



**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
GROUP**

Of The Ventana Chapter

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Dear Mayor Terrazas and City Council members,

In December 2016, the Sierra Club wrote to you with concerns about the proposed combined new downtown parking garage and library. Since that time the Downtown Library Advisory Committee's (DLAC) February 2018 report has been made available. We have read and considered their recommendation and continue to oppose the Option B Library-Garage proposal, for the following reasons:

- A major new capital expenditure to support automobiles coming downtown is inconsistent with our city's Climate Action Plan.
- The rationale that a large new parking garage will enable more efficient use of land downtown compared to surface lots ignores the healthy, affordable, space-efficient alternatives to domination by car culture. The automobile is inherently and unavoidably the most space-consuming, congestion-producing means for people to get around, however it is configured.
- Other communities and downtowns are successfully demonstrating superior, economically viable alternatives to auto-centric development. We can learn from them.
- The beautiful heritage trees at the proposed garage/library site are a valuable community asset that merit greater effort to preserve in any plans.
- If facilitation of affordable housing is the real objective, then that's where the public funds should go directly.
- The existing "civic center" of contiguous, culturally significant public spaces (library, city hall, civic auditorium) is worth preserving, not fragmenting.
- The DLAC members envision a brand new library facility, and the Sierra Club supports the best possible library outcome. However the \$45 million initial cost of the parking garage could instead pay for transportation alternatives that would meet our climate

responsibility, forego unsustainable automobile dependence, foster a more livable downtown, and support an upgraded library at the existing library site.

The Sierra Club urges you to reject the parking garage/library mixed use model and instead maximize the funds allocated for renovating our existing downtown library along with supporting a climate-action transportation model that anticipates the future not the past.

Sincerely,

Gillian

Gillian Greensite, Chair
Sierra Club, Santa Cruz Group
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