCCESSFULLY MEET THE NEEDS WITHIN THIS PLAN AND TO ENSURE EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE.

STRATEGIES:

- Ensure high quality training for all staff in order to support the goals within the equity action plan.
- Ensure high quality training for all staff to support the action steps for the Safe & Friendly focus, specifically to support staff in providing friendly, responsive customer service.
- Ensure high quality training for staff to support all of the many skilled areas of the organization so that Santa Cruz Public Library staff remain at the cutting edge of the field.

- Ensure staff have training to support constructive communication.
- Ensure that staff have training on measuring impacts.
- Ensure all staff have the necessary tools and resources for supporting their mental health and well-being.
- Seek staff feedback on the progress of the Strategic Plan.



**Staff Values and
Organizational Focus:**
STAFF DEVELOPMENT

6th

Staff Values and Organizational Needs:

GOAL THE LIBRARY WILL ENHANCE COMMUNITY OUTCOMES BY EFFECTIVELY ALIGNING ITS WORK WITH THE WORK OF ITS PARTNERS IN GOVERNMENT.

STRATEGIES:

- The Library's senior management will regularly study and examine opportunities to better leverage Library resources within its program and service plans to support the goals within the strategic plans and initiatives of all four of the jurisdictions that govern the Library's work.
- Library staff will seek out partner opportunities with the jurisdictions to better align the Library's work with their goals and to gain a better understanding of how the jurisdictions aim to implement their plans.



SANTA CRUZ
PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Plan

(DEI)



The Santa Cruz Public Libraries launched an internal team (the Equity Team) in 2020 that consisted of volunteers from different levels of the organization and that was led by the Assistant Library Director. They drafted the following statement of purpose:

To create an organizational culture of equity and inclusion, and to provide equitable and relevant services to all of the Library's patrons.

The Santa Cruz Public Libraries have endorsed this purpose and will also work to create a culture of belonging and accessibility for staff and all patrons. As an institution, the Library supports a learning culture which drives the DEI statement of purpose.

The team then focused its work in three areas:

- 1 The Library's External Services: Collection, Services and Programs.
- 2 The Library's Internal Services and Goals: Library Culture.
- 3 The Library's Hiring and Onboarding Practices.

The goal now is to ensure that the work of the Equity Team becomes an embedded and permanent work within all aspects of the Library. The following outline serves as a three-year guide for taking action within the Library to fundamentally advance diversity, equity and inclusion within the Library and in the community. The plan begins with training on DEI for the Library's senior staff. The senior management team will ensure the success of this plan. Consultants will also assist senior management in building trust among staff.

That training will cover core competencies for increasing awareness of vocabulary and communication skills to effectively support DEI work within the Library. Training will also support the development of further leadership skills to improve inclusion and a sense of belonging and tolerance and the development of a further understanding of both conscious and unconscious bias.



Focus 1: External Services: Collection, Services and Programs

The Library will align its DEI work on its collections, services and programs with the County of Santa Cruz's work on equity.

Year One:

1. The Library will focus on early childhood literacy to improve educational outcomes for all students in Santa Cruz County. It will also foster greater curiosity among all students. Community survey data provided by the United Way and in partnership with Applied Research Survey (ARS) indicates that significant inequities exist in third grade reading levels, college readiness, socioeconomic status, and in health disparities. We know that children learn to read up until third grade and then read to learn after third grade. Those not reading by third grade will therefore struggle to learn. The consequences for students who fail to read on grade level by third grade has far reaching implications for the individual and society. This plan begins by focusing primarily on third grade level reading outcomes as a long-term investment in addressing the many inequities within the County. It will also provide a road-

map for expanding learning outcomes for all students. The plan will develop a pilot program to increase the number of students reading on a third-grade level by 50% within its chosen school or schools by 2025. Lessons learned from that pilot program will be used throughout the County.

2. The library will work to reduce inequities in learning outcomes and raise outcomes for all students. Targets for success still need to be developed by Library and school staff. The Library will continue with annual Community Conversations of prioritized groups as identified in the strategic planning process. The results of that feedback shall be incorporated in service and program development by using the best practice DEI methodology.

3. Identify, develop, and maintain appropriate programming and services based on the data and input from community partners that support the Equity Action Plan.



4. Develop an audit plan for the Library's Collections. Identify, analyze, and implement best practices DEI methodology for building the collection. Use an equity lens in evaluations of vendors, service, and content providers. Establish a more robust process for cataloging Library materials in other languages, involving affiliates such as Pacific Library Partnership.

5. Remain adaptive to the lessons learned through the library's work with the County and other partners.

Year Two:

1. Evaluate and expand relevant, successful equity-focused programming and services.

2. Implement measurements developed in year one.

3. At the end of year two, the Assistant Library Director will draft a report on the services and programs identified in year one and analyze the success of the programs. The report should make recommendations and be presented to the Library's governance: Library Advisory Commission, (LAC) and the Library Joint Powers Board (LJPB).

4. The Collection Management Services (CMS) Manager will identify gaps found in the collections audit and make recommendations for change.



Year Three:

1. Implement recommendations from year two.

2. Provide a report to the LAC and the LJPB at the end of year three on the success of the program and provide recommendations for next steps including how this work can be integrated into the next Strategic Plan.





Focus 2: The Library's Internal Services and Goals: Library Culture

Organizational culture is intricately tied to organizational readiness and the ability of staff to carry out the goals of the DEI Plan and Strategic Plan. Beyond building staff knowledge and skills, this focus area is crucial to building trust and creating an environment where DEI efforts can flourish.

Year One:

- 1. Identify a consultant to develop an understanding of staff knowledge about Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Additionally, utilize the consultant(s) to gain a better understanding of staff wellbeing, levels of trust within the organization, and feelings of belonging and accessibility. Together, this data will inform training needs and help identify organizational development processes that need to be put in place.**
- 2. Identify staff trainings and workshops with the Training Coordinator and senior managers to provide in year one through year three. They should support and develop the competencies listed above.**

3. Identify tools through The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) or other best practices that can become regularly used in evaluation of practices and all policies through a DEI lens.

4. The Assistant Director of Libraries will provide a report to the staff that outlines senior management's plan for addressing the results of a consultant driven survey that captures the baseline of the organization's well-being on DEI.

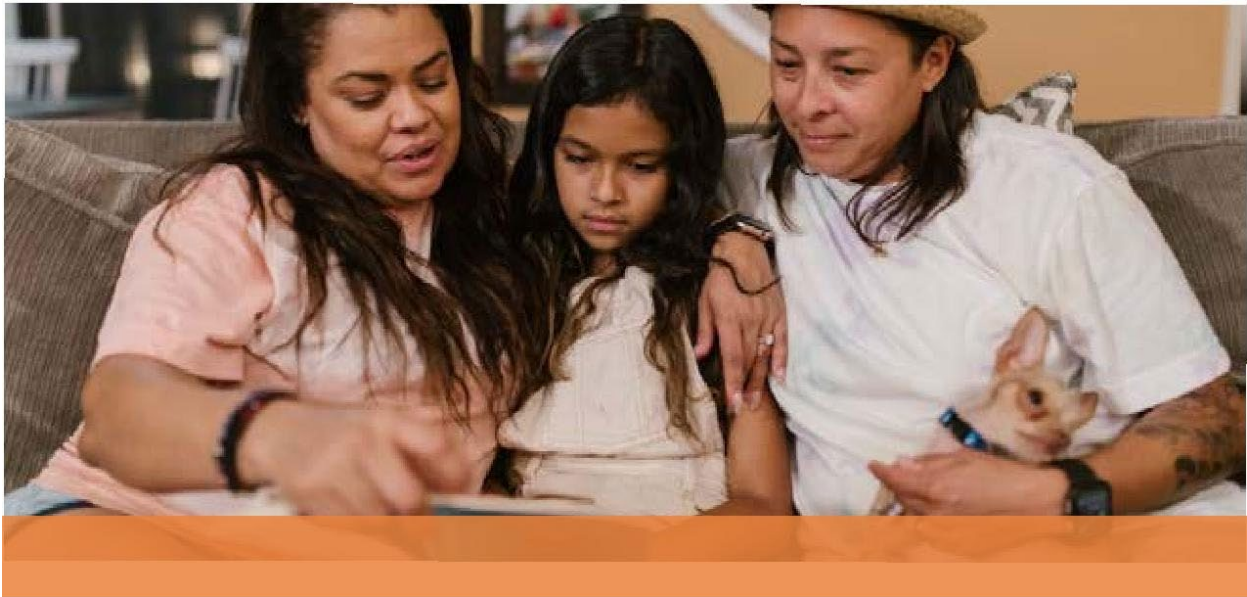
5. With the assistance of a consultant, support peer groups for the purpose of developing community, and constructive feedback for DEI leadership skills and professional development.

6. Continue community conversations throughout the year with staff. Senior management will prepare a report for the staff on its lessons learned from those conversations and how it intends to incorporate those lessons learned within the current strategic plan and the next plan.



Year Two:

- 1. Include in the consultant's contract a requirement to return in year two and follow up on a staff survey. The consultant should provide methods for identifying DEI progress and accountability.**
- 2. In collaboration with the same consultant, identify additional staff trainings and workshops for all staff to respond to year two's survey data.**
- 3. Maintain an ongoing survey of staff on knowledge and staff well-being as it relates to DEI.**
- 4. The Assistant Library Director will provide a report to the staff and the LAC and the Joint Powers Board that outlines senior management's plan for addressing the results of the survey and for enriching the culture of the Library and for meeting the purpose of this plan.**
- 5. The Library will consider how the lessons learned from this work and its recommendations can be integrated into the next Strategic Plan.**



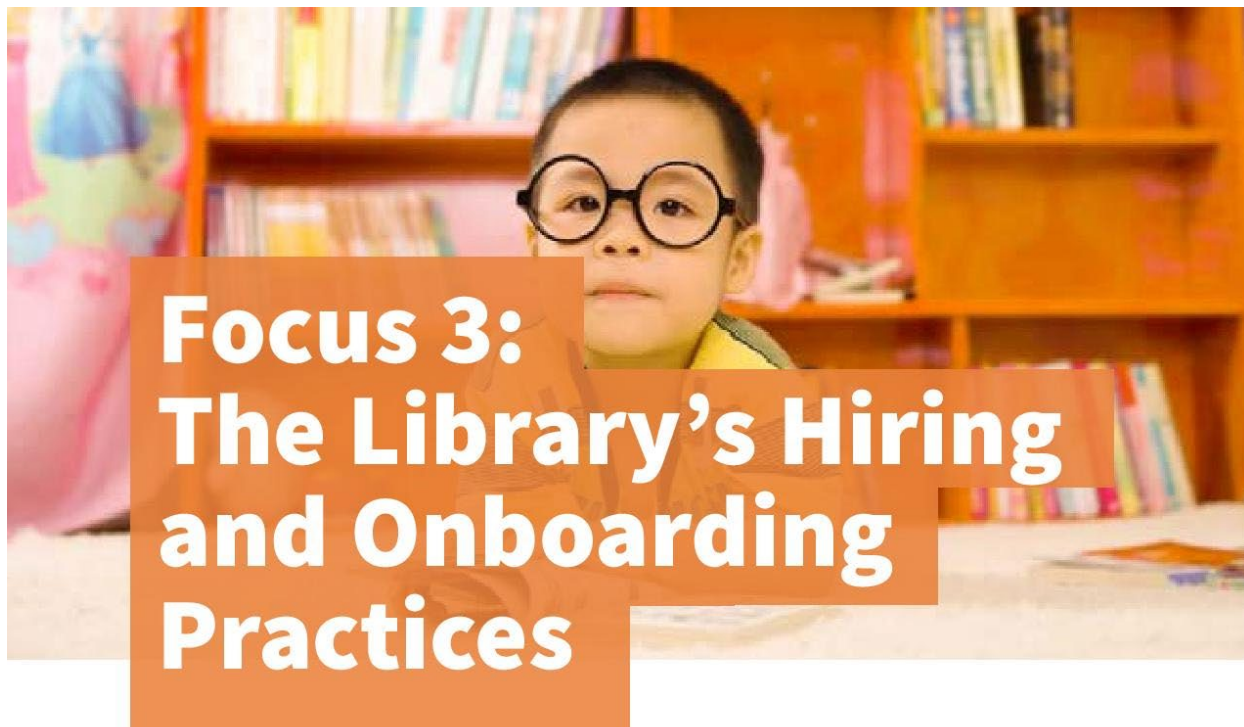
Year Three:

1. The same consultant used in year one and year two will return to conduct a third staff survey and compare results.

2. Identify staff trainings and workshops with the Training Coordinator and senior managers to respond to year two's survey data .

3. The Assistant Library Director will create a report for the staff and to the Library's governance that provides a three year history of the Library's work on improving its culture. The report will make recommendations for next steps including how this work can be integrated into the next Strategic Plan.





Focus 3: The Library's Hiring and Onboarding Practices

Systemic inequities in hiring practices have long affected the ability of marginalized groups to benefit from and participate in various organizations and institutions, including the Library. Employing a diverse workforce is intricately tied to achieving each goal of the Strategic Plan and this Equity Action Plan.

Year One:

1. A diverse workforce is critical for supporting a culture of learning at the Library. The Santa Cruz Public Libraries recognizes the immeasurable value of listening and responding to varied perspectives, philosophies and life experiences. A goal within year one is to develop a recruitment plan resulting in a workforce that reflects the diverse community served. Our community is made of every resident in the County and the Library also serves patrons who commute in from other counties. We are local and regional and we seek to learn more about our connection to our global community. The Library's senior management will establish meetings between HR to support an em-

ployment pipeline. Those meetings should focus initially on the following: examine skills and educational requirements; job descriptions, recruitment advertising practices; and processes such as interviews and candidate vetting. One aspect of the work of the Library will be to identify partners in the community that support diversity and that the Library can work with on recruitment strategies. To see more details on future agendas in meetings with HR, please refer to the Equity Team’s subcommittee on hiring’s document. Develop exit interview forms to document whether DEI issues were a factor in the staff person’s departure.



2. Identify funding sources for paid internships to encourage young people to consider librarianship.

3. At the end of year one, the Assistant Library Director will develop a report to the Library’s governance on the Library’s recommendations regarding hiring.

4. Conduct annual diversity audits on staff and ensure accountability through transparent benchmarks.

5. Develop an onboarding program for new employees and volunteers that incorporates the key findings around staff knowledge on DEI.

Year Two:

1. The Library will develop and implement a plan for development and provide staff with a clearer understanding of opportunities for professional growth and promotion.

2. At the end of year two, the Assistant Library Director will provide a report that documents the history of its actions and recommendations based on the work that came out of its report from year one regarding the Library's hiring practices. The Library will consider in its report how the lessons learned from this work and its recommendations can be integrated into the next Strategic Plan.



Year Three:

1. At the end of year three, the Assistant Library Director will report on changes made and what changes need to still be made within the next Strategic Plan.



WORKPLAN 2023-2025: *DEI; Community; and Organizational Objectives*

Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Objectives:

First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.

(A) Ensure that the yearly milestones within the DEI Plan are met.	
(B) In collaboration with the schools, identify and develop programming to support school readiness for underserved children.	
(C) Provide quarterly community conversations with prioritized groups. Provide the feedback to the LAC and JPA once a year.	
(D) Develop an audit plan for the Library's Collections. Establish a more robust process for cataloging in other languages, involving affiliates such as Pacific Library Partnership	
(E) Establish meetings between HR and senior management to meet the goal of developing a recruitment plan that will lead to more staff who reflect the community they serve; specifically, the Library needs to examine skills and educational requirements, job descriptions and recruitment advertising practices, and process i.e. interviews and how the candidates are vetted. Provide the plan to the LAC and JPA no later than the end of 2023.	
(F) Identify benchmarks for expanding engagement with traditionally excluded group.	

Community Objectives:

<p>1. Safe and Friendly</p>	<p>First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.</p>
<p>(A) Create welcoming spaces for all ages with cultural accessibility and ensure that spaces go beyond ADA compliance and achieve universal design at remodeled or new facilities: Provide annual audits of spaces.</p>	
<p>(B) Provide bilingual signage at all branch locations: The Library will address three branches a year for each of this Plan's three years. Signage must be developed or enhanced with bilingual signage.</p>	
<p>(C) Determine an appropriate threshold by 2024 for including new signage to address changing language demographics.</p>	
<p>(D) Improve support of the mental health of patrons: Establish a partnership with the County by spring 2023 to bring in social workers to the Library. Seek the input from the Social Worker for library programs at the Library that can support mental health. Seek social workers who can also work with teens as well as adults.</p>	
<p>(E) Pilot 3 programs, one each year in a different community that explores polarization, conflict resolution, and healthy communication.</p>	
<p>(F) Seek out input from partners on programs that engage the public on empathy, working through conflict, cross-cultural communication, cultural awareness, and de-escalation. Develop one program a year with partners that engages on these topics.</p>	
<p>(G) Create programs and services that explore the intersection between digital literacy and democracy.</p>	

(The target number of annual programs will be developed in the first quarter of the plan.)	
(H) Create opportunities for diverse groups to connect, have fun, and gain understanding through art, history, and humanities programs that celebrate diverse cultures and identities. (The target number of programs will be developed during a planning process within the first quarter of the year.)	
(I) Create/support programs that bridge cultures, generations, lived experiences, and communities. (The number of annual programs will be identified during a planning process in the first quarter of the plan. This work could be community led programming.)	
(J) Reopen the Branciforte, Scotts Valley and Live Oak branches in 2022: Provide quarterly surveys of patrons on the environment on all of the new or remodeled buildings.	
(K) Reopen the Aptos Branch Library by 2024.	

2. Inclusive	First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.
(A) Deepen relationships with partners serving marginalized and vulnerable populations to invite their participation in policy creation/revision and program planning: Provide representation at partner meetings or develop a round table at the Library.	
(B) Invite participation and feedback about library services, programs, and collections from traditionally excluded groups: Provide an annual report to the Library Advisory Commission (LAC) and the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) on the feedback and recommended actions.	
(C) Increase collaborations and partnerships with organizations that serve prioritized communities. Include	

in the annual report to the LAC and JPA any changes or proposed changes to Library programs/services or practices that resulted from those collaborations.	
(D) Implement the Diversity, Equity, Action Plan	
(E) Develop an updated Website by December 2023 that is more user friendly for other language users and for people with disabilities.	

3. Supportive	First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.
(A) Develop programs that support the socio-psychological wellness of youth and teens and provide regular a mechanism to provide ongoing feedback. (The target number of programs will be developed within the first quarter of the plan.)	
(B) Continue to collaborate with schools to invest in programs that focus on underserved children. Provide annual report to LAC and JPA on any changes or proposals that resulted from the collaboration.	
(C) Further develop the library as a platform for patrons to access social services: Develop more measures for identifying how many patrons are served with Library sponsored social services and outcomes.	
(D) Further develop programs that support incarcerated and decarcerated individuals: By 2023, recruit an Library Assistant 2 (LA2) to support the clerical work of the County Correctional Facilities (CCF) so that the Librarians can continue to expand programming.	
(E) Continue to collaborate with community partners to develop programs that provide positive experiences and social services that support people experiencing	

homelessness and individuals with mental health issues: Develop new metrics by the start of year three.	
(F) Ensure that the Library remains a leader in the County for environmental sustainability: Develop a plan by 2023 to reduce the Library's carbon footprint in half by 2026.	
(G) Ensure that the community of Santa Cruz County understands that the Library provides free services to support the needs of the County: Provide annual surveys of community's knowledge of the Library's work and develop annual marketing plans to raise awareness.	

Organizational Objectives:

1. Measuring Success	First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.
(A) Implement Neogov "Onboard" and "Perform" modules by January 2023 to ensure staff training is tracked and performance appraisals are completed on time.	
(B) Develop measurement tools for evaluating the Library's customer service by the end of 2022.	
(C) Develop and revise measurement tools for evaluating the Library's programs and services by the end of 2023.	
(D) Recruit a consultant to support staff in measuring the Library's impact on services and programs.	
(E) By the end of 2024, provide a dashboard that publicly displays the Library's measurements.	

2. Collections	First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.
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(A) Ensure Branciforte, and Aptos open with updated and improved collections and that all branch collections continue to meet the needs of the community.	
(B) Revise a Collection Development Plan that utilizes an equity lens by 2024.	
(C) Administer annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion audit on all collections.	
(D) Invite people and organizations who are from traditionally excluded groups to provide input on collections.	

3. Innovative Technology	First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.
(A) Develop a technology and computer replacement policy by June 2023	
(B) Migration of the Library's in-house Integrated Library System (ILS) to a hosted solution by April 30, 2023.	
(C) Re-locate Collection Management Services and the Library Information Technology teams to the Headquarters building by June 2023.	
(D) Re-locate Collection Management Services and the Library Information Technology teams to the Headquarters building by June 2023.	
(E) Replace obsolescent hardware Servers at all Branch locations by January 2023.	
(F) Install occupancy counting equipment at all branches by December 2022.	
(G) Develop plans for an additional generator and power backup solutions by December 2023.	
(H) Upgrade of our virtual, private cloud infrastructure by August 2023.	

<p>4. Learning</p>	<p>First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.</p>
<p>(A) Identify key skills that the Library can offer community members and that have the greatest impact for raising the income of low-income workers. Identify what those services would be in the Library by the end of 2023. Develop a program to offer those services by the beginning of 2024.</p>	
<p>(B) Ensure that the Library remains the go to place for bridging the digital divide in the County. Develop continuous evaluations and surveys.</p>	
<p>(C) Seek out traveling museum exhibits that can spark curiosity and conversation in the Library for all ages: (The target number for programming will be developed within the first quarter of the year.) Develop continuous evaluations and surveys.</p>	
<p>(D) Ensure that the Santa Cruz Public Libraries provides the comprehensive resources and services to support public research on the local history of the County.</p>	

<p>(E) Ensure that the library provides expert research assistance, teaches information literacy skills, and expertly connects patrons of all ages with materials and information to meet their educational, informational and entertainment needs. Continuously improve staff skills to evolve with patrons' needs and with developments in the profession. (Develop customer service surveys and begin implementing them in 2023.) Develop continuous evaluations and surveys.</p>	
<p>(F) Ensure that the Library supports all Santa Cruz County students emotionally and intellectually with caring adults and cutting-edge resources. Develop continuous evaluations and surveys.</p>	
<p>(G) Continue to expand participation of the summer learning program for all students and identify new avenues for reaching students within the groups identified through the Equity Plan. Develop continuous evaluations and surveys.</p>	
<p>(H) Continue to support the current work of the bookmobile and utilize the bookmobile and outreach efforts to support the summer learning goals.</p>	

<p>5. Skilled Staff and Organizational Readiness</p>	<p>First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means that there are reportable outcomes.</p>
<p>(A) Ongoing training on Equity Diversity and Inclusion for the Library's senior managers. Complete a skills and knowledge assessment by the end of the fiscal year 2023.</p>	
<p>(B) By the end of 2023, identify staff trainings to better support the Equity Plan with the learning systems specialist and senior managers.</p>	
<p>(C) Expand training on facilitating and conducting community conversations.</p>	

(D) Expand training to all staff on deescalation. Ensure everyone trains on it once a year.	
(E) Ensure high quality training for all staff to support the action steps for the Safe & Friendly focus, specifically to support staff in providing friendly, responsive customer service. Begin in 2023.	
(F) Ensure high quality training to staff to support all of the many skilled areas of the organization so that Santa Cruz Public Library staff remain at the cutting edge of the field: Develop a baseline by 2023 and provide annual reports.	
(G) Ensure training for all staff to support constructive communication. Begin for all staff in 2023.	
(H) Ensure that staff have training on measuring impacts. Begin in 2023 for all librarians. Begin in 2024 for all staff.	
(I) Develop a single point of contact that is dedicated exclusively to marketing and public information in order to expand and streamline communication by SCPL. Recruit a Community Relations Specialist by January 2023.	
(J) Staff mental wellbeing is crucial for safe, welcoming spaces that provide excellent customer service. Develop partnership with County social workers by spring 2023. Utilize onsite social workers to also support staff wellbeing by 1. Professionally handling behavioral issues that library staff are not equipped to handle, AND 2. Supporting staff who have just experienced a traumatic encounter.	
(K) Continue to develop volunteer program to work seamlessly between the City's volunteer office and the Library.	
(L) Seek annual staff feedback on the capacity and pace of change and capacity to manage the development and implementation of the new Strategic Plan. Throughout the implementation of the new Strategic Plan, identify	

staffing needs and potential creation of newly defined positions.	
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1. Alignment with Government Partners	First Quarter of the First Year: A "0" means it hasn't been initiated. A "+" means the program/service has begun. A "*" means there are reportable outcomes.
(A) The Library's senior management will provide bi-annual reports to the LAC and the LJPB on opportunities and shared goals and work with government partners.	
(B) In order to support the reports above, staff will attend Council meetings among all of the jurisdictions and seek to partner with agencies supporting the goals within the Library's Strategic Plan. The Library will seek continuous feedback from these partners and include the input in the bi-annual reports.	



STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 14, 2022
TO: Library Advisory Commission
FROM: Yolande Wilburn, Library Director
RE: Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2023

RECOMMENDATION

Review and approve the LAC 2023 calendar

DISCUSSION

The LAC schedule is coordinated with the JPA schedule so that policy items can be reviewed and discussed by the LAC prior to JPA review and discussion. Zoom information will be provided prior to the meeting date.

Meeting Dates - All are on Mondays at 6:30pm	
January 9	Zoom
April 3	Boulder Creek Branch Library
May 8	Branciforte Branch Library
July 3	Scotts Valley Branch Library
October 2	Aptos Branch Library



STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 14, 2022
TO: Library Advisory Commission
FROM: Yolande Wilburn, Library Director
RE: Library Policy

RECOMMENDATION

Accept and File Policy #305 Display

DISCUSSION

The Library System is governed by policies in order to maintain standards to ensure a safe and healthy environment for staff and patrons. In the past two months, a team of staff members have been revising Policy #305 Display. The City's Risk Management and City Attorney's Office provided recommendations during the revision process. The Library would like the LAC to review and approve the attached policy for submission to the Library Joint Powers Board.

Attachments:

- Updated Policy #305 Display
- Current Policy #305 Display

Prepared by: Gregory Yeh, Management Analyst

Reviewed and Approved by: Yolande Wilburn, Library Director

Display Policy: Bulletin Boards, Display Cases and Wall-Mounted Exhibits

JPAB Policy # 305

Approved: 10/2001

Last Revised: 10/2022

Five-year Review Schedule: 10/2027

To create welcoming spaces that serve the needs of a diverse community, the Santa Cruz Public Libraries (hereinafter the “Library”) may make available for Library use or community use certain designated spaces for conveying information or publicizing events pursuant to the conditions provided in this Display Policy. As provided further below, bulletin boards and display cases shall be open for public use pursuant to the guidelines in this Display Policy, and wall-mounted exhibits shall be reserved for Library use only.

Members of the public understand that the Library accepts no liability for the contents of any display and/or exhibit displayed by the public.

The following rules govern the type and manner in which materials may be displayed.

Bulletin Boards

The Library Bulletin Boards shall be open for public use pursuant to the guidelines listed below. Content expressed in any postings by the public on the bulletin boards does not necessarily represent that of the Library, its staff, or the Library Joint Powers Authority Board. Library assumes no responsibility for the preservation, protection, or security against theft or damage to any displayed material.

- All materials must be submitted to the branch service desk for posting. Library staff reserves the right to deny materials if the posting does not comply with this Display Policy, or if the content violates local, state, or federal laws, including but not limited to, any laws on obscenity, libel, defamation of character or invasion of privacy. The Library shall endeavor to post bulletin board materials on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Branch managers will determine the maximum size of materials on bulletin boards within their location. The Library does not guarantee space to post materials. Staff reserves the right to deny submissions if staff deems that there is no available space at that time on the bulletin board.

- All materials must have a posted and removal date on them. No materials should be posted longer than 15 calendar days. Library staff is not obligated, but they reserve the right to remove materials after the removal date has passed, dates have been falsified, or no removal date exist on the material.

Display Cases

The Library Display Cases shall be open for public use pursuant to the guidelines listed below. Content expressed in or on display cases does not necessarily represent that of the Library, its staff, or the Library Joint Powers Authority Board. Library assumes no responsibility for the preservation, protection, or security against theft or damage to any displayed material. Participants assume all responsibility for their display, including the provision of any desired insurance coverage. The Library shall not be responsible for or insure any displays at the Library.

- Display Cases shall not be used for commercial purposes, including but not limited to advertising for any goods or services. No work of art, craft, or artifact displayed may be priced for sale.
- Groups or individuals shall make a request to reserve space by completing the Library's Display Case Reservation Form, which shall include the proposed content of the display and a signed waiver of liability, release, assumption of risk and indemnity agreement. Approval shall be based on compliance with this Display Policy and shall be subject to available space.
- Generally, only one display per year per individual/organization may be booked at any one Library branch.
- Displays are retained monthly or as decided by the Library Branch Manager or their designee.
- The Library shall endeavor to schedule displays on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Each display must contain a sign indicating the name of the sponsoring group or individual. This sign shall be provided to the Library Branch Manager for review or their designee, by the sponsoring group or individual, at its sole cost, in advance of posting the display. The sponsor may also post a sign listing its address and phone number so that interested members may contact the sponsor directly. The sign may not exceed 5.5 x 8.5 inches. The location of the sign will be determined by the branch manager.

- Any participating individual or sponsor understands that in displaying contents in the cases, they are voluntarily agreeing to accept and assume any and all risks, known or unknown, including injury or property damage. By displaying contents in the cases, the participating individual or sponsor agrees not to assert any claim, institute any suit or other legal process against the Library, its officers, officials, employees, agents or volunteers for any property damage resulting from or in any way related to the display cases. If the sponsoring group or individual is concerned about insuring a display, that group or individual shall be responsible for obtaining and maintain their own insurance.
- The group or individual must follow all rules regarding installation and de-installation established by the Library branch at which the display is exhibited. Such rules may be changed from time to time by the applicable Library branch.
- Failure to adhere to the Library's Display Policy may result in removal of the current display as well as restrictions from further use of the Display Cases.
- Branch Managers, the Assistant Director of Libraries, or the Director of Libraries reserve the right to remove any display at any time if a display does not reflect any of the information stated in the Display Case Reservation Form or if the display does not comply with this Display Policy.
- The Library reserves the right to remove displays after the display period has ended as designated in the Display Case Reservation Form. The Library also reserves the right to discard or donate any displays not retrieved within 14 calendar days after the end of the agreed upon display period.

Wall-Mounted and Rotating Art Exhibits

The Library wall-mounted and rotating art exhibits shall be reserved for Library use only and shall not be open for public use.

The Library may solicit artwork to display on wall-mounted spaces or for rotating art exhibits. Interested artists should contact the Branch Manager at any Library branch to obtain information on how to submit their work on the Library's website. All submitted artwork shall be reviewed and selected by the Library's Art Committee. The artwork shall be evaluated by the Library's Art Committee based on the following criteria and standards:

- The artistic quality and originality of the artwork.
- The suitability of the artwork to the aesthetics of the applicable Library branch and exhibition space.
- The size or dimensions of the artwork.
- Budget considerations of the Library.
- The artwork does not contain images of an offensive nature, including but not limited to, elements of graphic depiction of violence or sexually explicit imagery or nudity.
- The artwork shall comply with any existing State and Federal laws on obscenity, libel, defamation of character or invasion of privacy.

The Library reserves the right to form partnerships with Santa Cruz County arts organizations to schedule, select, coordinate, and manage art exhibits.

All artists selected to display artwork shall be responsible for hanging or installing their artwork in compliance with this policy, as well as in compliance with any instructions from the Library Art's Committee or any Branch Manager.

No work displayed may be priced for sale.

The Library assumes no responsibility for the preservation, protection, or security against theft or damage to any artwork. Participating artists or individuals displaying artwork at a Library branch assume all responsibility for their display, including the provision of any desired insurance coverage. The Library shall not be responsible for or insure any artwork displayed at the Library. Any artist or individual submitting artwork to be displayed at a Library branch shall provide a signed waiver of liability, release, assumption of risk and indemnity agreement in a form provided by the Library.

**DISPLAY CASE RESERVATION FORM
AND
WAIVER OF LIABILITY, RELEASE,
ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

LIBRARY BRANCH: _____ DISPLAY CASE ASSIGNED: _____

PARTICIPANT (Please Print): _____

ORGANIZATION, if applicable: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

SECONDARY CONTACT INFORMATION:

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

DESCRIPTION OF DISPLAY: _____

SETUP DATE/TIME _____ REMOVAL DATE/TIME _____

Assumption of Risk: By using a display case (the “Display”) at the Santa Cruz Public Libraries (hereinafter, “SCPL”), the Participant voluntarily agrees to accept and assume any and all risks, known or unknown, including the risk of injury, property damage, or death.

Indemnification, Waiver and Release: Participant hereby agrees to release, discharge, hold harmless and indemnify the Library Joint Powers Authority, the Santa Cruz Public Libraries, the City of Santa Cruz, the City of Scotts Valley, the City of Capitola, and the County of Santa Cruz, and each entity’s respective officers, officials, employees, agents and volunteers from and against all actions, claims, or demands (including attorney fees and costs) for injury, death, or damage resulting from or in any way related to the Display, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

Installation: The undersigned has read the Library’s Display Policy and agrees to follow the rules set out therein. Failure to adhere to the Library's Display Policy may result in removal of the Participant’s Display and restrictions from further use of the Display Case.

Authorization for Use of Photos/Videos: Participant authorizes SCPL to use photographs and/or videos taken of the Display or Participant for reproduction in any medium for any lawful purpose.

Severability. In the event that any clause or provision of this Agreement shall be held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity of such clause or provision shall not affect any of the remaining provisions of this Agreement.

Interpretation. Participant acknowledges that the normal rule of construction to the effect that any ambiguities are to be resolved against the drafting party shall not be employed in the interpretation of this Agreement.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I FURTHER CERTIFY MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS AGREEMENT CONSTITUTES A RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS AGAINST THE SANTA CRUZ PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND AGAINST ALL OTHERS MENTIONED IN THE AGREEMENT. I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I AM VOLUNTARILY SIGNING MY NAME TO THIS AGREEMENT AND BY DOING SO AM ACCEPTING ITS TERMS AS BINDING UPON MYSELF, MY HEIRS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES, ORGANIZATION, AND ASSIGNS.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT: _____ DATE: _____

Display Policy: Bulletin Boards, Display Cases and Wall-Mounted Exhibits

JPAB Policy # 305

Approved: 10/2001

Last Revised: 9/2014

Five-year Review Schedule: 5/2019

In the context of its mission to enhance Santa Cruz County's quality of life by providing vibrant physical and virtual public spaces where people connect, discover, and engage the mind, the Library System makes available for community use display cases, bulletin boards, and other space for conveying information or publicizing events. The following rules govern the type and manner in which materials may be displayed.

Bulletin Boards

- Bulletin Boards in public areas may be used to publicize cultural events and programs of community interest.
- Notices about political candidates, religious services, or private enterprises may not be posted.
- All materials must be submitted to the branch service desk for posting and approval.
- Branches using digital signage may require posted notices to be received in or converted to electronic format for posting.

Display Cases

- Use of Display Cases is reserved for individuals, non-profit and not-for-profit groups only.
- Groups or individuals may reserve space in display cases on a first-come, first-served basis, by making arrangements in advance with the Branch Manager or her/his designee.

- Generally, only one display per year per individual/organization may be booked at any one Branch.
- Displays are for one calendar month.
- Displays must be of interest to some segment of the community. They may not advocate the election of any candidate for political office. They may concern an issue of current political interest. It is understood that the opinions expressed in the display do not represent those of the Library System, its staff, or the Library Joint Powers Authority Board and signs stating this are posted at each Display Case.
- The Library System will endeavor to make display space available to groups representing all sides of issues. It reserves the right to schedule displays on the first-come, first-served basis cited in Number 2 above. For displays regarding issues of current public debate, it also reserves the right to facilitate public comment on the issue via a binder in which people are invited to write their comments.
- Each display must contain a sign indicating the name of the sponsoring group or individual. The sponsor may also post a sign listing its address and phone number so that interested members may contact the sponsor directly.
- No work of art, craft, or artifact displayed may be priced for sale. The artist or sponsor of the display may post a sign within the display case stating that her/his business card is available at the service desk.
- The Library System has no insurance covering the contents of display cases or other exhibits. If the sponsoring group or individual is concerned about insurance, it must make independent arrangements.
- The group or individual must follow all rules regarding installation and de-installation established by the Branch at which the display is mounted.
- Groups or individuals sponsoring displays must sign a Display Reservation Form provided by the Library System stating the proposed content of the display and attesting that they understand the rules and policies governing displays.

- Branch Managers or the Director of Libraries reserve the right to remove any display whose content does not reflect that stated in the Display Reservation Form.
- Library reserves the right to remove displays after the month display period has ended.

Wall-Mounted Exhibits

- All the strictures listed above apply to wall-mounted exhibits.
- The Library System reserves the right to specify and limit the space in which wall-mounted exhibits are displayed.
- The Library System reserves the right to form partnerships with Santa Cruz County arts organizations to select, coordinate, and manage the hanging of art exhibits.