Summer 2012

South El Camino Real Vision Plan, City of Atascadero, Spring 2012

CRP 553 Project Planning Lab

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/crp_wpp

Part of the Urban, Community and Regional Planning Commons

Recommended Citation
Summer July 1, 2012, pages 1-117.
SOUTH EL CAMINO REAL VISION PLAN

DRAFT ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT PLAN

Prepared by

Project Planning Lab (CRP 553 MCRP) &
Urban Design Studio II (CRP 203 BCRP)

City and Regional Planning Department
College of Architecture and Environmental Design
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo

For the City of Atascadero &
San Luis Obispo Council of Governments

June 2012
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements vi
Preface vii
Executive Summary 1

**Chapter 1  Introduction- The Context** 5
  1.1 A Brief History of El Camino Real and The City of Atascadero 7
  1.2 Demographics 9
  1.3 Implications of the General Plan 10
  1.4 Economics 18

**Chapter 2  Project Area Assessment** 19
  2.1 Introduction 21
  2.2 Awareness Walk 22
  2.3 Design Blocks and Existing Conditions 24
  2.4 Analysis of Intersections 39
  2.5 Figure Ground Mapping 41

**Chapter 3  Community Outreach** 45
  3.1 Chamber of Commerce Meeting 47
  3.2 Online Preference Survey 48
  3.3 Firehouse 5K 49
  3.4 Community Workshop 49
  3.5 Farmers Market 49
  3.6 Survey of Merchants 50
  3.7 The Wordle 50
## Acknowledgements

**Graduate Students (MCRP)**
- Steven Inglesby
- Jonathan Hildalgo
- Emma Schoppe
- Brian Harrington
- Michael Heater
- Dana Hoffman
- Michael Christensen
- Rachel Cohen
- Michelle Godown

**Undergraduate Students (BCRP)**
- Kyle Bell
- Jonathan Chiu
- Elizabeth Day
- Fernando Herrera
- David Leong
- Andrew Levins
- Timothy McGarvey
- Peter Minegar
- Erin Murphy
- Sara Muse
- Gregory Vine

**Advisors**
- Vicente del Rio, PhD
  - Instructor
- Schani Siong: MCRP candidate
  - Teaching assistant
- Shaun Prestridge: BCRP student
  - Teaching assistant

**Special Thanks**
- Steve Devencenzi
  - Planning Director, SLOCOG
- Alfredo Castillo, AICP
  - City of Atascadero
- Warren Frace
  - Planning Director, City of Atascadero
- Atascadero Chamber of Commerce
- Mayor Bob Kelley
  - City of Atascadero
- City of Atascadero Design Review Committee
The South El Camino Real Vision Plan was a class project prepared by a graduate and an undergraduate class of the City and Regional Planning Department, California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo. The objective of this plan is to present a 20-year vision for the South El Camino Real corridor that responds to city policies and is consistent with Atascadero General Plan, and that reflects the State of California Complete Street policies. The implementation of this Plan's recommendations and proposals will provide the South El Camino Real corridor with a vibrant sense of place, contribute to its economic revitalization, make it comfortable and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists, and transform it into a community-oriented boulevard.

The development of the South El Camino Real Vision Plan was a process that included several major steps:

1) A site analysis of the streetscape and surrounding parcels, including views from the highway 101, to document the current physical characteristics;
2) Community outreach that included: notification of the process in the Atascadero newspaper; an online preference survey; street surveys at various locations; a survey of merchants along the El Camino Real; a community workshop; and a visit to the Chamber of Commerce and discussion with other stakeholders; 3) The study of applicable planning literature and comparable case-studies; 4) Identification of opportunities and challenges;
5) Development of a vision, goals and design concepts; and 5) Development of an overall illustrative design concept, proposals for streetscape, design guidelines, and specific ideas for the South Gateway at Santa Rosa Road.

This document and the policy and design proposals it contains are meant to contribute to an on-going planning process and community dialogue, by aiding the City of Atascadero with its efforts towards future development along El Camino Real and its collaboration with the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments.

The South El Camino Real Vision Plan was created by students of two coordinated 10-week long studio classes. As such, this Plan represents an academic product and should be understood within this context and its proper limitations.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This South El Camino Real Vision Plan is a plan to assist the City of Atascadero’s ongoing planning efforts for future development of the South El Camino Real corridor. Community members were involved at multiple steps of the project, including public meetings, surveys, workshops, and stakeholder interviews. The recommendations and design proposals described in the South El Camino Real Vision Plan were based directly on the comments and suggestions received from the community. This Executive Summary provides a brief overview of the process and proposals created by the design team.

The Vision Plan focuses on a concept plan for the 1.7 mile section of the El Camino Real Corridor, capped on the north end by Highway 41 and on the south end by Santa Rosa Road. The project area included the El Camino Real right of way, and adjoining parcels, including views from Highway 101. Through recommendations on streetscape design, intersections, design guidelines, and specific proposals for five distinct Districts, the Plan provides a vision for what the project area could be like in 20 years.

This plan will guide the development of South El Camino Real and intends to:

• Revitalize and enhance the economic and social fabric of the boulevard.

• Create vibrant and cohesive districts of clearly articulated styles and development standards.

• Create vibrant and inviting streetscapes that are both visually appealing and safe for all modes of travel.

• Create a cohesive identity for the corridor that invites people into the area, improving the opportunities for commerce and recreation.

Chapter 1: Introduction - The Context

This chapter summarizes the project team’s analysis of Atascadero’s history, demographics, and economic make-up. The Team recognizes the importance of the original design constructs of the Colony founder E.G Lewis’ vision for the community and incorporates elements of Colony style architecture and design into the concepts.

Basic economic analysis, suggests that there is demand for increased development certain sectors including: food and beverage stores, home furnishings and appliance stores, clothing and clothing accessory stores, motor vehicle dealers, and general merchandise. The concept presented includes visions for an increased development of these types in the South ECR.

Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

To better understand ECR corridor as a cohesive whole, the design team conducted an extensive survey of existing physical conditions. To accurately record current uses and conditions, a number of methods were utilized. The design team met with current planning staff for the city; analyzed existing zoning and ground-truthed land uses; conducted an Awareness Walk; and surveyed and photographed individual units facing the corridor.

The ‘Awareness Walk’ through the project area revealed a lack of pedestrian activity and conflict between bicycle and vehicle traffic; little social activity or reason to linger along the corridor; landmarks and views from the ECR that should be preserved including historic Colony homes and Chalk and Pine Mountain views; primarily Spanish and Mediterranean style architectural and design styles; and few way-finding signs or markers to add identity or sense of place to the ECR.

The design team consequently broke down the project into 18 design blocks and sub-units for more in-depth analysis, and conducted an extensive survey of existing physical conditions. Specific elements of each unit were recorded including current land use type, number of parking spaces, predominant architectural features and colors, grades, prominent landscaping features such as large trees, and any unique characteristics. Photographs of units were also included. These block analyses revealed a number of common characteristics along the corridor as well as unique characteristics of each section of the corridor. Common characteristics included high traffic speeds and noise, lack of shading and trees or seating, wide sidewalks, under-utilized street parking, and large setbacks with parking lots dominating frontage.

An analysis of current development conditions utilizing the figure-ground mapping technique helped us further understand current conditions (built-up and open spaces, public and private spaces, parking and circulation) and revealed the relationships of elements composing the existing city morphology.

Chapter 3: Community Outreach

Through a concentrated public outreach effort, a vision was created for South El Camino Real. The plan was developed through the collective effort of many community members and key stakeholders, whose support will be vital to any revitalization effort. As part of the community input process, the design team informed stakeholder groups of design effort and goals; met with the Chamber
Chapter 4: Design Vision

Through analysis of the current conditions of the context and the project area, and the input of the community gathered through the public outreach, the design team identified a set of opportunities and constraints for development along South El Camino Real, and a site analysis map. This understanding, together with the study of several titles of the current planning and design literature, allowed the team to identify five urban design qualities that were utilized as overall principles for the development of the vision and all the proposals. These principles were: connectivity, identity, safety, resilience, and human scale.

Next, in light of the previous work, a vision statement was developed for the future of the corridor: South El Camino Real provides a distinct, attractive, and economically vibrant boulevard. It enhances connectivity to the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods by promoting a safe and inviting environment for all modes of travel. Development along the El Camino Real celebrates Atascadero’s history and small town character.

A set of goals covering aesthetics, land use, sustainability, and circulation was defined, as well as corresponding objectives and design concepts. These were utilized as the framework for the development all design proposals and recommendations.

Chapter 5: Design Proposal

This chapter presents an illustrative design proposal for the whole South El Camino Real Corridor, from the intersection with Highway 40 to Santa Rosa Road. Five distinct districts were identified along the corridor, based on existing conditions and potential development.

From north to south these districts are: Plaza District, Village District, New Town District, Warehouse District, and South Gateway District. A specific vision and character is described for each of the five districts.

Several design ideas are recommended for the corridor including: recommendation for future development footprints, linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods, pocket parks and improvements to the sidewalks and intersections, public art, and specific architectural interventions.

The illustrative design for South El Camino Real reveals its full potential for becoming a walkable and economically vibrant community-oriented boulevard, providing Atascadero with a strong sense of place.

Chapter 6: Streetscape Design

The design team proposes a number of streetscape design improvements that provide innovative solutions for the right-of-way, that improve the character and safety of the boulevard without impeding circulation or visibility along the South ECR.

The proposal includes a series of general design standards as well as specific proposals. Among these are: street tree bulb-outs which accommodates parallel parking; street treatments to delineate bike lanes and accent the center turn lane; pedestrian islands at intersections to improve safety and break up the streetscape; small parklets to provide areas of rest and activity for visitors to the corridor in under-utilized street parking spaces; and additional street furniture and lighting to provide cohesiveness and pedestrian experience across the Districts.

Chapter 7: Design Guidelines

In this chapter a series of design guidelines for private development along South El Camino Real are proposed. These guidelines are divided into general guidelines and those that are specific to each of the five districts, in order to maintain a coherent overall image while encouraging the creation of unique characters for each district.

General guidelines are categorized according to footprint and setbacks; facades; low impact development; on-premise signage; car-access and on site parking; landscaping shading and outdoor furniture; screening and permeability; and parking public art.

Chapter 8: South Gateway District

Given the importance of the area around the intersection of El Camino Real and Santa Rosa Road, and the city’s desire of implementing a south gateway, this plan identified this as a district of special interest. The proposals for the South Gateway District will help reconfigure development around it and make it a distinct place that will mark the entrance to the city from the south, and provide a strong connection to the downtown.

Among the specific proposals for the South Gateway District are: a roundabout with a monument for the ECR/Santa Rosa intersection as we as the reconfiguration of development around it; improvements to the bridge over Highway 101; a linear park along the creek connecting ECR to the golf course; a new office/commercial park; a new mixed-use development; and several new parks and plazas.

Appendix

Presented in a separate volume, the Appendix contains all the research forms and information obtained from the field work, surveys, interviews, observations, case studies, etc.
The Vision Plan Development Process

- Final Plan
  - General Concept for the Corridor
  - Street Design
  - Design Guidelines
  - South Gateway Area Plans

- Project Area Assessment
  - Historic Evolution
  - Demographics
  - Economics
  - City Documents
  - City/SLOCOG Input
  - Existing Development/Uses
  - Development Trends
  - Community Outreach
  - Opportunities/Challenges
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction - The Context
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 A Brief History of El Camino Real and the City of Atascadero

Translated as “The Royal Road” or “King’s Highway,” El Camino Real was built by Spanish Missionaries to make the overland travel between their 21 missions easier. In 1912, the state of California began paving sections of the road with a two-lane concrete highway that eventually ran through the entire state and later became U.S. Route 101.

The City of Atascadero developed from a Mexican land grant awarded in 1842 as Rancho Atascadero, located along the historical El Camino Real. Seventy years later in 1912, a man named Edward Gardner Lewis purchased the ranch with the intention of creating a planned “utopian” colony, with a Renaissance-style city hall at its center. E.G. Lewis was a successful publisher and investor, who had previously founded the “utopian city” of University City, Missouri. Intended to be a model city, Atascadero’s plan follows a radial structure with rough concentric rings radiating outwards from the civic center and the City Hall with El Camino Real running through the center of the city, acting as a sort of main street. The preservation of open space, trees, hillsides, and the keeping of domestic animals demonstrate E.G. Lewis’ vision of a utopian city in the city’s general plan. He imagined Atascadero as a rural community, where all residents could live on their own acreage.

Early buildings, such as the Carlton Hotel and City Hall, demonstrate what is left of Atascadero’s early architectural style, however, little of Atascadero’s original urban form and architecture remains. Remnants of the original ideas can still be seen when looking at the original plan. Plans for the city were dramatically altered by the introduction of U.S. Route 101, which bisected the city and ran parallel to El Camino Real. Consequently, the city was divided into two halves by the freeway, limiting access to either side by pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicular traffic. In order to transport people from one side of the city to the other, as well as to provide access into the city from the freeway, nine exits and overpasses were constructed along U.S. Route 101 within the city’s boundaries. The numerous interchanges have effectively created issues of bottle necking and other traffic concerns as people travel from the commercial and service areas of El Camino Real to their homes on the other side of the freeway.

El Camino Real is a narrow segment of the city that hosts a large portion of the city’s retail, commercial and service usages. Due in part to the local geography of hills and valleys and the location of U.S. Route 101, this area has developed more linearly than compact, as was originally intended in E.G. Lewis’ design. Residents from all over the city come to El Camino Real for its retail, commercial and service amenities, such as: auto repair shops, grocery stores, drug stores, restaurants, specialty boutiques, banks and other office establishments.
Chapter One: Introduction

Atascadero City Hall
Originally designed to be the civic center of Atascadero Colony, the rotunda building, that is now Atascadero City Hall, was constructed in 1918. The park in front of the building has undergone many aesthetic changes and was originally developed to be a boulevard, but has since been converted into the Sunken Gardens park.

The Printery
One of the first buildings constructed in Atascadero the Printery served as the printer of the local newspaper, as well as the printer of E.G. Lewis’ magazines. The building was purchased by San Luis Obispo County and was being made into a historical landmark by the State of California, when it was damaged in the 2003 San Simeon earthquake at which point it was declared a hazard and dangerous.

Atascadero High School
Originally called Margarita Black Unified High School, the face of the building has changed drastically over the years from its original Italian Renaissance architecture to the modern building it is now. The original building (pictured above) featured a clock tower. After it was demolished, the owner of the Carlton Hotel attempted to recapture that architectural heritage of the clock by remodeling his hotel with a clock tower on it.

La Plaza & Atascadero Inn
The first commercial shopping center in Atascadero. It was constructed around 1920 and housed shops on the bottom floor and an inn on the top floor. Eventually it was converted completely into an inn. Overtime, however, the owners encountered financial hardships, and the inn went out of business. The ruins of the front brick entrance and fountain are all that remain.
1.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic data concerning the city of Atascadero, California is helpful in understanding the El Camino Real Corridor and its potential for development. To begin, the design team calculated population projection pyramids for the current population, projecting it to the year 2025 using 2010 Census data. The projections utilize the birth, death, and migration rates of Atascadero residents to mathematically predict the population for the future. The 2010 data show that two age range groups make up a larger percentage of the population in Atascadero; these groups exist within the age ranges of 25 to 29 years and 50 to 59 years. By projecting for the year 2025, the design team determined that if these individuals remain in Atascadero they will have different needs and require certain amenities. For instance, aging citizens means a need for local transportation, housing near transportation and/or goods and services, as well as facilities that can care for the elderly when they are unable to care for themselves. On the other side, those in their 20s have the potential to start families, increasing the need for the city to accommodate more children in the schools and housing and other amenities amenable for families. Overall the city is predicted to increase by 3,000 people in the year 2025 making the total population of Atascadero 31,337.

In terms of the racial demographics of Atascadero, the team broke down the population into racial groups; Hispanic or Latino, White, Black or African American, American Indian, Asian, and two or more races. The data show that the majority of the population is White (78.5%). The next most populous racial group is Hispanic or Latino with 14.2% of the population. With this data, we understand that minorities are less represented in the city of Atascadero.

In conclusion, the income and home price demographics for the city are taken into consideration in order to understand the financial well-being of citizens to see how much affordable housing is needed. This data also portrays the number of owned occupied and renter occupied households which give us more information about the Atascadero economy. Using 2010 Census data and the 2002-2010 Census Economic Survey, we see that the median family income rose from 2002 to 2010 and the median home price rose until 2007 but dropped during 2008, most likely due to the economic downturn. However, the median home price increased from 2009 to 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 29 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 34 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 39 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 44 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 49 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 54 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 59 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 64 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 to 69 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 74 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 to 79 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 to 84 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 years and over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The projections utilize the birth, death, and migration rates of Atascadero residents to mathematically predict the population for the future. The 2010 data show that two age range groups make up a larger percentage of the population in Atascadero; these groups exist within the age ranges of 25 to 29 years and 50 to 59 years. By projecting for the year 2025, the design team determined that if these individuals remain in Atascadero they will have different needs and require certain amenities. For instance, aging citizens means a need for local transportation, housing near transportation and/or goods and services, as well as facilities that can care for the elderly when they are unable to care for themselves. On the other side, those in their 20s have the potential to start families, increasing the need for the city to accommodate more children in the schools and housing and other amenities amenable for families. Overall the city is predicted to increase by 3,000 people in the year 2025 making the total population of Atascadero 31,337.

In terms of the racial demographics of Atascadero, the team broke down the population into racial groups; Hispanic or Latino, White, Black or African American, American Indian, Asian, and two or more races. The data show that the majority of the population is White (78.5%). The next most populous racial group is Hispanic or Latino with 14.2% of the population. With this data, we understand that minorities are less represented in the city of Atascadero.

In conclusion, the income and home price demographics for the city are taken into consideration in order to understand the financial well-being of citizens to see how much affordable housing is needed. This data also portrays the number of owned occupied and renter occupied households which give us more information about the Atascadero economy. Using 2010 Census data and the 2002-2010 Census Economic Survey, we see that the median family income rose from 2002 to 2010 and the median home price rose until 2007 but dropped during 2008, most likely due to the economic downturn. However, the median home price increased from 2009 to 2010.
1.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The General Plan of Atascadero is a document that establishes a set of guidelines for the type of land uses, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety for future growth within the city. The guidelines set in Atascadero’s General Plan encourage and support the goals of preserving a small town style and atmosphere, “while assuring orderly development and infill and efficiently providing needed goods and services to the community within the Urban Core” (II-13).

Each element of the General Plan contains a number of goals followed by official policies and program actions that guide short and long-range decision-making by the community. These policies and programs provide a course of action to achieve each goal. The General Plan reflects the desires of the community and the direction of future development they want to see. It is important to note that the policies and programs of each element are consistent with all other elements of the General Plan.

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element designates the general distribution and intensity of land use for future development, including the location and type of housing, businesses, industry, open space, education public buildings, and parks (I-8).

Land Use Element Goals

1. Protect and preserve the rural atmosphere of the community by assuring “elbow room” for residents by means of maintenance of large lot sizes which increase in proportion to distance beyond the Urban Core. (II-13)
2. Preserve residential neighborhoods and the winding tree-lined nature of the street and road system. (II-22)
3. Transform the existing El Camino Real “strip” into a distinctive, attractive and efficient commercial, office and industrial park area which can provide for the long term economic viability of the community. (II-23)
4. Preserve natural flora and fauna and protect scenic lands, sensitive natural areas, historic buildings and cultural resources. (II-28)
5. Watershed areas of Atascadero shall be protected. (II-32)
6. Conserve energy and resources by preventing or correcting degradation of the environment. (II-37)
7. Provide a wide range of recreational activities and leisure experience for all age groups, designed to foster a healthy community for residents and visitors. (II-43)
8. Provide a sound economic base to sustain the City’s unique character by establishing a range of employment and business opportunities and generate sufficient revenue to support adequate levels of public services, and environmental, social and educational quality. (II-44)
9. Retain and expand existing businesses and attract new businesses to improve the availability of goods and services. (II-45)

The El Camino Real Urban Design Vision and its anticipated development will effectively implement Land Use Element goals and policies, including Policies 1.1, 1.3, regarding protecting and preserving the rural character of the community. The Design Plan applies policies 2.1, 2.3, regarding compatibility with the existing neighborhood and the incorporation of pedestrian and transit oriented design concepts; policy 3.1 encourages retail businesses and mixed office and residential uses along ECR. Policies 8.2 and 8.3 regard the establishment of creek side setbacks and public access for recreational use.

The Design Plan also addresses Land Use Element policies 10.2 and 10.3, regarding water conservation efforts and regional clear air programs. Policy 12.2 regards the importance of recreational facilities and a comprehensive signage program for trails and bikeways. Policies 13.1, 13.2, and 13.3 regard the promotion of Atascadero as a tourist destination, the encouragement and support of the goals of preserving and enhancing the environment. (II-37)

1. Protect and preserve the rural atmosphere of the community by assuring “elbow room” for residents by means of maintenance of large lot sizes which increase in proportion to distance beyond the Urban Core. (II-13)
2. Preserve residential neighborhoods and the winding tree-lined nature of the street and road system. (II-22)
3. Transform the existing El Camino Real “strip” into a distinctive, attractive and efficient commercial, office and industrial park area which can provide for the long term economic viability of the community. (II-23)
4. Preserve natural flora and fauna and protect scenic lands, sensitive natural areas, historic buildings and cultural resources. (II-28)
5. Watershed areas of Atascadero shall be protected. (II-32)
6. Conserve energy and resources by preventing or correcting degradation of the environment. (II-37)
7. Provide a wide range of recreational activities and leisure experience for all age groups, designed to foster a healthy community for residents and visitors. (II-43)
8. Provide a sound economic base to sustain the City’s unique character by establishing a range of employment and business opportunities and generate sufficient revenue to support adequate levels of public services, and environmental, social and educational quality. (II-44)
9. Retain and expand existing businesses and attract new businesses to improve the availability of goods and services. (II-45)

The El Camino Real Urban Design Vision and its anticipated development will effectively implement Land Use Element goals and policies, including Policies 1.1, 1.3, regarding protecting and preserving the rural character of the community. The Design Plan applies policies 2.1, 2.3, regarding compatibility with the existing neighborhood and the incorporation of pedestrian and transit oriented design concepts; policy 3.1 encourages retail businesses and mixed office and residential uses along ECR. Policies 8.2 and 8.3 regard the establishment of creek side setbacks and public access for recreational use.

The Design Plan also addresses Land Use Element policies 10.2 and 10.3, regarding water conservation efforts and regional clear air programs. Policy 12.2 regards the importance of recreational facilities and a comprehensive signage program for trails and bikeways. Policies 13.1, 13.2, and 13.3 regard the promotion of Atascadero as a tourist destination, the encouragement and support of the goals of preserving and enhancing the environment. (II-37)

Circulation Element

The Circulation Element of the General Plan provides a long-range plan for a safe and efficient transportation network. The policies and programs of the Circulation Element include all modes of transportation. Understanding the importance of neighborhood quality, alternative modes of travel are emphasized.

Circulation Element Goals

1. Provide a balanced, safe, and efficient circulation system that serves all segments of the community, and is designed and constructed to preserve rural character. (III-27)
2. Provide for walkways, horse trails, and bikeways without curbs and sidewalks in rural areas. Provide a comprehensive system of routes to schools and parks which include creekside trails. (III-29)
3. Provide and promote alternative modes of travel to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality by providing viable transit alternatives. (III-31)

The El Camino Real Urban Design Vision and its anticipated development will apply Circulation Element policies 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, regarding the adoption of safety and increased level of service standards as well as enhanced development of multi-modal travel. The Design Plan implements policies 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and policies 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3, regarding an expanded system of multi-use trails designed for recreation and connectivity. The vision also addresses in these policies the need to accommodate safe travel for all forms of transportation including pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile through the practice of complete streets.

Preserve view sheds of Pine and Chalk Mountains
Encourage use of public transit.
Promote and provide alternative modes of travel.
Provide continuous pathways and linkages in rural areas.

http://www.completestreets.org/
Chapter One: Introduction

General Plan Consistency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>El Camino Real Vision</th>
<th>City of Atascadero General Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factors</td>
<td>Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conforms?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of distinct districts along the corridor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment with appropriate and economically viable land uses</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix and balance of uses and diverse activities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote connectivity to Downtown and surrounding residential areas</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster multi-modal access throughout the corridor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve safety and efficiency of movement through the corridor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen the edges of the corridor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the identity and visual quality of the corridor from Route 101</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve the small town, eclectic nature of Atascadero</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that new building development is both environmentally and economically sustainable</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve and enhance the natural assets of the area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote an environment that sustains continuous pedestrian activity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chapter One: Introduction

#### City of Atascadero General Plan Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Description</th>
<th>El Camino Real Urban Design Vision: How objectives implements General Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrate higher density development with Urban Core (LOC 1.1.2)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate local cultural and architectural themes into site and building design (LOC 1.2.5)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage infill development or revitalization or reuse of land (LOC 1.2.7)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural character design features, street trees, landscaping, parking, fencing, screening, and architectural design tailored to specific areas at gateways and corridors (LOC 1.3.1)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping and/or screen to buffer non-residential uses from residential areas (LOC 1.3.2)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update and maintain the Sign Ordinance with high standards for the quality and visual impacts of signs (LOC 1.3.4)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**El Camino Real Urban Design Vision: How objectives implements General Plan**

- Foster economic development that addresses market needs
- Promote activity throughout the day and night
- Screen unattractive uses and highlight entrances and viewsheds
- Provide visual features to draw attention to the corridor
- Public art
- Incorporate materials and design elements of historical architecture
- Encourage the development of spaces and uses that foster activity on the street
- Improve wayfinding
- Increase access points and improve pathways to accommodate all modes of travel
- Improve pedestrian access for all modes of travel
- Increase the number of safe crossing opportunities
- Screen unattractive uses and highlight entrances and viewsheds
- Provide visual features to draw attention to the corridor
- Public art
- Incorporate materials and design elements of historical architecture
- Encourage the development of shared parking resources
- Reduce the need of residents to leave Atascadero for goods and services
- Reduce the number of curb cuts through elimination of unused driveways
- Encourage the development of shared parking resources
- Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and other travelers
- Reduce urban runoff conditions
- Encourage the development of shared parking resources
### Chapter One: Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of Atascadero General Plan Policies</th>
<th>El Camino Real Urban Design Vision: How objectives implements General Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage existing uses to upgrade to contemporary design standards (LOC 1.3.5)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abate uses solely devoted to outdoor storage (LOC 1.3.7)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautify the City’s primary entryways; more attractive approach from freeway (LOC 1.3.8)</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass and scale of multi-family development is compatible with adjacent single-family neighborhood (LOC 2.1.1)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide street trees and landscaping consistent with rural character (LOC 2.1.3)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate pedestrian and transit oriented design concepts into new development (LOC 2.3.2)</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkways between residential developments and commercial areas (LOC 2.3.3)</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Atascadero General Plan Policies</td>
<td>El Camino Real Urban Design Vision: How objectives implements General Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporation of landscaping, pedestrian walkways and reciprocal driveway access (LOC 3.1.6)</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish and maintain setbacks and development standards for creekside development (LOC 8.2.1)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop park, trail, and recreational amenities in public creek reserves (LOC 8.3.1)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage water conservation efforts (LOC 10.2.3)</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce vehicle trips (LOC 10.3.3)</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive signage program for pedestrian walkways, bikeways and trails (LOC 12.2.4)</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate convenient locations of goods and services needed by local residents (LOC 13.1)</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter One: Introduction**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of Atascadero General Plan Policies</th>
<th>El Camino Real Urban Design Vision: How objectives implements General Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage planned office development (LOC 13.2)</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand tourist commercial nodes; develop tourist destination (LOC 13.3)</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage existing uses to continue provides needed products and services (LOC 14.1)</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attract new development and land uses that provide jobs and services that’s consistent with character (LOC 14.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow regional retail (auto and home furnishing) (LOC 14.3.1)</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure City regulations and processess support economic development opportunities (LOC 14.4)</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian access and travel (CI 1.1.3)</td>
<td>X X X X X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

City of Atascadero
## Chapter One: Introduction

### El Camino Real Urban Design Vision: How objectives implements General Plan

| City of Atascadero General Plan Policies | Foster economic development that addresses market needs | Promote activity throughout the day and night | Screen unattractive uses and highlight entrances and viewsheds | Provide visual features to draw attention to the corridor | Public art | Incorporate materials and design elements of historical architecture | Reduce the need of residents to leave Atascadero for goods and services | Promote viewsheds of Chalk Mountain and Pine Mountain | Promote development that is water and energy efficient | Increase the number of safe crossing opportunities | Encourage the development of spaces and uses that foster activity on the street | Improve wayfinding | Increase access points and improve pathways | Balance infrastructure resources to accommodate all modes of travel | Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and other travelers | Reduce the number of curbcuts through elimination of unused driveways | Encourage the development of shared parking resources |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Design connections to allow travelers to choose reasonably direct paths to destinations (CI 1.1.5) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Restrict truck traffic to designated routes (CI 1.2.4) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Shared driveways and access points when possible (CI 1.3.3) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X |
| Encourage mixed-use development to increase transit riders (CI 1.3.4) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Comprehensive system of trails, pathways, and bikeways to connect neighborhoods and commercial areas (CI 2.1) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Encourage use of bicycles (CI 2.2.1) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop pedestrian-friendly standards (CI 2.3.1) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
## El Camino Real Urban Design Vision: How objectives implements General Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City of Atascadero General Plan Policies</th>
<th>Cluster compatible uses</th>
<th>Tie the districts together with the development corridor</th>
<th>Create unique design qualities in each district</th>
<th>Foster economic development that addresses market needs</th>
<th>Encourage a broad mix of complementary uses</th>
<th>Encourage activity throughout the day and night</th>
<th>Screen unattractive uses and highlight entrances and viewsheds</th>
<th>Provide visual features to draw attention to the corridor</th>
<th>Public art</th>
<th>Incorporate materials and design elements of historical architecture</th>
<th>Promote development that is water and energy efficient</th>
<th>Reduce the need of residents to leave Atascadero for goods and services</th>
<th>Promote viewsheds of Chalk Mountain and Pine Mountain</th>
<th>Improve urban runoff conditions</th>
<th>Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and other travelers</th>
<th>Reduce the number of curb cuts through elimination of unused driveways</th>
<th>Encourage the development of shared parking resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote transit, bicycling and walking (CI 3.1.1)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus shelters along ECR (CI 3.2.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote transit use (CI 3.3.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4 Economics

Atascadero Leakage & Capture Characteristics

A quick leakage and capture analysis was conducted by calculating location quotients (LQ) using per capita taxable sales. LQ values for both 2008 and 2010 are provided for each economic sector and represent the city of Atascadero relative to San Luis Obispo County. Values below one generally signify less per capita sales than the county (or leakage), while values above one represent capture. It is important to note however, that other factors such as relative wealth may influence results, and some big ticket items such as automobiles are purchased in Santa Maria, which lies outside the County. Values are shown in the adjoining tables.

Sectors of Leakage

The 2010 data shows Atascadero has significantly lower taxable sales relative to the county in several sectors. Sectors with LQ values near or less than half include: Motor vehicle and parts dealers, home furnishings and appliance stores, clothing and clothing accessory stores, and general merchandise. In particular, clothing and clothing accessories are very low, with an LQ of 0.16. LQ values for apparel remained unchanged between 2008 and 2010, while they decreased for Motor vehicle and parts dealers, home furnishings and appliance stores, and general merchandise over the same period. These low LQ values suggest that there is demand for these goods among residents and is reason to include study of these types of uses along the south El Camino Real corridor.

Sectors of Capture

LQ values were well above one for building materials and food and beverage stores. Within the project site are no less than four large grocery stores; they are the place to go for shoppers from surrounding unincorporated towns such as Templeton and Santa Margarita. Home depot and other stores are also a draw to smaller nearby towns.

Overall, Atascadero’s taxable sales are well below 1.0, and the El Camino Real Corridor contains prime real estate along Highway 101 that may begin to recapture some of the sales it is losing elsewhere in the County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors of Leakage</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>LQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle &amp; Parts Dealers</td>
<td>27,100</td>
<td>20,930</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Furnishings &amp; Appliances</td>
<td>10,173</td>
<td>7,954</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Materials</td>
<td>35,403</td>
<td>34,283</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Stations</td>
<td>32,270</td>
<td>41,747</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel Stores</td>
<td>2,597</td>
<td>3,063</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>23,320</td>
<td>15,206</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating &amp; Drinking Places</td>
<td>28,524</td>
<td>27,700</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Retail</td>
<td>28,292</td>
<td>28,292</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail</td>
<td>250,039</td>
<td>222,361</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total All Outlets</td>
<td>279,047</td>
<td>253,351</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors of Capture</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>LQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle &amp; Parts Dealers</td>
<td>27,100</td>
<td>18,930</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Furnishings &amp; Appliances</td>
<td>10,173</td>
<td>7,954</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Materials</td>
<td>35,403</td>
<td>34,283</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Stations</td>
<td>32,270</td>
<td>43,747</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel Stores</td>
<td>2,597</td>
<td>3,063</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>23,320</td>
<td>15,206</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating &amp; Drinking Places</td>
<td>28,524</td>
<td>43,747</td>
<td>1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Retail</td>
<td>28,292</td>
<td>27,700</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail</td>
<td>250,039</td>
<td>222,361</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total All Outlets</td>
<td>279,047</td>
<td>253,351</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*San Luis Obispo County includes electronics & appliance stores

Existing retail on South ECR
CHAPTER TWO

PROJECT AREA ASSESSMENT
Page left intentionally blank
2.1 Introduction

The Vision Plan focuses on a 1.7 mile section of the El Camino Real Corridor, capped on the north end by the Highway 41 and on the south end by Santa Rosa Road. The project area included the El Camino Real right of way, and adjoining parcels, including views from Highway 101. To better understand ECR corridor as a cohesive whole, the design team conducted an extensive survey of existing physical conditions. To accurately record current uses and conditions, a number of methods were utilized. The design team met with current planning staff for the city; analyzed existing zoning and ground-truthed land uses; conducted an Awareness Walk; and surveyed and photographed individual units facing the corridor.
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

2.2 El Camino Real Awareness Walk

Summary of Findings

Pedestrian Activity
- Little pedestrian activity
- Cyclists on sidewalks
- Shared street parking and bicycle lane cause confusion

Social Activity
- People generally do not linger anywhere
- Weekly farmers market

Landmarks and Views
- Chalk Mountain
- Pine Mountain
- Historic buildings
- Grocery shopping centers
- Intersection of 41
- Mission bells
- Harley Davidson from freeway

Way finding
- Little street signage
- No signage to golf course, regional park, zoo, highway or downtown

Structures that catch the eye and why

- Placement
- Colonnade with Club Soda
- Garden Antique Store

- Size
- Harley Davison
- Grocery Stores
- Architecture/facades
- Davis Body Shop/Pro Paint & Supply – stucco façade in front contrasts with metal siding
- Plata lane business Park – attractive industrial building
- Sushi restaurant – western motif contrasts
- Historic homes/schoolhouse – historic architecture and pedestrian scale

Visual Character
- Leans toward Spanish style (tile roofs, pillars and arches)
- Auto oriented
- Weak sense of identity

Natural Environment
- Mature oaks
- Lots of gradient changes
- Terracing next to sidewalk
- Riparian corridor connecting with Chalk Mountain Golf Course

Conflicts
- Cyclist kicks truck in crosswalk
- Vehicles run red lights
- Short street crossing time for pedestrians
- Lots of noise on the street

Historic Colony Building on El Camino Real, now a preschool, near Curbaril Avenue

Colonnade with Club Soda on the corner of El Camino Real and Arcade Road

Mature oaks occupy a lot on El Camino Real between Curbaril and Pueblo Avenue
SANTA ROSA SOUTHERN GATEWAY AWARENESS WALK

While visiting the site, El Camino Real in Atascadero, the 203 class surveyed the conditions of the existing buildings, landscaping and grounds. One thing noticed was the power lines that run along the entire site. They were an eyesore and the old condition did not help with the presence. There is a high volume of traffic throughout the whole stretch and only one crosswalk to provide safe pedestrian access. No designated bike lanes were present, forcing bikes to have to go into the street by the cars. The average car speed was well over the speed limit making it even more dangerous for bikers and pedestrians. Most of the sidewalks were poorly maintained and do not provide the safe access needed.

There were many industrial and automotive retail shops that were unpleasing to look at and were run down properties. It was determined that the site contains a lot of potential but no one willing to invest with the current look. There’s nothing throughout the site to draw people to slow down and look at what’s around them. It’s more of a passing through road and not an inviting destination. The mix of businesses throughout the site is uninviting to residents and visitors. Four major vacant lots are available for development with view sheds of the surrounding natural landscapes. The lots are opportunities to develop retail and commercial businesses. One vacant lot had a riparian zone which will allow added landscaping along with protection for the species that are already there.
To further analyze the current physical conditions of the project area, the design team broke down the project into 18 design blocks and sub-units for more in-depth analysis, and conducted an extensive survey of each unit's existing physical attributes. Specific elements of each Unit were photographed and recorded including current land use type, number of parking spaces, predominant architectural features and colors, grades, prominent landscaping features such as large trees, and any unique characteristics (see Appendix). Based on Unit analysis, predominant uses, the design team interpreted the opportunities and constraints presented by each Design Block.
Design Blocks 1 & 18  
El Camino Real between Highway 41 and Pueblo Ave

This section of ECR is capped on the north by an important gateway intersection connecting State Highways 41 and 101. Although currently dominated by high traffic speeds, there is a potential for a ‘Gateway’ to the corridor. Infrastructure and buildings are newer than other section of the road but tend to lack character (due to the number of chain and box stores) and large setbacks with parking lots dominating frontage. Although not ripe for large scale redevelopment, this section would benefit from multiple circulation use delineation on the streetscape and trees and landscaping to add interest and sense of human scale.

**Predominant Uses**  This section of El Camino Real is dominated chain restaurants, banks, grocery stores, auto oriented services, with a few a few small-business retail shops sprinkled in.

**Areas of Opportunity**  The Pueblo Avenue intersection has a great view shed towards Pine Mountain, with potential to be a pedestrian center and landmark for ECR. Since it doesn’t have an on-ramp or exit to the 101, traffic speeds tend to lower. The commercial activity is strong and infrastructure is in good condition. Adobe Plaza and Plaza de Pueblo provide a design structure, with frontage trees, small outdoor seating area, and low-slung connected shops that might replicated throughout the ECR to create a stronger character, and human scale to the streets.

**Areas of Constraint**  The significant upward slope from ECR on each side pose design challenges. Road noise currently is extreme. The 101 on-ramp to West side pedestrian and bike traffic. Sheer amount of paved area and lack of large healthy trees.

**Unique Features**  Adobe business plaza is a series of interconnected shops. It has outdoor seating, landscaping, and large trees in the right of way. Plaza de Pueblo has a similar style. The layout of these plazas could become a theme element.

**Major Intersections**  The North end is capped by State Highway 41. A new on-ramp/exit-ramp connects ECR to the 101 across from Vons Grocery. Capped on the South end by Pueblo Avenue.

**Parking**  This section of El Camino Real has street parking throughout. At the time of the survey, only 40 cars were parked in street parking along the entire section of ECR. More than half the units have parking lots fronting the street. On average each unit as 24 parking spaces on this section.

**Set-backs**  Average set-back of building from the road is 45 feet. Several units have set-backs of over 100 feet, with Vons set back at more than 300.

**Trees/landscaping**  The streetscape is virtually devoid of trees or significant landscaping fronting ECR. The only trees close to the sidewalk are at the two shop plazas. Noteworthy trees for size and aesthetic are present at block 18 unit 2 and 9.

**Architectural Elements**  Buildings and road infrastructure along this section are generally unkept. The styles are predominantly that of chain restaurants and services stores. Buildings are typically tall 1 story (20-35 ft.), made of concrete or stucco, tan, cream or brown in color with red tile roofing.
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Design Blocks 2 & 17  
El Camino Real Between Pueblo Ave and Curbaril Ave

This section of ECR has a strong mixture of different uses that can be leveraged to create a dynamic streetscape. Improvements to the right-of-way to break up the paved areas and encourage multi-modal use as well as the addition of landscaping and seating will add to aesthetics and dynamic feel. There is minimal opportunity for redevelopment on privately owned parcels.

Design Block 17: Units facing San Luis Ave

Predominant Uses  This section of the design block fronts onto San Luis Ave. Uses include: waste management vehicle storage and mechanics, recycling center, cable tv office, a vacant office building and the Harley Davidson complex

Areas of Opportunity  It is close to El Camino Real main street. The east side of the street is lined with shrubs.

Areas of Constraint  It is right on the freeway and noisy. There are many parcels fenced up right next to the sidewalk creating a dead zone. The Harley Davidson complex is also a large presence on site with automobiles parked on site.

Major Intersections  None

Parking  The west side of San Luis Ave. supports angle street parking while the east side is a dedicated fire lane. Design units support head in parking or unmarked parking.

Set-backs  Set-back from San Luis Ave., a highway access road, average 25 feet. Several of the lots 19, 21, 27 have no buildings (see appendix for more details on these individual units).

Trees/landscaping  Average to good amount of shrubs planted along east side (in front of the design units) of the street.

Architectural Elements  Buildings and road infrastructure along this section are generally average. Buildings are vary in height from 1 to 2 story, made of a variety of materials including but not limited to concrete, stucco, wood and metal. Building colors are typically tan, cream, brown or grey in color.

Topography  The center portion of this section is fairly flat. The north and south ends of the design block have a downward slope that ranges from 3-8 feet.

The key map outlining design blocks 2 and 17.
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Predominant Uses
This section of El Camino Real contains a mix of restaurants, a bank, auto oriented services, a pre-school, law offices, a church, a health facility, retail shops and residential sprinkled in between.

Areas of Opportunity
Strong commercial activity and infrastructure in good condition. There are historic structures that can be built upon to add character. Bus Stops can become more central elements of the transit system.

Areas of Constraint
Awkward grading, sloping up on the east side of ECR and sloping down on the west side of the street pose design challenges on several of the design units. Road noise, currently, is extreme. Additionally, there is minimal amount of trees, other vegetation and landscaping. Design Unit 17 is very narrow and only supports an entrance on ECR, while several units, 19, 20, and 21 are used by Waste Management and therefore would be difficult to change use.

Unique Features
Garden vineyard, colony houses, Las Tiendas shopping plaza, narrow design unit 17 (the restaurant inside is very popular), Harley Davidson complex, mailboxes, and grading.

Major Intersections
Blocks 2 and 17 are intersected by Pueblo Avenue to the north and Curbaril Ave to the south.

Parking
This section of El Camino Real has parallel street parking throughout. At the time of the survey, only 7 cars were parked in on-street parking along the entire section of ECR blocks 2 and 17. This section of ECR has approximately 350 on site parking spaces, which averages to about 10 spaces per design unit.

Set-backs
Average set-back of building from the road is 25.5 feet. Several units have set-backs of over 100 feet.

Trees/ Landscaping
The streetscape has sparse number of trees and fairly insignificant landscaping fronting ECR.

Architectural Elements
Buildings and road infrastructure along this section are generally good to average. Buildings are typically tall 1 story (20-35 ft.), made of a variety of materials including but not limited to concrete, stucco, and wood. Building colors are typically tan, cream or brown in color with red tile roofing.

Topography
This section of ECR has significant sloping up on both sides from the sidewalk. The average rise is 4.17 ft. though in some units the ground height difference is as high as 5 ft. from the sidewalk and as low as 14 ft.

Design Block 2: Units facing El Camino Real

A colony house that has been put to re-use. Although colony houses are few and far between, a number of historic structures can be renovated, adding identity and maintaining small town character.

Residential uses (pictured above) are intermixed with retail and commercial (pictured below) along this section of the corridor.

Mailboxes and advertising signs in the right of way, currently an eyesore, can be transformed into items of interest and identity along the corridor.
Design blocks 3 through 6
El Camino Real Between Curbaril & Cascada

Blocks 3 through 6 exhibited qualities that could be used while redeveloping El Camino Real, such as large sidewalks, vegetation and landscape design, as well as architectural elements. Block 3 was the most visually pleasing out of all the blocks due to its 10 foot sidewalks, trees and other vegetation along the road and setbacks that make the site more pedestrian friendly. Certain businesses, including Walgreens Pharmacy, JP Morgan Chase Bank and Verizon Wireless, located near Curbaril Avenue had excellent building facades and parking located either in front of in back of the business, allowing the sidewalks to be very pedestrian-friendly. There were many buildings along Blocks 4-6 that were vacant or appeared to be out of business. Blocks 5 and 6, located perpendicular to Palomar Avenue and Arcade Road, were the least attractive due to the run down architectural design, very little vegetation and sections of narrow sidewalk, but supported minimal setbacks and large windows that allowed pedestrians to look in.

Predominant Uses  This section of El Camino Real is dominated by automobile services, small retail stores, and vacant lots.

Areas of Opportunity  The Walgreens shopping center offers good ideas for architectural design and landscape. Easy access for cars. Vacant lots are opportunities for residential or commercial uses.

Areas of Constraint  There is a high volume of traffic along these blocks and most of the business are very run down and desolate. Sidewalks varied in size and had an average width of 5 feet. They were not very well maintained and lacked vegetation.

Unique Features  Walgreens shopping center had suitable vegetation and the El Taco de Mexico business had an adobe facade which could be used as a basis for future design.

Major Intersections  The Curbaril intersection is a direct exit from Highway 101 and offers pedestrian crosswalks.

Parking  These blocks have street parking on El Camino Real as well as parking behind businesses and on side streets. On average there were 20 spots located behind each use and three spots on El Camino Real.

Set-backs  Average set-back of building from El Camino Real is approximately 10 feet, with the Walgreens shopping center having the highest setback at 45 feet.

Trees/landscaping  The streetscape lacks vegetation except for the Walgreens shopping plaza, which exhibits landscaping on the perimeter and welcomes customers. Trees are sparsely spread out throughout the blocks.

Architectural Elements  Buildings and infrastructure are primarily low-maintenance with ceramic tile roofing. Most of the buildings were one-story and had a tendency to have small windows. A great number of businesses had basic colors such as white, grey, and beige. When architectural styles were implemented, they followed an adobe design.
Block 7 consists of the area between Cascada and Solano Roads. The area of interest is entirely taken up by a large shopping plaza. It is in good condition, but some of the commercial spaces are vacant, and the occupied street-facing properties lack presence and distinction. There are generous amounts of parking in the center of the plaza for all the establishments, perhaps even too many. The vacant spaces could definitely be developed if more commercial and retail establishments lease them.

**Predominant Uses**  This section of El Camino Real is dominated by a large shopping plaza.

**Areas of Opportunity**  There are significant views of the hills from the central parking lot. Some properties in the plaza are vacant, which poses an opportunity for developers.

**Areas of Constraint**  The parking lot is overly large. This may pose a danger to pedestrians walking a long distance back to their cars. The street front properties lack street presence and seem almost abandoned. There is no crosswalk connecting the plaza to the other side of El Camino Real, so pedestrian accessibility is limited. The power poles are an eyesore.

**Unique Features**  All the buildings in Spencer’s Fresh Market have a similar appearance and paint theme.

**Parking**  There is an abundance of parking spaces. The parking lot holds a total of 302 cars.

**Set-backs**  As a whole, the plaza has a setback of approximately 5 feet from the sidewalk.

**Trees/landscaping**  There are a few trees in the parking lot.

**Architectural Elements**  The plaza is well maintained, and all buildings have a similar design theme. They are mainly built of stucco and wood, with red and tan colors.
**Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment**

**Design block 8**
**El Camino Real Between Solano Road and La Linia Avenue**

Block 8 consists of the area between Solano Road and La Linia Avenue. There are two commercial buildings fronting El Camino Real: Players Pizza and Ace Hardware. Behind those is a large lumberyard. This block is quite industrial in nature, and there is plenty of parking all around. There is not much opportunity for development, as everything is well established.

However, the lumberyard has plenty of open space. There are residential units in the vicinity, which could be a problem, as residents may be disturbed by the noise and traffic generated by the adjacent industrial unit.

**Predominant Uses**  This section of El Camino Real is made up of retail and industrial units.

**Areas of Opportunity**  The large lumber yard in the rear has plenty of open space. There are good views of the surrounding hills. The bare sidewalk presents an opportunity for additional landscaping and street furniture.

**Areas of Constraint**  There is no crosswalk across this section of El Camino Real. The lumber yard could be considered an eyesore and a noise issue to some. The power poles are also an eyesore.

**Unique Features**  The lumberyard in the rear takes up an enormous area. Also, Players Pizza is an unusually large restaurant.

**Major Intersections**  La Linia Avenue extends westward past El Camino Real.

**Parking**  This section of El Camino Real has 2-hour street parking throughout, with a few exceptions.

**Set-backs**  Average set-back of building from the road is approximately 9 feet.

**Trees/landscaping**  There are a few trees in the parking lots, and many more in the lumber yard, which provide much-needed shade.

**Architectural Elements**  Buildings, road, and sidewalk infrastructure along this section are in average condition. Each building has its own distinctive style, with Players Pizza having a beige-colored stucco appearance, and Ace Hardware having a more utilitarian look with a gray metal facade with red trim. Both of these street front buildings have tall facades (20-25 ft.).
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Design Blocks 9
El Camino Real between La Linia Avenue and Principal Avenue

Block 9 is a huge area, consisting of all the area between La Linia and Principal Avenues. There are a variety of uses, from retail and commercial, to industrial, to even residential. The most dominating unit is the concrete yard at the rear. Like the lumberyard in block 8, the concrete yard is a sprawling site with plenty of open space. Most of the establishments are small, so there is plenty of potential for development, especially in unit 15, where there are only two abandoned buildings and an expansive open space next to a riparian zone. The existing oak trees, grass, and creek could potentially be an opportunity to be developed into a park or similar public open space.

Predominant Uses  This section of El Camino Real has a large variety of uses, including retail and commercial stores, restaurants, and businesses to an industrial concrete yard to even a residential unit.

Areas of Opportunity  Unit 15 on Principal Avenue is vacant, with plenty of open space. The existing buildings are run down, but could easily be torn down and redeveloped. Unit 15 has a superb view of Chalk Mountain. Similar to the rest of the stretch, all of the buildings facing El Camino Real are low-rise, single story. These could be expanded. Sidewalks are bare and could use landscaping.

Areas of Constraint  There is no pedestrian crossing anywhere in this section. The power poles are an eyesore.

Unique Features  Margarita's restaurant exudes a pleasant atmosphere with its unique red paint and plentiful landscaping. The concrete yard in the rear is huge.

Major Intersections  La Linia Avenue continues westward past El Camino Real.

Parking  This section of El Camino Real has street parking throughout, with some exceptions. Most units (and all businesses) have on-site parking, notably, the car dealership.

Set-backs  Average set-back of building from the road is 36 feet. Several units have set-backs of over 100 feet.

Trees/landscaping  The streetscape is virtually devoid of trees or significant landscaping fronting ECR. The unit with the highest concentration of trees is Unit 11, which is Margarita's restaurant. Margarita's also has its own unique landscaping, such as bushes and stone benches.

Architectural Elements  Buildings and sidewalk maintenance along this section are generally average. There is no style that especially stands out, except for Margarita's. Buildings are typically medium-height 1 story (11-25 ft.), made of concrete, stucco, wood, or brick, and beige, brown, and red in color.

The large concrete yard shows the variety of uses along this corridor.
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Design Block 10
El Camino Real and Santa Rosa Road

Block 10 consists of 4 parcels of various retail and commercial uses. The frontage buildings are in decent shape but the landscaping seems to be better maintained than the buildings themselves. Most of the buildings on site are similar in construction and don’t seem to really match the surrounding architecture. This particular area is the main gateway at the south end of this project and needs some major updating to give the community and visitors a more inviting experience as they enter into Atascadero.

Predominant Uses
This area of El Camino Real is predominantly retail use with the exception of the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Social Services Buildings.

Areas of Opportunity
This area is the main gateway into Atascadero from the south along Highway 101. Conditions of existing buildings are in average shape.

Areas of Constraint
Since this area is a main gateway, it needs some major updating to give the community and visitors a more inviting experience as they enter into Atascadero.

Unique Features
Adobe business plaza is a series of interconnected shops. It has outdoor seating, landscaping, and large trees in the right of way. Plaza de Pueblo has a similar style. The layout of these plazas could become a theme element.

Major Intersections
El Camino Real and Santa Rosa Road intersects directly at this design block.

Parking
There is a total number of 120 on-site parking spaces within this design block. Parking is spread out and does not have a feeling of a giant sea of parking. Parking off-site is limited but still allows approximately 20 spots.

Set-backs
Setbacks on this design block range from 18 feet to 60 feet throughout.

Trees/landscaping
Landscaping is in fairly decent shape with mature trees along El Camino Real.

Architectural Elements
Buildings and road infrastructure along this section are generally unkept. The styles are predominantly that of chain restaurants and services stores. Buildings are both one and two stories, made of stucco, tan, cream or brown in color with red tile roofing.

View from El Camino Real and Santa Rosa Rd. intersection looking towards Design Block 10

County of San Luis Obispo Department of Social Services Buildings exemplify the quality of landscaping within this design block.
Design Block 11
El Camino Real and Montecito Road

Block 11 consists of 5 parcels the first 3 being mixed use, such as a landscaping firm, a chiropractor office, and a pest control office. All these parcels also have living units on them, however, they are run down unattractive and have no identity, all except for the chiropractor office which is a rather well maintained building. The other two parcels are merely residential one being an apartment structure that is well maintained with some beautiful landscaping of native plants. The other parcel is a single family home that is still under construction (for the last 3 years) only the building stands no form of landscaping or yard structure has been established yet.

Predominant Uses This section is predominantly mixed use, with the Single family homes along the El Camino Real also used as home based businesses the sections being the mixed use are medium density and single family homes low density residential.

Areas of Opportunity The side walk in front of the businesses is 8-10ft wide plenty of room for some streetscape extra landscape and street furniture. The businesses are due for some re-development.

Areas of Constraint This Section is far from any cross walk, little to no pedestrian traffic, re-development would conflict with current residences

Unique Features One of the buildings at this section is a beautiful brick building that stands out from the buildings around it. also the apartment complex behind the mixed use is very well up kept.

Major Intersections Close to the major intersection of El Camino Real and Santa Rosa, that is also a Southern gateway opportunity to Atascadero. This section could be used as an extension of proposed gateway.

Parking Each Business has its own parking lot as well as flow over parking along the street of El Camino Real.

Set-backs Average set-back of building from El Camino Real is 25ft following the Zoning code for residential units along the street.

Trees/landscaping There is a mix of well maintained Landscape and non existent Landscaping between the businesses, there is a major lack of Streetscape along El Camino Real as well. The entire section is covered with beautiful trees that are fully mature.

Architectural Elements The up-keep of landscaping reflects the architectural quality of the businesses and the homes, the chiropractors office has the best Architecture elements on the whole section and the second best maintained lot just behind the apartment building that may be simple in design but is very well maintained. The final lot at the end of Montecito is a new Single family home that is still under construction.
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Design Block 12
El Camino Real and Montecito Road

Block 12 consists of 5 parcels, the first 3 being mixed use, such as a landscaping firm, a chiropractor office, and a pest control office. All these parcels also have living units on them, however, they are run down unattractive and have no identity, all except for the chiropractor office which is a rather well maintained building. The other two parcels are merely residential one being an apartment structure that is well maintained with some beautiful landscaping of native plants. The other parcel is a single family home that is still under construction (for the last 3 years) only the building stands no form of landscaping or yard structure has been established yet.

Predominant Uses
This section on the corner of El Camino Real and Montecito Rd. is dominated by one Chevron gas station and a car wash, along with a vacant lot at the frontage of El Camino Real currently used by Goodwill.

Areas of Opportunity
Convenient location next to the 101 Freeway on and off ramps. The vacant lot at the intersection of El Camino Real and Montecito Rd has plenty of potential to compliment the commercial and office space surrounding it. Well maintained commercial area nearby.

Areas of Constraint
The gas station takes up a lot of extra space, and Montecito Rd is rarely used with no stop light at El Camino Real, very limited pedestrian access to the site.

Unique Features
Relatively flat topography

Major Intersections
Close to the major intersection of El Camino Real and Santa Rosa, that is also a southern gateway opportunity to Atascadero. This section could be used as an extension of proposed gateway.

Parking
This section has very limited parking mainly along the street of Montecito and El Camino Real. There are a few parking spots on the property of the Chevron gas station but those are also limited and primarily used for private use.

Set-backs
Average set back for the gas station is roughly 25 ft. from Montecito and 40-50 ft. from E Front St.

Trees/landscaping
This section has some beautiful old oak trees along Montecito Rd along with some other smaller trees along the gas station. Landscaping of this site has been let go, mainly consists of wood chips and a few shrubs, large sections of the landscaping opportunities are unused through this section and along the streets.

Architectural Elements
The architecture of the gas station and the car wash are complementary to each other, a simple design with a tan colored stucco and a slanted roof.
Design Block 13
El Camino Real between Rosa Rd. and Montecito Ave

Design Block 13 is a small cluster of six design units between Santa Rosa Rd. and Montecito Rd. along El Camino Real. Along its western border runs East Front St. and the 101 freeway. This cluster contains a clashing mix of recent and rundown development. The newer development contains attractive architectural details and has an Italian flair. These units also contain planted sidewalks as well as open green space and a bioswale along Santa Rosa Rd. Along El Camino Real, there are three rundown, one that is vacant. The middle of the block contains a parcel that was cleared by the city a few years ago and contains tall mature oak trees that provide a natural feature that could be highlighted by proper development. This sector shows the potential of the corridor by bringing in new businesses and more modern architecture. By harnessing the natural elements currently on the site along with updating the pedestrian features along El Camino Real, this development could play a pivotal role in defining El Camino Real as a business hub.

Predominant Uses  This section of El Camino Real is dominated by restaurants and office use.

Areas of Opportunity  There is new development on this section behind the street frontage that contains landscaping and various pedestrian elements. The site contains an empty parcel with tall mature Oak trees.

Unique Features  This area contains a clash between old development and new construction that puts unbalanced uses in close proximity.

Major Intersections  The North end is capped by Santa Rosa Rd.

Parking  This section has almost no street parking but within the site there is a mix parking types in front of the businesses. This parking is never more than one row wide.

Set-backs  Average set-back of building from the road is 10 feet.

Trees/landscaping  The streetscape along this site is well implemented around the newer units while it is devoid alone ECR itself. The newer development contains a bioswale, walkways and native planting that is far more attractive than many of the surrounding areas.

Architectural Elements  Buildings here have a great disparity in age and upkeep. The newer units are in prime condition while the older buildings are unkept and appear in poor condition.

Key map outlining design block 13

View of the abandoned parcel with large oaks.

Example of new development within the block.

Example of older buildings along this block of El Camino Real.
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Design block 14
El Camino Real between La Linia and Santa Rosa Road

Block 14 contains 11 design units ranging from self-storage complexes to a motel. Along with these various uses, are various other built conditions. The majority of the units contain marginal architecture with poor to fair landscape maintenance. There is only one vacant unit, which is still being moderately maintained. The streetscape is non-existent and the sidewalks are marginally maintained and ridden with mailboxes, electrical poles and various parking signs. Many of the units have a large front setback creating very poor street presence and little definition of the El Camino Real Corridor. The above ground utilities create a visual obstruction of all of the units and also cause interference along the sidewalks. The corridor has wide streets that with simple medians with light vegetation could soften the industrial and harsh atmosphere that currently exists. Similar renovation of the sidewalk could create a more pedestrian friendly environment for local residents.

Predominant Uses  
This section of El Camino Real contains self-storage, auto repair shops, motels, and various retail stores.

Areas of Opportunity  
Strong commercial activity and infrastructure in good condition. This area has large view sheds to the east of the surrounding hills.

Areas of Constraint  
This area contains above ground utilities, and many electrical boxes and a steep elevation change from the street to the parcel on the majority of the units.

Major Intersections  
There are no major intersections among this site, although its south end borders Santa Rosa Rd.

Parking  
This section of El Camino Real has street parking throughout with only a few exceptions. At the time of the survey, only 15 cars were parked in street parking along the entire section of ECR. More than 75% of the units have parking lots fronting the street. On average each unit as 24 parking spaces on this section.

Set-backs  
Average set-back of building from the road is 45 feet. Several units have setbacks of over 100 feet, with Miners Hardware and Motel 6 set back at more than 200.

Trees/landscaping  
The streetscape is virtually devoid of trees or significant landscaping fronting ECR. The only trees are found on the property and many did not even contain those.

Architectural Elements  
Buildings and road infrastructure along this section are generally unkept. The styles are predominantly that of services stores. Buildings are typically tall 1 story (20-35 ft.), made of concrete or stucco, tan, cream or brown in color with various roofing styles.

View of run down unit along La Linia.

An example of the large setbacks along El Camino Real.
Block 15 of our project consisted mostly of industrial and commercial uses. The mobile home park was the only residential use on the block. Many vacant buildings and parcels were present as well and provide good potential for growth and development. The landscaping was very sparse and needs dramatic improvement. Adequate on-street parking was provided for the entire block, however most of the spots were empty and not being utilized.

The majority of each lot was consumed by empty parking lots and this could be a potential for redevelopment because the space is not being used efficiently. Overall the block is not completely dead and has major potential for growth. Using the empty space, re-designing the buildings and landscaping the on-street views will make this block more aesthetically pleasing.

**Predominant Uses** This section of El Camino Real is dominated by three different types of properties. These are commercial/industrial, vacant land and mobile home parks.

**Areas of Opportunity** There was vacant land and vacant buildings throughout the site that could be developed or renovated to bring in a different crowd of pedestrians. It is located across from The Oaks shopping center. However, it is not located near any intersections making it more desirable for mixed use or residential housing.

**Areas of Constraint** Most of the buildings are for big industrial uses and it will be difficult to turn those into pedestrian friendly developments.

**Unique Features** The mobile home park consumed much of the land. Another unique development is the propane company, which has many large tanks that are an eyesore.

**Major Intersections** This block is one of the few that is not surrounded by any major intersections.

**Parking** Each lot had a suitable number of parking spots. There was some street parking also available in various quantities.

**Set-backs** Average set-back of building from the road is 20 feet, however some several units have buildings behind each other with a set-backs of over 100 feet.

**Trees/landscaping** There was no major landscaping in the block. The majority of the units had some vegetation but nothing significant. The quality of landscaping was consistent with the quality of architecture and maintenance of the building.

**Architectural Elements** There were very few units that were above average in the upkeep. Most of the industrial buildings were not well maintained and had below average architecture quality.
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Design Block 16
El Camino Real between Curbaril Ave and Plata Lane

The Northern boundary of this design block on the ECR is Curbaril Ave, an intersection with the potential act as a mid-corridor gateway with higher density development. The section is dominated by several large groceries, Food for Less and Albertsons, as well as a box-retail center with a CVS. With this section of the street transitioning to outmoded industrial uses moving south, as well as vacant lot and unused parking space, there is great opportunity for major redevelopment that will push ECR in a direction with activities and resources of a complete, active, corridor.

Predominant Uses This section of the ECR’s aesthetics is dominated by several large grocery stores. Other uses include industrial and automotive commercial, interspersed with small-scale strip malls and a vacant lot.

Areas of Opportunity Curbaril Ave intersection provides opportunity for gateway development with strong identity features. Large unused parking areas are ripe for new build-to-line development to create a more human scale. Vacant lot (unit 14) near the ECR Plaza Shopping Center provides additional opportunity for new development themes.

Areas of Constraint A number of large scale buildings with long-term set use as well as the necessity for large service vehicle access with little room for alternative road access than along the ECR.

Unique Features There several quirky buildings housing small businesses that add unique character to the street.

Major Intersections The north end of this design block is capped by Curbaril Ave, a major intersection with Highway 101.

Parking This block has the highest amount of parking per unit along the corridor site, with an average of 44 parking spaces in addition to street parking for each parcel.

Set-backs Average set-back of building from the road is nearly 60 feet. The largest setbacks are found at the two major grocery stores and box-store, though deep setbacks are common throughout the design block.

Trees/landscaping The streetscape is virtually devoid of trees or significant landscaping fronting ECR. Several notable size tree remain in the Albertson’s (unit 5) parking lot and there is greenery in the vacant lot (unit 14).

Architectural Elements Buildings and road infrastructure along this section are generally more rundown than other parts of the corridor. The styles are predominantly cinder block, with auto-oriented themes. Buildings are typically short 1 story (averaging 21 ft.).

Topography This section of ECR has some sloping up on both sides from the sidewalk. The average rise is 2.5 ft. with slight variation across units. Parking lots of the two shopping centers lack integration due to the difference in topography between them.

Albertson's Grocery store unit, with over 300 parking spaces is ripe for development of to-line development to provide greater interest and human scale to pedestrians.
2.4 ANALYSIS OF INTERSECTIONS

Multiple streets cross or lead to the South corridor of El Camino Real (ECR). These intersections allow motorized vehicles, bicycles and people to proceed along ECR onto their desired destinations. The design team surveyed all the intersections in the southern portion of ECR starting at the northern intersection of Morro Road (Highway 41) to Montecito. Each intersection was surveyed in order to analyze the existing conditions and record their accessibility to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. Current conditions of each intersection were also documented by a series of photographs depicting each corner and unique characteristics related to each respective crossing. Images and detailed analyses of all fourteen (14) intersections, as well as the survey form used can be found in Appendix.

The intersections ranged from good to poor depending on various components. The design team looked for the existence of traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, public lighting, street furniture, signage, conditions of the corners and sidewalks and an overall general evaluation of the how the intersection functioned for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. No intersection was the same as another but they shared many common elements. Below are descriptions of each of the intersections starting from the north and proceeding south. El Bordo Avenue and San Gabriel Road were excluded from the design team’s survey.

**Morro Road/ Highway 41**

This intersection contains highway styled overhead lighting. Street signage is present and has average legibility. The signage for on-ramps to highway 101 is small and hard to locate in the intersection. Three of the four ramped corners have yellow painted detectable warnings for individuals with disabilities. The intersection, from initial observation, supports heavy traffic that moves fast and switches lanes frequently. The intersection is imposing, loud and has lengthy crossing for the pedestrian. For the bicyclist, the intersection has faded street markings that delineate the bike lane and are hard to see. Overall entering into turns and traversing the intersection is difficult and lacks signage making motorists unaware of bicyclists.

**Highway 41 Northbound Off-ramp**

The intersection contains highway styled overhead lighting. The slope of the intersection into the Vons parking lot is in poor condition. The south part of the intersection does not support a crosswalk. No signage was observed a within the intersection. None of the corners have ramped, yellow painted detectable warnings for disabled individuals. The intersection contains heavy traffic with fast approach speeds due to highway on and off ramps. The intersection is imposing, loud and has lengthy crossing for the pedestrian. Pedestrians must cross a large parking lot from the intersection in order to enter Vons. For the bicyclist, the intersection has faded street markings that delineate the bike lane and are not clear on the west side.

**Pueblo Avenue**

The intersection does not support crosswalks. The east and west sides have stop signs that allow pedestrians to cross more safely. Poor street signage is available for Pueblo Avenue and El Camino Real is not marked by any signs. Pavement within the crossing area is in poor condition. Some corners are ramped, but have lips above ADA thresholds. The intersection contains light vehicular traffic that provides ample gaps for drivers on the east and west sides of the intersection to pull out. Infrequent traffic pulling onto ECR from Pueblo Avenue makes pedestrian passage easy, though cars sometimes pull into the crossing area before stopping. Pedestrians do not have safe access across El Camino Real at the intersection. As there is no nearby crossing it is likely that people jaywalk to cross El Camino Real. The intersection has poor street markings delineating the bike lane, but is not unsafe.

**Curbaril Avenue**

The intersection contains highway styled overhead street lighting. Street signage is present and has average legibility. Corners are ramped, but none have yellow painted detectable warnings for disable individuals. High frequencies of drivers making a right turn pull into the crosswalk. The crosswalk has crosshatched striping. Trees make the intersection more pleasant for pedestrians. Bicycle lane markings at the intersection are not legible.

**Junipero Avenue**

The western side of the junipero intersection is the entrance to Albertsons. It contains highway styled lighting. The intersection contains newer, easy to see and read street signage. The corners have ramped, yellow painted detectable warnings for disabled individuals. The intersection contains a traffic signal that appears to sense the presence of drivers in the intersection. For the pedestrian, the intersection is imposing and lacks trees of any
size. The sidewalks and curbs are in good condition. For the bicyclist, the intersection has poor street markings that delineate the bike lane.

**Palomar Avenue**
The intersection provides the entrance into a shopping center and contains highway styled lighting. The crosswalks have crosshatched striping. The intersection supports a street sign for Palomar that is readable, however no signs identify El Camino Real. All the corners are ramped; only one has yellow painted detectable warnings for disabled individuals. Overall the pavement in the intersection is in average condition. Power line poles take up space on the sidewalks near the intersection. The intersection feels large and imposing to pedestrians. For the bicyclist, the intersection has poor street markings that delineate the bike lane.

**Arcade Road**
This intersection forms a “T” at ECR and does not support crosswalks. The East side has a stop sign that allows pedestrians to cross more safely. Otherwise there is no striping or signage to indicate pedestrian movement. Street signage is hard to see and is hidden. Pavement within the intersection is in poor condition. Only the Southeast corner is ramped. The intersection contains light vehicular traffic. Drivers have limited sight as they pull out onto El Camino Real causing them to pull into the pedestrian crossing area in order to see oncoming traffic. For the bicyclist, the intersection has poor street markings that delineate the bike lane.

**Cascada Road and Plata Road**
This intersection is made of two different roads that converge at El Camino Real. It has commercial development on the northwest and southeast corners. The intersection does not support crosswalks. The east and west sides have stop signs that allow pedestrians to cross more safely. The street paving is in good condition, however a storm drain near the northwest corner of the intersection is in a state of deterioration and contains major cracks. This same corner also has several newsstands projecting outwards onto the corner. A bus stop is located several feet away from the intersection. The intersection contains highway styled overhead lighting.

**Solano Road**
This intersection is a “T” intersection for a commercial plaza. Heavy pedestrian use and crossings were observed at this intersection, which does not contain crosswalks. In crossing the street, some pedestrians were stranded or waited in the middle of the road, in the turn lane, in order to let cars to pass.

Traffic does flow faster at this intersection due to its location between two intersections with traffic signals. The intersection has good paving, however the paving on El Camino Real shows wear and the lane markings are faded.

**La Linia**
La Linia is different from the rest of the intersections in the area surveyed of El Camino Real in that it has major grade changes in a very short span of time. This causes that the center of El Camino Real to be much higher than the rest of the street, giving it a curve towards the center. This change in elevation is so drastic that it is difficult to see the corner in the diagonal direction. There is one wooden light post in the intersection. The paving is good, however on the west side of the intersection the grade changes cause the creation of poor drainage leading to potential problems of flooding in high rainfall and run-off.

**Gusta Road**
The sidewalks on the west side of the intersection at Gusta are in good condition, but the northwest corner of the intersection suffers from poor sidewalk paving. It is uneven and poses as a safety risk because of tripping hazards. This corner is also not completely paved due to overgrown landscaping.

**Principal Avenue**
The paving for the streets on the intersection of Principal and El Camino Real are average. The street shows slight signs of wear and some minor cracks and the northeast corner of the intersection is not completely paved. This may be from a lack of use. The intersection appears to be prone to flooding especially in the southeast corner. There is one wooden light post on the northeast corner of the intersection. There were also two bus stops near the intersection.

**Santa Rosa Road**
This intersection has a traffic light and is also a major intersection that brings traffic from Highway 101 to El Camino Real. This makes it a vital point of interest along South ECR. The southwest corner of the intersection supports a poorly paved sidewalk and the northwest corner of a state of deterioration. The crosswalk is no longer visible in some sections of the crossings and the well-worn pavement of Santa Rosa indicates that the road is widely used. Santa Rosa has many pedestrians because it is one of the few access points, which connects the west side of the city to the east.

**Montecito Avenue**
The conditions of the intersection are good. There is evidence that the intersection floods, perhaps in part due to problems with existing drainage. Although there had not been any recent rain, puddles were observed in the intersection. The intersection does not have any crosswalks or lighting. Two corners of the intersection are half-paved, where one side of the sidewalk (El Camino Real) is paved but the other half of the corner is not.
2.5 **Figure-Ground Mapping**

The Figure-Ground Mapping is a simple technique that consists of maps where elements are shown in either black or white. The elements to be highlighted (the themes) appear in black –the figures– while all the rest appears in white –the ground. In some (rare) instances, the lines for streets and curbs are also shown in these maps. This is a useful technique for analyzing and understanding urban spaces, as well as a method to orient design itself.

Through the strong black and white contrast of its drawings, the figure-ground technique reveals relationships between elements in space and their relative importance in defining the fabric and the form of a city. It discloses important city attributes such as the scale of footprints, accessibility, proximities, constancy, proportions, and other fundamental relationships such as between public and private spaces, built-non built spaces, etc.

In our assessment of the El Camino Real corridor, the figure-ground technique was utilized to map the following elements: building footprints, public space, private space, vacant lots, and parking/driveways. Using ArchGIS, the design team did an initial analysis of land use within the South El Camino Real corridor. This analysis produced the following maps: Parcels, Private Space, Parking Space, Vacant Lots, Present Buildings, and Present Building Usage. Conclusions reached from trends in land use helped to establish opportunities and challenges for redevelopment.

South ECR consists of parcels owned by private entities with the exception of the following areas: physical roads, sidewalks, and freeway right of ways. This presents a challenge to the design team, in that there is no public land to provide quick redevelopment. Any redevelopment of the corridor will have to coordinate with private landowners to accomplish a strategy that is mutually beneficial. Adding to this challenge is the fact that many parcels within the corridor are uniquely shaped and may not be conducive to redevelopment individually. While a challenge, private ownership is an opportunity as some private owners have expressed a readiness to redevelop.

A prime opportunity for redevelopment rests in several vacant lots located in the southern sections of the corridor. In total there is an estimated 5.392 acres of vacant land throughout the corridor. A significantly sized lot, located at El Camino and Principal, has the potential be used as an anchor and help establish that particular portion of the corridor.

Present building figure ground maps show that current design has tended to favor larger strip-mall type structures, which are located throughout the corridor. In addition, there are several large buildings occupied by national grocery store chains. Due to the nature of these large structures surface parking is significant.

Surface parking is the largest land use within the corridor, taking up roughly half of all land. During field observations, parking appeared to be underutilized. Currently these large parking lots have had the effect of pushing building deep into their parcel. Building setbacks range from being curbside to upwards of 500ft. Having a large source of parking is a potential opportunity as infill development can occur on these underutilized parking lots. Two large lots located in the center of the corridor have the potential for this type of infill.

As there is a building trend towards large strip-malls it is not surprising that the largest present building use is general - commercial. General commercial uses are located throughout the entire corridor. In the southern region there is a pocket of commercial service where many of the auto-oriented businesses are located. Office space is the third highest current usage found within the corridor. However, it is at a much smaller scale than that of general commercial and service commercial.

**List of Figure-Ground Maps:**
- Parcels
- Present Building
- Private Surface Parking
- Vacant Lots
- Private Space
- Existing Building Use
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Parcels

Present Buildings
Chapter Two: Project Area Assessment

Private Space
CHAPTER THREE

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
3. Community Outreach

Community input received in a variety of forums and settings is important to an effective design process and successfully garnering community support. The design team used public comments, concerns, and visions to help shape the design process. Hearing this input helped the design team to determine the desired aesthetic and goals for type of future development. As part of the community input process, the design team informed stakeholder groups of design effort and goals; met with the Chamber of Commerce, which represents many of the property and business owners along the ECR; administered an online preference survey, publicized by distributed flyers and an article in Atascadero News; conducted field interviews at the Firehouse 5k and health fair; and ran a small community workshop.

3.1 Chamber of Commerce Meeting

The design team attended an Atascadero Chamber of Commerce mixer event hosted by California Meridian Insurance on April 19, 2012. The mixers are an opportunity for member merchants, many of whose shops are located along the ECR, to circulate, enjoy refreshments and introduce themselves and network. Following the social hour, the speaker for the event introduced a panel of new chamber members and presented awards. Cal Poly students presented themselves and the enhancement research project for El Camino Real corridor, and afterwards conducted one-on-one interviews with the merchants.

Merchant participants in attendance provided recommendations for enhancing the corridor.

- Follow design steps taken for downtown Paso Robles.
- Separate image from other towns like Santa Margarita.
- More restaurants and variety of restaurants such as a Steak House.
- Introduce design elements that are utilized in the Calabasas Shopping Center like the water feature.
- Incorporate more outdoor entertainment and events including music and festivals like the existing the Harley Davidson Annual Ride, and Colony Days Parade.
- Foster a strong light life.
- Do not allow back-in parking.
- Do not include unnecessary medians.
- Provide more shade and vegetation throughout the corridor.
- Narrow the corridor for pedestrian friendliness and traffic calming.

3.2 Online Preference Survey

The design team ran an Internet survey from April 13, 2012-April 30, 2012. Survey questions were designed to explore respondent’s opinions on the current and future condition of El Camino Real. Five primary sections made up the survey, demographics, visual preference, current conditions, and desired elements. The survey was advertised through handouts at community events, along with a article in the Atascadero News. A total of 40 people took the survey during its initial run. The following page shows the graphics interpreting the data collected from the on-line surveys.

Demographics show that an older population made up the primary respondents. The age cohorts of 35-55 (42.9%) and 55-74 (40.0%) combined for 82.9% of the total responses. It is not surprising that these age groups were the most active participants, as the demographics of the City of Atascadero show an aging populous. Males were also more likely to take the survey, making up 61.8% of the response. These results may have some selection bias, in that the many of the philanthropic groups contacted had a disproportionate number of males.

The visual preference survey examined three different areas, housing, streetscape, and commercial. Respondents generally found all types of housing to not be appropriate for El Camino Real. Townhomes and single family homes in particular are seen in an unfavorable light. Conversely, residents did find that mixed-use type of development an attractive option to solving housing needs along the corridor. There was mixed results for the usage of apartment building, with a slight majority against them.

Streetscape preferences also revealed several telling results. Landscaped medians were heavily favored by a margin of 75.6%. In addition, bike lanes were found to be supported by similar margin. The response to an image that is similar to current conditions on El Caminor Real garnered a 61% disapproval rating. It would seem that these results show that there is support among residents for some form of medians and dedicated bike lane.

Commercial development along the corridor was considered an important factor to respondents. Survey results indicate that all forms of commercial development were desired, expect big box stores. Mixed use and retail/office space garnered the highest rates of approval from respondents in the survey.
Field interviews were conducted by the members of the design team at the Firehouse 5k and health fair on April 21st, 2012. Participants were asked what areas of ECR they liked/wanted preserved, what concerned them or needed change, and what they would envision for the future. Participants were also encouraged to locate important areas for consideration using color-coded stickers on map of the ECR corridor site. This independent community event provided the opportunity for the design team to gather input from community members that might not typically get involved in the planning process. During the event, the design team interviewed approximately 25 individuals.

In general, respondents liked new buildings like the Galaxy movie theatre and Rite Aid, as well as, unique historic buildings. They felt that many buildings along the ECR were in poor condition and lacked continuity. There was concern that small businesses had difficulty acquiring building permits. In the future, they would like to see the preservation and restoration of historic and unique buildings.

While they favored businesses like yogurt shops, microbreweries and local restaurants, there was a general concern that there were too many auto shops, grocery stores, Mexican restaurants and Pizza Parlors. In the future they would like to see the return of the bowling alley and other places to socialize like parks. They would also like more youth centers, afterschool programs and seasonal events like parades.

They thought the condition of the street could be safer for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Many mentioned that they avoid the ECR due to traffic congestion. In the future they would like to see more crosswalks and a clear bike lane. They felt the boulevard could be enhanced by general beautification in form of landscaping, benches, streetlamps and trashcans. They would like to preserve and expand the downtown feeling of the farmer’s market, sunken garden and new bridge.
Compiled results from responses obtained during the Firehouse 5K event

### What do you like about ECR and want to preserve or enhance?

- New buildings like the Galaxy movie theatre and the Rite Aid.
- Historic and unique architecture
- Encourage new food and beverage vendors like yogurt shops, microbreweries and local restaurants.
- Farmers market, new bridge, sunken garden and city hall.
- Enhance and expand downtown feel.

### What are your concerns about the ECR?

- No continuity in building types/styles.
- Buildings in poor condition, some areas feel run down.
- Crosswalks are too far apart.
- Too many auto shops, grocery stores, Mexican restaurants and pizza restaurants.
- Traffic is too fast.
- On ramps are too short.
- It’s too difficult for small businesses to get a building permit.
- It’s difficult and scary to navigate the street via walking, biking and driving.

### What is your vision of ECR? What would you like to see in 20 years?

- Pedestrian and bike friendly
- More integrated into the town, more consistent and cohesive identity.
- More crosswalks.
- Landscaping and beautification.
- Restore historic buildings.
- Youth centers and after school programs.
- Places to socialize like parks.
- Seasonal events like parades.
- Bring back the bowling alley.
- Add more trashcans, benches, streetlights.
- Emphasize the creek.
- Pedestrian/bike/transit safer and more pleasant experience.
- Tree oriented streetscape plan.
- Nodes and districts with identity and character.
- Underutilized space.

### Consensus Items

**What do you like about ECR and want to preserve or enhance?**
1. Diversity of locally owned businesses.
2. Small town feel and unique character.
3. Accessibility from different points in the city.

**What are your concerns about the ECR?**
1. Lack of shade and tree canopy cover.
2. Pedestrian experience including crossings, safety, comfort, and presence.
3. Underutilized space.

**What is your vision of ECR? What would you like to see in 20 years?**
1. Nodes and districts with identity and character.
2. Tree oriented streetscape plan.
3. Pedestrian/bike/transit safer and more pleasant experience.

### 3.4 Community Workshop

On Saturday, April 21, 2012 Cal Poly students held a community workshop with residents of Atascadero at the council chambers. An introduction to the project site and purpose of the visioning process was presented before community members began collaborating on the project. Community members worked as a group around a table with a map of the site.

### 3.5 Farmers Market

Four field interviews were conducted at the Atascadero Farmers Market on Wednesday, April 25th, 2012. Respondents shared opinions about the condition of the community and what they would like to see improved.

In general, respondents thought Atascadero was too spread out and not pedestrian or bike friendly. They do not see El Camino Real as a destination or an inviting place to walk or bike. They felt that fast traffic and the fact that people avoid ECR probably hurts business along the corridor. In the future they would like to see park’s improvements and a permanent place for an indoor farmer’s market.

### 3.6 Survey of Merchants

Twenty business owners along the El Camino Real were interviewed on April 6th and April 25th, 2012 by members of the design team. The interviews were conducted to gain opinions from business owners who might be impacted by development along the ECR. Business owners were asked what areas of the ECR they liked, disliked and would like to see improved in the future. They were asked to choose from a list of design elements they would like to see incorporated along the corridor in the future.

The surveys revealed a strong preference for adding street trees, planters, landscaping, better pedestrian crossings, small parks, and improved traffic and speed controls in the complete streets design. The respondents liked that ECR is the main street in town. It’s the central corridor, easy to access and busy, which is good for business. However, respondents thought that speeding along the corridor was a problem making pedestrian traffic difficult and un-safe.

Several respondents mentioned the speed limit of 30 – 40 mph was not being obeyed. Also, traffic congestion occurs at certain times of day, which causes Curbaril Avenue to become backed-up. One business employee indicated that he avoids the corridor and uses highway 101 to avoid congestion and make travel quicker. The other concern about ECR is that business owners feel disconnected from the downtown.
Chapter Three: Community Outreach

Compiled results from responses obtained from merchants along ECR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you like about ECR and want to preserve or enhance?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• High flow of traffic is good for business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It’s the city’s main street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use it to get to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It’s the central corridor in the city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It’s easy to access.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are your concerns about the ECR?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Traffic is too fast, the speed limit is not obeyed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hard to walk across.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Potential users avoid the ECR because traffic is slower than side roads – use highway 101 instead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Middle median is confusing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Divides the town in half.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Linear community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hard to find some business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No part of the downtown - not able to be in the downtown association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It is unattractive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limited street parking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your vision of ECR? What would you like to see in 20 years?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make more pedestrian and Bike friendly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make more business friendly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Slow traffic down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allow more signage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve directional signage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Designate a clear business district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Condense medical offices into a compact, specific area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide more parking on the west side near the industrial area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Add street trees, planters, and better landscaping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide better crossings for pedestrians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Add small public parks and street lights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Add speed and traffic controls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve directional signage for drivers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 The “Wordle”

We also analysed the responses from the on-line surveys, the Firehouse 5K event, and the merchants survey through the “Wordle” web software that generates a word “cloud” (see Figure). Word clouds show the frequency of a given word or phrase within the source material, with larger text representing words that are most common. Using word clouds is an effective way to take a large amount of information and compress it into a single image that reflects the desires of the community. Each public comment was coded into single phrases and then run through the software to determine frequency. This “Wordle” was generated using information from the Internet survey, merchant survey, and community outreach.

Examining the “Wordle” shows that the most common desired elements are improvements to the streetscape. Items such as street benches, trees, and pedestrian safety were the most common things discussed for future improvements. Citizens within the corridor would like a multi-modal space that is both pedestrian and auto friendly. A streetscape that incorporates elements that increase the ability for pedestrians to enjoy the environment is sought the most. As the information in this “Wordle” came from the community outreach, it has the same conclusions found in the other outreach efforts. These conclusions are discussed further in each subsection of the community outreach. The “Wordle” image is merely a summation of each of these subsections combined.
CHAPTER FOUR

Design Vision
**4.1. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

By examining the context and the existing conditions of South El Camino Real, and by considering the input from the community outreach efforts, sixteen major opportunities and challenges for redevelopment were identified and a final site analysis map was produced. This information set a direction for the development of the design concepts for the South El Camino Real Vision Plan, and for establishing the corridor’s visual, social, and economic vibrancy.

### Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Downtown: Proximity to downtown, opportunity to continue redevelopment.</td>
<td>2. Downtown: Creating better access &amp; pedestrian connectivity over a long distance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Deep Setbacks: Room for open space, new development, &amp; street-scaping.</td>
<td>5. Deep setbacks: Private ownership &amp; need to maintain visibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Parking: Underutilized lots covering a significant area.</td>
<td>6. Parking: Businesses and owners want more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Median/Turn Lane: Strategic use can improve vegetation, quality, &amp; character while preserving access to businesses.</td>
<td>7. Median/Turn Lane: Maintaining access &amp; visibility to businesses, overcome sentiments from past projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Identity: opportunity to transform &amp; create districts, beautify.</td>
<td>8. Identity: Creating a unifying idea and consensus on Atascadero’s “Identity”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Street Width: Room for “Complete Streets”, parking, bike lane, vegetation &amp; drainage treatment.</td>
<td>9. Street Width: Successfully weaving all these elements into a well functioning street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Dedicated Truck Lane: Add access south of Curbaril, mitigate large trucks on ECR and improve ability to make intersections more ped. friendly.</td>
<td>12. Dedicated Truck Lane: Access &amp; fesibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Large Oak trees: Preservation, opportunity for focal point.</td>
<td>16. Large Oak Trees: Maintaining visibility to businesses and impacts of development on large root systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four: Design Vision

Site Analysis Map
4.2 Urban Design Principles

In an effort to fully understand the impact on design and redevelopment on city centers, corridors, and communities, the design team proceeded with studying key titles in contemporary planning literature in order to understand the qualities behind successful projects and to identify an urban design criteria. The criteria helped the group to investigate objectively several successful case studies around the country and elsewhere which could serve as examples and inspiration for South El Camino Real. All the case studies are included in the Appendix.

The following five Urban Design Principles --concluded from the literature search and applied in the case studies-- composed a meta-criteria that, informed by the site assessment and community input, allowed a framework for the development of a vision, a set of goals and objectives, and the final design proposals for the South El Camino Real corridor.

Identity

Identity is the most important quality in generating a sense of place. A unique identity makes a place stand out among others, provides it with a distinct character, helps to draw people into an area and makes them want to stay. The project for Poway Road in the City of Poway, for instance, incorporates sycamore trees, planted at random intervals, to create a sense of nature and celebrate the rural character of the city. The project included new street lights with banners to establish the corridor identity as a shopping and entertainment destination. In Santa Monica, the Santa Monica Boulevard plan is set so as to transform it into a center for entertainment and nightlife, and to celebrate the local identity through unique design elements and signage.

Human Scale

Human scale refers to the scaling of elements in and along the street and how they impact the visual and psychological comfort of pedestrians. The goal is to create a sense of balance through the careful combination of design elements such as the height and bulk of buildings, architectural detailing, and landscaping, and their impact on pedestrians. In San Luis Obispo’s Mid-Higuera Plan for instance, buildings are required to have design elements that connect the development to the street and emphasize interaction with pedestrians. One key solution is to increase the building’s transparency which means to provide windows and other openings that allow pedestrians to see inside and create a connection between the development and the sidewalk. In the case of the Santa Monica Boulevard Plan, pedestrian-oriented lighting was added or retrofitted. The city merged this upgrade with its energy efficiency plans, adding lights while upgrading them to more efficient LEDs.

Connectivity

Connectivity refers to the linkages --physical and visual-- that exist between a place and its surroundings so that the community has easy access and perceive the place to be integrated to its immediate context. San Luis Obispo’s Mid-Higuera Plan establishes pedestrian linkages between the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods, and pathways linking the street to the San Luis Creek, a prized natural asset. Pedestrian and bicycle pathways will be established to improve linkages along the corridor. Connectivity can be enhanced by a signage system. In the case of the City of Truckee, signage was added to direct visitors to other attractions in the area, emphasizing the prime location of the town and local amenities.

Safety

Safety is seen as a key element for any urban design criteria, as it affects the well being of the community and has a strong psychological impact on the perception and quality of a place. In the Poway Road Plan the number of curb-cuts was reduced by eliminating unused driveways and encouraging shared driveways in new development, creating a safer sidewalk for pedestrians by eliminating points of uncontrolled interaction between pedestrians and vehicles. On the Santa Monica Boulevard Plan curbs were extended outward at intersections, decreasing the distance required to cross the boulevard for pedestrians and slowing traffic speeds. In Truckee, parallel parking was turned into angles parking, providing a buffer between pedestrians and the street.

Resilience

Resilience can be represented by the liveliness of the street. The goal is to create a place that is dynamic, attractive, and economically vibrant. In Santa Monica Boulevard, new development was required to have an active first floor to attract people into the building and creating a dynamic street environment. In the Valencia Town Center plan, resilience was key to ensure private reinvestment in the retail spaces, generating dynamic attractive pedestrian environments along retail spaces, with complementary uses above the ground-floor retail.
4.3 The Design Vision

The design team continued their visioning process by creating a vision statement. This vision statement describes the overarching desire to make South ECR a more vibrant, community oriented, safe, and inviting place, while preserving the small town, rural environment that the city enjoys.

**Vision Statement**

**South El Camino Real provides a distinct, attractive, and economically vibrant boulevard. It enhances connectivity to the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods by promoting a safe and inviting environment for all modes of travel. Development along South El Camino Real celebrates Atascadero’s history and small town character.**

Directed by the Vision Statement, the South El Camino Real Vision Plan pursues the following five goals: 1) Aesthetics; 2) Land Use; 3) Sustainability; and 4) Circulation.

The team also came up with a catch-line for South El Camino Real that is an easy-to-remember, expresses well the design vision, and could be used for marketing purposes: South El Camino Real - Where the Journey Becomes the Destination.

The following pages describe in detail each of these goals, their objectives, and programs or design ideas that provide the framework for the entire design development.

**Goal 1: Aesthetics**

**Objective 1.1**

To strengthen and improve the identity and visual quality of the corridor

- Screen unattractive uses and highlight entrances and view sheds (Image A.1)
- Provide visual features to draw attention to the corridor, particularly from Highway 101
- Protect and enhance view sheds of Chalk Mountain and Pine Mountain

**Objective 1.2**

To preserve the small town, eclectic nature of Atascadero

- Incorporate public art that reflects local history or town character (Image A.2)
- Incorporate materials and design element of historical architecture (see A.3)

When well maintained and decorated, even a simple mailbox can be a visual feature that adds interest to the street.
GOAL 2: LAND USE

Objective 2.1
To create attractive and distinct districts
- Cluster compatible uses in districts with strong sense identity
- Link distinctive districts together with a cohesive streetscape (Image L.1)
- Establish unique design qualities for each district

Objective 2.2
To redevelop the area with context appropriate and economically viable land uses
- Encourage a broad mix of complementary uses (Image L.2)
- Foster economic development that addresses community and market needs

Objective 2.3
To mix and balance uses and diverse activities
- Reduce barriers for projects that mix land uses
- Encourage the development of spaces and uses that foster activity on the street at various times of the day (Image L.3)

GOAL 3: SUSTAINABILITY

Objective 3.1
To ensure that new building development is both environmentally and economically sustainable
- Promote energy and water efficient development (Image S.1)
- Reduce the need for residents to leave Atascadero for goods and services by providing them locally

Objective 3.2
To preserve and enhance the natural assets of the area
- Encourage xeroscaping and use of local plant species
- Improve storm-water runoff conditions (Image S.2)

Objective 3.3
To promote an environment the sustains continuous pedestrian activity
- Minimize conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular travelers
- Reduce the number of curb cuts by consolidating underutilized driveways
- Encourage the development of shared parking resources (Image S.3)
- Provide shading along sidewalks through tree canopies (Image S.4)
**Objective 4.1**

**To provide greater connectivity with Downtown and surrounding residential areas**
- Improve way finding along El Camino Real and to other community resources (Image C.1)
- Increase access points along El Camino Real and improve pathways to the surrounding neighborhoods (Image C.2)

**Objective 4.2**

**To foster multi-modal access along the corridor**
- Balance infrastructure resources to accommodate all modes of travel (Image C.3)
- Improve safety and efficiency of travel through and within the corridor (Image C.4)
- Increase number of safe crossing opportunities (Image C.5)
CHAPTER FIVE

DESIGN CONCEPT
The South El Camino Real concept diagram graphically features the design elements, goals and objectives and their relationship to one another in the site. This diagram provides the framework for the plan view illustrations, which depict in more detail the attributes of the design, showcasing the design team’s efforts to focus on the design elements, identity, human scale, connectivity, safety and Resilience and the goals established in order to better develop and enhance the site’s aesthetics, land use, sustainability, and circulation.

The site is divided into five (5) districts: the Plaza, Village, New Town, Warehouse, and Gateway Districts. Each district is created to be unique, but their design is intended to overlap and integrate with the other districts along El Camino Real. Each of the districts expresses distinct architectural styles, increases walkability and connectivity within the site as well as creates residential access points to South El Camino Real, includes more public or semi public space for community gatherings, promotes safety for all modes of transportation, introduces public art into the fabric of the boulevard, and encourages the development to build closer to the sidewalk, enhancing human scale. The specific design details of each district and their streetscapes follow in chapters six, seven, and eight.
New Town

South Gateway

Warehouse District
Chapter Five: Design Concept

The Plaza District
Chapter Five: Design Concept

The Plaza District takes cues from existing popular shopping plazas, adding new and improving the relationship to the street with the incorporation of public/private leisure space.

New residential access parks provide more direct pedestrian routes to South El Camino Real. These spaces are incorporated with new and existing plazas.

Off street parking is hidden behind infill development with access from side streets to reduce curb cuts on El Camino Real.

New crosswalks are created at key points, including residential access parks. This shortens walking distances and improves pedestrian safety.

The northern gateway marks the entrance to Atascadero with a sculpture garden and signage.

Map Legend

1. The Plaza District takes cues from existing popular shopping plazas, adding new and improving the relationship to the street with the incorporation of public/private leisure space.

2. New residential access parks provide more direct pedestrian routes to South El Camino Real. These spaces are incorporated with new and existing plazas.

3. Off street parking is hidden behind infill development with access from side streets to reduce curb cuts on El Camino Real.

4. New crosswalks are created at key points, including residential access parks. This shortens walking distances and improves pedestrian safety.

5. The northern gateway marks the entrance to Atascadero with a sculpture garden and signage.

Image: Location map of the district

Image: Sculpture garden, landmark visible to highway, and unique pavement features at El Camino Real’s intersection with Highway 4.

Image: Visual landmark cuing entrance to Atascadero and northern gateway to South El Camino Real Corridor.
The Village District
The Village District respects the historical small town character of Atascadero and incorporates remaining colony homes.

2. A new residential access park provides a more direct pedestrian route to South El Camino Real.

3. Off street parking is placed behind infill development with access from side streets that reduce curb cuts on El Camino Real.

4. New crosswalks are created at key points. This shortens walking distances and improves pedestrian safety.

5. The intersection at Curbaril marks the central gateway with unique features at the sidewalk.

Chapter Five: Design Concept

The New Town & Warehouse Districts
The New Town and Warehouse Districts utilize infill development along ECR to create a more human scale and generate activity on the street.

A new residential access park provides a direct pedestrian route to south South El Camino Real.

Off street parking is placed behind infill buildings with access from side streets that reduce curb cuts on South El Camino Real. New side streets enable the auto-oriented nature of the Warehouse District.

New crosswalks are created at key points. This shortens walking distances and improves pedestrian safety.

A landmark and mural visible from the highway marks a distinct gateway to the South ECR corridor and Atascadero.

New Multi-Family residential is built behind commercial uses providing a mix of uses and walkable distances to a revitalized South El Camino Real.

A new access road for deliveries helps to remove large trucks from El Camino Real.
CHAPTER SIX

STREETSCAPE DESIGN
6.1 Streetscaping

Street furniture along South El Camino Real will serve a functional purpose in providing comfort and aesthetic value to the area. It will also break up the continuity of the area and help to establish distinct areas of styles along the boulevard. Some elements will be shared throughout the district in order to create a sense of order and continuity. Other elements will change between the districts to emphasize their new identities. It is important to find a balance between these two goals.

For South El Camino Real, the lightpost styles should remain the same along the corridor, but the color of the lightposts will vary between each district. The spacing of benches and refuse receptacles will remain the same along the street, but the style of these elements will change to match the design elements of each district. Decorative banners welcoming people to South El Camino Real should utilize the same elements and wording, but the coloration should reflect the design of each particular district.

Each district should have a unique identity that is complemented by its streetscape design, while still preserving elements that tie the entire street together into a cohesive place that people can recognize. In this chapter, streetscape design standards are created for each district.

The general guidelines for street furniture and the design of sidewalks along South El Camino Real are as follows:

- Street lighting should be consistent throughout the corridor, but should vary in color to emphasize the different districts. Street lighting should be twenty feet in height and should be oriented toward the street. It should utilize bulbs that are bright enough to provide light to both the street and the sidewalk.
- Banners should be included on all lightposts.
- Banners should be consistent throughout the corridor, but should vary in background color to match the design of the different districts. Banners should welcome visitors to the corridor and create an inviting environment that attracts and retains visitors.
- Pedestrian crossings should be emphasized to drivers using pavers. The pavers should vary in type according to the design guidelines of each district.
- Pedestrian crossings should be raised slightly to further emphasize the crossing to drivers.
- Bulb-outs should be used at intervals of approximately 40 feet to delineate street parking spaces and provide more space for street trees to be planted.
- Bulb-outs should extend five feet outward into the parking lane. Bulb-outs should not extend into the bike lane or driving lanes under any circumstances.
- Benches and trash receptacles should be sited at bulb-outs with trees to provide shade to benches and create a uniform distance between pedestrian amenities.
- Curb cuts should be eliminated where possible, including unused driveways.
- Shared driveways should be encouraged whenever possible to reduce the number of curb cuts without reducing access to properties along the corridor.
- The street parking lane should be thinned to eight feet in width.
- A dedicated bike lane should be incorporated into the streetscape at approximately four feet in width.
- The bike lane should be painted red at intersections for emphasis.
- The right-hand travel lane should be kept at twelve feet in width to maintain accessibility for trucks along the corridor.
- The left-hand travel lane should be thinned to eleven feet in width to provide a visual stimulus to calm traffic on the corridor.
- The center turn lane should be thinned to ten feet in width to provide space on the street for bike lanes.
- Median islands should be utilized at intersections to provide a safe shelter from vehicles for pedestrians crossing the street.
- Median islands should be landscaped to provide visual value to the boulevard.
- Medians should also be utilized at key points in the corridor to provide a break for pedestrians crossing the boulevard during long stretches between intersections.
- Medians should not be used extensively along the corridor, to maintain accessibility to adjacent properties.
- Wayfinding signage should be incorporated at all intersections on the corridor.
- Signage should be incorporated at both a pedestrian scale and a scale appropriate for motorists.
- Public art should be incorporated throughout the corridor.
6.2 Plaza District

In the Plaza District, street furniture will match the Spanish Revival style prescribed in the building design standards. This style will celebrate the history of El Camino Real as the linkage between the California Missions, and will create a vibrant, elegant streetscape for pedestrians.

In the Plaza District, streetscape design elements will include:

- Benches, refuse receptacles, newspaper dispensaries, and other street furniture should be composed of wrought iron or similar materials.
- Street furniture should be black with red and neutral tones used as accents where appropriate.
- Street lighting should follow the style prescribed in the General Guidelines, but should be painted black to match the street furniture.
- Bannering on street lighting should have the same design as in other district, but should utilize red as a background color to match the accent colors of other elements.
- Street trees should match the trees prescribed by the Design Guidelines, which includes Crepe Myrtle and Eastern Redbud.
- Pedestrian crossings should utilize red brick to emphasize the pedestrian crossing to motorists and provide a visually pleasing experience to pedestrians.
- Wayfinding signs should identify the district, especially at transition points between districts and entrances from other areas.
6.3 Village District

In the Village District, street furniture will match the rural, small-town design prescribed in the building design standards. These design guidelines seek to preserve the design created by historical structures in the area while emphasizing the historical quality of the boulevard.

In the Village District, streetscape design elements will include:

- Benches, refuse receptacles, newspaper dispensaries, and other street furniture should be composed of wood or similar materials.
- Street furniture should be bare wood with black, orange and neutral tones used as accents where appropriate.
- Street lighting should follow the style prescribed in the General Guidelines, but should be painted tan to match the street furniture.
- Bannering on street lighting should have the same design as in other district, but should utilize orange as a background color to match the accent colors of other elements.
- Street trees should match the trees prescribed by the Design Guidelines, which includes Tulip Trees, Eastern Redbud, Trident Maple.
- Pedestrian crossings should utilize cobblestones to emphasize the pedestrian crossing to motorists and provide a visually pleasing experience to pedestrians.
- Wayfinding signs should identify the district, especially at transition points between districts and entrances from other areas.
6.4 New Town District & Warehouse Districts

In the New Town and Warehouse Districts, street furniture will match the Classic Revival style prescribed in the building design standards. This style will create a visually appealing environment that is inviting to pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists and fosters economic activity and vitality in the area.

In the New Town and Warehouse Districts, streetscape design elements will include:

- Benches, refuse receptacles, newspaper dispensers, and other street furniture should be composed of steel, wrought iron or similar materials.
- Street furniture should be silver with vibrant color used as accents where appropriate.
- Street lighting should follow the style prescribed in the General Guidelines, but should be painted silver to match the street furniture.
- Bannering on street lighting should have the same design as in other district, but should utilize vibrant colors as a background to match the accent colors of other elements. The color used in this district can be more variable while preserving the identity of the area.
- Street trees should match the trees prescribed by the Design Guidelines, which includes Green Vase Zelkova, Magnolia, and Coastal Live Oak.
- Pedestrian crossings should utilize tumbled pavers to emphasize the pedestrian crossing to motorists and provide a visually pleasing experience to pedestrians.
- Wayfinding signs should identify the district, especially at transition points between districts and entrances from other areas.
6.5 Street Design

The reconfiguration of the street section and the right-of-way along South El Camino Real provides an opportunity for better streetscaping design and increased walkability, and allows for more functional and safer vehicle and bicycle circulation.

The new street section design is based on: a) reducing the width of the lane dedicated to parking to 8ft on both sides; b) altering traffic lanes to be 11ft and 12ft in the outside lane; and c) narrowing the center turn lane to 10ft. Reducing lane widths will also discourage speeding and provide the corridor with a traffic calming effect.

The major design elements proposed are:

- Dedicated bike lanes (Class 2) on both sides. The bike lanes will be painted green to visually alert vehicular traffic and pedestrians, increasing safety.
- Center lane with planted medians only at intersections to increase traffic calming and provide pedestrians with safer crossings.
- Marked crosswalks by the use of colored and texturized concrete. There will also be stronger street lights marking crosswalks.
- Sidewalk bulb-outs generating a visual narrowing effect for motorists while providing street planters and a cohesive landscaping along the corridor. The planters will allow for street trees to generate a comfortable canopy for pedestrians.
- Strategic placement of bulb-outs every forty feet maintains current on-street parking capacity. In areas where street parking is not necessary or appropriate the sidewalk can be widened generating comfortable pocket parks with benches, trash receptacles, special lighting, and public art.
To further define the road a landscaped median will be placed at all intersections. This median is to extend no more than 80ft from the crosswalk and provide access for vehicles to turn. It also must not interfere with any access to sites off of the main road. Correctly placed landscaped medians will make crossings of El Camino Real more in line with a human scale. The breaking up of the street width will encourage pedestrians to frequent all areas of the El Camino Real corridor.
6.6 Typical Sidewalks

Sidewalks will be 10ft wide and be marked by bulb-outs with tree planters spaced every 40ft. The trees will allow for a comfortable canopies increasing walkability and will provide for traffic calming by generating a narrower field of vision for motorists. Benches and trash receptacles will be placed at intervals next to the bulb-outs, and the special street lights will increase pedestrian safety. In locations where side parking is not necessary, such as along large parking lots and in front of the future Farmers Market at the Albertsons shopping center, the sidewalk will be widened for a pocket park featuring more benches, tables and seats, and public art.
Hypothetical variations of the design model for the sidewalks and pocket parks.
General view of El Camino Real showing the extended pocket park in front of the proposed Farmers Market and infill development at the Albertsons’ parking lot.
6.7 Side Streets

The side streets along South El Camino Real will follow a model as shown in the plan and crosssection. Street trees will be placed at intervals of 40ft with lamp posts between them. Efforts shall be made to incorporate sidewalks and bike lanes in all side streets to further enhance pedestrian access, strengthening linkages to the surroundings. Residents of the surrounding areas will be encouraged to walk and bike to the revitalized corridor.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Design Guidelines
Chapter Seven: Design Guidelines

This chapter provides design guidelines for the future development of the South El Camino Real as well as specific guidelines for the five distinct Districts. These Design Guidelines are intended to facilitate development of an economically vibrant boulevard, consistent with the goals of Identity, Human Scale, Connectivity, Safety, and Resilience Design Principles outlined earlier in this document. The guidelines should be adhered to in the development of all new projects as well as in existing lots undergoing upgrades or redevelopment.

All guidelines are consistent with analysis of the current site needs and with public comments and vision. The guidelines provided are meant to supplement, not replace the City’s existing Design Guidelines. Nor are these guidelines intended to encumber creativity in the architectural review process.

The General Guidelines apply to all development throughout the South ECR. Additionally, Specific Guidelines are provided with distinct architectural styles, landscape elements and features that are applicable to the five Districts listed below:

- Plaza District
- Village District
- New Town District
- Liberty District
- Gateway District

### 7.1 General Guidelines

The following general design guidelines are applicable to all projects along the South ECR corridor in the plan area and should be considered as the foundation for development for all projects within the districts as well.

#### Historic Architectural Styles

In order to maintain Atascadero’s small town character, new development along the South ECR corridor should be guided by Atascadero’s eclectic architectural styles. Historic buildings are defined by design features of the Colony development which is influenced by Spanish and Classic revival styles, with Arts and Crafts and Art Deco influences. Development should incorporate elements from these styles. Some recognizable features are:

**Arts and Crafts**
- Wood, stone, or stucco siding
- Low-pitched roofs
- Wide eaves
- Exposed roof rafters
- Porches with thick square or round columns
- Stone porch supports
- Exterior stone chimneys
- Numerous windows
- Some windows with stained or leaded glass

**Bungalow**
- Low, pitched roofs
- Multiple roof planes
- Dormer windows
- Ornate central entrances
- Prominent, raised front porches
- Extension of main roofs to create front awnings
- Brick or stone exterior chimneys

**Spanish Revival or Mediterranean**
- Scalloped roof parapets
- Stucco exteriors
- Clay tile roofing, generally red
- Exterior balconies

**Classic Revival**
- Brick and reinforced cement exteriors
- Symmetrical designs
- Round or square colonnades
- Ornate entrance ways, often with shallow peristyles.

**Art Deco**
- Ornamental motifs
- Linear symmetry
- Geometric shapes
- Eclectic materials

### A. Building Footprint and Setbacks

Building footprints and setbacks play an important role in the perception of scale for pedestrians and of the cohesiveness among diverse building styles and uses. Bringing consistency to these elements can make an environment more comfortable, easier to navigate, and welcoming for pedestrians and motorists alike.

1. The building relationship to the site should consider adequate landscaping, safe pedestrian movement and parking areas.
2. Zero setbacks are encouraged to generate pedestrian access, safety, and visibility. Exceptions should occur only when they provide opportunities for public use and should be appropriately landscaped to match the aesthetic and design guidelines of the designated district.
3. Building mass and envelope should be on the human scale, consistent with the intended use and themes of its District.
4. Building massing should preserve existing view sheds of Pine and Chalk Mountain.
5. Building height should not exceed two (2) stories. Three (3) story exceptions made for special uses or landmark buildings in the New Town District.
6. Siting, shape, and architectural solutions should respect existing topography, drainage patterns, and significant trees and landscaping.
**Chapter Seven: Design Guidelines**

**B. Facades**

Building facades and architectural style are one of the most important elements in establishing identity and sense of place. Stylistic facades will enrich El Camino Real’s landscape and make it an inviting place for people to come, shop, play and stay.

1. Facades should embody the architectural design style of the district through materials, colors, size, and shape.
2. Architectural treatments like windows, doors, eaves, and parapets should be incorporated in the style of the district to add interest, provide transparency, and harmonize the built environment.
3. Exterior architectural details should be added to eliminate expansive wall faces that are unchanged or contain no openings. Blank, windowless facades should either incorporate lighting features, public art installation, distinct materials, or vertical planting systems.
4. Roof design and materials should complement and enhance the building design rather than dominate or be non-existent.
5. The material, style and color of awning should match the design themes of the District.
6. Building materials and colors should be durable, architecturally pleasing and consistent with the style guidelines of the district.
7. Building entrances and windows should be oriented to accommodate pedestrian scale and facilitate the relationship between the street, sidewalks and buildings.

8. Existing historical architecture and signage should be preserved.
   a. Recessed entrances and large, prominent windows on the ground level encouraged.
   b. Providing ‘active’ entry spaces with pedestrian amenities and activities is encouraged.
   c. Amenities such as shaded seating and tables, drinking fountains, and bike racks are encouraged.
9. Project developments should integrate open space, outdoor seating, green spaces and other community gathering spaces.

**C. Low Impact Development**

All development should incorporate low impact features. This can include specific design elements, materials, and technologies. Carefully considering these elements can save energy and money as well as conserve water and other resources.

1. Design should include passive heating and cooling features. This may include considering structure orientation, as well as roof and window design to incorporate passive solar, green roof, and insulating materials.
2. Where appropriate, design should incorporate solar photovoltaics.
3. Design should incorporate locally sourced, recycled, and low-impact materials.
4. Porous parking lot materials are encouraged to be used in the overall parking lot design to allow storm water runoff and pollutants to be absorbed.
5. Bioswales or other landscaped elements are encouraged to filter sediments and pollutants from run-off while providing biodiversity and aesthetics.
6. Other green features such as retaining walls, terraces, water retention ponds, and permeable sidewalk pavement are encouraged.

**D. On-Premise Signage**

Signage plays an important role in the success of a business and will contribute to a strong identity for Atascadero. Signage Guidelines are intended to add character to streets and districts along El Camino Real and facilitate wayfinding. The guidelines are intended to prevent visual clutter that detracts both from the character of the city as well as the overall business environment.

The Atascadero Municipal Code states that sign information be kept at a minimum in the interest of both aesthetics and traffic safety (9-15.001). Chapter 9-15.003 (3) states, all signs that are not specifically exempted from this chapter [Nonprofit events, redevelopment projects] are subject to the appearance review guidelines and an approved sign permit. While all signage should conform to the standards of the city’s Sign Code contained in Chapter 9-15 of the Municipal Code, the following design guidelines for signage are flexible to promote creativity, not uniformity.

7. Signs should be clear, concise, and easy to read and understand.
8. Signs should be an integral part of the overall building and site design and should support the building’s overall architectural style.
9. Signage should be compatible with the building’s colors, materials, and design motifs.
10. Signage location, scale, and appearance should complement the character of the district to create an integrated and legible environment.
11. Signage shall reflect the specific attributes of each district.

---

**C.1:** An example of a building with passive heating and cooling elements incorporated into the design.

**B.2, B.7:** An example of facades that are transparent to the street with wide, glass entrances.
12. Neon lights, flashing signs, and internally illuminated signs should be discouraged.

13. Signage along should contribute to street activity and enhance the street-level experience.

14. Signs along South ECR should be scaled to the storefront in a pedestrian-oriented environment as opposed to signage scaled in a auto-oriented environment along Highway 101.

15. Hanging signs should be encouraged.

16. Sign regulations should protect historic areas, landmarks, and public view or vistas.

17. Murals should be encouraged on certain walls. Public art murals should not contain text or a specific commercial message.

E. Car Access and Onsite Parking

Parking is critical in the design of a building. Parking must be convenient and accessible to the driver while maintaining an inviting and safe pedestrian and bicyclist environment. The “sea of asphalt” effect should be mitigated through landscaping. Parking design needs to be integrated into the overall site plan, providing landscaping and pedestrian access.

Parking and loading standards are intended to: minimize street congestion and traffic hazards; provide safe and convenient access to businesses, public services, and places of public assembly; and to make the appearance of parking areas more compatible with surrounding land uses. (9-4.114). While all parking should conform to the parking standards of the city contained in Chapter 9-4 of the Municipal Code, the following design guidelines for parking are intended to improve the design of parking lots while minimizing the impact on development.

1. Street trees and perimeter screening is encouraged to screen parking lots from adjoining pedestrian walkways.
   a. Breaks in landscaped screening should be provided to allow for pedestrian circulation.

2. Parking lots should be landscaped with trees, shrubs, and/or grasses on the interior lot as well as along the perimeter to screen parking lot from sidewalk.

3. A planter should generally be planted every sixth parking stall to provide shade and mitigate runoff.

4. Curb cuts should be limited and widths be reduced to promote street continuity and reduce conflict with pedestrians.

5. Entryways should be limited to the minimum number required in Municipal Code 9-4.117.

6. Common driveways should be encouraged.

7. Entryways should be located on side streets.

8. Shared on-site and shared peak-hour parking is encouraged.
   a. Businesses should encourage off-peak usage of parking lots inviting uses such as farmer’s markets to utilize the space.

9. Parking should service multiple parcels to reduce need for on-site parking.

10. Parking should be located behind buildings.

11. If rear parking is not possible, parking should be located to the sides of a building with the lot screened from the street.

12. Parking lots should not take more than 40 percent of the main street frontage of a project site.

13. Parking lots should include pedestrian walkways to link parking areas to the building.

14. Parking lots should be designed so pedestrians walk parallel to moving vehicles.

15. Parking lots should include adequate bicycle racks that are close to the building.
   a. One (1) rack containing five (5) bicycle spots for every twenty (20) parking spaces in lot.

16. Parking lots should mitigate runoff through stormwater retention areas.

17. Parking spaces should be designed with permeable paving material such as gravel grids, pervious concrete, or porous pavers.

F. Landscaping, Shading, and Outdoor Furniture

Landscaping is an essential part of a user friendly streetscape. Trees and plants add to the identity, comfort, and beauty as well as shading. These features assist in defining a sense of place. In all cases landscaping and furnishing should be integrated into the overall design and be mindful of the scale and styles of surrounding structures. Outdoor public space should be incorporated into lot design and should provide adequate seating, lighting and tree shade to complement the center and provide opportunities for recreation or rest.
1. Landscaping should be incorporated in areas transitioning between adjoining properties. This suggests connectivity and cohesion between buildings of different styles.

2. Planting native, drought tolerant and fire retardant plants and trees is highly encouraged.

3. Trees or potted plants should be placed at intervals necessary to provide continuous shading along lot front line. Trees provide shading and buffer pedestrian shopping and dining areas from street traffic.

4. Pedestrian walkways should incorporate decorative paving techniques and materials.

5. Natural or existing topographic landscape that contributes to beauty and utility of development should be preserved or enhanced.

6. Landscape treatment should be provided to enhance architectural features, strengthen vistas and important axes, and provide shade.

7. Design cohesion should be achieved by repetition of certain plants or other materials.

8. Parking areas and traffic ways should be enhanced with landscaped areas.

9. Exterior lighting should enhance building design and adjoining landscape. Excessive brightness is discouraged.

10. Outdoor furniture including benches, tables, and chairs are encouraged. Aesthetic structures such as window boxes, trash receptacles, shading structures, bicycle racks, planters, decorated mail boxes, and other pedestrian-scale amenities are also encouraged.

11. Seating and shading structures, especially, are encouraged to provide a pleasant pedestrian experience, allowing for respite and gathering areas. Seating can be incorporated in many forms including ledges, walls, and benches in addition to chairs.

12. Outdoor furniture should be compatible with the style of the building and with the character of district. All furniture should be made of durable materials and be well-maintained.

13. Platforms seating, tables, potted plants and other furniture may be placed in the right-of-way parking lane for dining or other gather activities, where approved to be a “parklet” area and should not inhibit pedestrian or vehicle circulation.

5. Views to entrances should be emphasized by open design, large windows, and framing landscape features.

6. Screening should not inhibit access to entrances or visibility of nearby lots.

H. Public Art

The display of public art is encouraged throughout the corridor. Art enriches our urban landscape by engaging the visitor and increasing attractiveness of local businesses and services. Art enhances private and public developments and contributes to a more livable and beautiful space. Additionally, artistic monuments can provide definitive landmarks that attract outside visitors and provide unique identity. Local artists and local historical content can also enhance sense of community and maintain small town character.

1. Incorporating permanent art into building and landscape design is highly encouraged.

2. Functional structures should include art elements or visually appealing characteristics.
   a. Sculptures, fountains, murals, and decorated mailboxes, lanterns, benches, ledges, and bike racks are encouraged.

3. Artwork should be clearly visible and accessible from the street.

4. Artwork that emphasizes the history and character of Atascadero and surrounding region is encouraged.

5. Collaboration among artists, developers, architects, and business owners is encouraged in order to create unifying content or artistic design elements in art on multiple properties.

6. Art that invites public, especially youth, participation and interaction is encouraged.

7. Artwork and murals on “blank” walls or surfaces is encouraged.

8. Monumental artwork that is visible from US-101 is encouraged.

9. Artists are encouraged to provide an informational panel on the art piece.

10. Public art and aesthetic design features should be incorporated in the overall design of development projects.

11. Public art that is ‘interactive’ with visitors is encouraged.
Chapter Seven: Design Guidelines

7.2 Specific Guidelines

Plaza District

The Plaza District will be a shopping destination. The following design elements will revitalize this area of South El Camino Real and encourage activity throughout the day and evening. Pedestrian scale amenities and accessibility will allow for greater walkability within and between distinct shopping plazas.

1. Façades
   1. Frontages should be inspired by Spanish Revival architectural styles.
   2. Development design with connected shop fronts opening to central public plazas is encouraged.

2. Building Footprint and Setbacks
   1. Building setbacks for parking should never exceed sixty (60) feet.
   2. Buildings should not exceed thirty (30) feet.

3. Trees and plants
   1. Tree and plants selected should include: Crepe Myrtle, Eastern Redbud
   2. Additional plant types that are encouraged include: Trident maple, sages, deer grass and other drought-resistant native shrubs and grasses.

4. Public art and murals
   1. A central monument or fountain in plazas is encouraged.
   2. Decorative tiling or brick designs that define and accentuate public plaza spaces are encouraged.

5. Onsite Parking
   1. Front parking lots should only be in front when shared by multiple tenants in a plaza oriented design.
Building setbacks for parking should never exceed (60) feet. Front parking lots should only be in front when shared by multiple tenants in a plaza oriented design.

Colorful seasonal trees provides pleasant landscape features for pedestrians.

A central monument or fountain is encouraged for plazas.
Chapter Seven: Design Guidelines

Village District

This district celebrates the unique character and buildings of historic Atascadero. The Village District will represent the spectrum of notable architectural styles along the corridor including Arts & Crafts, Spanish revival and Classic Revival. The area will provide an eclectic mix of smaller scale retail, dining, and office uses. The development of retail and social spaces will connect and bolster activities and uses already developed in the Downtown Colony Square.

1. Façades
   1. Façades should be inspired by Arts and Crafts, Spanish Revival and Classic Revival architectural elements.
   2. Development design should reference existing Colony home styles.

Building Footprint and Setbacks.

1. Building frontage should meet front lot lines.
2. Buildings should not exceed twenty-five (25) feet.

2. Trees and Plants
   1. Tree and plants selected should include: Tulip Trees, Eastern Redbud, Trident Maple.
   2. Additional plant types that are encouraged include: Trident maple, sages, deer grass and other drought-resistant native shrubs and grasses.
   3. Flower gardens and planters are strongly encouraged to add color and warmth to the Village landscape.

3. Public Art & Murals
   1. Public art and murals will be of especial focus in the Village district. Local art will create a warm and inviting environment, celebrate Atascadero’s culture and establish a sense of community.
   2. A variety of art mediums should be commissioned to add color and interest to mundane public structures and landscape. (refer to General Public Art & Murals Guidelines).
A variety of art mediums should be commissioned to add color and interest to mundane public structures and landscapes.

Frontages should be inspired by arts and crafts, Spanish and Classic Revival Architectural elements.

Development should reference existing colony home styles.

Blank exteriors and frontages should be avoided.

Flower gardens and planters are strongly recommended to add color and warmth to the streetscape.
New Town District

The New Town District, located on South El Camino Real at Cubaril Avenue, will be a distinct destination for shopping and socializing. The District will serve as an entertainment focal-point of the El Camino Real Corridor that is active during business and evening hours. It will be oriented toward pedestrian-scale experience, with compact layout, plazas, abundant seating and shade, and recreational opportunities. The District will include various forms of general and specialty retail, dining and entertainment establishments. Additionally, professional and office uses will be intermingled. The District will be a node of activity centralized between the Gateway District and the Downtown area, activating activity in the heart of the ECR corridor and connecting to other gathering areas.

1. Facade
   1. Historic buildings should be preserved and enhanced.
   2. Frontages should be inspired by Spanish and Classic revival style.

2. Building Footprint and Setbacks
   1. Building frontage should be front lot lines.
   2. Continuous building frontage accommodating multiple tenants and shop entrances are encouraged.
   3. Buildings should not exceed thirty-five (35) feet.

3. Trees and Plants
   1. Tree and plants selected should include: Green Vase Zelkova, Magnolia, and Coastal Live Oak.

4. Corner Development
   Good street corner design can contribute to street vitality and place-making identity for Atascadero. Street corners in the New Town District will play an important role in establishing a distinct destination and connecting the corridor to the downtown.
   1. Setbacks for corner buildings should be spacious enough to allow for public rendezvous or pocket parks.
   2. Building height should be up to three (3) stories or two (2) stories with an appropriate landmark or monument to set it apart from the rest of the block and establish it as a district.
   3. Building’s corner edges should be softened with entrances, windows or other architectural elements to provide safety and visibility for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.
   4. Larger trees and plants should be displayed. Live oak trees are especially encouraged.
Examples of coastal live oaks in the area that should be preserved.

Example of historic buildings that should be preserved and enhanced.

Sketch example of corner development.
Chapter Seven: Design Guidelines

Warehouse District

This District is intended to accommodate and concentrate a range of roadway and vehicle oriented retail, service and wholesale commercial activities. The land uses in this District will emphasize automotive businesses with intermingled light industrial and office uses.

The following design guidelines apply to projects in the Warehouse District. Land uses within this district will consist of automotive sales, repair and services. There is a great deal of development opportunity for automotive businesses to locate or relocate to these planned centers. The consolidation of automotive dealerships and services would lead to a more efficient land utilization along South El Camino Real as well as benefit businesses by improving public access to auto related services. Economic analysis shows significant sales leakage in Atascadero relating to motor vehicle sales (refer to Economics, page 25.) The creation of the Warehouse District could attract major sales tax back to Atascadero.

While all auto dealers, service stations, auto repair and services must conform to the standards of the Atascadero Municipal Code contained in Title 9, Chapter 6, the following design guidelines are intended to improve the design and access of these services while minimizing the impact of its development.

1. Facades
1. Buildings in this District should use the Art Deco architectural style.
2. Design consistency with use of colors and materials in this district should be considered in the design review process.
3. Rustic metal materials should be encouraged on the exterior of buildings. Artwork is encouraged on metal rooftops.
4. Visibility from the public street with a focal point on automotive sales, repair and services areas should be encouraged.

2. Building Footprint and Setbacks
1. Services conducted adjacent to residential uses should provide appropriate buffering techniques, landscaping and setbacks to mitigate any negative effects created by the operation.
2. Car wash stations in view of the public street should be screened with landscaping.
3. Auto dealers should consider building the main showroom on the minimum ten (10) foot front setback with large, transparent window displaying their inventory.

3. Trees and Plants
1. Tree and plants selected should include: Green Vase Zelkova and Coastal Live Oak.
2. While trees may not be appropriate or suitable in some circumstances, angled parking areas provide opportunities for shrubs, grasses, and flowers.
3. Auto dealerships are subject to the Landscaping and Screening ordinance (9-6.163, g.).

An example of pleasant landscape and sidewalks as a buffering technique in a car dealership setback area.
4. Lighting

1. Lighting adjacent to residential land uses should be fully shielded and pointed away from residential areas.

2. Automotive dealerships should be subjected to additional lighting regulations and should be treated on an individual bases and reviewed by the Planning Commission.
   a. The minimization of light intensity on auto dealer lots is encouraged to maintain the rural atmosphere of the area.
   b. Outdoor lighting should be dimmed at the close of business hours.

5. Signage

1. Auto services stations and dealers with frontage along Highway 101 should consider have a pole mounted freeway oriented sign that increases the District's visibility.

2. Portable signs, banners and other similar temporary signs should not be allowed.
Chapter Seven: Design Guidelines

South Gateway

El Camino Real’s South Gateway will provide a distinct and memorable entrance to Atascadero and a strong connection to the historical downtown. It will be a robust commercial activity node which emphasizes a people-friendly environment, and open spaces and plazas will integrate private developments to the public domain of the sidewalks. The bridge over US-101 will be remodeled to include dedicated bicycle lanes, cantilevered sidewalks, and special lighting.

1. Facades
   1. Buildings should follow Mediterranean or Spanish Revival architectural styles.

2. Building Massing and Setbacks
   1. Front setbacks should not exceed thirty-five (35) feet, and side setbacks should be kept to the minimum as required by the City of Atascadero.
   2. Building should be kept to two stories (2) and a maximum height of thirty-five (35) feet from the highest point, except in landmark buildings by special permission.
   3. Large buildings should be designed so that their architectural massing is broken down to achieve a more human scale.

3. Trees and Landscaping
   1. The tree species that are encouraged are: Palm Trees to accentuate or punctuate architecture and plazas, and Coastal Oak Woodland and Magnolia to provide shading and urban forest effect.
   2. Landscape design and planting should make use of xeroscaping solutions and use native and drought-tolerant species.
   3. Classic style architecture and sculpture in PUDs’ central plazas is encouraged.

4. Development
   1. Planned Unit Developments (PUD) are encouraged throughout the South Gateway District to increase overall architectural and design consistency, provide solutions for shared parking, and for better management of common parts.
   2. The development of common areas, plazas, and pocket parks open to the public is encouraged.
Chapter Seven: Design Guidelines

The development of common areas such as this pocket park is encouraged.

Example of central plaza in a planned unit development (PUD).

Example of planned unit development (PUD).

The development of common areas such as this pocket park is encouraged.

Building heights should be kept to two stories with varying bulks and facade treatment.
CHAPTER EIGHT

SOUTH GATEWAY DISTRICT
Page left intentionally blank
Chapter Eight: South Gateway District

CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAM

Central fountain as focal point
Mixed Uses: Office & Residential
Fountain as landmark
Multi mode bridge
Office/Commercial Park
Linear Park
Roundabout with monument
LEGEND
- OFFICE/COMMERCIAL
- RETAIL
- MIXED-USE
- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MED DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- OPEN SPACE
- VEHICLE CIRCULATION
- PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

6 150 200 400
Bird’s eye view of the South Gateway District showing its final proposed development.
Chapter Eight: South Gateway District

City Of Atascadero

Area 1: Creekside Gateway

The intent of the Creekside Gateway development is to provide a strong sense of place and help marking Atascadero's south entrance along El Camino Real. The overall design and placement of buildings and land-uses generate a lively and walkable environment, and provide strong linkages between El Camino Real and the existing residential areas to the northeast. Drivers and pedestrians will be attracted to the development by the plaza at the corner of Principal Avenue and by the succession of landscaped public open spaces and view corridors between buildings along the development, including a linear park along the creek and riparian corridor with pedestrian and bike paths that will connect El Camino Real to the golf course.

The development is divided into two main areas: the South and the North Creekside Gateway. The South Creekside Gateway features a 14,900 square-foot commercial complex around the corner plaza that opens up to El Camino Real. Shops, eateries, and cafes will attract patrons, and decks with seating will take advantage of the views to the linear park and riparian corridor. Next to the commercial complex along Principal Avenue, an apartment building will feature twenty two-bedroom units. A new road will connect Pino Solo Avenue to a residential PUD with 16 single family units, some of them with their fronts towards the linear park and the riparian corridor.

The North Creekside Gateway development includes a 85,125 square-foot retail complex next to the creek and along El Camino Real, as well as a set of 14 townhomes and 8 single family homes. The retail buildings are organized around a large central plaza as the pole of public and commercial activity.

The placement of different uses and the system of open spaces provide a smooth transition towards the existing residential neighborhoods and to buffer them from the more intense uses along El Camino Real. Also, the residential use gets less dense the farther away from El Camino Real until the single family homes are reached, when the development blends well with the existing single family residences in the neighborhood.
Conceptual model showing aerial view of the Creekside Gateway development. View from the South.

View of single family homes that face the creek and passive park.

View of the townhomes with the central courtyard and playground.
Chapter Eight: South Gateway District

Conceptual model showing aerial view of the Creekside Gateway development along El Camino Real. View from the North.

Commercial and retail front to activate El Camino Real

View of a courtyard with fountain at the intersection of Principle and El Camino Real

Central commercial courtyard with seating and retail
Chapter Eight: South Gateway District

Area 2: Office Park

The El Camino Real Office Park is located on the west side of El Camino Real, between La Lina Avenue and Santa Rosa Avenue, and its development respects the existing Motel 6 and hardware store. The project’s site design allows for a strong integration with El Camino Real by providing easy access, plenty of visibility, and a pedestrian-friendly environment with a series of street-oriented uses.

Facing the sidewalk there are public oriented uses such as retail units and restaurants, as well as an entry plaza with plenty of landscaping and outdoor seating that support the retail and eateries. A central linear park-like area separates these buildings from those located towards the back of the site, dedicated to more specialized commercial, service, light industrial, and office uses. The building located in the center, behind the plaza, is the only two-story to promote visibility and also privacy for the second floor. A new road runs through the entire project along the back property line, providing access to the rear, to parking, and connecting to La Lina Avenue. Parking is located on either side of the central space, as well as in the rear.

The El Camino Real Office Park totals 36,500 square feet of leasable space: 13,600 square feet of commercial space and 31,000 square feet of office space. There is a total of 256 off-street parking spaces.
Chapter Eight: South Gateway District

Section AB

El Camino Real
Small shops, eateries, cafes and bakeries
First floor: Retail
Second floor: Offices

Parking lot south of the site.
Plaza faces El Camino Real with attractive seating areas.
View of the water fountain at the main entrance.
Seating area for surrounding retail buildings.
Area 3: Gateway Plaza & South Plaza

The major concept behind the development proposed around the intersection of El Camino Real with Santa Rosa Road is to generate a memorable gateway into Atascadero for drivers exiting Highway 101. When fully completed, the South Gateway will be recognized by residents and visitors alike as a distinct livable place, and will provide a strong connection between El Camino Real, 101 Highway 101 and the development located on the west side, and the downtown.

The full concept for the South Gateway project includes four complementary phases/parts that nonetheless can be implemented independently: a) new streetscaping including a roundabout; b) the Gateway Plaza directly facing the ramp from the Santa Rosa Bridge; c) the South Plaza located the south-east of that intersection; and d) renovations to the bridge and the pedestrian/bike linkages to the west.

Streetscaping

The new streetscaping along El Camino Real and the ramp connecting to the bridge is paramount to the South Gateway project. Not only it provides a strong welcoming feel through better sidewalks, landscaping, and tree planting but it supports the surrounding land uses and contributes to placemaking. The new roundabout slows vehicular traffic without diminishing the capacity of the thoroughfares, and contributes to the place’s identity through the display of a public art piece by a local artist (a sculpture or a mobile). The placement of planters and its trees at the median lane along El Camino Real emphasizes the place’s centrality.
Gateway Plaza

Together with the roundabout and its public art piece-- provides the focal point for the visual axis experienced by drivers/bikers/pedestrians coming down the ramp from the Santa Rosa Road Bridge. The Plaza's importance is emphasized by the massing of its architecture as well as by its open spaces and landscaping solution, and distinctiveness is provided by the adopted Spanish Revival style with beige facades and clay tile roofs. The robustness of the Gateway Plaza is guaranteed by the distribution of retail uses throughout the complex, complemented with the integration of these uses to the open spaces through outdoor seating and gathering areas. The core of this project is a linear plaza with stone fountain flanked by a row of palm trees on either side leading to a restaurant.

The development incorporates the veterinary hospital and an office under different more appropriate retail-oriented uses. Parking is located at both sides to allow a clear street frontage, attracting patrons. At El Camino Real trellises with planting providing aesthetical attraction and character to the Plaza will mark the entryways to the parking lots. Palm trees, magnolia trees, and aloe vera will be placed throughout the gardens and integrate well with the architectural style. The Gateway Plaza has 34,025 square feet of total square footage and offers 91 off-street parking spaces.
South Plaza

Located in the two blocks immediately to the south-east of the new roundabout, the South Plaza development expands on and incorporates the existing buildings and their respective uses. These include a bicycle shop, a small convenience store, and a fast-food eatery. A new street with a “U” shape connects back to El Camino Real to complete the block and facilitate pedestrian and vehicular access.

This new block includes mixed use buildings with retail/commercial uses on the bottom level and office space on the upper level. The massing and placing of the buildings generate a plaza open to El Camino Real, featuring landscaped areas, outdoor seating, and a central gathering area with a sunken fountain to attract patrons and provide a strong feeling of place. In addition, two two-story office buildings facing each other generate a central area for eating or working outdoors. All of these uses will have adequate parking located in the rear of the area to allow frontage of the plaza and retail.

The South Plaza offers a total of 47,600 square feet of built-up space and 127 off-street parking spaces.

Santa Rosa Bridge Renovation

The existing Santa Rosa Road bridge crossing Highway 101 is narrow with one traffic lane in each direction, a sidewalk only on the south side, and no bike lanes. Pedestrian and bike crossing is difficult, what is particularly troublesome given the fact that Santa Rosa Elementary School is located in the east side and several children walk to and from El Camino Real. The ramp down towards El Camino Real does not feature bike lanes either and the only sidewalk is located on the north side – opposite from what happens at the overpass, making pedestrians to cross both east Front Street and Santa Rosa Road to continue walking east, or risk climbing down the existing steep slope located at the south side of Santa Rosa Road towards the existing retail plaza.

This project adapts the bridge to all modes of transportation, to help marking the axis toward the South Gateway Plaza, and to provide a place-marker for drivers along Highway 101. The cost-effective design concept includes replacing the existing sidewalk and curb along the overpass for two dedicated bicycle lanes, protected from the traffic lanes by vertical PVC delineators. A light cantilevered steel structure extends from the overpass on both sides to provide pedestrian walks. The cantilever consists of a metal grid with a fence to provide additional safety. Light fixtures provide more safety and add human scale to the bridge, helping to identify it as the major south access to Atascadero.

Bicycle lanes are added to both sides of the Santa Rosa Road ramp between the bridge and El Camino Real, and a new sidewalk will be provided on the south side. A ramp and sidewalk provide better pedestrian access from the intersection of East Front Street and Santa Rosa down to the existing commercial plaza and its proposed extended development.
Chapter Eight: South Gateway District

The Santa Rosa bridge before and after, showing the cantilevered extension for pedestrians and the bikeway.

Proposal for the Santa Rosa bridge as seen from the highway.
View of the South Gateway District from the North-West
Chapter Eight: South Gateway District

View of the South Gateway District from the South-East


City of San Francisco. 2010. *Better Streets Plan*. City of San Francisco Planning Department.


