

## Central Commercial District Revitalization Corporation

### Survey Report

The Board determined, before the annual meeting in 2004, to survey the membership on their attitudes about our program and about issues relating to the potential for redevelopment. Questionnaires were mailed out to the property owners in the District with the ballots and annual meeting information. On each survey question a space was left for comments.

1. The first item on the questionnaire sought responses regarding the quality of the cleanup program we have been running. Of the responses received, 60% thought the neighborhood was “greatly” improved by the program, one of those indicating lack of awareness we were doing it, 10% indicated there was a “little” improvement. The surprise was that 30% reported no improvement at all, one identifying the 2900 block of Imperial as such a location.

2. The survey asked what, apart from cleanup and trash, are the needs of the community for improvement of its appearance. 50% of the respondents indicated that the community needs a general upgrade of development, commercial and residential. 36% of responses indicated that some store-front face lifts, more trees, flowers and banners were needed just to dress up the community. 14% indicated that nothing more need be done. One comment suggested the need for better code enforcement of structures in yards being used for housing.

3. Regarding the need for major facilities for the community, 19% thought the community needs more parks and recreation facilities. 24% saw the need for a shopping center, or at least some strip centers, and parking lots. 5% asked for substantial numbers of affordable apartments and condominiums. 24% focused on the need for substantial numbers of upscale, high-rise apartments and condominiums. 29% asked for manufacturing and light-industrial employment opportunities in the community. It should be noted that the survey participants were property owners and not tenants, so the low interest in affordable apartments and condominiums may represent an economic bias because property owners would obviously fare better economically from upscale housing. Comments added to the survey responses indicated a need for more money in the community, additional businesses to provide jobs and services for “our people,” and some major facilities.

4. Opinion on what the community needs to get rid of was as follows: 21% of the responses identified wrecking yards and auto body shops. 18% identified telephone and power poles (overhead wires). 18% identified dilapidated houses and apartments. 15% identified unsightly store buildings. 23% identified half-way houses and rehabilitation facilities. Less than one percent of responses indicated that none of the list needed to be gotten rid of. One comment suggested that, if the wrecking yards and auto body shops were gone, the rest would follow and that we should be careful what we wish for. A couple took the time to comment that rehabilitation was as good as removal on dilapidated housing.

5. On whether to permit apartments to be built above store fronts, 73% of responses favored it and 27% were against. One comment added that the concept would create more

housing and more jobs for “our people”.

6. On the concentration of multiple housing units close to bus stops and trolley stops, 86% of responses favored it, and 14% were against it, one noting that it already exists. A comment pointed out that it would help the traffic congestion.

7. 88% agreed that it should be possible for people with low incomes to live close to trolley stops so they don't have to own cars. 12% of responses disagreed, one indicating in the comments that we already have buses and trolleys in the immediate area. Another commented “Access to rapid-transit should be the right of all persons living in a city. The concentration of people in cities needs to be sufficient to permit efficient use of mass-transit. To a large extent, the mass-transit system is the city.”

8. 73% favored closing streets here and there so there could be pedestrian malls with shopping, restaurants and public space for relaxation and entertainment. Of the 27% who were against it, one commented that “Maybe the streets around Farmer's Market” and another said that “It would depend on the over-all plan.”

9. 25% of the responses objected to having tall buildings in our community if they were surrounded by open space, trees, lawns and recreation areas. 75% had no such objections.

10. When asked if our community should organize a redevelopment district, who should be in charge?, none of the respondents indicated it should be the City of San Diego; 58% of the responses said CCDRC should be in charge. 25% indicated it should be “Other,” with some expression of uncertainty and one comment suggesting it should be a hired full-time administrator. 16% responded that we don't need a redevelopment district. One comment was that we need an organization plan – organization or district. Another was adamant that it should not be SEDC or CCDC and that there should be no eminent domain or limited powers of eminent domain.

11. Respondents were asked “If there is a redevelopment district formed to improve our community, should it have eminent domain powers” to take residential property. 22% indicated it should. 22% also indicated it should have such power over commercial property. 11% thought it should have such power over industrial property. 44% indicated it should have no powers of eminent domain. Comments included “No exceptions” “Only if current fair market value is paid for those properties” “Eminent domain powers to transfer property from one private party to another private party are probably unconstitutional, certainly immoral, and serve as a strong temptation for corruption of public officials” “Community needs to decide this - I prefer unlimited power of eminent domain; “Eminent domain is a very serious power - I am not sure I would grant this power without first knowing more about a ‘redevelopment district.’”

12. Regarding the planning process with the City, none of the respondents reported very good experience with the City. 10% of responses indicated it was what you might expect, not great, but okay. 80% reported it was too slow, too many unnecessary rules and too expensive. 10% indicated having had no experience with it. Comments included “Trash dumping and graffiti” “All planning departments across the nation are slow and seem to have paperwork

forever” “They are incompetent - The Development Services Department of the City of San Diego has a very unfortunate desire to micro-manage. This combined with the lack of automation and the poor policies has resulted in excessive costs and delays. These costs and delays are a major cause of the present housing crisis. The Texas system of no zoning might be better.” “Sounds like a slow & expensive process - put in place to promote corruption and bribery.”

13. Asked for any general comments about our District, the neighborhood or the City, we received the following: “It is broken” “It’s a waste of money” “I see the turn around happening very happy about it - proud of our wide streets, sick of our small junk/unattractive businesses” “Too many do\_related and loitering street people on curbs and sidewalks” “Trash dumping and graffiti is still a problem” “Some people in this area enjoy being poor. The free stuff has helped sustain their family & reality hurts” “The multiethnic composition of the community is a great plus. The location, including some of the views of the water, is excellent; I applaud all of your efforts to take control of our community and find funds (other than City funds) to achieve your goal” “We do not get our fair share of services from City”

14. Asked what they would want to do with their property if the zoning and master plan rules were changed, none of the respondents indicated a desire to redevelop as industrial property, but 25% said they would like to develop their property as commercial property (wholesale or retail) and 25% indicated they would like to develop their property as multiple dwelling units. 17% said they would like to develop their property as single family residences. 17% indicated they would make no changes. Two comments specifically indicated they would like to do mixed use with commercial on the first level and residential above.