

SECTION III

TRANSPORTATION, TRANSIT, & PARKING

XI. TRANSPORTATION: PLANNING & POLICY CONTEXT

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A. APPROACH & PURPOSE

1. Overview

The purpose of this analysis¹ is to propose a framework for a long-term and comprehensive transportation management plan which anticipates, supports and manages substantial revitalization in the Beach and South of Laurel areas in a manner which reduces reliance upon the automobile, protects neighborhoods, enhances coastal attractions, and facilitates shoreline access.

The objective is to develop the most appropriate combination of circulation improvements, transit/rail, parking, pricing and pedestrian/bicycle strategies which will:

- · support new development and expand the operational season,
- protect existing neighborhoods, and
- encourage transit, rail, pedestrian and bicycle access.

The assumption underlying this approach is that no single strategy will solve the complex issues of implementing the Beach Area/South of Laurel Master Plan. Rather, the implementation strategy must address interrelated elements including:

- changes to circulation patterns,
- improvements to contributing intersections,
- coordination of commercial and residential parking strategies,
- development of an integrated pricing system and fee structure for transit and parking,
- · construction of new parking facilities,
- dispersal of employee parking to intercept lots,
- development of shuttle service for visitors and employees,
- provision for potential rail service, and
- proposals for management and implementation.

Thus, the focus of this analysis will be on five proposed pillars of a transportation management plan. These five are:

- Vehicular circulation and parking,
- 2. Proposed shuttle system & intercept lots,
- 3. Potential recreational and transit rail service,
- 4. Improved bikeways and pedestrian paths, and
- 5. Proposed coordinated approach, and financing.

Original research and analysis for the transportation section of this report have been provided by the consulting teams of Fehr & Peers, Transportation Analysis Report Beach Area/South of Laurel Master Plan, (April, 1997) and Michael G. Jones, Parking and Transportation Management Plan, (April, 1997). Additional information was provided by: Beach Area Transportation Study (1986), and Beach and South of Laurel Area Parking Study (1991).

2. Goals

The goals of this planning effort are fourfold:

- to facilitate access to the Beach and South of Laurel while reducing reliance upon the automobile,
- b. to propose a staging of development activity which both allows for expansion and encourages alternative modes of transportation,
- c. to devise a management approach which:
 - ensures coordination among commercial expansion, recreational activities, and neighborhood protection,
 - manages the streets, public rights of way, and gareways as an irreplaceable resource, and
 - clearly links pricing, parking and transit strategies.
- d. to improve linkages between the Beach and the Downtown.

3. Central Premise

The central premise is that the beach area of Santa Cruz is a magnificent and irreplaceable resource which needs clear and sensitive management of its future. Central to this future is the comprehensive management of access, circulation, parking and the appearance and functioning of public streets and private spaces.

The scale and complexity of this program requires the close coordination of public and private investment strategies and timetables. To ensure success, a public/private coordinated approach is recommended.

4. Planning Considerations

There are a series of planning considerations which must be acknowledged in the development of a transportation management strategy for the Beach area of Santa Cruz. They are:

- Physical constraints,
- Seasonal Surges: Parking Issues,
- · Seasonal Surges: Circulation Issues,
- · Linkage between Constraints & Incentives,
- Public Streets as Public Spaces.

Physical Constraints

The major visitor draw to the City of Santa Cruz – the Beach and the Boardwalk – are located in what is essentially a cul-de-sac at the end of the roadway system. The result of this fact is that access to the beach area is limited to a tightly circumscribed number of entryways through which the majority of traffic must flow.

As the following map documents, almost 60% of the visitors to the Beach area arrive from Highway 17 and follow Ocean Street to the beach. Another 20% arrive from the South

and exit Highway 1 at Morrissey Boulevard and funnel into Ocean Street at Soquel.² Thus, Ocean Street provides vehicular access for approximately 80% of visitor traffic.

1. 11.

The physical constraints presented by a cul-de-sac are heightened by the physical topography of an oceanside basin shaped by the heights of West Cliff and Beach Hill to the north and west and the watercourse of the San Lorenzo River to the east. This results in two additional entry points – Pacific Avenue and Beach Street which intersect at the entry to the Wharf.

These physical facts are of enormous importance in planning for this area, for the number of possible vehicular approaches are extremely limited. The impact of this is reflected in differing levels of congestion at contributing intersections. One of the challenges of this transportation management plan has been to identify the maximum potential impact of proposed development on these intersections and identify acceptable ways of mitigating it.

Another one of the challenges has been to start placing realistic emphasis on alternative modes of transportation. This analysis addresses the importance and necessary components of a shuttle system, the potential for increased rail access, and a two-way bikepath on Beach Street. While some of the proposals will be more long term, such as rail, and some—like pedestrian and bike improvements will only serve a small fraction of the population — it is vital that the City put in place a coordinated, long-term strategy which integrates these options into long-term solutions.

Seasonal Surges: Parking Issues

The transportation and parking demands of the Beach area are subject to strong peak seasonal surges as well as extended season weekend demand. This type of demand creates a tension in planning between requiring appropriate capacity but not overbuilding to meet periodic peak demand.

Creating a balance between the parking demand and supply is all the more important in the Beach area where the amount of land is limited and where, in season, residents, visitors and employees compete for space. This fact goes to the major goal of this Plan which is the need to extend the season of the Beach.

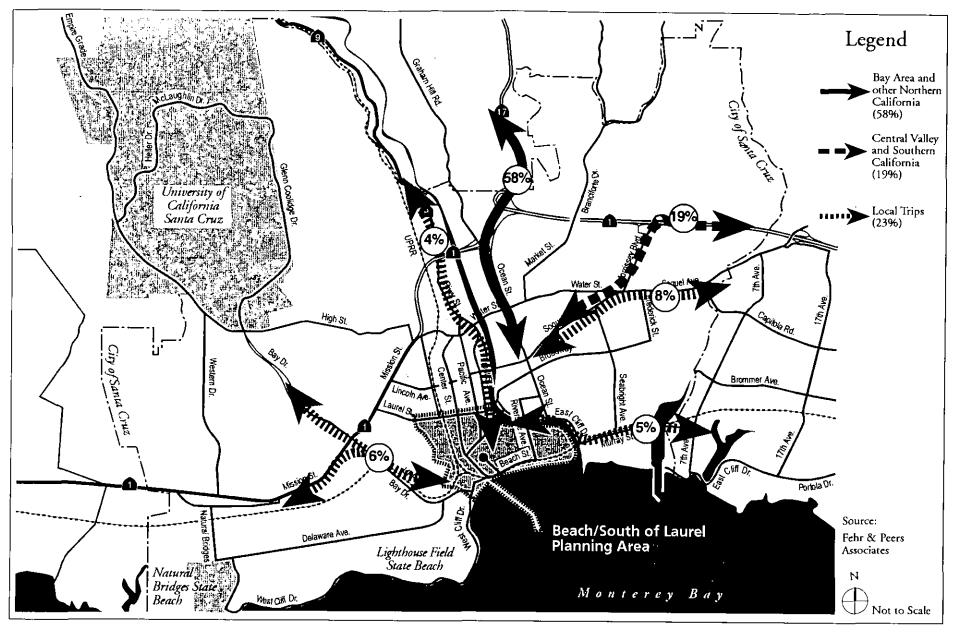
For that reason, this transportation analysis will treat the public parking supply as a major public resource and recommend policies which are designed to:

- protect residential neighborhood parking,
- encourage employee parking at remote lots/garages, and
- manage on-street metered parking as a major public resource.

The private parking supply will be addressed as a valuable and essential resource crucial to the revitalization of the Beach area. The major private parking supply is consolidated in the Main Beach and River Parking Lots. The operation and management of these lots:

- play a vital role in the appearance and functioning of Beach Street,
- impact the viability of residential land uses in the Beach Flats and on Second Street, and
- impact circulation and access on Beach and Riverside Streets.

² Fehr & Peers, 2nd draft, Beach Area/South of Laurel Master Plan: Transportation Analysis Report, [Report] April, 1997, Figure 18, "Regional Trip Distribution: Beach Area Trips", p.71.



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City of Santa Cruz - Beach / South of Laurel Area Plan

Figure 48

Regional Trip Distribution

For that reason, this study will recommend the implementation of staged improvements to these lots which include:

. . .

- interim improvements to the access and operation of the Main Beach lot, and
- retail/garage development on the Main lot in response to market support.

Landscaping standards will also be proposed for new or expanded surface lots and garages.

Seasonal Surges: Circulation Issues

Transportation analysts have developed a "rule of thumb" called the "peak design day" which is an accepted industry standard for evaluating traffic and parking demand impacts typically associated with a high concentration of seasonal, recreational/entertainment uses. This peak design day represents the 20th busiest day of the year, and has been identified for Santa Cruz as the Easter Weekend in the Fehr & Peer's study (p.15).

This transportation planning approach protects public jurisdictions from overbuilding to meet peak demand, but may also result in not adequately meeting projected demand for 19 of the busiest days of the year.

In Santa Cruz, these 19 days represent most probably part of every weekend between Memorial Day and Labor Day. This means that sometime on every summer weekend, there may be some intersections functioning at Level of Service E or F during peak periods.³ Thus, there will be congestion at some intersections during periods of peak demand both now and in the future.

This study regards this periodic congestion not only as a constraint but as an opportunity to encourage visitors to avail themselves of the proposed shuttle system. For that reason, recommendations will be offered on how the shuttle system can benefit from this reality.

Linkage Between Constraints & Incentives

To encourage alternative modes of arrival, there must be a clear and a clearly perceived linkage between incentives and constraints. For that reason, this study recommends a careful calibration between meter rates and fines, and the pricing of the shuttle and off-site intercept lots.

Additionally, there should be a clear relationship between cost and convenience – with parking closest to the beach the most expensive and the furthest away the least.

For this reason, this study will also recommend that the shuttle be free in its start-up stages, and will encourage increased bike patronage through a continuous two-way bike lane, propose an innovative hotel/bike program, and the location of bike parking convenient to the Wharf.

Public Streets as Public Spaces

The street system in the Beach functions primarily to move traffic into, through, and out of the area. This is a critical and primary function. However, the street system also represents a substantial investment by the City in major infrastructure.

³ Level of Service, as defined in the *Highway Capacity Manual Special Report 209* for urban streets [p.11-14].

In addition to functioning as a traffic circulation base, the street system should be viewed as a visible signature for the City, a stage for local serving events, and a revenue source which merits careful management.

In the Beach area, the streets have the possibility of extending the open space and providing key linkages between primary attractions such as the Wharf and the Boardwalk and the Downtown. They should also reinforce the commercial function of the business area and provide design protections to residential neighborhoods. As such, the design of the streets, particularly Beach Street and Pacific should maximize their contribution to the overall appearance and functioning of the area.

These principals are clearly illustrated by the City's recent completion of improvements to the Wharf entryway and implementation of the Beach Street Promenade.

It is the intent of this study to support and maximize the City's existing investment through recommendations for intersection improvements and the creation of attractive gateways, management of the public on-street parking supply and proposals for management of the streets – particularly Beach Street – as public open space.

The street system thus provides the City an opportunity to design and manage it as a major public space – with strong and attractive gateways – linking its marquee attractions of the Beach, Wharf and Boardwalk more effectively to each other and to the downtown.

For that reason, this study will offer traffic management, urban design, and recreational management recommendations for the main arterials of Pacific Avenue and Beach Street which will enhance the overall vitality and functioning of this area for both local resident and visitor alike.



B. POLICY CONTEXT FOR TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the intensive planning efforts of the past decade, the City of Santa Cruz has identified and adopted a series of policy decisions which are to guide the future development of specific transportation recommendations.

This adopted policy framework, as expressed in the *General Plan and Local Coastal Program*, 1990-2005 (adopted 1992) and in the *Beach Area Plan Strategy*, (adopted 1996) identify the goals which the following transportation recommendations are to achieve.

The following clearly identifies the policy foundation for the specific program elements which will be proposed, and against which they should be judged.

1. General Plan Recommendations

While the *General Plan* recommendations pertain to the City of Santa Cruz as a whole, the following five "Circulation Element Goals" have particular relevance to the Beach and South of Laurel area which provides the basic circulation framework for the City's greatest traffic generators – the Beach and the Boardwalk.

- GOAL C1: Develop a comprehensive, multi-modal circulation planning program that takes as its highest priority reduction of automobile trips by the creation of viable alternative transportation modes, effective transportation systems management programs, and integration of land-use and circulation planning.
- GOAL C2: Develop and promote pedestrian travel as a viable transportation mode by developing and maintaining a safe, comprehensive, convenient, accessible and aesthetically pleasing pedestrian system.
- GOAL C 3: Develop a safe, convenient and effective bikeway system that promotes bicycle travel as a viable transportation mode and connects work, shopping, schools, residential and recreational areas.
- GOAL C4: Aggressively pursue development of a comprehensive and integrated mass transit system including buses, paratransit and rail transit/fixed guideways to provide increased mobility in the community.
- GOAL C 5: Maximize the efficiency and safety of the existing road system while ensuring that it accommodates all modes of travel, operates at an acceptable level of service, and is not expanded unnecessarily.

In specific recommendations for the area, the General Plan states:

"The transportation system must serve a number of purposes. Streets are important linkages to the beach, downtown and residential neighborhoods. The street system should endeavor to separate tourist from local traffic. Tourist traffic needs to be directed to and through collection and distribution points in order to move large volumes of visitors. Local streets should be designed to discourage tourist traffic. Additionally, landscaping and other design techniques should develop streetscapes that

City of Santa Cruz, General Plan - 1990-2005, I, p.141.

link the Beach to Downtown along Pacific Avenue and other major travel corridors, the Downtown neighborhood, and the San Lorenzo River. [I.p.112]"

Other specific recommendations which are directly relevant to this study state:

"As part of the overall traffic improvement program in the Beach Area, improve the appearance and traffic flow of the Beach Street/Municipal Wharf intersection." [II, 3.9,p.7]

"Minimize traffic conflicts within the Beach Commercial subarea; identify a site for peripheral parking opportunity and a beach shuttle service to the Beach Area." [II, 3.10, p.7], and

"Create a visual and functional link between the Boardwalk and the Municipal Wharf, along the length of Beach Street." [II, 1.3, p.5]

2. Adopted Plan Strategy Recommendations

The adopted Beach Area Plan Strategy outlined a broad series of transportation and planning goals to be applied in the Beach area. The four major transportation goals agreed upon are:

- 1) creating a transportation system which encourages alternative forms of transportation and alternative routes to the Beach,
- 2) preventing visitor intrusion into neighborhoods,
- 3) linking the Beach Area with the Downtown, and
- 4) providing alternative transit modes and parking to accommodate anticipated recreational and commercial improvements. [p.30-37].

The *Plan Strategy* specifically encouraged alternative transportation modes such as shuttle service and improved bicycle and pedestrian access. In addition, it recommended the:

- development of a multimodal transportation hub,
- the establishment of signage to promote alternate beach access routes to limit increased traffic impacts on lower Ocean Street neighborhood,
- · the promotion of rail access to the Beach,
- · the establishment of a formal funding mechanism to promote transit,
- the examination of establishing a parking assessment district in the Beach and South of Laurel to provide new resources to construct additional parking, and
- the establishment of the South of Laurel as a pedestrian friendly, urban, mixed use environment.

3. City Council Directives

In adopting this Plan, the City Council directed that:

all of the proposed transportation management measures be implemented
as soon as possible – particularly the shuttle and remote lots, the Depot
lot, electronic signage and meter management, the bikeway, and
roundabouts,

 in any case, implementation of transportation management measures is to precede any potential Boardwalk expansion or commercial expansion on the Main Beach parking lot,

- the City should aggressively pursue outside funding sources for alternative transportation projects,
- a continuous two-way, year-round, east-west bikeway on Beach Street and across the San Lorenzo River is to be a high priority,
- a cost-benefit analysis should be prepared for a possible parking structure at the Depot site to possibly accommodate a natural history museum,
- protection of routes not already designated as coastal access routes which are not included in the planning area, such as Chestnut Street, is critical, and specific measures should be developed for their protection,
- if, through a future planning process, the realignment of Third Street is
 evaluated, the City Council recommends considering an alternative approach
 to buffering the Beach Flats residential neighborhood from commercial
 activity and heavy traffic, such as landscaping and other possible
 mechanisms, and also including the possibility of eliminating commercial
 parking with in the Beach Flats residential area.

C. SUMMARY OF POLICY FINDINGS

The adopted policies listed above are designed to provide a policy basis for a comprehensive transportation management strategy which encourages alternative forms of transportation and reduces reliance upon the automobile. They emphasis the appropriate role which a transit/shuttle system can play, and recommend the establishment of periphery parking and of a safe and effective bikeway.

In addition, these circulation policies identify the importance of linkages between the major assets which the City possesses – the Beach area and the Downtown, and the Municipal Wharf and the Boardwalk. They also identify the important role which design and landscaping can play in creating visual linkages in the treatment of major arterials.

These policies seek to limit increased traffic impacts both in the directly adjacent neighborhoods of Beach Hill and Beach Flats, as well as in the Lower Ocean Area through the promotion of alternative routes and peripheral parking, and to establish the South of Laurel as a pedestrian friendly urban area accessible through various forms of transportation.

Finally, these policies recognize the importance of establishing a formal funding mechanism to support recommended improvements such as transit and additional parking resources.

In the following recommendations, a transportation planning approach will be offered which acknowledges the essential role of the automobile and suggests both intersection and parking improvements, but which balances this reality with pragmatic recommendations for an effective shuttle system, a two-way bike path on Beach Street, and identifies the potential for rail access in the future.

XII. CIRCULATION: EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



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A. OVERVIEW & APPROACH

1. Factual Context for Transportation Recommendations

The factual context for the transportation recommendations which follow is provided by the Beach Area Plan Strategy (1996), the South of Laurel Area Plan Strategy (1995), The Beach and South of Laurel Area Parking Study (1991), The Beach Area Transportation Study (1988), and The Beach Street Promenade Design Plan (1991).

Much of the analysis which follows is excerpted directly from: Beach Areal South of Laurel Master Plan: Transportation Analysis Report (April, 1997) by Fehr & Peers, and their Executive Summary (March, 1997); and the Parking and Transportation Management Plan for the Beach Areal South of Laurel Master Plan Area (April, 1997) by Michael G. Jones. 1

2. Development Projections: Basis of Circulation & Parking Analysis

Development Projections: Beach & South of Laurel Area Plan Strategy

Development projections are the factual basis for analyzing circulation and parking impacts. The potential developments discussed in this plan provide the basis for the current analysis of potential traffic impacts in these areas.

The major specific commercial development proposals for the Beach area include, at buildout:

- a 250-275 room conference hotel facility at the La Bahia site,
- less than 125,000 square feet of new commercial development on the Main Beach parking lot, (amount to be determined through a communitybased planning process), and
- 2.5 acres of city park.

In the South of Laurel area, already approved development – which includes 194 residential units and the 32,000 square foot police station – plus new opportunity sites provide for a total of 117,000 square feet of commercial space, and 186 residential units.² This total reflects a recent reduction of 84,000 square feet in the commercial development category due to planning considerations.

Since these are developments which are proposed within a planning context and do not represent actual development submissions, many of these projects are best described as "fluid", lacking both specificity and certainty. ³

¹ Copies of these reports are available at the Department of Planning.

² Appendix A.

³ Michael G. Jones, draft Parking and Transportation Management Plan for the Beach Area/South of Laurel Master Plan Area., [Plan] p.6.

This lack of certainty poses a challenge to the plan in terms of quantifying impacts, and so the most conservative analytical method is employed in order not to under-assess potential transportation requirements. This approach also fulfills the requirement of the Environmental Impact Report for assessment of maximum effect.

Maximum Build Out: Basis for Circulation & Parking Analysis

In order to assess the fullest possible transportation impacts of potential development in the area, a parking and circulation impact analysis of "maximum build-out" was carried out.⁴ In addition to analyzing maximum build-out of these potential developments, "background" regional traffic growth was also factored in. This means that an additional 9% total traffic growth was added to the design day traffic volumes.⁵

This type of maximum case analysis allows a jurisdiction to anticipate the greatest possible traffic impact – or worst case scenario – associated with potential developments, and identify the maximum extent to which mitigation measures may be required.

In terms of using maximum build-out as a basis for analysis, two things are important.

- 1. that in terms of timing, build-out is projected to occur sometime between year 10 and year 15, and
- 2. many of the projects to be constructed will most likely be less than the maximum allowable and may have lower traffic and parking impacts.

Therefore, some of the mitigation measures which are identified – based on worse case scenario – are not required until a certain level of development has occurred. In order to identify these traffic and parking "trigger points" and identify funding strategies, a second study was carried out.⁶

B. Existing Conditions: Circulation

1. Overview

The analysis of existing circulation conditions found that:

- there are 5 North-South Arterial/Collectors which serve the Beach and South of Laurel. They are: Ocean Street; Riverside Avenue; Front Street; Pacific Avenue, and Washington Street.
- there are also 5 East-West Arterials/Collectors. They are: Laurel Street/ Broadway; Barson Street; San Lorenzo Boulevard/East Cliff Drive; Third Street; Beach Street; and Bay/West Cliff Drive.
- the creation of a one-way loop through the Boardwalk area has been successful in increasing traffic capacity and decreasing congestion.

⁴ by Fehr & Peers.

⁵ This is a standard industry practice. Fehr & Peers, Report, p.84.

⁶ by Michael G. Jones and Associates.

 on the "design day", 6 of the 16 intersections which serve the Beach and South of Laurel areas operate at a Level of Service D or worse. Two unsignalized intersections – Beach/Cliff and Pacific/Washington operated at LOS F and E respectively. [See following Figure]

e 1 15, 40 . .

in the South of Laurel, the peak period is the afternoon commute (4-5 pm), while for the Beach and Ocean Street corridor, it is early Saturday afternoon (2-3 pm).

The function of the "existing conditions analysis" is to identify the major arterials and their primary intersections and to assess how well they are currently functioning.

The analysis revealed that currently two of the intersections – Beach/Cliff and Pacific/Washington are functioning below an acceptable level of service on peak weekends.

City of Santa Cruz General Plan policy has identified LOS D as the minimum level of acceptable service on "peak design day" in the South of Laurel. A policy decision has been made to accept LOS E on the Ocean Street corridor. This analysis indicates that improvements are needed to these intersections now, before new development impacts occur.

Additionally, the analysis provides an early warning that the four intersections currently operating at LOS D or worse on a peak design day – Beach/Pacific (Wharf intersection); Riverside/San Lorenzo; West Cliff/Bay, and Ocean/East Cliff – will probably be in need of mitigation once a moderate level of development occurs.

In the South of Laurel, the analysis found that the intersections along Laurel, particularly the Laurel/Front intersection, are more heavily impacted by traffic on the peak weekday because proposed land uses in this area are of a nature which will generate more weekday trips than weekend traffic.

2. Analysis of Development Impacts on Circulation: Six Alternatives

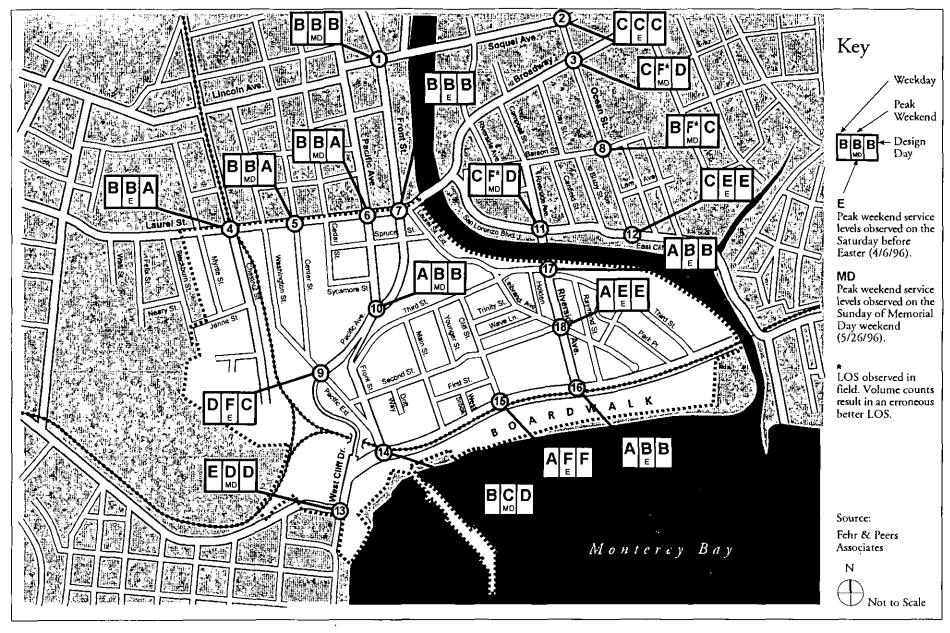
In order to analyze the development impacts on circulation at full build-out, different "trip generation rates" were calculated for the various types of land uses proposed for the Beach and South of Laurel.

The findings were that of the 1,369 trips on a peak weekend afternoon peak hour, the Beach area accounts for 75% of total trips; the South of Laurel for 17%; and already approved projects (such as the police station) for 8%.⁷

Based on this full build-out, intersection performance was analyzed according to six different possible combinations in order to identify circulation patterns with the least impact.

Four of these combinations involved changing the circulation plan or trip distribution, and two involved changes to the land use plan.

⁷ Report, p. 60-68. "Executive Summary", p.i.



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Figure 49

PM Peak Hour Levels of Service



The six alternatives analyzed are:

	Alternative	Street Network	Trip Distribution	Land Use
1.	Base Alternative	Existing ¹	Dual-access ²	Master Plan as proposed
2.	Two-Way Alternative	Two-way circulation for Beach between Riverside and Pacific and Riverside south of Third	Dual-access ²	Master Plan as proposed
3.	La Bahia/Dream Inn Switch	Existing	Dual-access ²	Master Plan, with uses at Dream Inn and La Bahia sites switched
4.	Scaled-back Boardwalk expansion	Existing	Dual-access ²	Master Plan, with Boardwalk expansion scaled back by 50,000 square feet (50%)
5.	East-side routing	Existing ¹	East-side access ³	Master Plan as proposed
6.	East-side routing with new bridge	Existing	East-side access ³	Master Plan as proposed

¹ Existing network includes the planned Third Street realignment and the re-opening of the West Cliff Bridge to southbound traffic.

The analysis revealed that Alternative 1, using the existing one-way loop circulation network with dual access was preferable.⁸ Dual access refers to directing Wharf/Beach going visitors off Ocean Street at Soquel over to the Front and Pacific corridors. This would result in attracting approximately 10% of beach going traffic toward the new parking facility proposed for the Depot site, while relieving additional congestion on Ocean Street.

Included in the background assumptions of this analysis were the re-opening of the West Cliff Drive Viaduct (westbound traffic only) and the re-opening of the Laurel Street Extension to two-way traffic.

3. Intersection Improvements Needed for the Approved Plan

The following intersection improvements were identified as needed to ensure improved service levels at full build-out. Eight of the 16 intersections studied will require some form of mitigation to improve operating conditions to LOS D or better.

² Dual access refers to beach area trips utilizing both the Ocean Street and Front-Pacific corridors

East-side access refers to beach area trips using only the Ocean Street corridor to access the beach area.

⁸ Fehr & Peers, "Executive Summary", p.iii.

- Intersection modifications at Pacific/Beach and Pacific/Washington are recommended as design improvements, but are not required as mitigations.
- Signal re-timing and new left turn phasing at the Front/Laurel intersection.
- Intersection modifications at Ocean/Broadway and Ocean/East Cliff.
- New traffic signal at Riverside and Leibrandt.
- · Intersection modification and new signal at West Cliff/Bay Street, and
- New traffic signal at Beach/Cliff for pedestrian safety.⁹
 [See following Figure: Proposed Roadway Improvements]

4. The Two-Waying of Beach Street

The opportunities and challenges presented by the two-waying of Beach Street were analyzed. The initial analysis identified as an option the re-opening this street to two-way traffic. The advantages presented in this approach were:

- · reducing traffic congestion and impacts on Third Street and Beach Flats,
- improving outbound conditions along a segment of the Ocean Street corridor, and
- increasing connectivity between the beach/wharf area and the downtown using the Pacific Avenue corridor.

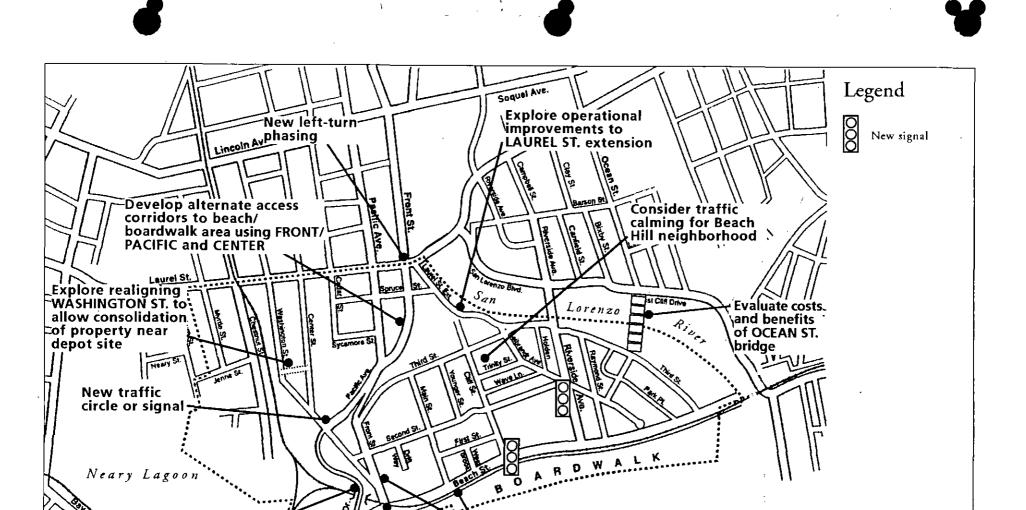
Additionally, important land use and economic development goals could be achieved with the two-waying of Beach Street. There were, however, several practical constraints:

- · increased congestion at the Wharf intersection,
- the capacity of the existing street width to accommodate two-way vehicular traffic as well as a two-way bike path and the railroad traffic, and
- the recent installation of sidewalks and curbs which would have to be removed.

This study therefore recommends that if congestion at the Wharf intersection can be successfully addressed, it would be appropriate to review the status of Beach Street as new development occurs, and carry out additional substantive analysis.

Deferring a decision regarding the two-waying of Beach Street until significant development occurs – such as a conference hotel facility – allows the City to carry out the necessary engineering analysis, consult with the affected businesses and property owners, and permits an opportunity to develop a public/private cost sharing approach toward implementation.

For a complete description of the proposed improvements, consult Fehr & Peers, "Executive Summary", p.iv-vii, and Michael G. Jones, *Plan*, p.7-8, and Table 9, p. 29-33.



Explore operational

FRONT ST. in future

change to BEACH ST. and

Monterey Bay

The Phipps Group

Re-opening of

DRIVE Bridge

Intersection

improvements

WEST CLIFF

City of Santa Cruz - Beach / South of Laurel Area Plan

Source:

MCP

Michael G. Jones,

Planning, Design, & Economics

Transportation

5. Pacific Avenue: Gateways & Traffic Circles

Pacific Avenue plays a special role in the City of Santa Cruz. It functions not only as the City's "Main Street", and as a crucial link between the Downtown and the Beach area, but also as a principal gateway to the Wharf and the Monterey Bay.

The *Downtown Recovery Plan* (1991) recognized the importance of Pacific Avenue in the reconstruction of the Downtown, and recommended it be designed as a "major public open space" which could accommodate important civic events. (p.7)

The South of Laurel Plan Strategy (1995) also pays special tribute to the importance of Pacific Avenue in terms of linking the South of Laurel Area to the retail activity of the Downtown and the recreational activities of the Beach area and the Wharf. It recommends that the landscaping and design of the downtown area be extended along the length of Pacific Avenue to the Front Street intersection, and that a Beach access design theme is recommended for the continuation of Pacific. [p.23-4] This study strongly supports that recommendation.

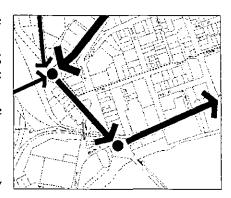
Over 20 years ago, in 1977, the *Beach Area Design Plan* identified the entrances to the Beach area as:

"typified by billboards, garish signs, gaudy motels, parking lots and confusing intersections...The most important intersection in the Beach Area, at the Wharf and Beach Street, is a confusing and ugly desert of concrete islands, power poles and parked cars. Washington and Front Streets, approaching the Wharf combine to create a vast open area given over almost entirely to cars." [p.7]

While substantial improvements have been made to the Wharf entry, the basic analysis of twenty years ago holds true today. Therefore, the recommendations in this plan focus on that portion of Pacific Avenue between Washington Street and Beach Street which functions the principal gateway to the Wharf and the Beach.

As the following photos illustrate, this section of street – which currently projects an overwhelming impression of cars and concrete – provides the City of Santa Cruz with a significant opportunity to develop a suitable gateway to the magnificent Monterey Bay, while at the same time addressing the major traffic delays which are presented by the two intersections of Pacific/Washington and Pacific/Beach.¹⁰

The reports indicate that the reopening of the West Cliff Drive bridge will ease some of the existing congestion problems at the Wharf and Pacific/Washington intersections. Additionally, they have both recommended that the City explore the possibility of installing traffic circles¹¹ or roundabouts¹² at the Wharf intersection and at the intersection of Pacific and Washington – which would also act as an entry to the proposed Depot parking lot. Should this policy be pursued, the necessary traffic and design study of this area would have

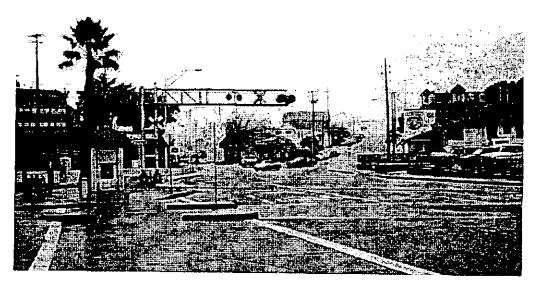


The transportation studies have identified the intersection of Pacific and Washington as already operating at LOS F on peak weekends.

^{11 &}quot;Executive Summary," p.vii.

¹² Jones, Plan, p.8.



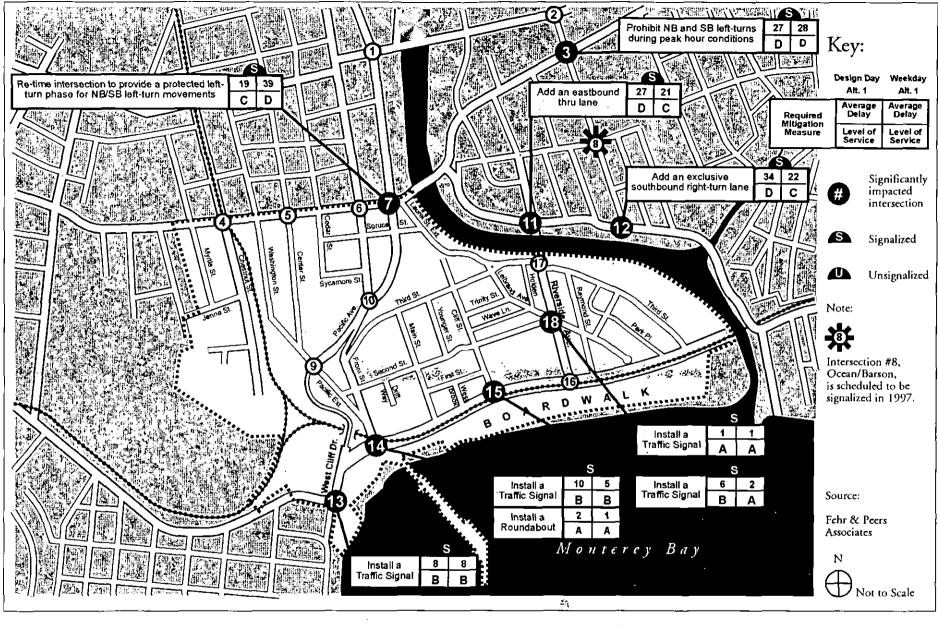


to analyze any potential trade-off between efficiency and safety, and also analyze the intersection at Second and Pacific within the overall proposal for this improvement. [See following Figure]

It is recognized in the transportation industry that modern roundabouts can manage traffic flows with a lower level of delay than signals. However, in the Beach area, there are concerns about possible conflicts at the Wharf entrance and the total amount of space available for the proposed circles which will have to be addressed. Care will also have to be taken to ensure bike and pedestrian safety.

In terms of urban design and in the creation of a suitable gateway to the Monterey Bay, traffic circles – as the following illustration reveals – are far preferable to overhead traffic signals. They offer the opportunity to both manage traffic more evenly and establish a clear and elegant entryway.

Within the context of these recommendations, such an approach would also facilitate the management of Pacific Avenue and Beach Streets as major public open spaces, and begin to integrate the recent improvements at the Wharf entry with the remainder of the Beach area.

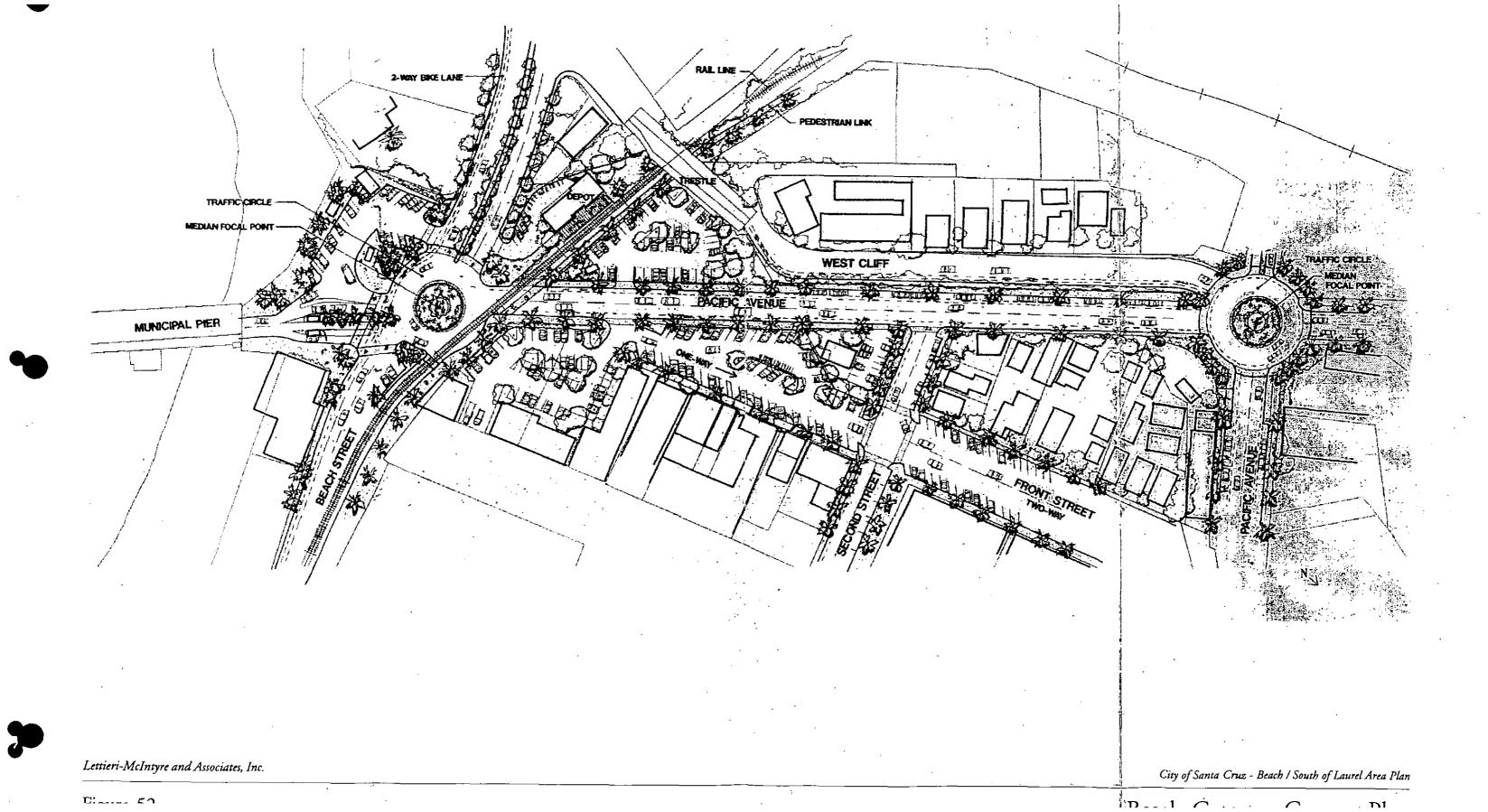


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City of Santa Cruz - Beach / South of Laurel Area Plan

Figure 51

Proposed Mitigations



C. RECOMMENDATIONS: CIRCULATION

1. Recommendation: Maintain One-Way Loop

This study recommends that Alternative 1, continuing the one-way loop circulation network with dual access as the preferred alternative in the short term. This circulation pattern achieves the objective of operating at an acceptable level of service while promoting an alternative route to the Wharf and the Beach.

2. Establish "Dual Access" Approach

The "dual access" approach, that is directing Beach/Wharf goers off of Ocean at Soquel and down Front and Pacific, will not only reduce some of the congestion on Lower Ocean and provide some relief to the adjacent neighborhoods from additional impacts, but equally importantly serve to direct Wharf/Beach goers to the peripheral parking lot proposed for the Depot site. This traffic pattern also begins to integrate the downtown with the Beach by providing a convenient opportunity to visit the Downtown.

It is important to realize that this approach represents a modification of existing policy which has been to contain the majority of beach going traffic on the Eastside, and direct visitors down Ocean Street. Clear and attractive signage will play an important role in successfully directing Wharf/Beach goers to the proposed Depot lot.

3. Install Traffic Circles [Roundabouts]

This study also strongly recommends the examination of the Pacific Avenue corridor between Washington and the Wharf for the development and installation of traffic circles if feasible. Should this remedy not be practical, it is strongly recommended that these two intersections be redesigned, not only to improve traffic flow, but as major gateways to the Monterey Bay.

It is recommended that the Pacific Avenue/Washington Street roundabout be installed first and monitored to assess the circulation improvement and/or impact.

4. Re-evaluate Two-Way Beach Street as Development Occurs

As major development occurs in the Beach, particularly a conference hotel facility, this study recommends re-evaluating the re-opening Beach Street to two-way circulation, if the conflicts between the cars, railroad and bikes can be resolved. The installation of a traffic circle at Beach and Pacific should help to facilitate traffic movements in a two-way network.

5. Protect Other Corridors Affected by Growth in Beach-Related Traffic

It can be anticipated that additional traffic corridors, such as Chestnut Street, which are not designated as coastal access routes and which are not included in the planning area, will be affect by growth in Beach-related traffic. Specific measures should be developed for their protection.

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XIII. PARKING: EXISTING CONDITIONS

& RECOMMENDATIONS



XIII. PARKING: EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. OVERVIEW AND APPROACH

This chapter on the existing conditions and recommendations for parking is to read be in conjunction with the discussion of policy context and circulation. The basic factual information and analysis are based on the earlier cited sources.

B. Existing Parking Conditions

1. Parking Supply

Four geographic areas — Beach Hill/Beach Flats, the Wharf, South of Laurel and River Flats — are included in the calculation of the parking supply for the Beach area and South of Laurel. The parking inventory is estimated to total approximately 7,850 parking spaces which are distributed in the following manner: about 1,700 on-street spaces; 650 residential permit parking spaces; 3,000 publicly available off-street spaces; and 2,500 private residential or commercial off-street spaces.¹

The two largest sources of public parking supply are in the private lots owned by the Seaside Company, known as the Main Beach lot and the River lot which provide approximately 2,038 spaces. [See following figure]

The other significant aggregation of public parking is on the Wharf where 430 spaces are available. There are also 666 parking meters in the Beach area.²

2. Parking Occupancy

During the peak design day, parking occupancy in the Beach area is "at capacity" - ranging from 91% to 97% occupied.³ Occupancy in the South of Laurel and River Flats is significantly lower, ranging between 55% and 57%.⁴

The importance of these occupancy rates is twofold:

- there is at present little or no additional parking capacity in the area to accommodate new growth, and
- any increase in visitor demand even without new growth may result in a significant spillover into adjacent neighborhoods.

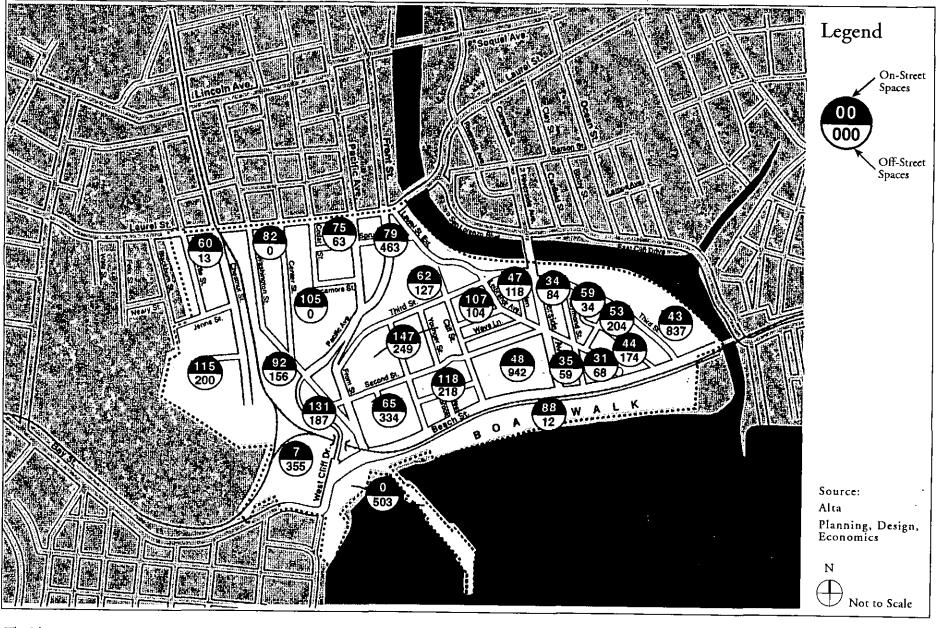
Factored into this occupancy are the approximately 435 spaces which are occupied by employees.

¹ Fehr & Peers, "Executive Summary," p. viii.

² Matt Farrell, Memorandum, March 14, 1997.

³ Jones, *Plan*, p.10.

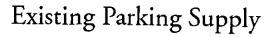
Fehr & Peers, Report, Table 2: Peak Period Parking Occupancy, p.26-28.



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City of Santa Cruz - Beach / South of Laurel Area Plan

Figure 53









C. FUTURE PARKING CONDITIONS

1. Parking Generation Rates

There are different parking generation rates associated with different types of land uses. The highest generation rate is assigned the entertainment uses on the Boardwalk and on the Beach, which ranges from a rate of 12 spaces/1000 sf on a peak weekday, to 15 spaces/1000 sf on a peak weekend.⁵

One key consideration was to identify the number of people and vehicles that had the Beach rather than the Boardwalk, Wharf, or other uses as a primary destination. The reasoning behind this is that it is critical to preserve that parking supply to comply with Coastal Access requirements.

"Based on a variety of sources including the 1994 Visitor Survey, an estimated 13% of all visitors had the beach as a primary destination on a design day, translating into 445 vehicles. An estimated 220 of these vehicles are currently parking in Seaside Company lots. The 300 space depot lot — which is roughly equidistant to the beach — was identified as a method of removing these parkers from the Boardwalk parking and freeing up capacity for future growth."

For purposes of calculating future recreational/entertainment use demand, a policy decision was made to assign 13.5 parking spaces/1000 sf to Boardwalk expansion and 1.5 parking spaces/1000 sf to the beach and other commercial uses.

2. Parking Supply

The approved Plan significantly reduces the total amount of proposed development and results in reduced parking demand in the Beach/Wharf area. Removal of the Boardwalk expansion results in a parking demand decreased by 1,500 spaces. In addition, reduction of the Main Beach Lot development to less than 125,000 square feet (with a potentially smaller facility resulting from the required community-based planning process) will result in a reduction in parking demand at this site by at least 175 spaces. Elimination of the West Coast Santa Cruz Hotel parking lot for a 150-room hotel reduces peak period parking demand by 49 spaces.

The total impact of the land use changes in the approved Plan is to reduce future parking demand by 1,759 spaces and reduce future parking supply by 1,012 spaces, for a net change of +747 spaces. This net reduction in projected demand avoids the need for the River Lot parking garage and could remove the need for additional parking from the Beach Area. If, through a future planning process, it is determined that a garage is necessary, the reduced demand would allow the construction of a smaller Main Beach Lot garage through a reduction of up to 40% (604 spaces) of the original garage for a total of 942 spaces. The 303 space deficit in the Beach Visitor Area will be met through the shuttle and remote lots.

At issue, is identifying the most appropriate manner in which to provide these spaces — which both meets the need to support development and provide coastal access while not paving over excessive amounts of highly limited beach area land mass.

⁵ Fehr & Peers, Report, p.29-32.

⁶ Jones, Plan, p 10.

The parking and circulation analyses concluded that the most appropriate way this shortfall can be mitigated is by provision of:

- a 300 space parking lot at the Depot (or other convenient South of Laurel site),
- remote parking in existing and unused spaces in downtown garages (200± weekend spaces)⁷ and/or at the County Government Center lot (450± spaces), and
- shuttle connections between remote parking and the Beach.⁸

D. RECOMMENDATIONS: PARKING

1. Overview & Approach

The central premise of this planning effort is that "the beach area of Santa Cruz is a magnificent and irreplaceable resource which needs clear and sensitive management." Part of that management will be to comprehensively address the issue of parking which will control not only future revitalization in this area and provide public access to the Coast, but possesses the potential to adversely impact the quality of life in adjacent residential neighborhoods.

In devising parking recommendations, three competing goals must be kept in balance. That is:

- making the Beach area accessible to all,
- supporting revitalization whose new uses will require additional parking, and,
- recognizing that the highest and best use of this irreplaceable resource is not surface or structured parking and thus alternative methods of arrival must be encouraged.

A sensitive equilibrium among these goals is mandatory, and can be best addressed by a partnership between the public and private sectors. Each has a vital stake in the future of this area. For the City of Santa Cruz, it is clear that an opportunity exists to improve a major California coastal resource — the Beach and the historic Boardwalk. This area is the "image" of Santa Cruz in the minds of most who live outside its borders, and represents a significant financial resource for the City. It is moreover, with the reconstruction of the Downtown almost complete, the one major remaining area in the City with significant unrealized revitalization potential.

For the private sector, it is equally clear, that to expand the season and remain competitive in the future — as neighboring and other coastal communities improve their attractions —

⁷ Matt Farrell, "Downtown Parking Lot Surveys", March 19, 1997.

⁸ Fehr & Peers, "Executive Summary," p.x. and Report, p.103; Jones, Plan, pp.12-13.

Ð

there must be a significant increased investment in the physical building stock and infrastructure of the area. New retail attractions are needed, and major upgrading of exterior appearance is required.

It is unrealistic to expect either partner to proceed in investing without clear assurances that they share a common goal and a common timeline. For that reason, this study will recommend a proposed management approach and structure. In addition, this study strongly endorses a "sequencing of private and public improvements." Such an approach allows both the public and private partner to time and calibrate their respective investments in a manner which reduces risk and ensures mutual reinforcement.

The time line identifies:

- Short-term 1-5 years
- Mid-term 5-10 years, and
- · Long Term 10 years and beyond

In the short-term, the City with its private partners in the Beach area can develop and implement three parking programs which will be of benefit to the area:9

- a. an employee off-site parking program,
- b. increased management of the public on-street parking supply (meters), and
- c. development of a visitor shuttle service/remote lots.

2. Recommendation: Employee Off-Site Parking Program

Where parking is "at capacity," as it is in the Beach area, and where there is competition at peak periods for available parking, it is both desirable and prudent to "create" — in effect — new capacity by freeing up existing spaces. The parking analysis indicates that approximately 435 spaces in the Beach are occupied by employees. Some of these are private spaces, but many are public. Freeing-up of existing spaces is done most frequently by developing employee off-site parking programs, encouraging employee ridesharing, and levying parking transfer fees on employers. There are already two examples of such programs in existence in the Beach area.

The City of Santa Cruz has already begun to carry out such a program in its management of the Wharf employees off-site parking program. During the peak season, essentially from Memorial Day to Labor Day, employee parking is forbidden on the Wharf on weekends and holidays. A free employee shuttle service is provided to an off-site lot.

A major private employer, the Seaside Company, has in the past operated a peak season employee shuttle service to off-site parking. This frees up approximately 300 spaces from their current number of 1910 spaces allocated between the Main and River lots - or approximately 16% of their total inventory.

⁹ The next section "Sequencing of Development," will provide a fuller discussion of the proposed improvements for all the time periods.



This study recommends the development and implementation of a comprehensive, peak season employee off-site parking program which would address the needs of both large and small employers in the Beach area. It further recommends that the proposed coordinated implementation approach, bring together City agencies and private property/business representatives work together to meld the existing employee shuttle program elements into a comprehensive program which meets their mutual requirements.¹⁰

The freeing up of public parking spaces offers financial benefits for what might be minimal financial costs if the two programs were merged. Wharf gate revenues to the City for FY 95-96 were \$578,400, up from \$420,000 in FY 94/95. Much of that increase was due to the change-over from meters to Gate control which began in August 1994, but it also reflects the benefits of increased management of this resource. For the Seaside Company, each employee space represents on average - \$6/day x 45 days if counting only the peak weekends x 300 employees = \$81,000; or \$6/day x 95 days if counting Memorial Day to Labor Day x 300 employees = \$171,000.

All successful shuttle programs acknowledge the relationship between incentives and constraints. Unlike Europeans, Americans do not willingly choose transit if accessible parking - even very expensive parking - is available. Therefore, for any employee off-site parking/shuttle program to be successful, certain issues must be addressed:

- off-site parking locations must be accessible, secure, and free or priced below alternatives,
- · shuttle service must be timely and dependable, and
- · the "regret factor" for violations must be high.

It is important that both the City and the business community begin thinking about such a program now, for as the area is revitalized, the proposed land uses — such as conference facilities, retail and boardwalk expansion are very labor intensive and employee parking requirements will significantly increase.

3. Recommendation: Increased Management: Public On-Street Parking Supply

The issue of parking meters tends to raise intense emotions among business people and patrons alike. However, clear policies and goals and sensitive but firm enforcement of regulations often results in providing jurisdictions with a management tool in congested areas which can both be priced to reflect the market value of convenience and be used to encourage alternative modes of transportation.

This study recommends that the City of Santa Cruz develop and implement a meter management program in the Beach and South of Laurel area which:

- · relates the pricing of meters to location and convenience,
- implements new technology allowing patrons to extend their length of stay,

¹⁰ No costs for this potential program have been factored into the estimate of total costs. It is assumed that some cost-sharing arrangement would be made.



- correlates the pricing of meters to that of off-site parking and shuttle service, and
- provides a revenue stream for needed public initiatives in the Beach area.

This program should be carried out in tandem with a shuttle program which serves remote parking lots.

On-street parking occupancy is at 100% capacity on the peak weekend afternoon in the Beach area. [See following figure¹¹]. Utilization was much lower in the South of Laurel at 55% capacity. 100% capacity means that at peak periods, there is significantly more demand than can be reasonably accommodated. When meter utilization exceeds supply, fees should be adjusted, and alternative parking and alternative modes of transportation should be encouraged. There are currently 666 meters in the Beach area, with varying time limits and prices per hour.¹²

Approximately 2/3rds of the meters have time limits which range from 2 to 10 hours and are priced at 75 cents/hour. One-third of the meters have a 12 hour time limit and are priced at 50 cents/hour - which is below market in this high demand area. In essence, the meters which provide the greatest convenience in terms of length of stay, have the cheapest rates.

This study recommends a comprehensive review of the time limits and pricing of the meters in this area. It suggests that:

- electronic meter heads be considered for the Beach area which offers the
 patrons the ability to extend their length of stay, and offers the City the
 flexibility of calibrating hours and rates,¹³
- fee schedules for meters be developed which reflects the value of convenience
 with meters in the Beach at a higher per hour cost, and
- the South of Laurel area be reviewed for installation of meters which should be priced below those in the Beach. [Approximately 500 could be installed over the next 10 years. Jones, Plan, p.41]

One of the goals of this pricing strategy is to encourage Beach goers, who are often more price sensitive than visitors to the Boardwalk, to use the Pacific/Front Street approach and park either at easily accessible and convenient Depot lot or on the meter in the South of Laurel and walk to the Beach.¹⁴

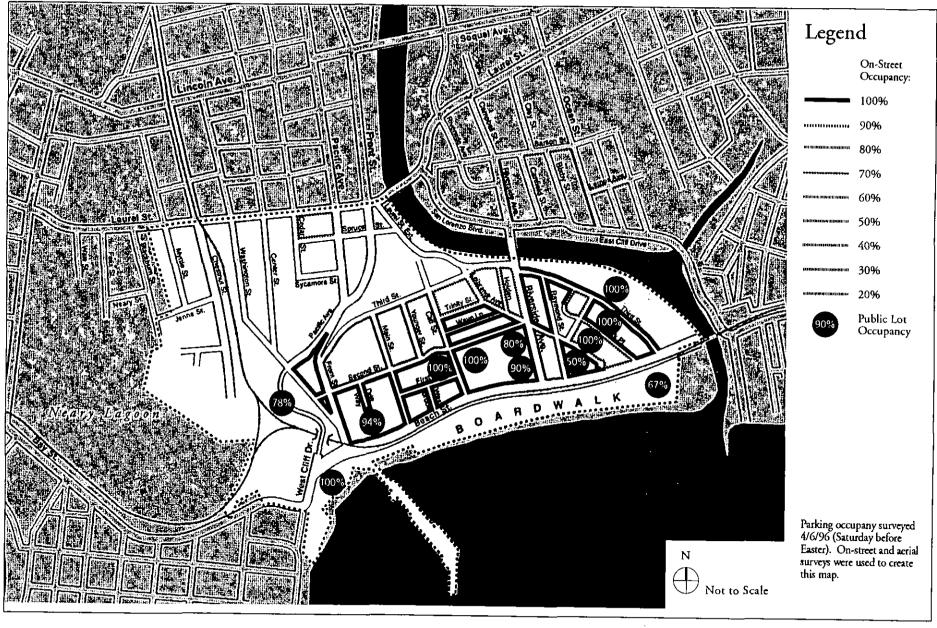
It is instructive to compare meter information between the Beach and the Downtown.

¹¹ Taken from Fehr & Peers, Report, 1st draft, Oct, 1996.

¹² Matt Farrell, Memorandum, March 14, 1997.

¹³ Costs could range from \$25/meter using present mechanisms to \$200/meter for new electronic heads. No total has been factored into the total program costs. Director of Public Works, Memorandum, April 18, 1997.

¹⁴ See discussion, Fehr & Peers, Report, p.102.



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Figure 54



Issue	ye see Beach	Downtown	Total
# Meters	666	802	1,468
% of Total	45%	55%	100%
Meter Revenue '95-'96	\$510,000	\$406,400	\$916,400
% of Total	56%	44%	100%
Citation Revenue '95-'96	\$393,000	\$593,837	\$986,837
% of Total	40%	60%	100%
# of Citations Issued	22,541	42,829	65,370
% of Total	34%	66%	100%
Collection Rate %	73%	83.4%	



This table reveals that while the Beach has only 43% of the total meters [between the Beach and the Downtown], it generates 56% of total meter revenue — on a partial year. All these meter revenues go into the General Fund.

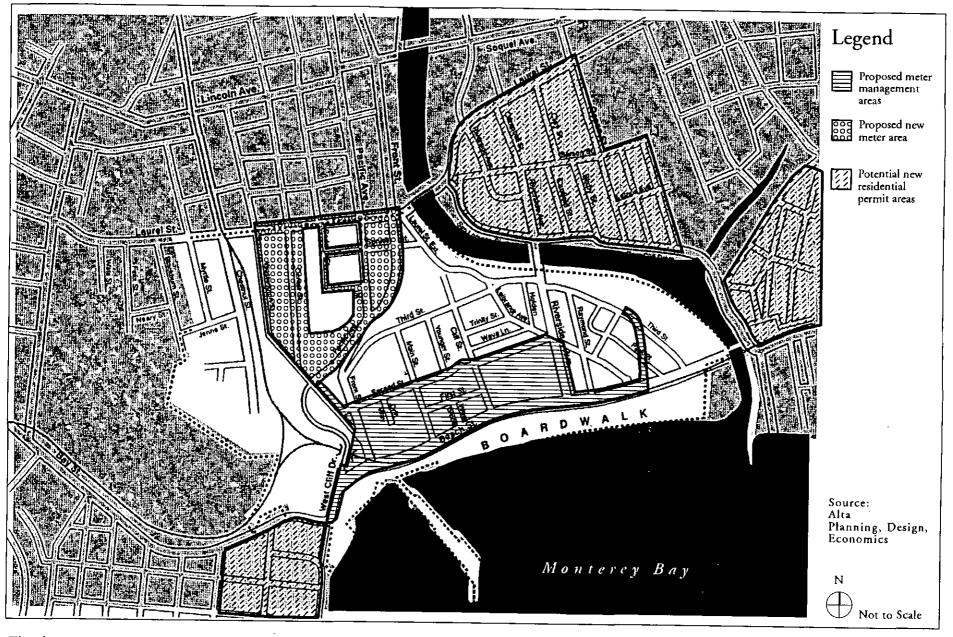
The Downtown, on the other hand, has 56% of the total meters, but generates 44% of the total meter revenue — on a 12 month year. These meter revenues flow to the Downtown Parking District.

Additionally, the total number of citations issued and the collection rate is far higher in the Downtown. The total number of citations issued in the Beach has dropped dramatically since Fy 90/91 when 28,500 citations were issued, reaching a low of 19,100 in Fy 94/95 when meters were removed from the Wharf and a paid attendant parking program was instituted. In Fy 95/96 citation revenues from the Beach totaled \$393,000 of which 80%, or \$311,400 went into the general fund.

This study recommends that a review be made of the current citation enforcement approach in the Beach area, with a view to managing this area in the same manner as downtown. It also recommends that consideration be given to substantially enhancing the collection rate by providing collection boxes at convenient locations which allows violators to pay a reduced fine before leaving the area. Historically, in tourist areas, this approach has worked very well in increasing collection rates.

In implementing any changes in meter or enforcement management, it is essential to publicize these changes fully, and develop a program of friendly warnings in the first stage of implementation. Additionally, it is important to address the understandable concerns of the area businesses and be able to demonstrate the benefits which will accrue to the area from these new management policies.

¹⁵ Information in this section was compiled from: Economic & Planning Systems, Inc., draft Downtown Santa Cruz Parking Study: Phase I: Historical Analysis & Baseline Forecast, Table II-7, and "Parking Revenue Report, Fiscal Year 95/96.



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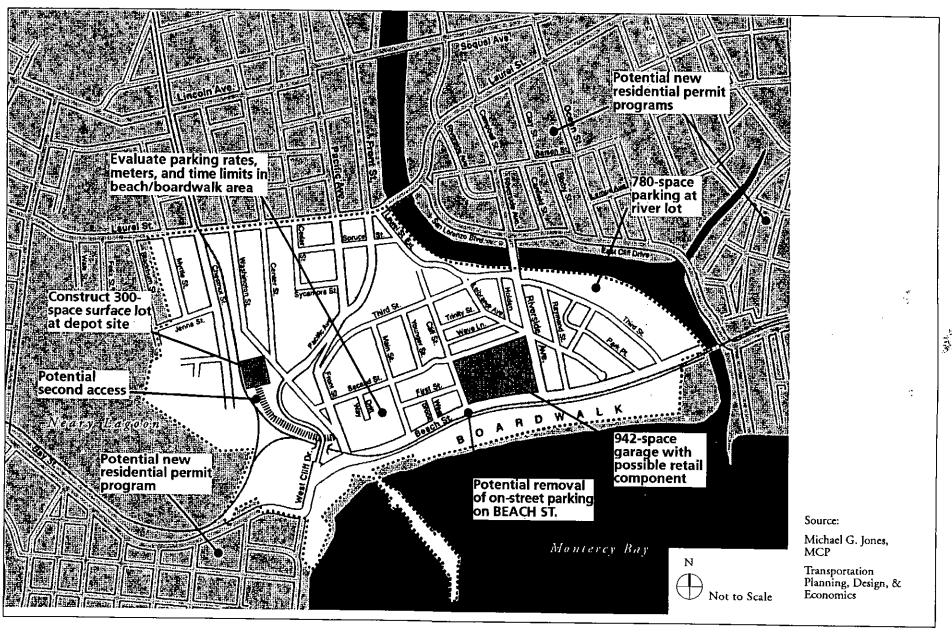
City of Santa Cruz - Beach / South of Laurel Area Plan

Figure 55

Meter Management Areas and Residential Permit Areas







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One of the objectives of this plan is to propose recommendations which support the sensitive revitalization of the Beach area for the benefit of the entire City, and to identify potential revenue sources which will provide funding for needed improvements in the Beach.

4. Recommendation: Two Potential Revenue Sources

This study recommends consideration be given to two potential revenue programs which could support revitalization of the Beach and South of Laurel areas, that is:

- · the eventual application of a parking district in the South of Laurel, and
- dedication of a portion of parking/citation revenues from the Beach to fund improvements in the area.

To accomplish this second recommendation, this study recommends that a parking/citation revenue baseline be established for the Wharf/Beach and that these revenues be secured for continued support of the General Fund. ¹⁶ [In FY 95/96, these revenues totaled approximately \$1,400,000: Meters - \$510,000: Citations - \$311,400: and, Wharf -\$578,000]

It also recommends that the City Council establish policy which directs that revenues above this established baseline be, in the future, directed to funding the public initiatives/improve-ments in the Beach which are being proposed by this planning process. Among such initiatives could be financial support for a shuttle system and neighborhood traffic calming streetscape improvements. As this resource is better managed, and development occurs and as the effective Beach season is extended, it is anticipated that these revenues would grow.¹⁷

The parking analysis assumes that meter rates will increase throughout the City ¹⁸ from \$.75/hr to \$1.50/hr (in constant 1997 dollars) over the next 10 years, resulting in \$707,000 in additional meter revenue by the Year 2007.

Demand and usage of metered spaces is projected to increase approximately 33% during this same period.¹⁹

5. Recommendation: Neighborhood Protection Program

As on-street parking is better managed and as parking demand increases in the area, there could be a direct spill-over impact on surrounding neighborhoods. For that reason, it is important to implement, at the same time as the meter program, the traffic calming and urban design recommendations for neighborhood entryways to Beach Hill and Beach Flats. It is also important to keep the "regret factor" very high. The current citation is \$33.00 for parking in the Beach Hill or Beach Flats residential permit zone.²⁰

¹⁶ The establishment of such a base-line might also allow for a percentage increase over time.

¹⁷ A detailed analysis of parking revenue projections is found in Jones, *Plan*, p.41-41, and Table 16.

¹⁸ See also, Economic & Planning Systems, Inc., draft report, Downtown Santa Cruz Parking Study: Phase I: Historical Analysis and Baseline Forecast, March, 1997.

¹⁹ M.G. Jones, *Plan*, p.39.

²⁰ "Municipal Code Bail Schedule", 2/1/94.

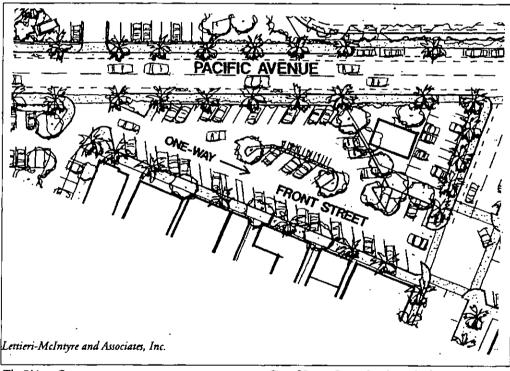


In addition, the East Cliff, River Flats and West Cliff neighborhoods could begin to experience visitor parking impacts as revitalization occurs. It is recommended that the City carefully monitor these neighborhoods and be prepared to respond should residential permit parking programs be requested.

6. Recommendation: Front Street Improvements

This plan recommends changes to the way parking is allocated on that portion of Front Street between the Wharf intersection and Second Street. As the following illustration demonstrates, both the direction of traffic flow and the distribution of parking is changed. It is recommended that the same number of diagonal spaces adjacent to the shops be maintained, but that the expanse of public space be consolidated and landscaped both to allow protected, head-in parking²¹ and to create and continue the boulevard effect of the proposed Pacific Avenue gateway.

A landscaped island is proposed to "neck-down" the exit at Second Street and calm the flow of traffic. It is understood that a thorough traffic analysis will need to be performed on this proposal. This proposal also supports and reinforces the concept of a traffic circle at the Wharf, while providing additional protections to the Front Street section of Beach Hill.

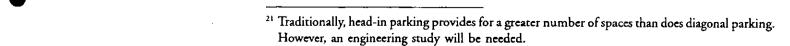


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City of Santa Cruz - Beach/South of Laurel Area Plan

Figure 57

Front Street Concept Plan









XIV. TRANSIT & RAIL: BIKE & PEDESTRIAN: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

XIV. TRANSIT & RAIL: BIKE & PEDESTRIAN: RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Overview & Purpose

In order to identify which improvements the City should implement first, the parking and circulation studies analyzed a variety of development scenarios. The following discusses those improvements which will be needed for the first stage of development, projected to be years 1-5 after plan approval, and discusses the exciting potential of rail.

In the patterned minuet of steps taken by cities and developers in areas designated for revitalization, it is certainty and coordinated timing which ensures success. Therefore, in an effort to provide certainty to the private sector and to anticipate possible costs to the public sector, an analysis was carried out of the transportation impacts and funding needs of the development proposals recommended in this plan.¹

"The sequencing or phasing of growth in the study area is largely dependent on external factors such as economic conditions, and is difficult to predict precisely. In order to plan for needed physical and operation improvements, however, the City must identify likely development scenarios and trigger points which will allow time to identify and secure the required funding and public-private partnerships." ²

B. Possible Development Scenarios

Analyzing the various development proposals for the Beach and South of Laurel, three possible staged development scenarios were identified. These development scenarios were grouped into five year time spans and included both specific projects which had been identified in the Plan Strategies, as well as non-specified general growth which it is reasonable to assume might occur.

These three stages are:

Short-Term (1-5 years)

Specific Projects

- 250-275 room conference hotel facility, w/37,000 gsf of retail/ restaurant, undetermined number of parking spaces, La Bahia site
- 2.5 acres of city park

General Growth

- 45,000 gsf of office
- 20,000 gsf of retail

¹ See Jones, *Plan*, p.27; and p.36-37.

² Jones, *Plan*, p.27.Based on the projected development sequence, the Plan analyzes parking utilization and operations, identifies development and operating cost assumptions, parking revenue assumptions, suggests sequencing of parking generation, and provides 10 year parking pro-formas. [p.36-37].

- 150 dwelling units
- 32,000 gsf of Police Station

Mid-Term (5-10 years)

General Growth

- 25,000 gsf of office
- 20,000 gsf of retail
- 30 dwelling units
- 139 hotel rooms

Long-Term (10 years - Build Out)

Specific Projects

• less than 125,000 gsf of retail at Main Beach Parking Lot (amount to be determined by future planning process)

General Growth

- 22,000 gsf of office
- 25,000 gsf of retail
- 23 dwelling units

1. Short-Term Improvements Required: YEARS 1 - 5

Using this approach of sequencing development, it was found that in order to address the circulation and parking requirements of the first stage development projected for years 1-5, an additional 300 space parking lot and a shuttle system to intercept lots would be required as a mitigation measure.

This approach allows a substantial amount of development to occur in the Beach/Wharf area without the burden of constructing an expensive parking structure.

"a parking deficit first appears in 2001 (Year 4). Under 'proposed improvement,' parking improvements are sequenced starting with the depot site and shuttle system in 1999. The La Bahia on-site parking supply is phased in at the same time the project comes on-line (2000), although evening demand will outstrip this supply by about 120 spaces (to be parked at the depot site).³

The City should provide this additional surface parking in the South of Laurel which has an ideal location in the Depot Site. Should this exact location prove not to be available, another near-by site in the South of Laurel must be identified. Further analysis should be carried out as to the costs and benefits of providing structures vs. surface parking on the Depot site.

C. PROPOSED SHUTTLE SYSTEM

The proposed shuttle system is the priority component of the suggested mitigation program for revitalization of the Beach and South of Laurel areas. It would serve not only to defer the need for a parking structure during the first phase of development, Year 1-5, but also assist in reducing parking and congestion problems in the Beach area.

³ Jones, *Plan*, p.41. This analysis assumes the implementation of the Third Street Realignment and the consolidation of parking on the River Lot.

As the service is developed, it could provide a vital linkage between activities in the Beach and the Downtown. It is crucial that the shuttle program be implemented as soon as possible and be carefully structured for success.

1. Needed Shuttle Characteristics

An analysis was carried out of type of shuttle service which would be needed to mitigate parking needs upon full build-out. Then, a detailed analysis of these components was performed and specific shuttle program recommendations were identified.⁴

Background & Overview

As a rule, jurisdictions tend to be skeptical about the feasibility of shuttle service. They often regard shuttles as a major operating expense serving only a small segment of the population. This is based partly on local experience, partly on the national experience of declining transit ridership across the nation during the past decade, and partly on the recognition that Americans on the whole often tend to view transit negatively — or at best, neutrally.

The City of Santa Cruz operated a Beach Area shuttle service between 1985 and 1994 with moderate success, using standard Metro buses, and a 30 to 45 minute headway. Service was provided by the City and funded by a 60% public and 40% private funding plan. The service was discontinued in 1994 due partially to declining ridership.⁵

For any shuttle service to have a realistic expectation of success, both the elements of cost and of personal resistance must be addressed. Throughout this study has run the leitmotif of linking constraints to incentives and personal costs to personal convenience. The elements of the proposed shuttle program below attempt to cement these essential relationships.

The Experience Begins With the Vehicle

Because of resistance to transit, it is critical that the vehicle itself be attractive and the ride itself an enjoyable experience. For that reason, it is strongly recommended that the vehicle be the rubber-wheeled trolley-style open vehicle which is fun to ride, relates to the history of the area, and is easy to load and unload. They could also possibly be electric.

In the early days of the Beach, the City had a variety of shuttles and electric trains which provided easy and convenient access. This study recommends an attractive shuttle which has the capability of handling beach going equipment and recreates the earlier version of Santa Cruz.

Proposed Hours of Operation: Number of Shuttles

The proposed hours of operation are from 9 am to 10 pm, or 13 hours per day during weekends in the peak period, and two hours shorter in the evening during off-peak periods.

The service is proposed for nine months a year on weekends only. As the Beach area develops more year-round attractions, this service proposed should be re-examined.

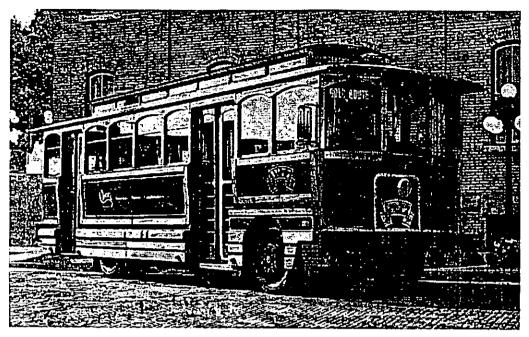




Jones, Plan, p.16-27. The majority of the following shuttle discussion is based on this analysis.

⁵ Jones, *Plan*, p. 20.





"A caveat to this is the possibility that a shuttle could serve local residents and employees with direct timed connections to the Metro-Multi-Modal Terminal. For example, the shuttles could possibly replace Route #7 (Beach Route)" Jones, *Plan*, p.18.

In order to remove the demand for 400 parking spaces from the Beach area, at least four vehicles with a maximum capacity of 47 people, including standees, would be required.

Proposed Headways: 10-15 Minutes⁶

For shuttles to be successful, the service needs to be both predictable and reliable. Passengers must be able to anticipate another shuttle within 10-15 minutes both in the parking lots and along the shuttle route. This is often difficult to accomplish in normal urban conditions. It is complicated in Santa Cruz by two factors:

- concentrated arrival time and when the fog rolls in concentrated departure time of beach visitors, and
- congested routes.

This study recommends that arrangements for back-up bus capacity be made with Metro or other sources to assist during peak periods, when the proposed shuttle system can only provide for approximately 71% of design day demand.⁷

Proposed Shuttle Route

In the beginning, the proposed shuttle route must be simple, direct, and as rapid as possible. As local residents and visitors become accustomed to the service, it may be possible to operate additional routes.

⁶ Fehr & Peers, "Executive Summary", p x.

⁷ Jones, *Plan*, p.19 for a full discussion.

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The following proposed initial route should be analyzed for its ability to serve to connect the River/Front Garage, the County Center, with the proposed Depot parking lot and the Beach. [See following figure] The stops should be clearly signed with schedules/routes, and located at existing Metro stops. A fifteen minute round-trip is proposed. Alternative routes which avoid Beach Hill should also be analyzed.

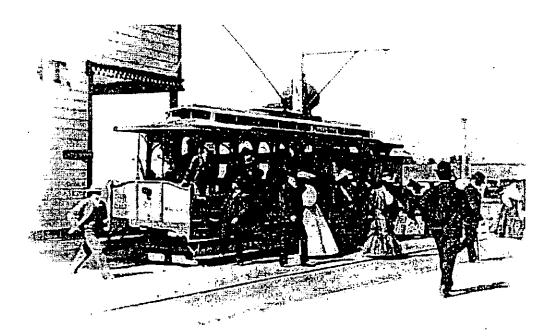
Example of Public/Private Shuttle Funding

The Wave Shuttle service in Monterey began as a joint venture with funding from the City of Monterey, the City of Pacific Grove, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and the Monterey Bay Air Pollution Control District provided funding equal to the sum of the first three sources. This was matched with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding. The incentive to create the system was an effort to reduce auto use and deal with a parking problem at the Aquarium.

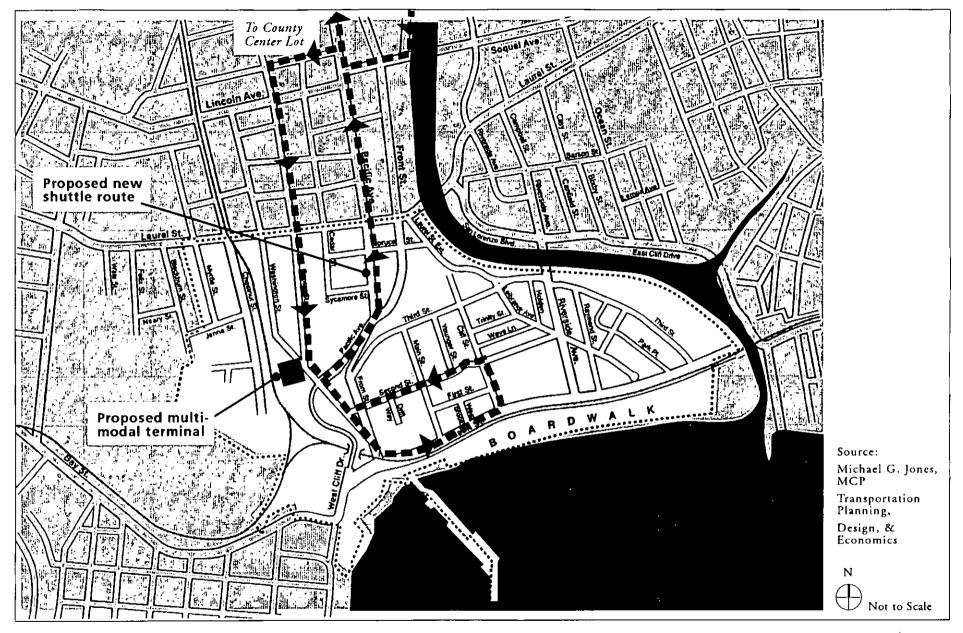
In the FY 1994, the first year of the demonstration, the Monterey Bay Aquarium provided \$40,000 of the \$530,000 budget, with an additional \$10,000 provided by local businesses in the City of Monterey through their associations. The City matched that amount, and the City of Pacific Grove provided \$7,000. These combined municipal and business contributions were then matched by the local air pollution control district, with fares and advertising revenue completing the needed funding potential shuttle route.

The actual business contribution amounted to \$50,000, or 9.4 percent of total needed, but it should be noted that this amount leveraged a great deal more. Although many in the business community felt that they were already paying taxes that should fund the service, there was substantial business support in marketing the service.

Putting together a funding package with ten sources, and then following up to obtain the funds, required strong advocacy by the transit Board and municipal leaders, and a lot of staff time from the transit system for group presentations and follow-up.



Early example of Santa Cruz Trolley



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Figure 58

Potential Shuttle Route



D. PROPOSED REMOTE PARKING LOTS

1. Near Term Proposed Lots: Years 1-5

In the near term, there are three logical sites which could effectively serve to provide remote parking for beach and Wharf goers. They are:

- River/Front Garage which could provide up to 200 spaces for Beach area parkers on weekends,8
- the County Center parking lot which could provide up to 450 spaces on most weekends, and
- the proposed Depot lot of 300 surface spaces which could serve not only
 as parking but also as a potential transfer point between the shuttle and
 Metro bus systems.

The Depot site offers the exciting potential of providing a realistic intercept lot for visitors whose primary destination is the Beach. Because of its location along the railroad tracks which lead directly to the Beach, this site could provide convenient and attractive pedestrian access from parking less than 5 minutes from the beach area.

This site could also act as a true multi-modal stop, a potential transfer point between the shuttle and the Metro bus systems, and as the following section will describe, this area is also being studied for the possible location of station stops for both recreational and transit rail. [See following illustration]

Because of the many interconnecting functions this site could perform in the coming years, this study recommends that the City take the necessary steps now to acquire this site to ensure that beach area weekend parking could be accommodated here. Timing is a critical issue in transportation planning, for often opportunities disappear which can never be recreated.

2. Mid-Term Proposed Lot: 5-10 Years

The California Department of Transportation is currently planning to construct a clover-leaf intersection where Route 17 intersects with Highway 1. In the "fishhook" design, there may be provision for a 150 car parking lot, if this improvement is adopted by the Regional Transportation Commission. [See following map].

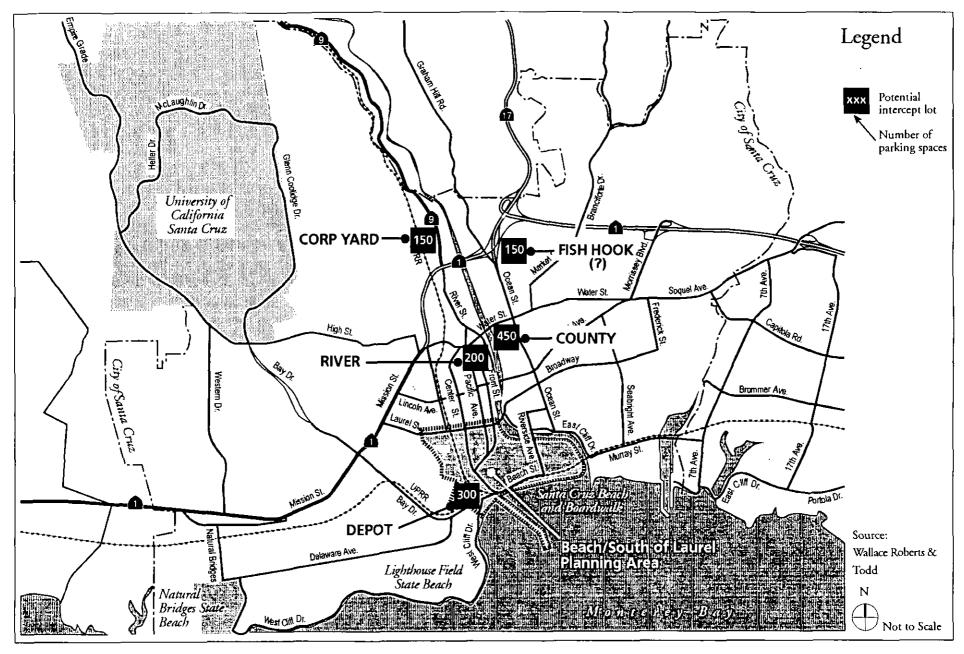
In preliminary conversations, Caltrans has indicated its willingness to consider using this lot for a remote parking/beach shuttle connection on the weekends.

Study will be needed to see this site can be realistically served by shuttle.

3. Long-Term Proposed Lot: 10 Years & Beyond

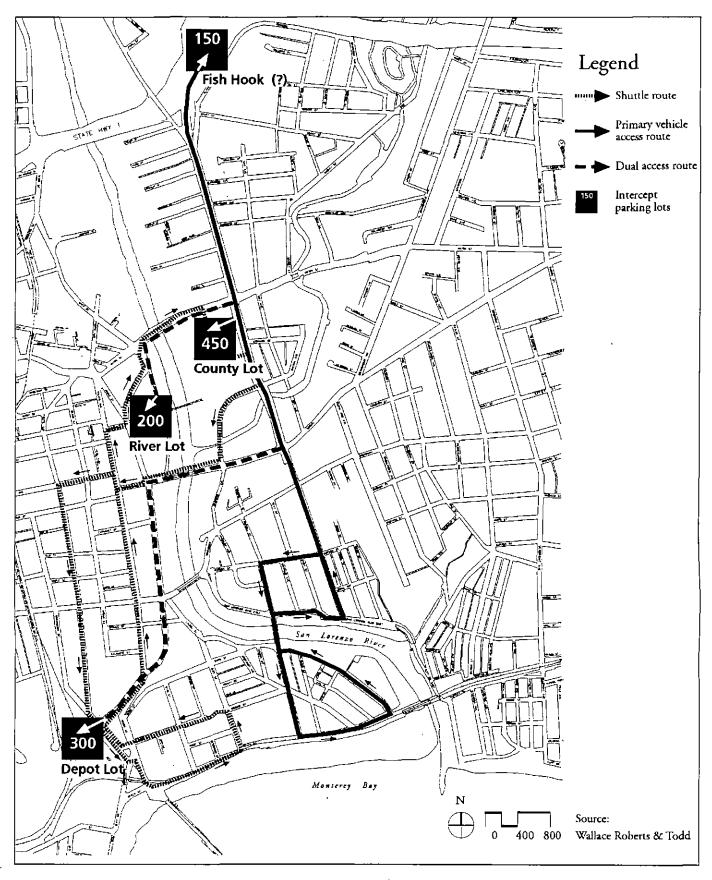
The Major Transportation Investment Study, being directed by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, is analyzing eight major transportation alternatives which will affect the City of Santa Cruz. Two of those alternatives include rail transit service which would employ the Southern pacific rail line with a potential station stop located near the intersection of River Street and Encinal where the City has a storage yard.

⁸ Matt Farrell, Memorandum, March 19, 1997,"Downtown Parking Lot Surveys."



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If such rail service becomes a reality, there may be the potential to develop an intercept lot at this site, and use rail service as a shuttle to the beach.

E. CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS: CONSTRAINTS & INCENTIVES

1. Constraints

Because of reluctance to use transit, there are three principal constraints which should be marketed to enhance the attractiveness of remote parking and shuttle use. They are: lack of easily available parking, congestion and cost.

As on-street and off-street parking in the Beach area reach capacity — often mid-morning on a Saturday, peak weekend, and congestion on lower Ocean builds, it is recommended that the City employ "real time signs"/ electronic signs to inform visitors that close-in parking is full. Such signs would be useful at the intersection of Ocean St/Water Streets, and/or Ocean Street/Soquel "where visitors need to be prodded to leave the ocean St. corridor and park at the County Center or the downtown area." Manpower would be needed to monitor conditions and change signs as needed.

The issue of cost is an important one. Coupled with the meter management recommendations noted earlier, this study recommends that remote parking and shuttle service be free in its initial stages. As the system gains acceptance, a small flat fee for all day shuttle usage could be instituted. The City of Monterey now charges for its enormously popular "Wave" shuttle.

2. Incentives

Remote parking lots must be clear, safe, and well signed. Arriving visitors should be directed toward the remote lots from the moment of arriving within the City.

The shuttle needs to be creatively marketed. One of the proposed major management functions of the suggested coordinated approach to implementation will be a parking/shuttle management program which includes aggressively marketing the shuttle.

A simple, clear and colorful map should be distributed to all local hotels and visitor centers. Major attractions such as the Wharf and the Boardwalk should include the shuttle in their promotions. In the initial stages, it should be made clear that the shuttle is free and provides rides between parking, the Beach and the Downtown. Major downtown retail establishments and restaurants should promote the shuttle.

The goal of the marketing program will be to make the shuttle the ride of choice for local residents as well as visitors. To that end, this plan recommends developing a promotional campaign that includes the selection of an appropriate name for the service; design of an attractive ticket, distribution of free tickets to all hotels and retail and restaurants in the area, frequent publicity.

⁹ Aspen, Colorado has recorded a major increase in ridership."The gains we are seeing are driven largely by paid parking in Aspen, which in essence makes the bus free. That, coupled with frequent departures, are bringing people to the transit habit in record numbers." *Passenger Transport*, August 7, 1995.



F. Costs

The shuttle analysis provides a cost comparison of different service levels, types of vehicle and operators, and compares the cost of operating the shuttle to the cost of providing 400 spaces of structured parking at \$15,000/space.¹⁰

The conclusion was that the proposed shuttle service would cost approximately \$185,000 per year to operate, while 400 close-in parking spaces would cost about \$300,000 per year. However, revenue from the parking spaces would generate a positive cash flow.

Choosing to implement the shuttle system in the first stage of development would defer the need to construct a garage until at least Year 6, when due to new development, there would be adequate demand to warrant a garage.

While the analysis found that for mitigation purposes a shuttle system is necessary for only approximately 30 days out of the year, this study recommends that in order to provide a consistent service, increase utilization of the vehicles and establish a reliable linkage between the Beach and the Downtown, a 9 month schedule of weekend service is desirable.

The following Table provides a comparison of existing shuttle systems which have been successful.

Table 6 Comparison of Shuttle Systems				
City/System	Santa Cruz- Option #2 (proposed)	Monterey	San Luis Obispo	Santa Barbara
No. of Vehicles	4	5 (max.)	2	10
Veh. Type/Cost	trolley bus	standard bus	trolley bus/ \$190,000	battery/ \$175-200k
Veh. Capacity (seated/total)	28/47	40	17/42	22/27
No. of Routes/ Length	1/3.5 miles	4	1/2.5 miles	4/5.5 miles
Operating Days/ Year	110	110	363	363
Operating, Hours/ Year	3,534	5,179	2,054	32,670 (est)
Operating, Hours	9am-l0pm/ 9am-8pm	9am-6:30pm	12n-5:30pm/ 12n-9:30pm	8-10 hours/day
Headways	10-15 minutes	10 minutes	17 minutes	6-22 minutes
Annual Ridership	109,000	120,000	100,000	744,000
Annual O&M Costs	\$176,700.00	\$227,500.00	\$37,000.00	\$650,000.00
Costs per Operating Hour	\$50.00	\$44.00	\$18.00	\$20.00
Net Costs per Passenger	\$1.61	\$0.89	\$0.37	\$0.87

¹⁰ Jones, *Plan*, Tables 2,3,4,5,6. Structured parking was assumed because of land constraints in the Beach area. [*Plan*, p.23]

G. RECOMMENDATIONS

In adopting this Plan, the City Council directed that all of the proposed transportation management measures - particularly the shuttle and remote lots, the Depot lot, electronic signages and meter management, the bikeway and roundabouts - should be implemented as soon as possible. In any case, implementation of these measures should precede any potential Boardwalk expansion or commercial expansion on the Main Beach parking lot, and the City should aggressive pursue outside funding sources for alternative transportation projects.



1. Recommendation: Purchase Trolleys

Purchase four historic trolley-type, tourist friendly vehicles, possibly using alternative fuel sources (battery or electric) if special grant funding can be obtained from the Air District.

2. Recommendation: Arrange Back-Up Service

Arrange for back-up service with Metro for peak periods.

3. Recommendation: Preferred Route

Utilize one route between the Beach, Wharf, Depot Lot, Downtown Santa Cruz, and the County Center.

4. Recommendation: Preferred Schedule

Operate nine months, on weekends (Option #2). Option #1 (summer weekends only) may be an acceptable alternative depending on availability of operating and maintenance funds.

5. Recommendation: Marketing

Implement marketing, signing, and other improvements identified above.

6. Recommendation: Identify Funding

Identify funding sources to cover first two years of operation (\$440,000) and pay for shuttle vehicles. Possible sources include: incremental meter revenue, assessments on new developments (in-lieu fees), private sector contributions, local, regional, state, and federal grants, and revenues from the Depot Lot.

7. Recommendation: Competitive Bids

Place operation and vehicle purchase on competitive bid basis.

H. RECREATIONAL/TRANSIT RAIL

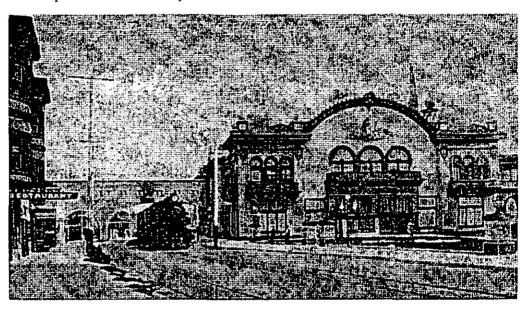
1. Overview

The City of Santa Cruz possesses an irreplaceable asset in the Union Pacific Railroad tracks which run through the heart of the Beach area. Most other American cities have torn up their center city track beds losing forever the opportunity to integrate rail service into their transportation solutions.

One of the central tensions in devising a transportation masterplan for revitalization of the Beach and South of Laurel areas is the basic question of at what point will congestion

throttle the success of redevelopment? Given the physical constraints of the area, its operation as a cul-de-sac, and the tightly constrained number of entry points, the existing railroad tracks through the area offer an exciting potential for providing ease of access to large volumes of people in the future. These tracks are ideally located to serve the Beach/ Wharf and the Boardwalk, the major tourist attractions in the area.

However, while the location of the tracks provides a major resource to the City, they also act as a potential challenge to the functioning of Beach Street. Their physical location in the middle of Beach Street will require that any additional rail service take into account the need to provide for vehicular, pedestrian and bike circulation within the same roadbed





2. Existing Conditions

The Union Pacific Railroad tracks run from Bay Street to East Cliff Drive, passing under the West Cliff trestle and sharing the Beach Street right of way from Pacific Avenue to the trestle-bridge over the San Lorenzo River.

The tracks intersect the Santa Cruz Big Trees and Pacific Railroad (SCBT&P) at a "Y" north of the West Cliff trestle bridge, and the track right of way is shared with Union Pacific south of Maple Street. This track runs between Washington and Chestnut.

There are three round-trip Union Pacific trains a week, —some as long as 50-60 cars. The SCBT&P Railroad operates seasonal recreational trains twice a day between Memorial Day and Labor Day. There is weekend-only service in May and in September/ October. Roaring Camp estimates ridership at 200 to 500 per trip, with an average during peak months of 250 passengers.¹¹

3. Looking Toward The Future

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is in the process of investigating two types of potential regional rail service which would substantially benefit the City of Santa Cruz as a whole and the Beach area in particular.

¹¹ Fehr & Peers, Report, p.46.

Weekend Intercity Rail:

The Intercity Recreational Rail Study for the San Francisco Bay Area to Santa Cruz Corridor, completed in August, 1996, was designed to assess the feasibility of providing a weekend intercity rail service between the San Francisco Bay Area and Santa Cruz County. [See following Corridor Map].

As the origin-destination studies for the Beach area have documented, approximately 60% of total visitor arrivals come from the San Jose area and could potentially avail themselves of this service.

The Rail Study estimated ridership levels, and found that "an Intercity Recreational Rail service between the Bay Area and Santa Cruz is estimated to attract about 900 passengers on a summer weekend day, and approximately 160 passengers on a summer weekday. During the non-summer seasons, the estimated ridership varies between 584 and 701 passengers on a weekend day and between 106 and 125 passengers on a weekday." [p.20]. The Santa Cruz Boardwalk would be the terminus point of the service.

One of the primary goals of the study was to develop a service strategy which could be implemented on a trial basis as early as 1998. To test the concept, a special event was planned.

The demonstration project — The Return of the Sun Tan Special — of May, 1996 was enthusiastically received and delivered over a thousand passengers to the Beach and Boardwalk area via rail, demonstrating the potential value of this mode of travel to the Santa Cruz area on weekends.

There are a variety of ownership, management and cost issues regarding the weekend intercity rail service which must be resolved. Should agreements be reached soon, it is anticipated that this service could begin within the next 2 to 5 years.

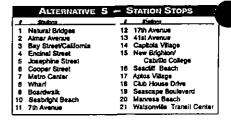
Rail Transit Service

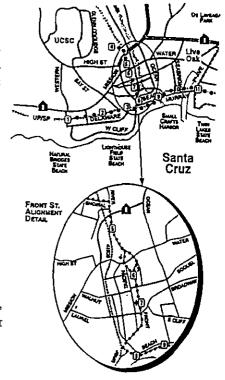
In addition to the examination of the potential for weekend intercity rail service, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission is analyzing eight alternatives in a *Major Transportation Investment Study*, which will examine, among other options, the issues related to expanding rail transit service to and within Santa Cruz.

Three of the options regard rail transit service to and within the City. They are:

- Alternative #4: Rail Transit to UCSC via Harvey West along Chestnut Street ending at the UCSC campus bookstore,
- Alternative #5: Rail Transit to Natural Bridges and Harvey West, entering downtown Santa Cruz via Front Street, and
- Alternative #7: Rail Transit to Harvey West, terminating at Harvey West Park.

Because of the complexity of the issues involved, and the scale of the potential improvements, rail transit service, should it be chosen as the preferred option by the SCCRTC, is not anticipated to come on line until sometime in the next decade.





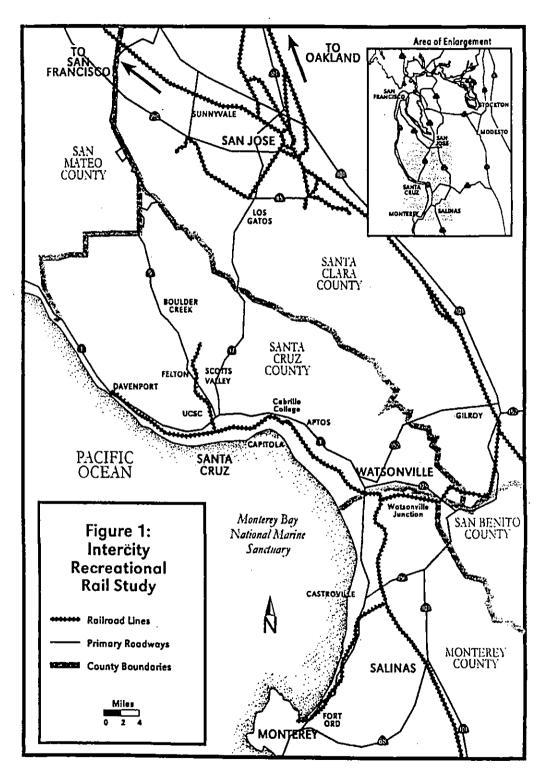


Figure 61

Intercity Recreational Rail Route

The potential benefit of such service to the City of Santa Cruz is enormous. Alternative 4, using the Chestnut Street corridor, would provide an internal commuter rail connection linking the University of Santa Cruz with the Downtown and the Beach and the East Side as well as a rapid external rail connection to Capitola, Aptos and Watsonville; while Alternative 5, using Front Street would provide direct linkage between the economic centers of the Downtown and the Beach and points South.

The recent "First Night" special demonstration on New Year's Eve 1996 employed a self-propelled rail car which provided service throughout the evening along Chestnut Street in the Downtown area.

4. Recommendations

The great potential for renewed passenger rail service in the future is one the City of Santa Cruz should actively explore with the Regional Transportation Commission. In anticipation of expanded service, the City should:

Recommendation: Team with SCCRTC

This study recommends that the City work closely with the SCCRTC to ensure that the City's interests are incorporated into the major transportation investment study and weekend intercity rail plans.

Recommendation: Preserve Rights of Way

Ensure that all future planning preserves the necessary rights of way and potential station stop locations for both weekend intercity and rail transit service.

Recommendation: Provide for Rail in Redesign of Beach Street

Anticipate expanded rail service in any redesign or traffic circulation proposals for Beach Street.

Recommendation: Relocate Depot Structure

This recommendation is no longer feasible due to fire. However, if the City is successful in acquiring the Depot site, the remaining Freight Depot structure should be incorporated into the site development or in the nearby vicinity.

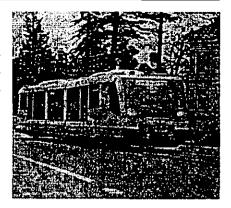
I. BIKEWAYS & PEDESTRIAN PATHS

1. Overview & Policy Basis

The *Beach Area Plan Strategy* had as one of its major transportation recommendations the reduction of vehicular traffic and the concomitant improvement of pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

The Strategy specifically recommended:

Promote bicycle access by improving access routes to the beach including: expanding width of the San Lorenzo trestle to accommodate bikes, 12 establishing dedicated bike lanes on Beach and Third Streets, completing





The RegioSprinter arriving on Chestnut Street. Over 1,750 passengers enjoyed the ride.

¹² The transportation studies recommend the bikepath between Pacific and San Lorenzo trestle.

the River Levee trail, examining potential for a two-way bike lane on the beach or an alternative approach on Beach Street that connects with West Cliff Drive. Look at establishing a bike jitney service. [p.35]

The South of Laurel Plan Strategy has as one of its primary goals the creation of a pedestrian friendly urban area by establishing pedestrian paths and bicycle route networks within an area that already serves both with a relatively continuous sidewalk system and bike lanes on key streets such as Laurel, Washington and Front/Pacific. [p.18-21]

2. Bicycle And Pedestrian Recommendations

The circulation and parking analyses have identified the need to preserve safety and mobility for bike riders and pedestrians as traffic increases due to the proposed developments. In particular, they recommend:

Recommendation: Install 2 way Bikeway: Beach Street

Installation of continuous a two-way year-round east-west bikeway on the south side of Beach Street between Pacific Avenue and the San Lorenzo River should be a high priority project. The City should aggressively pursue outside funding sources for this project.

A separated bikeway may separate bike traffic better. Any design will have to take into consideration not only Caltrans design requirements, but also the potential for conflicts with pedestrians, at intersections, at railroad crossings, and any impact on shuttle efficiency.

The proposed bikeway will require the cooperation and approval of the Seaside Company for that segment which is proposed on its property.

Recommendation: Connect Bikeway to East & West

In conjunction with the bikeway proposed above, pursue pedestrian and bicycle access across the San Lorenzo trestle to the east, and connect the Beach Street bikeway to West Cliff Drive at Bay Street.

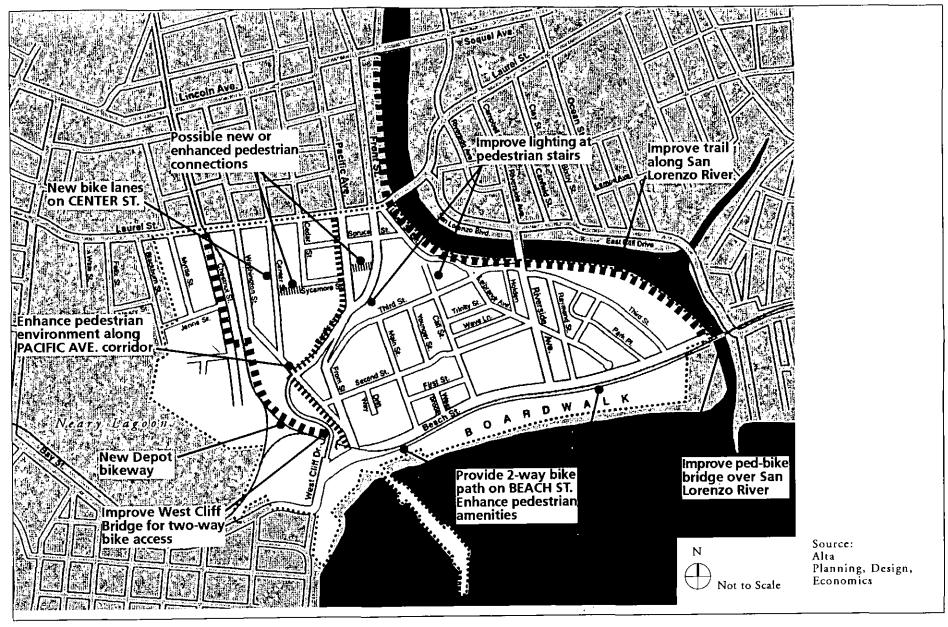
Recommendation: Connect to Downtown

Enhance bicycle and linkage access along the San Lorenzo River between the Beach area and the downtown through signage, curb lanes, and/or installing bike lanes.

Recommendation: Pedestrian Improvements

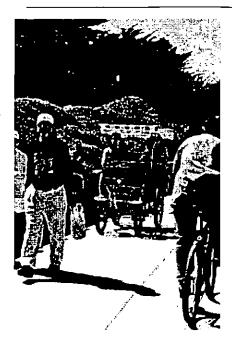
Provide pedestrian enhancements along the Front Street and Pacific Avenue corridors, including appropriate urban design elements as opportunity sites develop, with lighting, sidewalk furniture and plantings.

- Improve Beach Street as a pedestrian-oriented corridor by implementing compatible features from the Urban Design Recommendations.
- Design and implement a pedestrian walkway from the Depot parking lot to the Wharf intersection.



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- Improve the Cliff Street and Pacific Avenue stairways and pedestrian pathways in the South of Laurel area.
- Improve east-west pedestrian connections in South of Laurel by identifying new pedestrian and bikeways.

One of the most satisfying elements of this planning process has been the recent ability of resolve some of the technical issues which had been preventing the installation of a two-way bikeway on Beach Street. It is anticipated that this improvement may be one of the first which can be implemented as a result of this Plan.

J. POTENTIAL BIKE TAXI SERVICE

Improvement of the bikeway system in the Beach area will create additional opportunities for local residents and visitors to utilize new bike services. The Beach area plan includes several new bike path options that could be utilized by a bike rental facility in this area.

The Depot site has been identified as a multimodal transit hub. One of the optional modes of transportation originating from this site should be a bike rental facility.

Recent discussions with private bicycle rental operators has led to the imaginative possibility of establishing a bike taxi service. This service could provide an established bike shuttle route that hotel patron in the lower Ocean Street and Riverside Avenue areas could utilize to get to the beach.

This service could include several four wheel bike transports operated by students that could accommodate four or five people and beach gear. Another concept could involve a variety of hotels having bikes, or bike jitneys available for patrons to rent.

Improvements to bikeways in the Beach area will provide the opportunity for visitors to include biking as an optional recreational activity similar to Monterey bike path and the Santa Barbara beach access route. Opportunities will exist to establish several private bike rental areas that visitors can utilize.

Improvements identified in the plan, including the two-way Beach Street bikeways, the two-way River levee connection to Downtown and better connections to both West Cliff Drive and across the San Lorenzo River Trestle, will vastly improve bike access in the area.