



## 2018 Winner

# Todos Santos Plaza "150 Years as the Heart of Concord"

Submitted by: City of Concord

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### Concord's History

In 1834, Don Salvio Pacheco received a land grant of nearly 18,000 acres from the Mexican government. When the nearby town of Pacheco was damaged in an earthquake in 1868, the Pacheco family engaged a surveyor to plot a town around their home and gave the parcels away to Pacheco residents and shopkeepers. Don Salvio Pacheco dedicated Todos Santos Plaza in 1868 as the town square for the 20-block town, later named Concord. The City of Concord, a suburb 30 miles northeast of San Francisco, celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2018. In recognition of this milestone, representatives from the City, Concord Historical Society, Todos Santos Business Association, Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, and Mt. Diablo Unified School District will unveil a new bronze statue of Don Salvio Pacheco to commemorate Concord's founder, in July.



### Spanish-Inspired Architecture

Since its founding, Todos Santos Plaza has served as the vibrant center of the city. The city was designed with a grid pattern, consistent with the founding of Hispano-American cities, which facilitated controlled expansion. Todos Santos Plaza was placed at the center of the grid and has served as a community gathering place for many years. Early structures were influenced by East Coast architects and constructed using local materials. Around Todos Santos Plaza, buildings are designed in the revival style and rely on the past for inspiration. The surrounding buildings are

most prominently influenced by the Spanish Colonial Revival Movement. Building design is complemented by new decorative light fixtures, public archways, and decorative lights on street trees, as well as murals and other public artworks. In February 2017, the City adopted the Todos Santos Design Guidelines, a comprehensive set of design tools intended to create a sense of place and enjoyment for the city's diverse resident population, and to emphasize Spanish and Spanish-inspired architecture to promote a coherent style that reinforces Concord's historical past.

### **Accessibility & Mobility**

Todos Santos Plaza is conveniently located to allow a variety of mobility options to access the "jewel" of Concord's town. From 2012-2018, the City worked with Bay Area Rapid Transit ("BART"), a regional rail system, to renovate the Concord BART Station plaza located three blocks south of Todos Santos Plaza. The project goal was to improve ridership experience at the Station through enhancements including new landscaping, lighting, street furniture, banners, signage kiosks, and upgraded paving materials. These upgrades are intended to improve the arrival experience for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. This year, BART is also planning to build an enclosed bike station for up to 120 bicycles; an additional project to support multimodal arrival to the site. Additionally, in 2016, the City adopted the Downtown Corridors Plan, which includes conceptual streetscape plans for Oak Street, Grant Street, and Salvio Street to make the downtown area more accessible, pedestrian oriented, and enhance its visual character. The City aimed to transform the public realm in these areas to support the kind of residential, retail and employment-generating development envisioned for the city. These critical street segments are important links to key locations in the downtown area including the Concord BART Station, Todos Santos Plaza, Park and Shop shopping center, surrounding residential neighborhoods, and the Monument Corridor community (the vibrant socially and economically diverse segment of the community). In September 2016, the City also adopted the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Safe Routes to Transit Plan to improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists to Concord's BART stations, improve connections between the regional trails network (such as the Ironhorse Trail) and downtown, and to fill in gaps in existing infrastructure. Since the adoption of these plans, the City has initiated implementation by installing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Additionally, the City partnered with Bike Concord, a local non-profit organization, and John Muir Health to provide free and discounted bike repair services at the weekly Farmer's Market at Todos Santos Plaza.



## Local Businesses

Drawn by the vibrant events held in Todos Santos Plaza and the proximity of corporate offices and residential dwelling units, a host of restaurants featuring global cuisine surround the Plaza including Lima, Poke Salad, Canasta Kitchen, Tower Grille, Naan 'n Curry, Fusion Bistro, Grant Street Pizza, La Sen French restaurant, Capriotti's Deli, the Spaghetti Factory, Woung Luang Thai Cuisine, Cream, Loard's Ice Cream, Lettuce Inn, EJ Phair Brewing Company, and the Hop Grenade. These restaurants are predominately small family owned and operated businesses that have a vested interest in the Concord community and can often be found actively engaged in community events.



## Community Events

During the last -20 years, the City has increased the programming of Todos Santos Plaza, expanding the existing Farmers' Market to two days per week, expanding the length of the Music and Market series which hosts bands on Thursday evenings from May through September at the Plaza's band stand, and facilitating food vendor operation around the park during the music and market series. The City's Economic Development Division promotes the Concord VIBE campaign, a public-private partnership, to attract young professionals to restaurants and businesses within the downtown by hosting events throughout the year. Concord hosts the Spring Brews Festival, a local event that includes the participation of over 60 breweries from throughout the State. The City also hosts a number of targeted events, such as the Cool Concord Cars Show, where classic and modern vehicles are shown with pride, and the new Armed Forces Half-Marathon, where local athletes run from Todos Santos Plaza through the Concord Naval Weapons Station and return to the Plaza to honor veterans and active members of the armed forces. Additionally, the City hosts a number of family-oriented annual events, including the Mothers' Day Music Festival, where students perform, and the Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony and Sing-A-Long. These efforts have resulting in welcoming more than 150,000 visitors to Todos Santos Plaza for events annually, contributing to residents' day-to-day quality of living and vibrancy of Downtown Concord.