



City of Santa Clara

The Center of What's Possible

Downtown Precise Plan Retail 101 Community Workshop

Meeting Summary

*Santa Clara Senior Center, Room 222
1303 Fremont Street, Santa Clara, CA 95050
January 16, 2020 | 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm*

Meeting Objectives

This meeting focused on the retail in our downtown area. At this workshop we discussed how retailers determine if a new store is warranted, how data is collected and analyzed, how real estate is evaluated, and how internal decision processes work.

Meeting Summary

The consultant gave presentations on the greater downtown area and retail data and analysis. Participant takeaways included an understanding of retailer processes and how to communicate a property's compelling attributes to a potential retail tenant. Highlights of the discussion from the meeting are noted as follows:

- Easy parking – should we plan where the parking goes first?
- Will the Plan analyze potential foot traffic by type of use?
- What is the gravity side of Downtown? (University, Monroe Street commute traffic, Safeway, Hwy 880)
- Access to Downtown – how do you find it? Is it easy?
- What type of use do you envision Downtown? Specialty retail that will draw customers locally and from the south bay.
- El Camino Real provide commodity retail, well represented. Downtown can provide specialty retail.

- Is the proximity of the train a plus or a minus for Downtown? (it's both) (Market drivers: residential, then office, then the transient population)
- Transient occupant is not a strong motive than residence – most retail is attracted by residential population
- Clone vs anti-clone – doing the same as other successful retail center or avoid repetition by providing different retail type
- What about pop-up retail? Is it an emerging trend? Design space for pop-ups, they can be a reason to visit. Pop-retail in San Jose is interesting and fresh
- Do big box retailers contribute to the amount of commercial space per person? When they close and open it raises or lowers the amount per person significantly.
- The problem of needing more retail space is a better one to have than having too much space and less demand.
- Convenience attribute needs to be there for mixed-use project.
- Does larger ceiling make it easier to convert to other uses? - It's more than just the height space for conversion between uses.
- Will we have design guideline for developer to be build? Yes - one will be developed for the Plan.
- SCU synergy draws specialty retail
- Future retail that is a draw for long term. – we need to build something that will evolve and stand the test of time
- Who will occupy the retail during the daytime? Office workers? Yes - and residences
- How about the cost of rent? How does that play into the success of commercial space? Will Downtown Santa Clara need rent subsidies? We are heading into another economic cycle.
- Right sizing commercial square footage do not over build – empty space is not good, demand is.
- Commodity uses are about convenience.
- New development will need functional paths of travel for loading and garbage collection.
- Your experience walking down the street should not be broken (blank or dead spaces).
- Would locating City Hall in downtown help sustain the retail? – it's a foot traffic driver but it'll become an inactive space in the evening and weekend.
- The goal is to draw local and close regional community