



City of Santa Clara

The Center of What's Possible

Downtown Precise Plan Downtown Community Task Force

Meeting #6 Summary

*Santa Clara City Hall, Council Chambers
1500 Warburton Avenue, Santa Clara, CA 95050
March 10 | 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm*

Meeting Objectives

The purpose of the meeting was to present and discuss status update, development density and market realities, form-based codes, making downtown attractive to developer and how all of these topics start to shape options for the land use framework for Downtown.

Meeting Summary

This meeting was livestreamed and broadcast on the local Cable Channel, and the City of Santa Clara's Facebook page and YouTube channels.

The consultant team gave a presentation and the DCTF then asked questions and engaged in discussion with the consultants. Highlights of the discussion from the meeting were as follows:

- Go over precise plan workplan - review overall timeframe and process
- Current working on land use then will work placemaking subsequently
- Provide feasibility findings
- Meeting in the box – great input
- What we've heard from the community outreach thus far. Incorporating them to opportunities and visions
- Critical facts: City owned land and lease ending; surplus land act would apply; and removal of courthouse to bring back grid
- University as a partner
- Private property owner considerations

- Transportation challenges
- Making downtown unique and what does that mean? WRT provide a list explaining this
- Vision for downtown – Authentic, Adaptable and
- Interdependent uses and shared resources
- Leveraging the university partnership
- Downtown activation and programming for weekday and weekend
- How to balance community needs with development realities: land use & density, parking and access, market feasibility, community benefits and technical issues.
- Financial feasibility considerations – what rents and selling well for this location. Would development be profitable? Demand over time. Housing as a driver of the redevelopment of downtown
- Redevelopment potential across a range of potential land use densities. Redevelopment from existing low-density to higher density buildings.
- Preliminary benchmarks for density
- Developer feedbacks: type III construction for housing (5 floors) and Type I for office (6-8 floors). Space needs to be flexible for commercial space. Mostly housing development.
- Parking challenge. Possible solution public transit and transportation demand management.
- Who pays for public realm? – developer-based funding, land secure financing, city funding
- Development options – market rate housing to 1000sf gross
- Option 1 – Central Open Space – housing heavy with centralize open space and activation area
- Option 2 – Bookend Open Space – walkable downtown need balance housing and job
- Option 3 – Lowering Densities – more sensitive to neighborhood edges
- DCTF feedback
 - Central open space makes more sense by starting at the core and then expand out
 - This plan has more form right now – more music art and neon sign
 - Podium is becoming more modular – need to dress them up to be more interesting
 - Central open space – welcoming entrance is missing from this plan but incorporated in the other plans
 - Why are the housing group together? Is it true mixed use if you have a mix uses instead of grouping of different uses.
 - True gathering places similar to Pike Place in Seattle that doesn't just become gather space, but a iconic gather place to visit
 - Parking
 - Walkable on all four sides to activate all sides.
 - Central open space option – that need entrance attraction on the end
 - Need to showcase relation to the Santa Clara station
 - Maximize retail
 - WRT mention of alley way as another layer of hierarchy for access. Use as service and interesting elements
 - Alley is the most important to have street tree because of fire access. Alley would be additional access for fire lane requirement
 - Help visualize the priority
 - A mixed use that has office to support retail during the day
 - WRT- need to make the first two city-owned block to be successful

- 40-50 depth for retail – is that adequate? WRT- yes
- Stepping back retail to allow outdoor seating and other active uses
- Retail success – disagree that we can only start at the east side – the courthouse can be another opportunity combining with the adjacent Swenson’s property.
- Management need City Council direction to take action on pursuing the courthouse removal – there’s no harm in talking and now is the time to start the discussion
- Anchor tenant theatre – three folks not named
- Is Washington street a service street? WRT – it would a mixed street.
- Trolley going down Franklin through the SCU.
- Mathew: Option 1 has been a clear vision – concern is has not shown how to activate the central place. It’s contingent to things that are not easy. The challenge is the south access to the central space is not dynamic access. How do we move from the east into the center easily? WRT – any framework will be a phasing plan to get us there. Each phase needs to be successful independently.
- Pull and movement of people to this place? What’s the tool? Student housing? Bigger challenge is also to bring people the other way to get to Downtown. How to deviate other path from the train station and get them to go to downtown. WRT – resolve during the phase.
- Convention center vs conference center in hotel. There’s a difference in scale and intensity.
- Like alley way – like option one – like that WRT considered the size of the alley. How do know what units to get built when we use FAR instead of DU/acre. Innovative construction method and type that would reduce cost in the future.
- City entitled city-owned land
- More collaborative meeting instead of procedural meeting. Motivate get you to activate us.
- What do we need to provide for the courthouse? Could this the requirement be amended? Has the court house’s demand change? We need to start the conversation.
- City-owned land is our leverage.
- WRT next steps – form-based code – where we are is phase II and the next step is seeking larger community input.

Public Comments

- Go with form-based code
- Need to initial the discussion to remove the courthouse
- Figuring out the anchor tenants for this project will set the tone for this area.
- We don’t have to enter the negotiating to understand what it takes to move the courthouse
- Start the negotiation with courthouse to create a successful phase I. Need a cool central draw to the area.
- Parade of Champion would be proud to see the changes in this area at their annual parade
- Wels Fargo – willing to have parking structure
- May timeline for City Council to ask for council direction – sooner the better
- Start the conversation of removing courthouse – restaurant to open along Lafayette and have it open late to midnight. The first phase is very important to student and young engineer

- More collaborative meeting – to get better feedback
- Like the idea of option 1 and 2 as a hybrid – its more inviting culture – talking to the university student, they say there's no culture
- Need to put housing in
- No council member in district 5 to champion this
- More negotiation
- Debby Davis: Transit area but doesn't define what transit rich meant?
- Court house – Ana and Mary – Andrew – it was stated that we need to pay the money – we must look at what is viable to be built
- In favor with option one – more walkable – get people there – if we must go with housing first – it is not a bad thing – worry about a flow is not going grow organically
- Always have an open dialog
- University student capstone project – revitalization and partnership with the City of Santa Clara
 - Increasing business density would make more walkability
 - Including more community events to have students and faculty to gather
 - Improving crosswalk aide and pedestrian lighting
 - Post and get print out of student's poster