



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 5, 2007
TO: Downtown Design Committee
FROM: J.D. Hightower, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY IMAGE SURVEY RESULTS**

The Community Image Survey is complete and it revealed some very interesting results. The tabulation of scores is attached to this memo. The tabulation of a small sample size did reveal some rather strong and uniform reactions to the images. To get an accurate reflection of the committee, it is useful to evaluate the top 10 rated images and the bottom 10 rated images out of 41 images total. This fits a good curve model with neutral zero being the average on the 23 entry. The highest score was an average of positive 3.285 and the lowest score was an average of negative 3.142. Another interesting point of this sample was that the tenth highest and lowest scores on either end were the last scores rate at least either positive 1 or negative 1. Thus evaluating the top 10 and bottom 10 should reflect a representative reaction to the images.

I also tabulated staff ratings of the images to act as an informal control group sample for the committee member tabulations. In general, staff's reactions act to further reinforce the committee position in that both groups had 6 out of 10 common bottom ratings with the same lowest rated image. The same was true that each group had in common 3 out of 10 of the highest rated images. Again the both groups had in common the single highest rated image. The highest rated image is number 17:



By far this was the highest rated image with an overall score of 3.285 from the committee and was the highest rated image by staff with a score of 4.83. This should come to no surprise in that the image brings a river to the street. This is consistent with both the General Plan them of bringing the river back to Riverbank as well as the theme of the Plaza Del Rio. The Committee should explore expanding the river within the plaza and possibly bring it out along the expanded side walk concept contemplated by the group. This feature would complement the zero curb concept decided upon at the meeting. The sidewalks are treated with either field stone or stamped concrete.

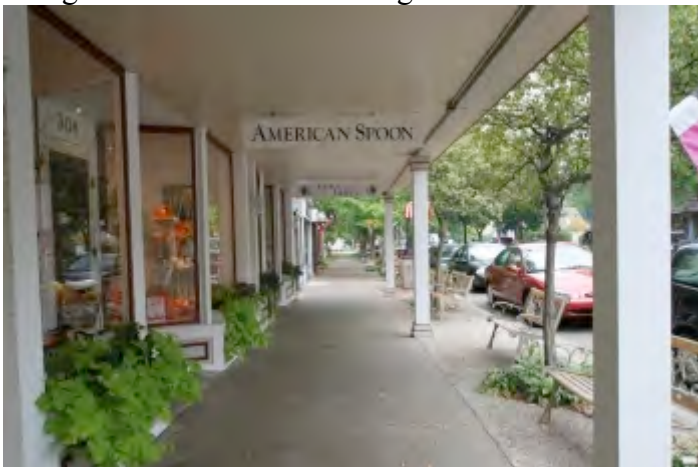
The second highest rated image by the committee is image 27 with an overall score of 2.71. This image is:



AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

There are several important features to this image. The street is clearly striped with a single travel lane, a clearly striped bicycle lane and clear on-street parking lane. The street is framed with buildings along the right-of-way and is also framed by street trees along and over the street. This being the second rated image probably reflects the group's desire to provide a tree canopy with the project.

The third highest rated image with a score of 2.57 is image 13. Image 13 also made the staff top ten rating with a score of 3.0. Image 13 is:



This picture shows a consistent use of colors and materials on the buildings and a common covered walkway. The benches, shade, trees and green within planter boxes makes this an attractive streetscape, although the parallel parking was a stated concern of the committee. The benches are highlighted by using a differing texture concrete finish. Future design efforts may want to consider a covered walkway and probably will include uniform bench spacing.

The fourth highest rated image was image 34 with an overall score of 2.28. This was also within the staff top ten with a score of 4.3. Image 34 is:



This shows most of the classic streetscape features: a broad sidewalk with outdoor café seating, ornamental street lights, uniform street trees, bicycle racks with a fair number of bikes. The outdoor café style seating is delineated by dimensional railing that acts as a separator between the customers and general pedestrian traffic. A result of the Main Street renovation project should be policies that allow outdoor café seating as long as it is delineated by appropriately scaled and detailed railing. It appears that the sidewalk has died concrete yellow in color. It is noteworthy that only one side of the street has uniform street tree planting and that the street has parallel parking.

The fifth rated image with an overall score of 2.14 is image 38 shows:



The Brendan Theater on 10th Street in Modesto, a zero curb line, tree lined street with informal outdoor café seating. The art-deco design of the marquee sign is prominent in the image, a design theme that may appeal to the design committee. The uniform use of color and material on the awnings also stand-out as well as the use of different concrete banding on the sidewalks.

The sixth rated picture is image 33 that rated a positive 1.86, this image is:



A roundabout with under construction with bulb-out curb type and landscaped delineator islands. There are public spaces on all corners with a bandstand/gazebo on one corner. This could be similar to the stage area proposed by the Plaza Del Rio. The crosswalks look to be made of pavers. The travel land and rollover area of the roundabout look to be treated with pavers or a stamped field stone pattern as well. The sidewalks are pavers that are integral with the street and delineated by regularly spaced street trees. This may indicate the desire to treat the travel lanes and crosswalks rather than stripe. The blue roof building addresses the street well and looks to have a door facing the public space on the corner. It appears that there is another public amenity under construction on the other corner.

The seventh rated picture is image 9 that rated a positive 1.43, this image is:



This is a fully completed and landscaped roundabout that utilizes a split sidewalk with bollards within the planter area that probably provides low level lighting. Again the crosswalks are treated with pavers same as the previous image. This gives a strong impression of a desire to have special surface treatment of crosswalk areas. The street trees are also palm trees same as about. This may be a landscaping option that the committee may want to explore given that the two pictures showing roundabouts as well as the top rated picture feature palm trees as street trees. This is similar to the City of Patterson, although they do not relate well to the river theme. This point may need clarification by the committee.

The eighth rated picture is image 2 that rated a positive 1.29, this image is:



This shows a corner bulb out with seating wall and bench facing the stores on the main street. The depth of the return on the bulb-out indicates on-street diagonal parking. The sidewalk transitions into a zero curb height at the alley way. The sidewalks are treated with pavers as well as the entry to the alley from the street. This may indicate a desire to have sidewalks treated with pavers as well a strong interest in street benches and seating walls. Seating walls could be incorporated as a delineator on a zero curb line concept that would replicate the planters on the four corners at the intersection of 3rd and Santa Fe.

The ninth rated picture was image 31 with a score of 1.14, this image is:



Again this shows the use of sidewalks treated with pavers, crosswalk areas highlighted with differing materials, in this case extending into the sidewalk area. The streetscape features the use of ornamental bollards, street lights and trash receptacles. The use of awnings over individual windows is also visible from the street.

The tenth rated picture is image 16 with a score of 1.0, this picture is:



This picture shows a large median with benches being a strong statement throughout the image with six benches visible in the image. The arrangement of the benches facing one another in the shade of trees provides a comfortable place for people to meet and exchange ideas. The surface of the median appears to be died concrete with heavy score lines at approximately two foot by two foot squares.

A common theme to all ten positive images is the use of specially treated sidewalks, crosswalks, benches and seating walls, and the use of bollards to delineate traffic. This is consistent with the direction given at the meeting.

Now let's examine the ten lowest scored images. The 32nd out of 41 rated image was image 11 with a score of -1.29, this image is:



This image shows a sparsely landscaped roundabout with painted crosswalks and painted rollover area of the roundabout. This contrasts with the two top rated images of roundabouts that featured crosswalks treated with pavers and rollover area with either pavers or stamped concrete. The other contrast is the landscaping on the center islands that featured fully and lushly landscaped center islands. Thus the roundabouts for the downtown renovation project need to provide ample landscaping and surface treatment of the center island and crosswalks.

The 33rd out of 41 images was image 22 with a score of -1.43, this image is:



This image shows painted sidewalks with botts dots and a relatively narrow street section without on street parking. The median is wide and landscaped at the expense of parking. This shows a preference for on street parking opportunities. Thus the direction given for medians needs to be balanced with the need for on-street parking. A little surprising is that the sidewalk is a zero curb line approach that is contrary to the direction given at the meeting.

The 34th out of 41 images is image 15 with a score of -1.72, this image is:



This shows a street made completely out of pavers, both sidewalks, parking lanes and travel lanes. This may indicate a preference of the committee for differing surface materials to indicate differing uses of the street. The center of the picture is an at grade traffic delineator. The lack of landscaping in the delineator also may indicate a desire for full landscaping within traffic delineators. This would be consistent with the discussions of the roundabouts and the adopted vision statement to provide full tree canopies over the streets.

The 35th out of 41 images is image 23 with a score of -1.72, this image is:



This picture shows a life size chess board within a median area of street. The chess set is framed by an arbors providing some shade and hedges from the travel lanes of the road. Ornamental lights and wooden chairs and tables are the other streetscape features in the image. The lack of predominant green landscaping may be the reason that the image rated low. Another factor is that the median width has come at the expense of on street parking as an outdoor café can be clearly seen in the background.

The 36th ranked out of 41 images is image 28, scored -1.72 by the committee. This image is:



This image is an innovative method to delineate a bicycle lane and interface with an intersection. The lack of landscaping along the roadway, ornamental lights, non-treated concrete sidewalk and excessively wide intersection are probably the reason for the low score of this image.

The 37th ranked out of 41 images is image 4, this scored -1.86 by the committee. This image is:



The complete lack of landscaping and street trees and plain looking sidewalks would be consistent with committee high ranking scores. Also the lack of doorways facing the right hand side of the street and lack of parking on that side give a blank look to the image.

The 38th ranked out of 41 images is image 25, this scored a -1.86 by the committee. This image is:



This is a painted bike lane that is on two differing materials. This may again point to a preference for differing yet consistent materials, not paint, to be used to differentiate differing uses of streets.

The 39th ranked out of 41 images is image 30, this scored a -2.43 by the committee. This image is:



This shows bike lane made of consistent yet differing materials and is separated from traffic by street tree plantings and is separated from the sidewalk area via a strip of gray colored pavers. The

driveway entrances are also treated with pavers. The smallness of the trees compared to the street width and building heights may be the reasons this image scored low.

The 40th ranked out of 41 images is image 29, this scored a strong dislike with a score of -2.57. This image is:



This image shows an innovative bicycle lane type, separated from traffic by a parking lane and street tree planting. The surface of the bike lane is painted, perhaps a contributor of the low score. The sidewalk has bands of pavers but is not colored and is harsh against the grey building in the background. This lack of color may have been another factor in the low score of the image.

The lowest ranking image of the survey was image 10, a very strong dislike with a score of -3.14. This image is:



This is a picture of a mini-roundabout treated with a single small tree and protected only by non-ornamental bollards/pipes. The crampness of quarters and evidence of vehicles running over the roundabout and damage to the bollard are evident. The lack of sidewalk treatment is also apparent.

Some conclusions about the lowest ranking images is that the committee generally did not like the treatment of bicycle lanes. The direction given to include bicycle lanes as part of the street design indicate that special attention needs to be paid to the treatment of bicycle lanes. The committee also expects a high degree of landscaping to be included in the overall street design concept.