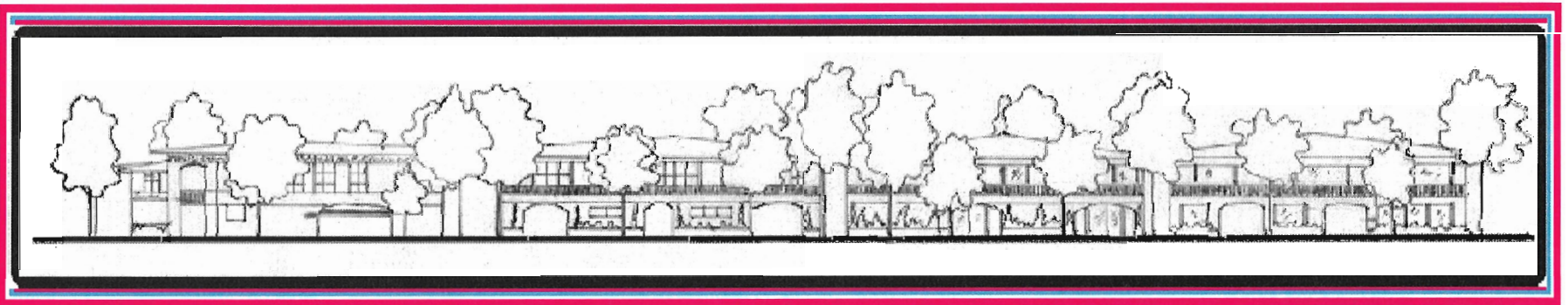


# **SAN LUIS OBISPO UPTOWN INFILL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**BY  
STEPHANIE M. SKANGOS**



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by

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Senior Project  
City and Regional Planning Department  
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San Luis Obispo  
2006

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**San Luis Obispo  
Uptown Infill Development Plan**

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June 2006

Zeljka Pavlovich Howard  
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# SAN LUIS OBISPO UPTOWN INFILL DEVELOPMENT PLAN



List of Figures	iii
Preface	v
<i>Some Thoughts</i>	v
Introduction	1
Existing Conditions	2
<i>Land Use</i>	2
<i>Historical Significance</i>	4
<i>General Plan, Land Use Element</i>	4
<i>Zoning Regulations</i>	5
<i>Community Design Guidelines</i>	6
Analysis: Opportunities and Constraints	7
<i>Opportunities</i>	7
<i>Constraints</i>	7
Infill Development	9
<i>What is Infill Development?</i>	9
<i>Why Infill for This Area?</i>	10
Case Studies	11
<i>Middletown, Connecticut: Main Street Market</i>	11
<i>Lawrence, Kansas: Downtown 2000</i>	11
<i>Roanoke, Virginia: Center in the Square</i>	12
<i>Bethesda, Maryland: Bethesda Row</i>	12
<i>Huntington Beach, California: Main Street</i>	13
<i>Redlands, California: Downtown Redlands</i>	13

Vision: Goals & Objectives **15**

*Issue 1* **15**

*Issue 2* **15**

Vision: Plan & Proposal **17**

*Proposal* **17**

*Plan* **17**

*Block 1: Alley and*

*Block 2: Monterey Street* **18**

*Block 3: Monterey Street and*

*Block 4: Higuera Street* **20**

*Block 5: Higuera Street and*

*Block 6: Marsh Street* **22**

Conclusion **25**

References **27**

Figure 1: Location Map	<b>1</b>
Figure 2: Site Location Map	<b>1</b>
Figure 3: Site Zoning Map	<b>2</b>
Figure 4: Site Aerial	<b>3</b>
Figure 5: Historically Significant Buildings	<b>4</b>
Figure 6: Map of Opportunities and Constraints	<b>8</b>
Figure 7: Example of Infill Development: Before and After	<b>9</b>
Figure 8: Examples of parking within project site	<b>10</b>
Figure 9: Main Street, Middletown, Connecticut	<b>11</b>
Figure 10: Downtown Lawrence	<b>11</b>
Figure 11: Roanoke Center in the Square	<b>12</b>
Figure 12: Bethesda Row, Maryland	<b>12</b>
Figure 13: Main Street, Huntington Beach	<b>13</b>
Figure 14: Downtown Redlands	<b>13</b>
Figure 15: Downtown SLO Design Guidelines	<b>15</b>
Figure 16: Mixed Use Design	<b>16</b>
Figure 17: Proposed Site Plan	<b>17</b>
Figure 18: Example of High-Density Residential	<b>18</b>
Figure 19: Proposed Site Plan and Street Elevations for Blocks 1 and 2	<b>19</b>
Figure 20: Example of restaurant with outdoor seating	<b>20</b>
Figure 21: Example of Work/Live Units	<b>20</b>
Figure 22: Proposed Site Plan and Street Elevations for Blocks 3 and 4	<b>21</b>
Figure 23: Example of Pedestrian Park	<b>22</b>
Figure 24: Example of Mixed-Use - First-floor retail with second and third floor office space	<b>22</b>
Figure 25: Proposed Site Plan and Street Elevations for Blocks 5 and 6	<b>23</b>
Figure 26: Example of Work/Live/Mixed-use	<b>24</b>



## Some Thoughts

This project represents an accumulation of five years of education aimed towards achieving my bachelor's degree. Knowledge gained from courses and real-world experiences have been combined in an effort to convey what I've learned during my years as a City and Regional Planning student at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. The work placed into the making of this project demonstrates my ability to take what I've learned throughout my years as a student and use this knowledge to help me succeed in the professional realm.

Through my course studies, I have developed an interest in the design aspect of the planning profession. The design of a community is an essential component to enhancing the quality of life in an area. For this reason, I am very interested in community development design with an emphasis on redevelopment and infill of existing communities. I have become very interested in community revitalization and the connection between the built environment and the social community.

It is this interest that led me to choose a senior project focused on the redevelopment of the uptown portion of the San Luis Obispo Downtown Core. This project has allowed me to focus my attention towards redeveloping an area I believe has great potential to become a thriving and vibrant community within the Downtown Core. Furthermore, this project has served as a great opportunity for me to put into practice what I've

learned thus far, work within my main area of interest, and prove to myself that I have the ability to continue to grow and gain knowledge throughout my life.

As my time as a college student begins to wane, and a new chapter of my life is opened, my hope is that others view this project as a successful stepping stone from the life of a college undergraduate to that of a planning professional. In any case, this is how I ultimately view it.

Stephanie Marie





## Introduction

The City of San Luis Obispo, located in Central California, attracts many people to its beautiful, small town environment. Downtown San Luis Obispo is a highly desirable location within the City for both residents and visitors. The City has identified a Downtown Core which can be described as the heart of the community. This area strongly defines San Luis Obispo and is the city's center for shopping, entertainment, and cultural and social activities. Therefore, it is essential that the entirety of this area be vibrant in order to maintain its attractiveness.

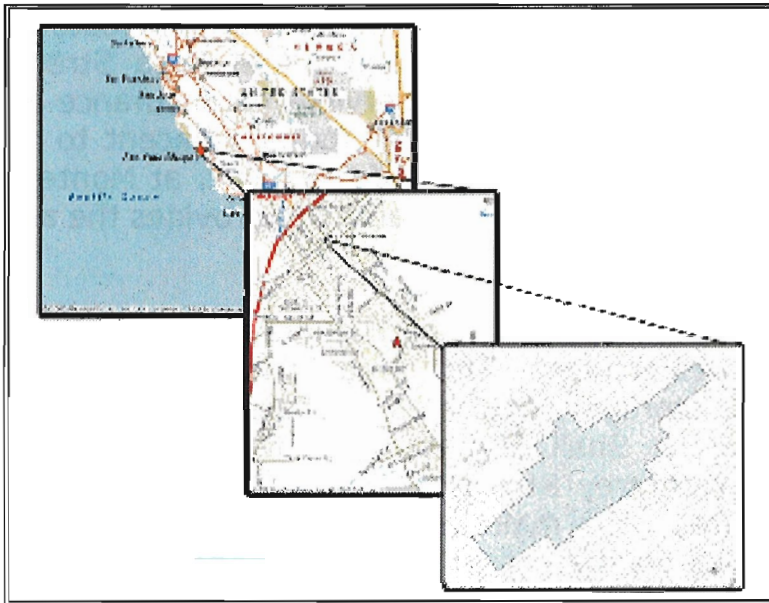


Figure 1: Location Map  
Sources: City of San Luis Obispo, MapQuest.com

This study focuses on the eastern edge of the downtown core, which is surrounded by Santa Rosa, Palm, Toro, and Marsh Streets (see Figure 2). The area is approximately 7.2 acres. Although it is part of the Downtown Core, this area fails to be representative of Downtown San Luis Obispo, and thus, revitalization and redevelopment are essential and necessary for this area. Based on an analysis of existing conditions of the project site and integration of the City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Guidelines, an infill development plan will be proposed. This plan will focus on the revitalization of the area, striving to expand the attractiveness of the Downtown into the outer areas of the Downtown Core.

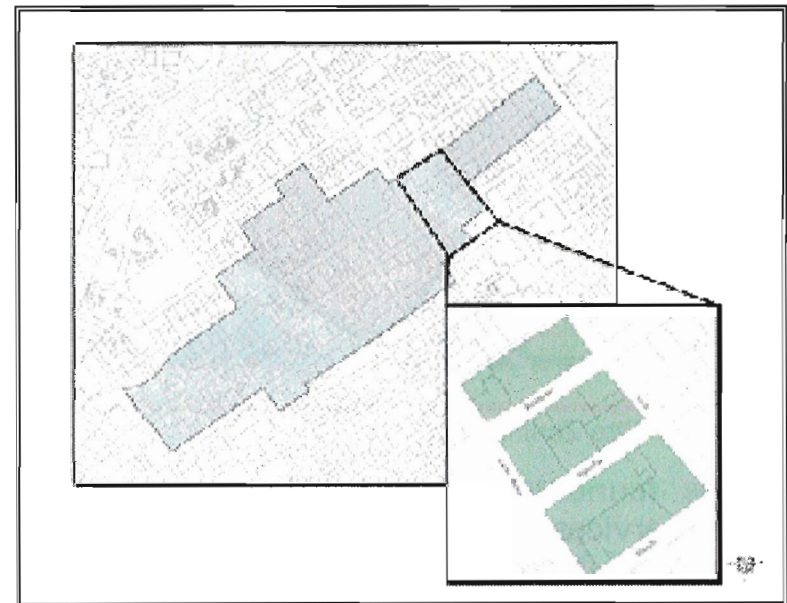


Figure 2: Site Location Map

## Existing Conditions

### Land Use

All parcels of the project site are currently developed; there are no open space lots within the project area. Most of the area is zoned Retail-Commercial (C-R); however, the parcel expanding along Toro Street between Higuera and Marsh Streets (Parcel 17) is zoned for Office (O) use. (See Figure 3.)



Figure 3: Site Zoning Map

The uses found in the area consist of legal and medical services, wholesale distribution centers, insurance and financial agents, manufacturing, automobile dealers and service stations, and automobile parking. Roughly four of the parcels are completely dedicated to off-street private automobile parking

lots. The other lots contain some sort of off-street parking as well. In fact, a large portion of the project site consists of pavement dedicated to parking for users of the area.

The area of the site that lies along the North side of Monterey Street consists of three office buildings dedicated to legal and medical services, and two buildings dedicated to administrative use by the County of San Luis Obispo. This large parcel (Parcel 3) is owned by the County. A portion of this parcel closest to Toro Street is used by San Luis Bay Motors. Across Monterey Street, a combination of uses allowed in the C-R zone can be found. These include the Downtown Shell Gas Station, located at the corner of Monterey and Santa Rosa Streets, a private parking lot that services the insurance and broker agents and services found adjacent to the lot. On the other corner of the block, at Monterey and Toro Streets, Santa Maria Tire provides the area with an auto supply store.

Along the north side of Higuera Street are two auto dealerships. This area is largely dedicated to the storage of vehicles for sale or repair. The Downtown Shell also extends over to this block from Monterey Street, along Santa Rosa. Across the street, the main use found is that of Bank of America on the corner of Higuera and Santa Rosa Streets. A large parcel is dedicated to parking for this use; this block is more than fifty percent parking.

Behind Bank of America and facing Marsh Street are a couple of private parking lots servicing a legal service office and County of SLO Risk





Figure 4: Site Aerial



Management office buildings. There are a few vacant offices within these buildings. These parcels are all owned by RKE Properties II, which is managed by Rossi Enterprises. This includes the various office buildings found on Parcel 17. The uses that make up Parcel 17 include various private legal and medical firms, as well as County medical services. Financial services are also located within these buildings. Many of the suites are currently vacant.

## *Historical Significance*

The City of San Luis Obispo is full of historic remnants from the past. The City prides itself on its historical background; City Departments and Officials attempt to preserve any buildings of historical significance in order to preserve a portion of the San Luis Obispo of the past for future generations. Therefore, areas of historical significance are very important and meaningful to the City.

Within the project site, there are a few buildings of historical significance (see Figure 5). These buildings are significant because they were built before 1927. They have been restored and some have been retrofitted, but the original buildings remain. An office building located on Parcel 17 (1160 Marsh Street) has been placed on the Master List of Historic Resources for the City of San Luis Obispo. This building contains three levels and is divided into a number of different suites containing various uses. A few of the suites are currently vacant.



Figure 5: Historically Significant Buildings

## *General Plan, Land Use Element*

The Land Use Element of the General Plan of San Luis Obispo provides overall information on the City's future vision for the area. These guidelines drive the future development and growth of the City so as to create and preserve the desired image of the community.

Chapter 3 of the Land Use Element discusses commercial and industrial development. The project site is designated for both general retail and office development based on the Land Use Map. General Retail, as detailed in LUE 3.1, should be located in areas with access to arterial and collector streets, yet be designed so as to avoid increasing traffic on residential streets.

The demands of the city, and the county, should be met by the amount of retail in the area. *LUE 3.4: Offices* maintains that financial and professional services, as well as governmental services, shall be provided for the community in the peripheral areas of the Downtown Core. Historic and architecturally significant buildings located within office districts should be conserved rather than replaced.

The project site is located within the Downtown Core, and thus, Chapter 4 of the Land Use Element, which discusses the visions for Downtown San Luis Obispo, is relevant to this study. LUE 4.1 maintains the role of the downtown as one in which economic vitality is of great importance. Furthermore, the downtown area serves as the political, cultural, and social center of the City, and thus, must meet the demands of both the city and the county and suitably accommodate pedestrian access, off-street parking, and compact building design.

### *Zoning Regulations*

The City of San Luis Obispo has designated certain uses that are allowed within the Retail Commercial (C-R) zone in Chapter 17.40 and Office (O) zone in Chapter 17.34 in the City's Zoning Code. The City has also established uses that can be allowed in each zone based on use permit approval by the Director of Community Development or the Planning Commission. Some of the uses allowed in the C-R zone include live/work units,

mixed-use projects, convenience store, auto parts sales, medical services and financial institutions. Uses allowed in the O zone range from private meeting halls to residential care facilities to transit stops.

In addition to the above mentioned uses, the City has also described certain uses that are allowed in most zones with use permit approval (Chapter 17.08: Uses Allowed in Several Zones). For this particular study, the relevant uses allowed include temporary uses, such as construction activities and educational conferences, service stations, child and adult day care, and live/work and work/live units.

The zoning ordinance details the property development standards and maintenance standards for each zone in Chapters 17.16 and 17.17. Density and parking requirements are especially important to the development of property anywhere in the City. Based on the City's zoning ordinance, the maximum density allowed for the C-R zone is 36 units per net acre regardless of the cross-slope. For the O zone, the allowed density ranges from 12 units per net acre at a zero to 15 percent cross-slope to 2 units per net acre at a 26 percent or more slope. Parking requirements for both zones are based on the type of use.



### *Community Design Guidelines*

The City of San Luis Obispo has also created Community Design Guidelines to guide the development of design projects and provide developers and project applicants with information on the City's expectations and preferences for the quality and character of new development. The Community Design Guidelines have established a set of goals for design quality and character that focus on the following: architectural distinction within the City, creation of pedestrian scale, the protection of natural resources and the integration of the natural and built environments.

The architecture found in the City of San Luis Obispo reflects the various influences of particular periods of growth. There is no single style that distinguishes the local residential and commercial areas, but rather a set of various complimentary design styles that encompass historic and present-day San Luis Obispo. The City desires to maintain this architectural quality, and provides guidelines on developing new buildings that fit into the City as a whole and the immediate surrounding contextual neighborhoods.

Of particular relevance to this study are the design guidelines for commercial projects found in Chapter 3 of the *Community Design Guidelines* and the downtown area in Chapter 4. The guidelines stress the importance of neighborhood compatibility and design consistency for commercial projects. The surrounding areas of a building site

will determine most of the elements in a new design. An important design goal focuses on the development of a new building with the appropriate design theme of the surrounding area, while complying with building scale and size, setbacks and massing, and building textures and materials. The Community Design Guidelines describe the particular elements required for commercial projects, including form and mass, rooflines, building and parking location, and building materials, all of which are suggested in order to maintain design and site consistency throughout the project site and its surrounding areas.

The guidelines for the downtown area focus on the primary goal of preserving and enhancing the attractiveness of the area to residents and visitors. Specific requirements for the street orientation, height, scale, and façade design of buildings located in the downtown core are suggested so as to create an area that is welcoming and pleasant. The City strives to maintain a pedestrian-oriented downtown full of life, character and vitality.

## Analysis: Opportunities and Constraints

Based on the gathered background information about the project site and the City's Land Use Element, Zoning Code, and Community Design Guidelines, a number of opportunities and constraints for the project site can be inferred.

### *Opportunities*

An important opportunity arises from City involvement. The project site has recently been considered by the City has a great opportunity for redevelopment. The Community Development Department has received some tentative proposals for the area. Furthermore, there is a project underway involving the intensity and building height regulations for the Downtown Core. The area from Santa Rosa to Pepper Street of the Downtown Core is being considered for renovation and potential redevelopment within this project. Therefore, redevelopment of the project site is likely to be accepted by the City.

Another opportunity lies within the fact that the project area is almost completely developed, and the current buildings can be used for further economic growth. There are many vacancies in existing buildings which can be occupied by new tenants, while existing thriving businesses can remain intact. Complete redevelopment is not necessary for most of the area. Façade improvements and retrofitting of buildings would entail

most development in the area, yet some new development can also occur.

Because a large portion of the project site is dedicated to parking, the use of infill development to revitalize the site is a major opportunity. Currently, the required parking is large because of the existing uses in the area, such as the auto dealerships and repair services. The required number of parking will decrease when these uses are changed to office, retail, and residential. Thus, most of the parking in the area can be eliminated while still complying with the City's parking requirements, and the area can be made more compact through the use of infill development.

### *Constraints*

A major constraint to the redevelopment of the project site is the historical significance of many of the buildings located within the area. Although the focus of the revitalization in this project is infill development and, hence, most existing buildings will be conserved rather than replaced, the opportunity to replace a building if necessary is highly limited. Furthermore, any new construction that is to take place on a parcel which contains a building of historical significance to the City, whether the original building will be affected or not, entails a more restrictive and lengthy process. Even façade improvements and retrofitting of historically significant buildings require extra limitations and processes.



Another constraint revolves around the fact that many of the sites have ground water and soil contamination problems. Before any redevelopment can occur, this needs to be remediated. A problem within this is that in order to remove the contamination on some of the sites, buildings will need to be removed; some of these buildings are considered historically significant. Normally, it is the responsibility of the current property owner, regardless of whether their use caused the contamination or not, to remediate any soil contamination on their property. However, because the contamination has been assessed as not hazardous, the City has approved an ordinance which requires that once contaminated property is sold to a new owner or a new use is made of the property, the contamination must be removed. Current owners may be hesitant to redevelop their property for new use, and property may not sell easily because of this.



Figure 6: Map of Opportunities and Constraints



## Infill Development

### *What is Infill Development?*

Recently, more and more communities are looking to revitalize their neighborhoods through the practice of infill development. Infill development can be defined as “new construction on scattered vacant or underutilized lots in established neighborhoods and business districts” of a community. Infill development can help preserve open space and prevent urban sprawl by focusing development in existing neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods with an abundance of vacant or underutilized land are prime candidates for infill development. A normal circumstance of underutilized land in existing neighborhoods is abandonment of the neighborhood as a whole. People, both residents and business owners, move out to other areas of the community that are more vibrant and economically vital. These tenants are not replaced by new ones because there are no incentives for living or occupying units in a dying out neighborhood. Through the use of infill development, these neighborhoods can be revitalized and remain highly desired locations for residents and businesses.

Infill development focuses on the revitalization of a neighborhood by redeveloping areas of the community that are not being utilized to its full potential (see Figure 7). By creating an area abundant with potential for high utilization, it is

more likely that a vibrant, livable community will result. Furthermore, focusing development in existing areas avoids the problems often faced by new developments, including public infrastructure service such as roads, water and sewer lines. In fact, the use of infill development even relieves the pressuring demands on roads and other public infrastructure by creating a community with more amenities within a certain distance.

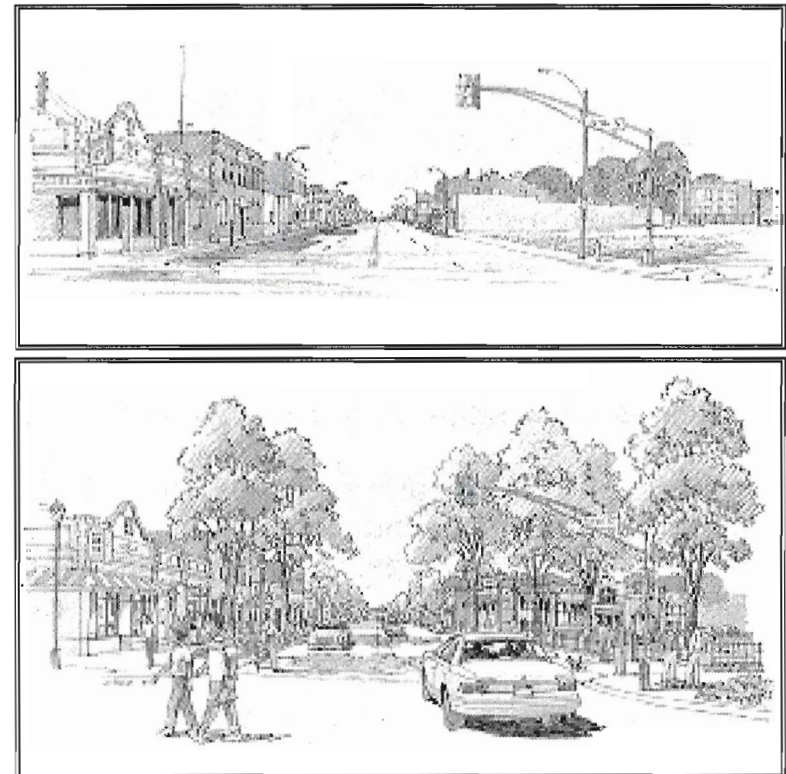


Figure 7: Example of Infill Development: Before and After  
Source: SmartGrowth.org

Infill development can help enhance the quality of life for a community. Often, infill development relies heavily on the principles of Smart Growth and New Urbanism, focusing on creating neighborhoods that are self-sufficient. Redeveloping an existing community through infill development creates an area that is more pedestrian-friendly and relies less on the automobile to access the various necessary amenities.

## *Why Infill for This Area?*

The project area is part of the San Luis Obispo Downtown Core, yet fails to be representative of the well-known downtown character of San Luis Obispo. Although the area lies on the outskirts of downtown and does not need to be a continuing form of the downtown center, infill development can enhance the quality of this part of the core and create a vibrant community that serves as a transition into the downtown center.

The project site is a prime candidate for infill development: an existing neighborhood with underutilized lots. This area is currently developed and contains a large amount of pavement dedicated to parking (see Figure 8). These lots can be redeveloped into mixed uses that allow for more retail and possible residential units in the area. Furthermore, by developing the parking lots into more livable space, the area can become more pedestrian-friendly, promoting walking instead of driving. Creating a more walkable area in this part of the Downtown Core can encourage more people from

this area to walk to the downtown center, rather than drive and park in one of the downtown's parking structures. Redeveloping the outskirts of the Downtown Core can be beneficial to the entire downtown, as well as the City, creating a neighborhood with more economic opportunity and vitality.

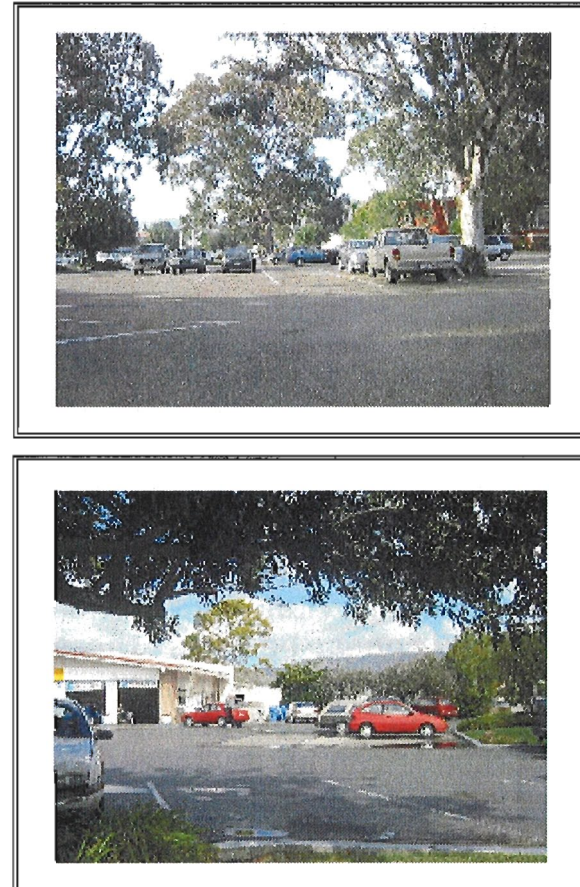


Figure 8: Examples of parking within project site



## Case Studies

Many communities are using infill development to help revitalize their downtowns. Communities in both metropolitan and rural areas are restoring the vitality of their downtown cores by focusing redevelopment in vacant and underused land and buildings. The following are some examples of communities that have focused their efforts on infill development to meet the challenge of deteriorating town centers.

### *Middletown, Connecticut: Main Street Market*



Figure 9: Main Street, Middletown, Connecticut  
Source: State of Connecticut Judicial Branch

Main Street is a major artery in Middletown, Connecticut, a city with a population of 43,000. It was developed into a mixed-use pedestrian walkway with commercial and retail space on the ground floor and housing on the upper floors of the buildings.

Currently, Main Street features a mix of various shops, restaurants, and government office buildings. Prior to this redevelopment, downtown Middletown was facing underutilization. The City worked to create a zoning ordinance which called for the use of mixed development in the area that would contribute to pedestrian interest. Furthermore, great attention was paid to the incorporation of pedestrian bridges throughout the corridor to maintain a walkable environment. The Main Street Market helped to revitalize Middletown and opened the doors for further redevelopment in the City. The City is now focusing on its next project: a riverfront, mixed-use corridor.

### *Lawrence, Kansas: Downtown 2000*

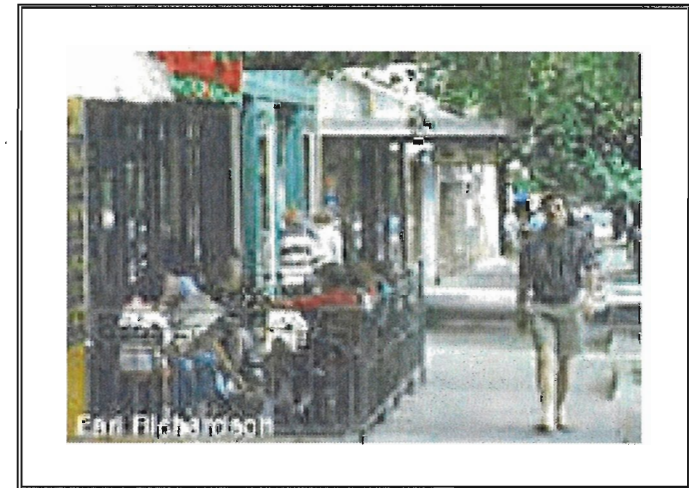


Figure 10: Downtown Lawrence  
Source: America Live

The City of Lawrence, Kansas had a strong downtown area, yet the heart of the downtown was underused because of its poor design for

pedestrian traffic. The solution to the problem involved combining amenities for all forms of transportation, including walking, cycling, and driving. A parking garage with surrounding mixed-use development was proposed for the downtown on land which was occupied by vacant buildings. Backed with support from local banks, developers, and residents, the City was able to redevelop their downtown into a more vibrant shopping, dining and entertainment district that welcomed pedestrians and automobiles alike.

## *Roanoke, Virginia: Center in the Square*

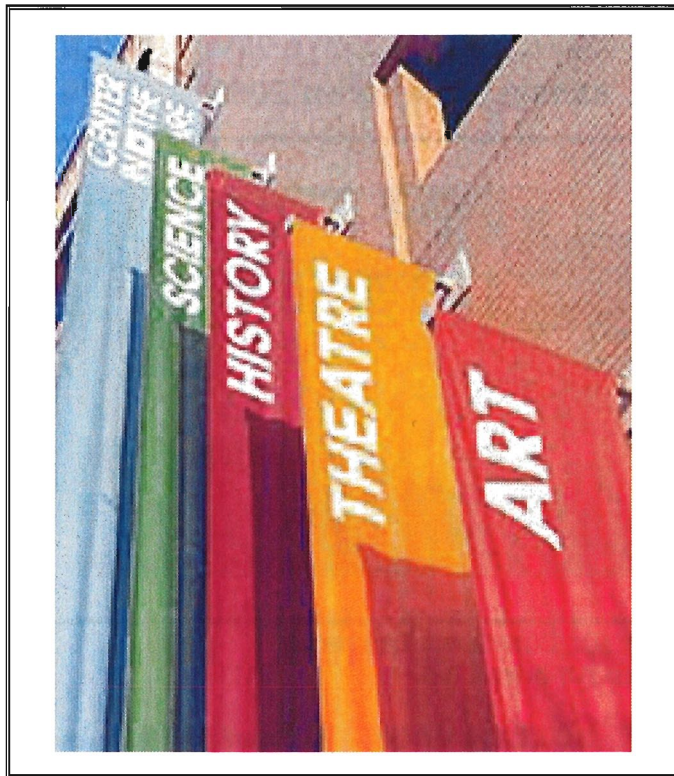


Figure 11: Roanoke Center in the Square  
Source: The Roanoke Valley of Virginia

Downtown Roanoke, Virginia is now a highly desired location that attracts numerous new businesses and residents. Center in the Square opened up in the Farmer's Market District of downtown Roanoke after various Roanoke officials, citizens, and developers were involved in a comprehensive revitalization project know as Design '79. This project was a direct result to the deterioration of the downtown area in the 1970s, during which many businesses and residents moved out to the suburbs of this Virginian city. Focusing on infill development of existing vacant buildings in the downtown, the City was able to create Center in the Square, which is now a bustling and vibrant area of downtown Roanoke.

## *Bethesda, Maryland: Bethesda Row*

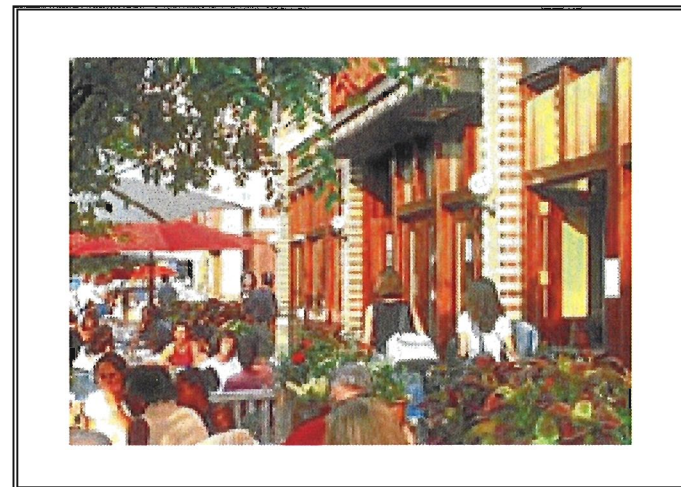


Figure 12: Bethesda Row, Maryland  
Source: SmartGrowth.org



Located in the central business district of Bethesda, Maryland, Bethesda Row is a good example of downtown revitalization through the use of infill development. Vacant land and buildings in the area were redeveloped into a mixed-use development that is pedestrian-friendly and serves as a shopping and restaurant district for the City. The streetscape of Bethesda Row is pedestrian-oriented, with storefronts placed directly along the sidewalk and landscape buffers between the sidewalk and street-parking. Off-street parking is provided by a main parking garage, and there are some parking lots located behind buildings, out of sight from the street. Bethesda Row shops and restaurants serve both the local and regional community, and offer a friendly environment with a mix of amenities.

*Huntington Beach, California: Main Street*



Figure 13: Main Street, Huntington Beach  
Source: Huntington Beach-Homes.com

Downtown Huntington Beach's Main Street began to decline in the 1970s and eventually became a high crime area greatly avoided by residents and visitors. After the 1982 adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan, Main Street began to get a face-lift, and the area was revitalized into a safe and vital downtown. Vacant lots and buildings were transformed into mixed-use developments with attractive combinations of Southern California architecture. The streetscape was made more attractive to pedestrians by the incorporation of wide sidewalks, aesthetically pleasing storefronts, and lucrative landscaping. The City utilized the appeal of the beach and various special incentives to attract new development in the area. Local residents and visitors now enjoy the various amenities provided by Main Street, including the mix of retail and commercial, residential, and recreational units.

*Redlands, California: Downtown Redlands*

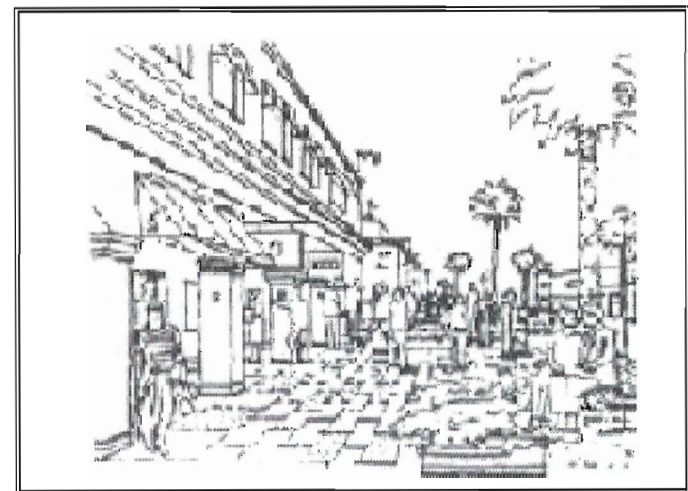


Figure 14: Downtown Redlands  
Source: RedlandsWeb.com

Redlands, California has been able to maintain its downtown as the hub of the City through the use of infill development coupled with the preservation and restoration of historic buildings. The City has focused on using historic buildings that have become vacant for new development. Rather than tearing down these buildings, they are restored and redeveloped into new locations for businesses and offices. The original architecture and character of the buildings are preserved and maintained. This redevelopment has helped the city to maintain its distinctive character while increasing the downtown's prosperity by reinvesting in its historical heritage.

## Vision: Goals & Objectives

Based on the analysis of existing conditions and the City of San Luis Obispo's General Plan Land Use Element, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Guidelines, and research on infill development and various case studies, an infill development plan can be made for the project site. Prior to constructing a site plan and design for the infill of the area, it is essential that a vision for the site be made.

### Issue 1

The eastern edge of the Downtown Core is currently underdeveloped and not representative of the San Luis Obispo Downtown character. Downtown SLO is nationally known for its social vibrancy and economic vitality and is a highly desirable location for residents and visitors. The project site does not blend well with the downtown nor is it an attractive location for visitors.

**GOAL 1** REDEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE DOWNTOWN CORE.

**Objective 1-A** Create a walkable and attractive environment by focusing on the Community Design Guidelines suggested for the Downtown.

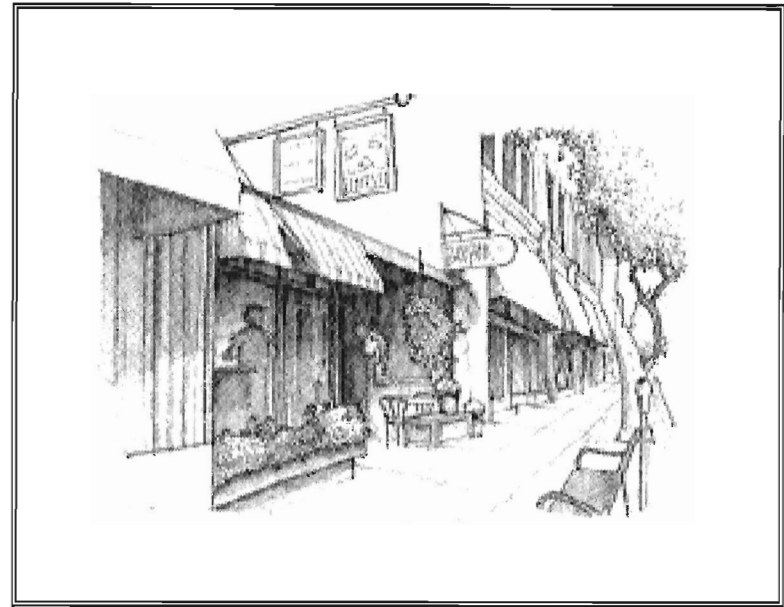


Figure 15: Downtown SLO Design Guidelines  
Source: City of San Luis Obispo

**Objective 1-B** Create an area that smoothly transitions from uptown San Luis Obispo, through the edge of the Downtown Core, and into the downtown center.

### Issue 2

The project site is currently underdeveloped and contains an abundance of off-street parking. Many of the existing office buildings are underutilized and have vacant suites. This area is a prime location for various professional services and uses because of its proximity to the Downtown Center and City and County buildings. Increasing the density in the area would



help to further create a vibrant portion of the Downtown Core.

## **GOAL 2**

REDEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA SHOULD FOCUS ON INFILL DEVELOPMENT TO INTENSIFY THE CURRENT DENSITY IN THE UPTOWN PORTION OF THE DOWNTOWN CORE.

Objective 2-A Develop the underutilized lots by focusing on infill development, primarily in areas that are currently dedicated to parking.

Objective 2-B Create an area that offers an abundance of services by focusing on increasing the number of buildings and developing new mixed uses.



Figure 16: Mixed Use Design  
Source: City of San Luis Obispo



## Vision: Plan & Proposal

The analysis of existing conditions and the determined opportunities and constraints for the project area have shown that the project site is a prime candidate for the use of infill development to revitalize the area. Two major issues, the character and intensity of this portion of the Downtown Core, have been discussed in the above goals and objectives for this redevelopment project and are addressed in the proposed *San Luis Obispo Uptown Infill Development Plan*.

### Proposal

The *San Luis Obispo Uptown Infill Development Plan* proposes that the site be redeveloped into an area that smoothly transitions from North San Luis Obispo into the Downtown Center. Redevelopment of the project site shall focus on maintaining the downtown character throughout the uptown portion of the Downtown Core. Key aspects of the downtown character include pedestrian access, specific design guidelines and zoning requirements, and concentration of mixed-uses.

The plan also proposes that the project area be redeveloped into an area of higher intensity by increasing the number of buildings, uses, and amenities within the project site. Infill development will focus on creating new buildings in areas of the site currently dedicated to parking. A

majority of the existing buildings will remain as the primary focus of the plan is to increase density rather than eliminate current buildings and uses.

### Plan

The *San Luis Obispo Uptown Infill Development Plan* covers three parts, or sets of blocks, within the project site (see Figure 17). Individually, each of the blocks offers a unique aspect to the project. Taken as a whole, the individual parts combine to create a plan that reflects the vision of an area of higher intensity which better transitions into the Downtown Center.

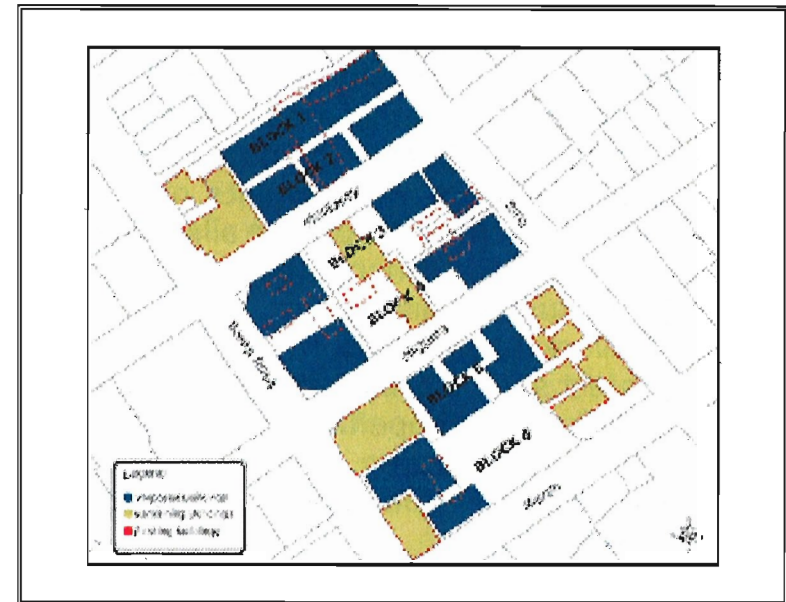


Figure 17: Proposed Site Plan

## *Block 1: Alley and Block 2: Monterey Street*

Two of the five existing buildings on this portion of the project site shall remain: the San Luis Diagnostic Center at the corner of Santa Rosa and Monterey Streets, and the law offices located in the cottages at the corner of Santa Rosa Street and the alley entrance (see Figure 19). The former building was developed fairly recently, and its architectural style fits in well with the character of the area. The latter building was built in 1922, and thus, is historically significant. The three buildings to be removed will be replaced with residential and mixed-use buildings.

High-density residential is proposed for Block 1, facing the alley. Residential units surround the project site; thus, high-density residential will fit in well with the character of the area. The residential units will be apartment-like town homes, with first-floor parking. Each residence will have its own garage-parking with on-street access from the alley way. There will be two stories of apartments, each with balconies overlooking the surrounding areas; these will either face out from Block 1 towards North Santa Rosa Street or into the project site. Placing residential units within the Downtown Core will hopefully help create a more vibrant area by attracting both students and professionals seeking convenient housing in a desirable location.

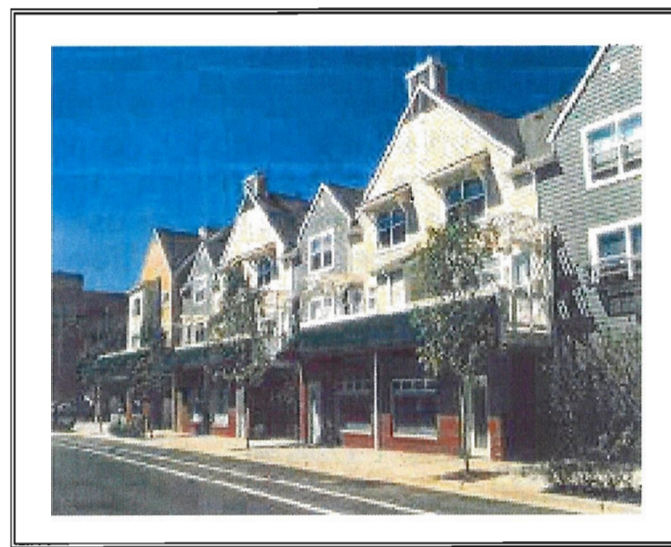


Figure 18: Example of High-Density Residential  
Source: City of Austin, TX

Block 2 will include a mix of uses similar to the Downtown Center. Monterey Street is a major arterial leading into the Downtown from Highway 101, and thus, it is essential that this area be representative of the downtown character and smoothly transition into the heart of San Luis Obispo. Three mixed-use buildings are proposed for this block. There will be retail and small shops on the first floor. The second floors of the buildings will be dedicated to office space. The General Plan Land Use Element for the City suggests that the space surrounding the Downtown Center and Core should be available for office use; therefore, most of the mixed-use buildings proposed for the site will have second-floor office space. The building at the corner of Toro and Monterey Streets will have a two-story restaurant, with balcony seating overlooking the project site. This location is a prime spot for



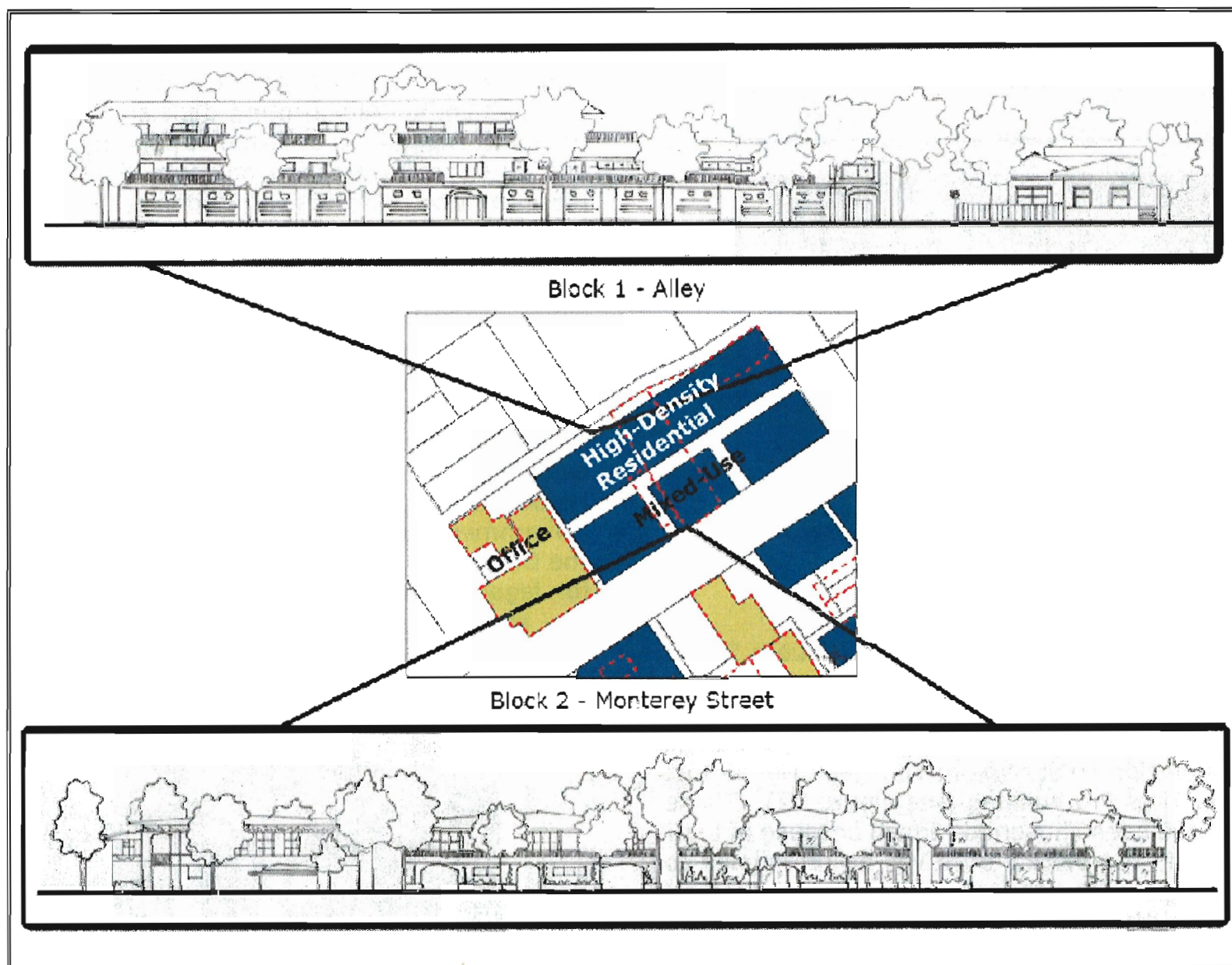


Figure 19: Proposed Site Plan and Street Elevations for Blocks 1 and 2

a new restaurant because it lies along a major arterial into the Downtown, which provides it with easy access and visibility.

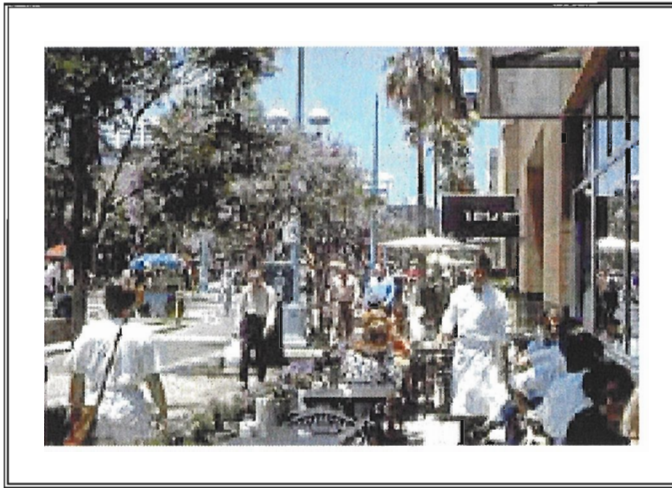


Figure 20: Example of restaurant with outdoor seating

Source: City of Austin, TX

## *Block 3: Monterey Street and Block 4: Higuera Street*

The plan for this section involves the largest removal of existing buildings. Only two buildings within this portion shall remain: Mortgage House Inc. and the old Tires Pro building (see Figure 22). These buildings have been chosen to remain because of their location within the block. Both will be remodeled to better fit in with the downtown architectural character. Furthermore, the existing uses of the buildings will be replaced and made available for office use. The other buildings, currently dedicated to auto service use, will be removed and replaced by more mixed-use.

Along Block 3, at the corner of Toro and Monterey Streets, an art gallery and small museum are proposed. Both buildings are intended to function as small community centers dedicated to fostering the education and knowledge of painting, sculpting, and other art forms. The museum shall display art pieces by local residents and students. The art gallery is intended to be used by the local community as a place to take art classes, attend lectures, and display artwork.

Behind the museum and art gallery, along Block 4, will be Work/Live units, studios dedicated to working professionals, and corporate apartments for traveling professionals. First-floor parking will be available behind the building with access from Higuera Street. The close proximity of this site to the Government offices and Courthouse located within the Downtown area, make this location a prime one for legal professionals in need of temporary stay.



Figure 21: Example of Work/Live Units  
Source: Castana Developers



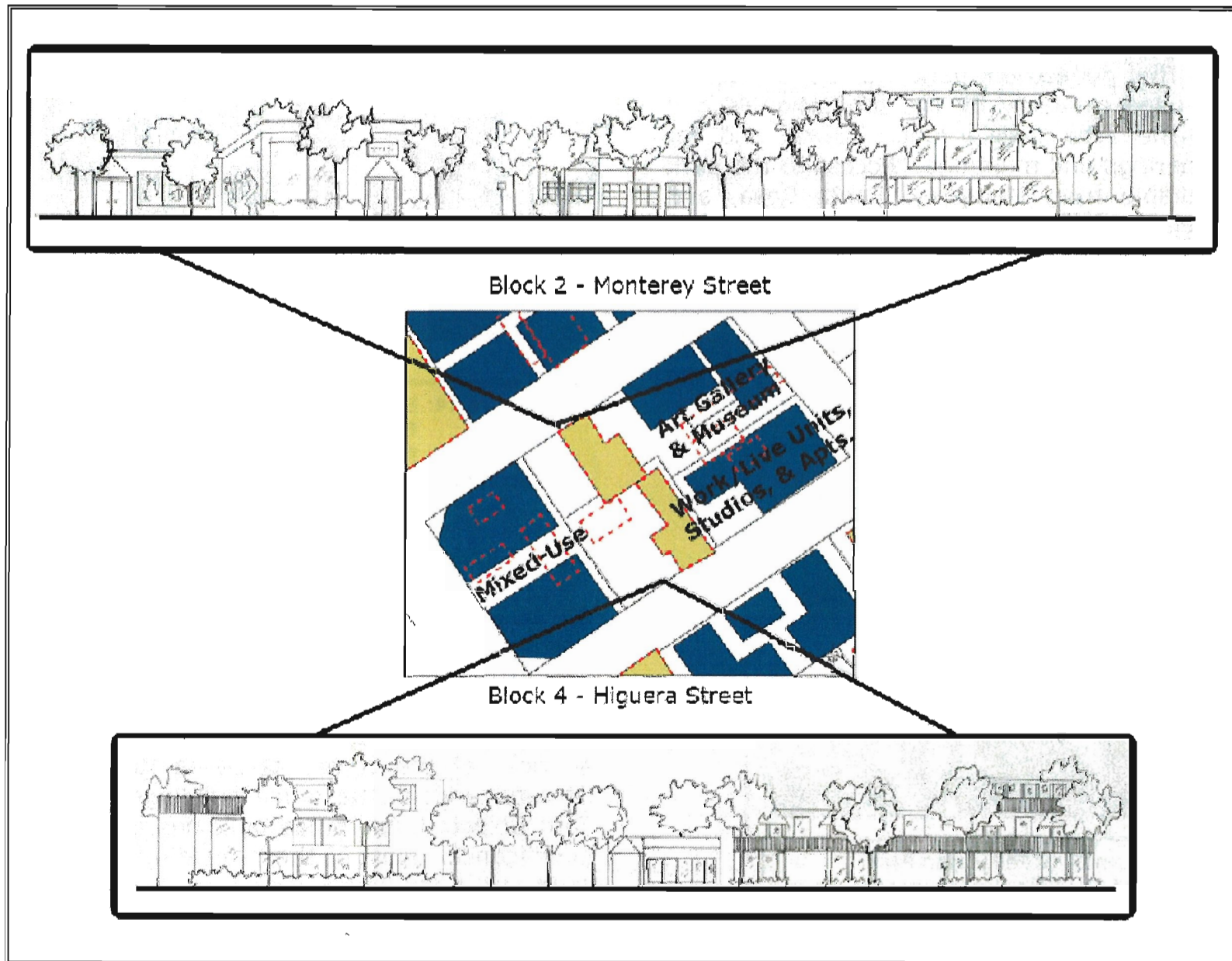


Figure 22: Proposed Site Plan and Street Elevations for Blocks 3 and 4

The other half of Blocks 3 and 4 are proposed to contain a pedestrian park and two mixed-use buildings. The pedestrian park will be a passive park to be used primarily by the professionals and workers in the area during lunch hours, and for various gatherings and meetings. Access to the park will be available from Monterey, Santa Rosa, and Higuera Streets. The existing Shell Gas Station will be replaced by two mixed-use buildings with small retail shops on the first floor, and offices and studios on the second and third floors. The top two stories will have balconies that look out over the surrounding areas, including the pedestrian park. Access to the park will also be made available from these buildings.



Figure 23: Example of Pedestrian Park  
Source: City of Cape Canaveral, FL



Figure 24: Example of Mixed-Use -  
First-floor retail with second and third  
floor office space  
Source: City of Austin, TX

## *Block 5: Higuera Street and Block 6: Marsh Street*

All buildings, except one, shall remain on this portion of the project site based on the plan, as well as half of the parking lot (see Figure 25). This includes the Bank of America, located at the corner of Santa Rosa and Higuera Streets, the legal services at the corner of Santa Rosa and Marsh Streets, and all the office buildings located along Toro Street; these office buildings are of historical significance. Most of these buildings are occupied; there are a few suites within the buildings that are currently vacant, which will be used as future office space. The portion of the parking lot to remain is completely landscaped and will be hidden. Mixed-use buildings and work/live units will be added to the blocks.



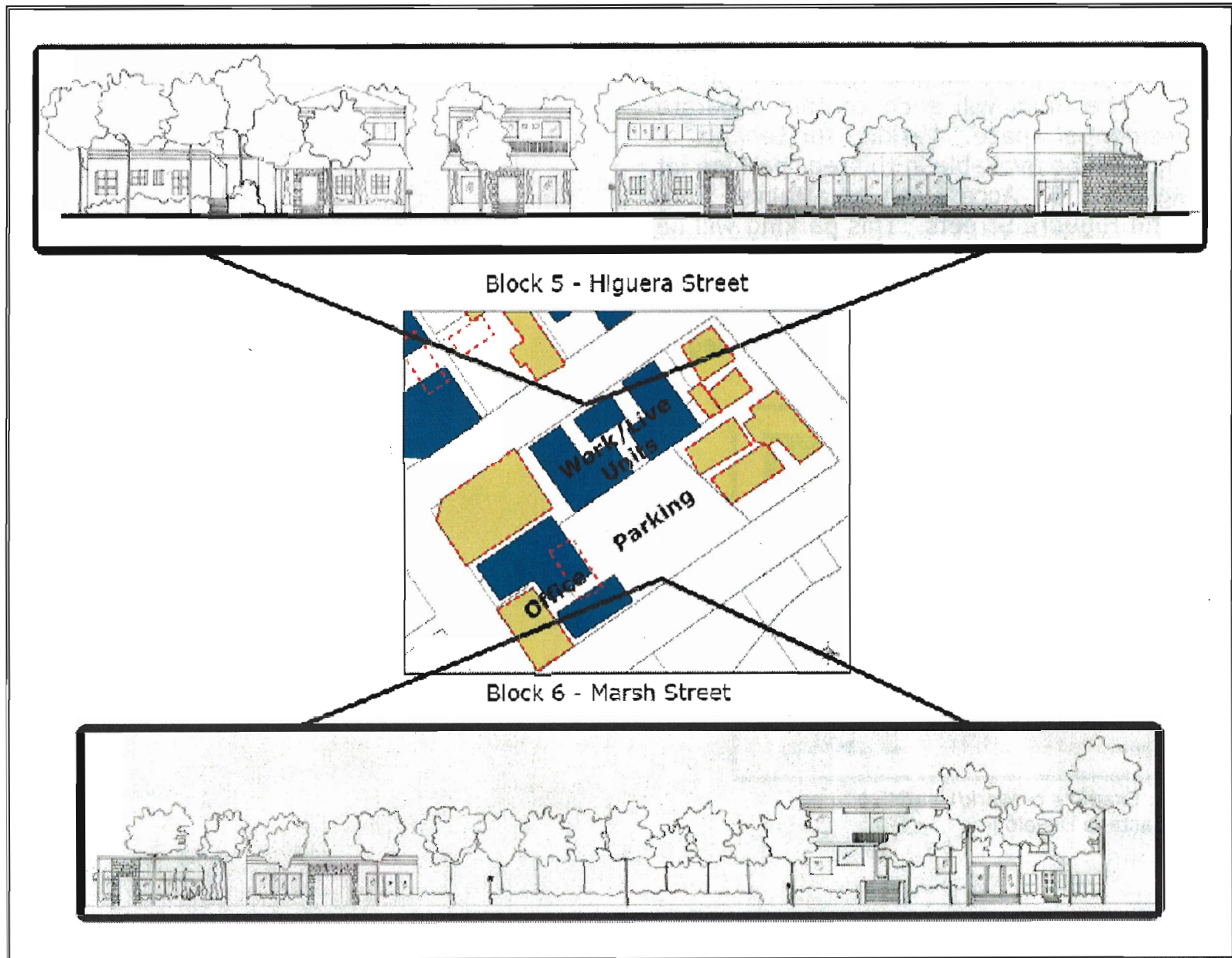


Figure 25: Proposed Site Plan and Street Elevations for Blocks 5 and 6

A building complex for work/live units will be developed along Block 5. These units are dedicated to working professionals who work out of their homes. The units will each contain separate office and residential space. Parking for tenants of these buildings will be available in the rear parking lot located along Block 6. Access can be attained from both Marsh and Higuera Streets. This parking will be available to the tenants of the existing and proposed office buildings as well. The two proposed office buildings are located along Santa Rosa and Marsh Street. This office space will be used by legal, financial, and medical services.



Figure 26: Example of Work/Live/Mixed-use  
Source: Castana Developers



## Conclusion

The uptown portion of the San Luis Obispo Downtown Core is an area that currently fails to be representative of the well-known downtown center that serves as the heart of San Luis Obispo. This project has focused on a portion of the Downtown Core that extends from Santa Rosa to Toro Streets and Monterey to Marsh Streets, an area that covers approximately 7.2 acres. The site is currently underutilized and a majority of the area is dedicated to off-street parking. Because the site is located directly adjacent to the downtown center, it is essential that this portion of the Downtown Core be redeveloped into a thriving community that better transitions into the vibrant downtown center.

Based on an inventory of existing conditions and research on the San Luis Obispo General Plan Land Use Element, Zoning Ordinance, and Community Design Guidelines, an analysis of the opportunities and constraints within the project site was made. The findings from this analysis conveyed that the project site was a prime candidate for the use of infill development to help redevelop and revitalize the area. Research on infill development and various case studies involving downtown revitalization through the use of such development have further shown that this type of redevelopment is appropriate for the project site.

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Combining the issues found from the analysis of existing conditions with the essentials of infill development, two main goals were developed. These involved redeveloping this uptown portion of the Downtown Core into an area that better represented and transitioned into the downtown center, as well as placing a focus on intensifying the area by directing attention to infill development and mixed-use. These two goals, along with their objectives, were addressed in the proposed *San Luis Obispo Uptown Infill Development Plan*.

The plan focuses on eliminating the multitude of parking lots in the project site and replacing them with new development dedicated to mixed-uses. Residential, office, and commercial uses have been proposed for the area, as well as recreational uses, including a pedestrian park and small community art center. The *San Luis Obispo Uptown Infill Development Plan* is aimed at creating a community that better represents the heart of San Luis Obispo, and will continue to do so throughout the future.



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