EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

September 2019
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The City of Atascadero is preparing a corridor plan to identify future land use and circulation improvements along El Camino Real. The goal is to create a new vision and the tools to transform the existing auto-oriented, regional corridor into a multimodal economic hub. El Camino Real is the central spine of the City, and has a significant bearing on the overall image, identity, and economic health of Atascadero. It is the main north-south thoroughfare and the primary access to services, the downtown core, and surrounding neighborhoods. Recent investment in the downtown, upcoming development and new businesses along the corridor, and future street improvements from the Downtown Traffic Calming Study will incentivize additional improvements and new development. This Existing Conditions Assessment will supply the foundation for the El Camino Plan by analyzing market conditions, land use, urban form, and circulation in the study area.

Funded with a Caltrans grant, the El Camino Plan focuses on two large segments of El Camino Real. Figure 1 shows the boundaries of the two study areas, which total 266 acres and 3.1 miles in length. The north end is 1.2 miles in length from San Benito Road to San Anselmo Road. The area farther north along El Camino was not included because it has newer development and future development under the Del Rio Specific Plan. The south study end is 1.9 miles in length from Morro Road to San Gabriel Road. San Gabriel Road marks the end of commercial and industrial uses along the corridor, and the area farther south along the corridor is used almost exclusively for residences (although Atascadero State Hospital is a major use connected to the corridor south of San Gabriel).

The El Camino Plan does not include the downtown area, primarily because the city is much further along in planning and revitalization efforts per the Downtown Revitalization Plan and other street design efforts. Indeed, the El Camino Plan is, in part, an effort by the city to provide a commensurate level of attention to the other parts of the corridor beyond the downtown. It is also worth noting that the plan does not cover the two other areas of the city that have significant nonresidential development: the commercial corridor along Morro Road southwest of the 101 freeway and the industrial area along Traffic Way north of downtown.
Figure 1. Project Boundary
2. STUDY AREA CONTEXT

EXISTING LAND USE

The study area context is comprised of what is on the ground today or soon to be constructed (existing/planned land uses), the underlying parcel sizes, and variations in the pattern of development. Together, these conditions provide a foundation (along with the market assessment) to be considered in providing strategic recommendations for change.

The study area is comprised of a diverse mix of land uses, including retail, restaurant, lodging, auto-related, building-related, office, residential and vacant properties. Chart 1 and Table 1 identifies the distribution of land uses in the study area by acres. The pattern of land uses within the project area is shown in Figure 2.

Table 1. Existing Land Use within El Camino Real Study Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Land Use</th>
<th>Area (ac)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Mix with Retail/Restaurant</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Use</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Commercial*</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other**</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**TOTAL</td>
<td>**219.6</td>
<td>**100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other Commercial does not include retail, restaurants or lodging businesses. Could be office, auto-related, construction, etc.

**Other is a mix of uses that are not retail, restaurant or lodging.
Figure 2: Existing Land Use
PARCELIZATION

There is a wide range of parcel sizes and configurations within the two study areas, as shown in Figures 3. Parcel sizes are an important consideration in evaluating the potential for future land use and site capacity. Many parcels tend to be narrow and deep, which creates further challenges in efficiently using the land.

On the north end, most of the parcels (61.5 percent) are 10,000 square feet or less and generally contain small industrial or commercial service uses. Twenty parcels are 60,000 square feet (1.4 acres) to 120,000 square feet (2.75 acres), which are better suited for larger industrial, technology, and office uses. Incentives for parcel consolidation should be considered to create more efficient use of the sites by allowing for internal connectivity between parcels and better use of the back half of the properties.

On the south end, a couple of areas have a consistent pattern of parcel size and configuration. But for the most part, parcels vary significantly. Most of the parcels range from 10,000 to 30,000 square feet (0.2 acre to 0.7 acre), which are suitable for smaller commercial, retail, and restaurant uses. Larger parcels tend to be clustered, which can provide opportunities for creating larger, mixed-use projects with outdoor public spaces and amenities. New development and infill would also greatly benefit from lot consolidation to enable connectivity between parcels and more efficient use of deeper parcels.
DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The development pattern is illustrated in Figures 4a (North End) and 4b (South End). These figures are intended to summarize the key features of the built environment that present opportunities and constraints for future investment and change. These features include:

- The relationship between built and unbuilt space, the overall pattern of development, how parcels are utilized, and the relationship of the uses to El Camino Real.
- Vacant parcels that can be developed.
- Types of roadways serving the areas, with gateways into the City highlighted.
- Transit stops serving the uses.
- Five-minute (or ¼ mile) walk-sheds along the corridor to illustrate the potential for pedestrian activity.
- Existing curb cuts for driveways on both sides of El Camino Real that can disrupt traffic flow and create conflict points between pedestrians/bicyclists and cars.
- On-street bike paths along El Camino Real. Note: Striping for the bike path on the North End has recently been completed.
- Parcels that are elevated above El Camino Real and therefore limit the interface between buildings and the street.
- Parcels that are oriented toward Highway 101 and are served by a local frontage road.
Figure 4a. Development Pattern (North End)
Figure 4b. Development Pattern (South End)
NEW AND PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

Atascadero is seeing a surge of new planned and proposed development, including retail, restaurant, hotel, and residential uses. Some of these projects are under construction, while others are still in the entitlement phase at the City. It's notable that these investments are spread out along the multi-mile corridor, which speaks to a consistent strength in the underlying market. These projects, along with other potential projects, will inform the market analysis, the opportunity area concepts, and the final plan recommendations.
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3. URBAN FORM / COMMUNITY CHARACTER

DOWNTOWN AS ANCHOR

Downtown Atascadero is the social, cultural, and historic hub of the City. Master planned by E. G. Lewis in the early 1900s, Atascadero was to be a model of sustainable agrarian living coupled with urban amenities. The iconic City Hall with its Italian Renaissance architecture fronts onto historic Sunken Garden and is surrounded by shops, restaurants, offices, the junior high school, and residential neighborhoods in a compact, walkable setting. The Downtown is the primary anchor or node of activity along El Camino Real. Other smaller nodes have emerged along the corridor but are in the form of traditional suburban shopping centers.

The Downtown is a draw for new residents and businesses looking to locate in the city. Proximity to a walkable, active, downtown environment continues to be a top priority for creative office and tech industries as well residents of all generations. The success of the Downtown is linked to the investment and renewal of the corridor.

CHARACTER / IDENTITY

The north end of the study area is more rural in character than the south end, primarily due to large-lot residential uses (on the east side of El Camino Real), some vacant properties, clusters of mature oaks, and road segments that lack sidewalks. Small-scale industrial and commercial uses dot the corridor. In contrast, the south end is mostly built out with a mix of big-box centers, smaller commercial centers, and stand-alone service commercial and restaurant uses. The uses span many decades and a variety of architectural styles. Unscreened storage or auto repair can give a “messy” or negative impression of the overall quality of businesses along the corridor. Vacant businesses are also a detraction.

Both study areas should be welcoming gateways into the City that draw people in to explore the corridor and Downtown. The design of future development, especially at corners, along with wayfinding, should be a priority at the freeway interchanges. Establishment of architectural design standards should also be considered to improve the look of new or renovated buildings.

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OUTDOOR SPACES

Outdoor spaces are people places—spaces that extend the indoor environment to the outdoors. Plazas, patios, courtyards, green spaces, and pedestrian paths are an important placemaking element for creating more “experiential” retail and commercial hubs along the corridor. These amenities add value when designed as an integral part of the project. Within the two study areas, aside from some restaurant/brewery patios, there are no outdoor places to attract people and “extend the stay.”

For a busy arterial such as El Camino Real, the location and design of these outdoor spaces requires special attention. Consider tightening open space requirements for future nonresidential development to require the dedication of a usable open space on-site, provide programing options and site design requirements.

STREETSCAPE

A well-designed streetscape along El Camino Real could bring cohesiveness and a new aesthetic quality to the corridor. Streetscape is an important element to creating a memorable experience in shopping and dining areas. The existing landscaping along El Camino Real is primarily located behind the sidewalk on private property. Utility poles, utility boxes, and street lighting are located on sidewalks, which will pose challenges to integrating street trees and planters.

A detailed streetscape plan should be prepared for El Camino Real that can be implemented as new development occurs or as other funding becomes available.
Street Activation

Street activation is a key ingredient to a successful retail/commercial environment. Building placement and orientation have an impact on the way people experience a place—from on foot or from a car. Visually interesting buildings that are oriented to the street activate a corridor and contribute to the vibrancy of the area. Locating parking behind or on the side of buildings, placing buildings closer to the street with enough landscape setbacks, and integrating outdoor spaces that are safe and welcoming are key design elements that should be woven into the development standards for the corridor. In addition, the design of a building’s ground floor entrance or façade, plus the landscape and hardscape setback areas determine if it is pedestrian friendly, offers privacy and security where needed, and sets a quality image for the corridor.

There is no consistent placement of buildings along the corridor—some buildings are close to the sidewalk with a convenient entrance from the street, and others are set back with a large parking lot in front, which deters walking. Some businesses enliven their frontages with transparent windows, well-maintained landscaping/planter boxes, and outdoor seating. Other businesses do not open or front onto El Camino Real. Some properties on the north side of El Camino Real are elevated above the street, which makes access to commercial uses challenging to design.

It is not reasonable to expect consistent street activation up and down El Camino Real, especially given the mix of service commercial and industrial uses. However, it is possible to focus on commercial nodes and set higher standards for site design, landscape / streetscape design, building orientation, pedestrian connectivity, and façade treatment.
BUILDING CONDITION

As discussed in the Market Study (Appendix A), much of the commercial building space, retail and offices, is undifferentiated, with some interspersed among residential and industrial uses. In addition, there are many stand-alone commercial buildings with an individual curb cut and an isolated parking lot. In an earlier time, a good location was one with visibility to traffic, a noticeable sign, and an easy turn-in for the parking lot. However, as retail continues to change, these properties will become less and less functional for retail businesses. The challenges posed by the quality of some of the city’s commercial building stock are evident in asking lease rates. The vast majority of listed retail vacancies had asking lease rates under $16/sq. ft./year. It is estimated that lease rates would need to be higher (in the mid- to upper twenties to support new development or significant reinvestment in retail properties). As long as there are abundant vacancies with low lease rates, developers will have a hard time attracting investment and financing for new retail development, and property owners will have a hard time repaying debt to substantially reinvest in their retail properties.

Some low-cost retail building space is healthy for a local economy, but too much tends to drag down all lease rates and hinder new development and property improvement, all of which can eventually lead to a downward spiral and eventual disinvestment. To address this through the El Camino Plan, the city can identify ways that owners who are interested in transitioning their property to another use can do so easily.
4. DEMOGRAPHICS

The following demographic data is from the 2017 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau. This data provides a snapshot of how Atascadero compares to San Luis Obispo, Paso Robles, and the County of San Luis Obispo.
### MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Share of Countywide Households</th>
<th>Share of Countywide Multifamily Housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atascadero</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paso Robles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO-City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO-Unincorporated County</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### HOUSING TYPE

- Atascadero
- Paso Robles
- San Luis Obispo
- San Luis Obispo County

- Single-unit detached
- Single-unit attached
- Duplex
- 3 to 19 units
- 20 or more units
- Mobile home
- Other

### HOUSING TENURE

- Atascadero
- Paso Robles
- San Luis Obispo
- San Luis Obispo County

- Owner-occupied
- Renter-occupied

### HOUSING AGE

- Atascadero
- Paso Robles
- San Luis Obispo
- San Luis Obispo County

- Built 1949 or earlier
- Built 1950 to 1969
- Built 1970 to 1989
- Built 1990 to 1999
- Built 2000 to 2009
- Built 2010 or later
5. MARKET ASSESSMENT

The Market Study quantifies the degree to which market forces may support the desired uses and types of development envisioned under the El Camino Plan. While the plan focuses on certain portions of the El Camino Real corridor, the market study considers market demand citywide. This chapter is from the Executive Summary of the Market Study and summarizes the study’s findings. The full report is in Appendix A.

RETAIL MARKET DEMAND

TRENDS IN RETAIL

When adjusted for inflation and the number of households, in-store retail sales nationally (excluding auto sales) recovered somewhat from the recession but have not returned to prerecession levels. Indeed, over the past five years, in-store sales of convenience goods have declined 1.5 percent per year, and in-store sales of comparison goods have declined 0.3 percent per year. At the same time, online retail sales have increased 5.0 percent per year, consumer spending at restaurants and bars has increased 2.6 percent per year, and spending on entertainment and recreation has increased 2.4 percent per year.

The shift of consumer spending to ecommerce has been growing for a long time. However, since the recession, Americans have begun to make a fundamental change, in which the typical family is spending no more at bricks-and-mortar retail stores. Increased consumer spending is taking place online, at restaurants, and for entertainment and recreation.

Although the nature of retail is changing, bricks-and-mortar stores still account for the vast majority of sales (83 percent, down from 88 percent five years ago). As this trend continues, retail stores are experimenting with various approaches to online retail, including online ordering with in-store pick-up or delivery. Grocery stores are experimenting with online ordering with home delivery, and if they are successful, it is likely that most chains will close some stores. The supermarket-anchored shopping center, long a staple of suburban America, may become obsolete.

Current thinking is that weaker, and even some moderately strong, shopping centers and districts will face increasing vacancies, and stronger centers and districts will continue to thrive, and perhaps grow with reduced competition. New retail development is expected to be limited mainly to areas with significant housing growth and areas that are substantially underserved.

TAXABLE RETAIL SALES IN ATASCADERO

Prior to the 2008–09 recession, the amount of taxable retail sales per household was higher in Atascadero than the countywide average, although still lower than in Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo.

Since the recession, the amount of inflation-adjusted taxable retail sales per household has increased slightly in Atascadero but is still substantially below the prerecession level. In contrast, the level is at or near the precession level countywide and in Paso Robles, and sales have exceeded the prerecession level in San Luis Obispo County. The retail sector in Atascadero has not yet fully recovered from the recession.

RETAIL MARKET POTENTIAL IN ATASCADERO

The market study analyzed the potential market demand for retail businesses in Atascadero. The analysis defined a trade area that is truncated to the northwest and southeast, reflecting competition from Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo. The trade area is extended to the northeast and southwest, reflecting the lack of retail businesses in these more sparsely populated areas.

Overall, the market analysis finds that there is a substantial amount of retail spending by trade area households that occurs in other cities rather than in...
Atascadero. The report describes several factors that may limit the City’s ability to capture the leaked retail spending.

The analysis notes that there are two types of stores that do not currently leak retail spending—food and beverage stores (which includes grocery stores) and building materials, garden equipment, and supply stores.

For convenience goods (items that people buy on a regular basis), the analysis finds that current market demand could support an additional pharmacy and a variety of small retailers in cosmetics, beauty supplies, food and health supplements, office supplies, pet supplies, and other miscellaneous store types. Across all these convenience goods stores, if the City captured all the leaked spending, the market could support up to 29,000 square feet of additional retail building space.

For restaurants and drinking places, the analysis finds that there is a substantial amount of leaked spending, which could support 38,700 to 67,600 square feet of new restaurants and bars. Restaurants and bars are key components of the emerging emphasis on experience-oriented shopping to compete against online retail. This level of market demand could be spread throughout downtown and along El Camino Real.

For comparison goods (items that people tend to purchase infrequently or rarely), the analysis finds that the City leaks spending for furniture and home furnishings, electronics and appliances, sporting goods, and book and music stores. Capturing this leaked spending in Atascadero could support new stores in each of these categories. However, many of the national chains in these retail categories are experiencing difficult times, facing challenges from the shift to online retail and high debt. Many national chains are in the process of shrinking their footprint rather than expanding. It may take longer to attract new businesses in these retail categories, and the City may not be able to capture all the leaked spending. However, there are opportunities for existing stores to capture some of this leaked spending and opportunities for new independent businesses.

Communities that do not have a regional mall and the bevy of chain stores that locate near malls almost always leak retail spending for clothing and clothing accessory stores. In Atascadero, that leaked spending could support up to 181,400 square feet of retail building space. Without a regional mall, it is unlikely that the City could attract enough businesses to capture all the leaked spending. Nevertheless, this is a sizeable amount of spending, suggesting that the City should be able to attract small-scale or boutique clothing and accessory stores.

The analysis indicates that there is potential market demand for general merchandise stores. One subcategory in this type of retail is department stores, which would include stores like Target and Walmart. The market support in this subcategory is for about 135,000 square feet. This should cover an average Target or Walmart, and so it is no surprise that Walmart had proposed a new store in Atascadero. The market analysis suggests that attracting such a store may be realistic. At the same time, the changing nature of retail suggests that even this level of leaked spending may not be sufficient to attract a new department store/general merchandise store.

RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

One of the challenges facing retail growth in Atascadero is the outdated nature of some of the existing retail building space. Along some parts of the corridor, stand-alone, single-use retail buildings stand on their individual parcel with their own curb cut and parking lot. In other areas, retail businesses are interspersed among light industrial, self-storage, and other uses, lacking visibility and easy accessibility.

Many of these poorer locations have tenant turnover and vacancy issues, and these result in lower asking lease rates. Low lease rates limit the ability of property owners to maintain and invest in their properties. Low lease rates also make it harder for better-situated retail properties to command lease rates high enough to support new development and reinvestment in existing properties.

To capitalize on the market potential, the El Camino Plan should focus on creating and enhancing experience-oriented shopping districts and centers,
which can compete with the continuing shift to online retail. Encourage retail, restaurants, and entertainment uses to move from underperforming centers to future designated commercial hubs. The plan should also identify strategies to allow the transition of some outdated retail buildings to other uses in order to reduce vacancies and to increase lease rates to levels that will support new retail development and reinvestment in existing retail properties.

OFFICE MARKET DEMAND

Office market demand is typically driven by growth in employment in knowledge-based sectors that primarily operate in office buildings. These sectors include: Information; professional, scientific, and technical services; and Management of companies and enterprises. These sectors account for 4.8 percent of the jobs in the city and 6.8 percent of the jobs countywide. More importantly, these sectors added 1,300 jobs countywide over the last five years, growing 1.8 percent per year. Total five-year job growth in these sectors in Atascadero was a single digit. At the current local trend, job growth in these sectors would not support new office development in Atascadero.

Office-based businesses and office developers increasingly view Atascadero favorably. In part, this is because there is room to grow and develop in the City and the City is perceived as business friendly. In addition, San Luis Obispo, which has captured most of the office-based employment growth in the past, has low vacancies, higher lease rates, and is perceived as challenging to entitle new office development. These factors suggest that the City could account for a larger share of future growth in office-based employment. The analysis finds that if the City gets one-third of new office-based businesses and 11 percent of the remaining expansions in office jobs (the City’s current share of countywide office workers), the market could generate up to 195,000 square feet of new office development.

The quality of place is becoming increasingly important in the location decisions of firms in these sectors. They are competing with each other for skilled and educated workers, and these workers increasingly place a value on working in districts with a mix of restaurants and services within walking distance. Places in proximity to downtown or to walkable nodes along the corridor would make attractive locations for office development.

Medical office is often considered a subset of the general office market. Atascadero accounts for a large part of countywide employment in the health care and social services sector, due in large part to Atascadero State Hospital. However, the city’s share of medical office businesses is closer to its share of total countywide jobs, nearly 8 percent. If the county adds a similar number of medical office jobs over the next five years and if the share of those new jobs locating in Atascadero is similar to the city’s share of medical office employment, then the city would need an additional 42,000 square feet of medical office building space.

INDUSTRIAL MARKET DEMAND

Industrial market demand is driven primarily by growth in the Manufacturing, Wholesale trade, and Transportation and warehousing sectors. However, the market study focuses on industrial demand generated by the manufacturing sector, because these uses are more suited to locations along El Camino Real than are warehousing and distribution facilities.

Atascadero accounts for less than 3 percent of countywide manufacturing employment. Although there was a small increase in manufacturing employment over the last five years in the city, the sector has still not returned to prerecession employment levels. In contrast, the manufacturing sector added 1,100 jobs countywide over the past five years, growing at a rate of 3.2 percent per year.

As with office development, manufacturing businesses and industrial developers increasingly view Atascadero as a favorable location. With available land and facilities and a robust business attraction effort, the analysis finds that the City could attract up to 25 percent of future manufacturing employment growth. This could result in the development of up to 237,700 square feet of new industrial building space.
Some of this new industrial development would need to be separated from potential conflicts with non-industrial land uses. However, some of the new industrial business would be smaller scale and could be integrated in mixed business districts that would be suitable for the El Camino Real corridor.

**LODGING**

Atascadero accounts for a small percentage of the lodging establishments countywide and an even smaller percentage of employment in the accommodations sector. However, this is not unexpected because Atascadero is inland, and the county has several beach communities and wine country with an active tourism base. Nevertheless, even based on the number of employees in the accommodations sector per 1,000 population statewide, the city has about half the amount of lodging as could be expected.

Many cities seek to attract new investment in hotels in order to collect additional revenue from transient occupancy tax. Furthermore, overnight visitors often provide spending support for nearby restaurants, entertainment businesses, and retail stores. Connection with and access to activity centers is a key element in the success of the hotel market. While the Market Study does not quantify demand for a particular number of additional hotel rooms, the El Camino Plan should consider ways to encourage hotel development in order to capitalize on the benefits that hotel and visitors generate for nearby businesses. Development of new destination entertainment and recreation opportunities and economic growth that supports additional business travel will help attract new hotel investment.

**PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

Based on the Market Study analysis, the El Camino Plan should consider the following.

**Plan for Experience-Oriented Retail.** The Market Study finds that there is a substantial amount of leaked retail spending that could support additional retail businesses. However, with the changing nature of retail, the walkability, entertainment and recreation opportunities, and experience of a place will become increasingly important for sustainable and lucrative retail districts and centers.

**Big-Box Is a Maybe.** The Market Study finds that there is enough consumer spending to support big-box retail, but with the changing nature of retail, it may be difficult to attract investment from national chains. The plan need not do away with development standards that accommodate large format retailers, but the plan also should not rely on the attraction of such a business.

**Provide for Transition of Older Retail Buildings.** The plan should provide ways that property owners with older and, perhaps, obsolete retail buildings can transition their property to an alternative use if interested. Office and manufacturing facilities may be appropriate in some parts of the corridor. In some circumstances, multifamily residential might also be appropriate, most often when it is within walking distance of a planned experience-oriented retail district or center or when it is part of a mixed-use building. The City could also seek out grants to provide funding to assist retail businesses to move from older and obsolete buildings to better, experience-oriented retail districts or nodes along El Camino Real.

**Partner with the Small Business Development Center.** The City can partner with the Cal Poly Center for Innovation Small Business Development Center to provide training to existing local businesses and budding entrepreneurs interested in starting a new business in Atascadero.

**Plan for New Office Development.** The plan should identify ways of accommodating new office space in proximity to walkable retail districts or centers. Considering the long-term potential, the plan could accommodate multistory office buildings and additional acreage. Areas outside of the El Camino Plan could also accommodate some of the future office demand. In addition, the plan should consider the degree to which medical office space is appropriate. The City’s current strategy is to focus medical office along Morro Road. If medical office wants to locate along El Camino Real, it should be focused in mid-block locations where shared parking is available.
**Plan for New Industrial Development.** The plan should identify ways of accommodating new industrial development, both large-scale traditional manufacturing and smaller-scale business integrated into mixed business districts. As with the office demand, new industrial development may be accommodated in other areas of the city, not just along the corridor.

**Actively Market Atascadero to Office and Industrial Businesses.** City staff currently engages with potential businesses about the opportunities in Atascadero. The city also has other partners than can help with business attraction, including real estate brokers and dealers and the San Luis Obispo Economic Vitality Corporation.

**Consider Adopting a Specific Plan.** A specific plan can provide a level of environmental clearance and certainty in the development process, both of which can ease and quicken the development process. It is not uncommon, especially with industrial businesses, that businesses looking to expand seek opportunities that can become productive assets quickly.
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6. POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

GENERAL PLAN

The 2016 Atascadero General Plan Land Use, Conservation and Open Space Element establishes several commercial designations and a public facility designation (US Post Office) in the study area, as shown on Figure 5. Based on the intensity limits identified in the General Plan, the study area has the potential for over 3 million square feet of nonresidential development, as shown in Table 1.

General Commercial (GC) designation is considered a Mixed-Use Designation. It is intended primarily for office, neighborhood, retail, and tourist commercial uses; however, multifamily development in a mixed-used development may be conditionally allowed up to 20 du/ac. Exclusive or stand-alone multifamily development may be allowed along the El Camino Real corridor provided it is in a midblock location that is “not best reserved for commercial development.”

Service Commercial (SC) accommodates more intensive uses than allowed in other commercial areas, such as lumberyards, building-materials supply, wholesaling, storage, auto sales, auto and equipment repair, and printing establishments. These uses are appropriate in non-pedestrian-oriented areas. They frequently have outdoor storage needs involving trucking activity and movement of large products. This land use designation is applied to properties on the south side of El Camino Real, along Highway 101.

Commercial Park (CPK) designation applies to areas along the northern portion of El Camino Real to accommodate uses that require large parcels, such as automobile and mobile-home sales, factory outlet centers, traveler destination and recreation complexes, craft uses, nurseries, and planned commercial developments. Also allowed are certain types of light industrial uses, including research and development facilities and clean manufacturing facilities, along with office parks and business uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Plan Land Use Designation</th>
<th>Corresponding Zoning District</th>
<th>Area (ac)</th>
<th>Ave. FAR</th>
<th>Building Sq.Ft.</th>
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<td>Commercial Park (CPK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Commercial (GC)</td>
<td>Commercial Neighborhood (CN)</td>
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<td>0.3</td>
<td>1,815,521</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial Professional (CP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial Retail (CR)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial Tourist (CT)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Facilities (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Commercial (SC)</td>
<td>Commercial Service (CS)</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>683,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family Residential (1.0 ac lot min) (SFR-Y)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>216.3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3,071,912</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5. General Plan Land Use Map
POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The following are the big-picture considerations related to the General Plan that will inform the corridor alternatives and final recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES</th>
<th>CONSIDERATIONS TO BE EXPLORED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While the GC designation allows the potential for midblock residential, there is no clear direction on where this is possible. Therefore, the uncertainty level for property owners/developers is high, which affects development feasibility.</td>
<td>Consider a policy or regulatory mechanism to better define areas that can transition to mixed use or multifamily along the corridor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While the uses allowed under the SC designation need adequate space along the corridor, it is important that these areas be clustered as much as possible to minimize negative impacts on adjacent retail, restaurant, entertainment, and service commercial uses.</td>
<td>Compare existing SC uses to the locations designated and consider adjusting the boundaries where necessary to preserve the synergy/function of key commercial retail nodes. Re-examine landscape setbacks and landscape requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The CPK designation is currently in one location along the north end of the corridor. There is the potential for an additional employment hub(s) on the south end of the corridor as vacant or underutilized properties transition over time.</td>
<td>Identify the location for additional employment uses and consider expanding CPK zoning in areas that can support clean and optional development without detracting from the commercial nodes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ZONING

The study area contains six commercial-related zoning districts and one public facility district (US Post Office), as shown on Figure 6 and in Table 2. The distinctions between them are noted below.

The **Commercial Neighborhood (CN)** zoning district is established to provide for small-scale retail shopping and personal service facilities at the neighborhood level. The CN zone is situated and designed to serve the limited shopping and service needs of the immediately surrounding residential area. Residential is conditionally allowed in a mixed-use building within the 35-foot height restriction.

The **Commercial Professional (CP)** zoning district provides for offices and limited retail shopping and personal service facilities along El Camino Real. The CP zone is situated to serve streets with higher traffic volumes while also serving to provide a compatible transition between such streets and adjacent single-family residential areas. Residential is conditionally allowed in a mixed-use building within the 35-foot height restriction.

The **Commercial Retail (CR)** zoning district is established to provide for a wide range of commercial uses to accommodate most of the retail and service needs of the residents of the City and surrounding areas. Residential is also conditionally allowed within this zone in a mixed-use building within the 35-foot height restriction.

The **Commercial Service (CS)** zoning district is established to provide for light manufacturing and large lot service commercial needs of the residents of the city and surrounding areas. Residential is also conditionally allowed within this zone in a mixed-use building with the 35-foot height restriction.

The **Commercial Tourist (CT)** zoning district is established to provide for limited commercial uses intended primarily to serve the public traveling along Highway 101. This designation is generally located at intersections with the freeway.

The **Commercial Park (CPK)** zoning district provides for large-lot commercial and light manufacturing uses. Comprehensive development plans are encouraged to achieve appropriate functional relationships between various uses and preclude “piecemeal” development of existing larger lots.

**REGULATORY CONSIDERATIONS**

The following are the big picture items that will guide the preparation of corridor alternatives and final recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Designation Code</th>
<th>Zoning Land Use Designation</th>
<th>Area (ac)</th>
<th>FAR</th>
<th>Building Sq.Ft.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CN</td>
<td>Commercial Neighborhood</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>52,050</td>
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<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Commercial Professional</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>117,430</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPK</td>
<td>Commercial Park</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>573,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Commercial Retail</td>
<td>115.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1,503,837</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Commercial Service</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>683,368</td>
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<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Commercial Tourist</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>142,204</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Public Facilities</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSF-Y</td>
<td>Residential Single Family</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>216.3</strong></td>
<td>--</td>
<td><strong>3,071,912</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHALLENGES</td>
<td>CONSIDERATIONS TO BE EXPLORED</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily residential is only allowed above commercial in certain commercial zones (CP, CN, &amp; CR). However, this is inconsistent with the corresponding General Commercial (GC) designation in the General Plan, which allows for stand-alone multifamily via a CUP in midblock locations.</td>
<td>A better solution would be to identify where stand-alone multifamily should be allowed along the corridor based on market factors, opportunity sites, and location. Then determine the appropriate tool: allow by right or CUP within commercial or potentially create a Residential Overlay Zone. In addition, forcing multifamily to be above commercial should be limited to the Downtown, where there is an established walkable environment. MU should not be forced (but allowed) in other locations where the pedestrian environment is not already established.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multifamily residential is limited to 20 units per acre. Density may not be the best metric to facilitate the changes desired.</td>
<td>Limiting the number of units on a site through residential density should be replaced by form-based regulations to control number of stories, bulk, and massing. This flexibility will enable the City and developer to focus on design and amenities, working within a development envelope that “fits” along the corridor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed-use buildings that include multifamily residential are limited to 35 feet high. This makes providing two stories over commercial difficult if not impossible, especially since the ground floor commercial should be a minimum of 10-12 feet high to attract restaurants and other active uses. Two stories of residential is typically the minimum required to make a mixed-use project financially feasible.</td>
<td>A better solution would be to allow flexibility in height but regulate the maximum number of stories based on development feasibility and surrounding context. Fire Department capabilities also need to be a consideration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Commercial Service zone is intended for light manufacturing, heavy manufacturing with a CUP, equipment sales, warehousing, wholesale and distribution centers, storage, and similar uses. However, it also allows for general retail, restaurants, hotels, schools, services, and other uses that are the focus of the CR and CP zones. This creates incompatibilities between uses and dilutes the potential for synergy and activated commercial environments.</td>
<td>In order to create viable commercial retail nodes at key locations along the corridor, the CS zone should be limited to its intended range of industrial, wholesale, and manufacturing uses. It should also be focused in areas where there are other, similar uses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHALLENGES</td>
<td>CONSIDERATIONS TO BE EXPLORED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Commercial Park (CPK) designation is intended for larger-scale commercial, industrial, and manufacturing uses. However, it also allows for nearly everything that the CR zone allows.</td>
<td>Given the City’s desire to reserve this area for a range of new employment uses, the CP zone should be refined in terms of the uses encouraged and development standards to create a high-quality employment hub.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fencing and screening requirements for outdoor storage, equipment, or manufacturing activities appear strong in the code, but are not happening on the ground. The public perception when driving along the corridor is that properties are not well maintained, which impacts commercial lease rates. There is also a screening provision that allows for chain-link fencing.</td>
<td>Determine if this is a code enforcement issue or nonconforming issue and address. Also, revise the requirements to disallow chain-link fencing on any properties fronting El Camino Real.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many permitted uses within the purpose and intent of the CPK, CR, and CT zones require a CUP, which increases the cost, time frame, and level of uncertainty for prospective businesses.</td>
<td>Revisit the list of uses requiring a CUP and reduce where possible defining the conditions in the code. Include more general criteria as to why certain businesses require a CUP, including number of visitors, sale of alcohol, extended hours, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are no setback requirements for commercial designations in the study area. This allows uses to locate close to El Camino Real to be seen and activate the street, but in many locations the centers are set far back from the street. Any stand-alone residential allowed within a commercial district must comply with the minimum setback requirement of 15 feet.</td>
<td>Establish a new maximum setback with requirements to front El Camino Real that is tailored to the commercial district and parcel widths and addresses the placement of parking. Address stand-alone commercial buildings differently from multiple buildings/uses on the large properties. Also revisit minimum setback and require a reasonable landscape setback. Properties that are elevated above El Camino Real should have a tailored landscape setback given the handicap access requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking standards for commercial designations have resulted in excess parking for many commercial uses. A significant amount of land remains unused along the corridor that could be developed for other purposes.</td>
<td>In January 2019 ITE released a Parking Manual that documents the average parking utilization or demand by different land use types and community settings. This information is intended to help inform jurisdictions of the average and range of expected parking demand. Parking standards for commercial districts should be re-evaluated based on expected demand, but not result in over-parking commercial uses. This will enable additional infill development within many commercial centers.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6. Zoning Map
7. MOBILITY

STUDY AREA

The study area consists of two disconnected segments of El Camino Real on either side of downtown Atascadero. The northern segment is 1.2 miles long and extends from San Anselmo Road to approximately 200 feet north of the intersection of El Camino Real and Madera Place. The southern segment is 1.9 miles long, extending from San Gabriel Road to State Route (SR) 41.

The two segments of El Camino Real have a cross-section largely consisting of five lanes (two through lanes in each direction with a 2-way left turn lane) within a 100-foot right-of-way. The 1800-foot segment at the northernmost portion of the project area is two lanes (one through lane in each direction), although there is approximately 80 feet of right-of-way available. There is on-street parking along most of corridor; however, given the available off-street parking, use is relatively light. El Camino Real is parallel to and in close proximity to US 101. The ramps associated with the San Anselmo, Curbaril, and Santa Rosa interchanges are all within 400 feet of the intersections of those streets with El Camino Real. Each roadway consists of only two travel lanes, contributing to congestion in the corridor.

Sidewalks are 10 feet wide throughout most of the corridor, although there are some narrower sections, approximately 5 feet wide, in several locations. Sidewalks are continuous in the southern portion of the project area, but in the northern portion are several significant gaps. Along the west side of El Camino Real, there are existing sidewalks along approximately 90 percent of the roadway, but sidewalks are in place along only about 30 percent of the eastern side of the roadway. There is also a segment near the intersection with Machawk Drive with no sidewalks on either side of the roadway.

There are mostly continuous bike lanes throughout the project area, but adjacent traffic has a posted speed ranging from 35 to 45 mph, which makes bicycling uncomfortable for most people. There is a gap in the bike lanes in the vicinity of the 101 access ramps south of the intersection of El Camino Real and Hwy 41.

There are frequent driveways throughout the project area. This large number of potential conflict points pose a safety concern, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists. Figure 7 shows the location of approximately 188 curb-cuts along El Camino Real.

Crossing El Camino Real is especially challenging for pedestrians at many locations throughout the project area. The southern study area includes sixteen intersections. Only seven of these intersections have marked crosswalks, and six of those have traffic signals. From Santa Rosa to Palomar, a distance of ¾ of a mile, there are no traffic signals. Crossing distances are
approximately 85 to 100 feet. The northern portion of the study area has a total of nine intersections, only two of which have marked crosswalks, one with a traffic signal. The crossing distance at most intersections is approximately 80 feet.

There are 26 public street intersections throughout the study area, of which 8 are controlled by a traffic signal, as indicated below:

- San Gabriel Road
- El Bordo Avenue
- Montecito Avenue
- Santa Rosa Road (signalized)
- Principal Avenue
- Gusta Road
- La Lina Avenue
- Solano Road
- Plata La/Cascada Road
- Arcade Road
- Palomar Avenue (signalized)
- Junipero Avenue (signalized)
- Curbaril Avenue (signalized)
- Pueblo Avenue
- Plaza del Camino (Vons) shopping center (signalized)
- SR 41 (signalized)
- San Anselmo (West)(signalized)
- Valdez Avenue
- San Anselmo Rd (East)(signalized)
- Campbell Lane
- Maya Lane
- Marco Lane
- La Uva Lane
- San Benito Road
- Madera Place (south)
- Madera Place (north)
Figure 7. Curb-Cuts along El Camino Real within the Study Area
RELEVANT STUDIES AND PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

State Route 41 Corridor Study. A study completed in 2018 to develop plans for designing SR 41 to enhance bicycle and pedestrian access and safety between downtown Atascadero and Atascadero Lake Park/Charles Paddock Zoo. The current development pattern is very much a patchwork, as there is 100 feet of public right-of-way available, but the roadway is only three lanes wide in most of the project area. Due to the challenges of navigating the El Camino Real/SR 41 intersection, a plan for bike lanes and sidewalk improvements along Atascadero Avenue was included in the plan. Caltrans plans to implement buffered bike lanes along SR 41 in 2019. The City has applied for funding from the Active Transportation Program for the Atascadero Avenue portion of the project. This application is pending.

US 101 Interchange Study. Completed in 2007, a study and conceptual designs were prepared for roundabouts at five interchanges in Atascadero—Santa Barbara Road/San Antonio Road, Santa Rosa Road, Curbarel Avenue, Traffic Way/Ardilla Road, and San Anselmo Road. The project was initiated as a result of concerns about queuing between the US 101 off-ramps and El Camino Real, because the two routes are close to one another. A roundabout was subsequently designed for the Del Rio/US 101 interchange as a traffic mitigation for the proposed Walmart near the El Camino Real/Del Rio intersection. However, this is not being implemented since that project is not moving forward.

City of Atascadero Bicycle Transportation Plan. The City’s bicycle plan was adopted in 2010 and includes a set of existing recommended bikeway projects, including bike lanes along El Camino Real and several intersecting streets.

El Camino Real Downtown Traffic Calming and Corridor Plan. This study is underway and is expected to be adopted in the summer of 2019. The study explores alternative design concepts for new bicycle and parking improvements along El Camino Real between Highway 41 and Rosario Avenue.

Figure 8, Planned Circulation Improvements, identifies the location and extent of current projects underway within or connecting to the study area. These include:

- Implementation of improvements identified in the State Route 41 Corridor Study from El Camino Real to Portola.
- Striping improvements along El Camino Real from San Anselmo Road east to San Benito Road for travel lanes, two-way turn lane, and Class II bike lane.
- Alternative concepts being evaluated as part of the El Camino Real Downtown Traffic Calming and Corridor Plan.
Figure 8. Planned Circulation Improvements

**HWY 41 PROJECT**
Includes a combination of buffered bike lanes, cycle tracks, continuous sidewalks, and intersection crossing improvements.

**STRIPING**
El Camino Real striping improvement from San Anselmo East to San Benito Road.

**DOWNTOWN STREET ENHANCEMENTS**
Alternative designs have been developed for new pedestrian, bicycle, and parking improvements between Highway 41 and Rosario Avenue.

**ATASCADERO AVE**
Project will enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety, and improve access to Atascadero High School and the downtown area.

PLANNED CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS
EXISTING SEGMENT CONDITIONS

NORTHERN SEGMENT—SAN ANSELMO ROAD TO NORTH OF MADERA PLACE

The northern segment of the project is 1.2 miles long. For the purposes of providing an overview of the corridor, the segment was divided into two smaller segments based on their respective characteristics.

San Anselmo Road to North of Marco Place

This segment is 2700 feet long, with two travel lanes in each direction and a two-way left turn lane. Curb and gutter are present along portions of this segment. The roadway narrows to one lane in each direction at the northern end of the segment. There is a posted speed of 45 mph.

Pedestrian Facilities

There are continuous sidewalks on the west side of the street throughout this segment. Along the east side, there are no sidewalks along the northern 850 feet of the segment. The only locations with marked crosswalks across El Camino Real are the intersections at the eastern and western sections of San Anselmo Road.

Bicycle Facilities

While bike lanes are clearly marked at some places, in other places the pavement markings are either not there or not clearly visible. Shoulders are various widths. Bike lanes are proposed along both the eastern and western portions of San Anselmo Road, which intersects El Camino Real. There is no designated bike parking within the public right-of-way. Bicyclists park their bikes at bike racks on private property or locked to various street furniture such as sign poles.

On-Street Parking

On-street parking is generally available throughout the segment; the major exceptions are a red-curbed section in the southbound direction north of San Anselmo Road and a section in the northbound direction where the shoulder is narrow and parking is prohibited. Land uses are typically set back from the roadway and have off-street parking, so on-street parking use is relatively light.

North of Marco Place to North of Madera Place

This segment is 3500 feet long with one travel lane in each direction. The pavement is approximately 50 feet in width, and the parking lane/shoulder on the west side of the road is as wide as 25 feet. Curb and gutter are present along portions of this segment. The posted speed is 45 mph.

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks are inconsistent along this segment. Approximately 70 percent of the segment has sidewalks along one side, and 30 percent has no sidewalks at all. Shoulders of various widths can be used by pedestrians where sidewalks are not available. There are no controlled crossings or marked crosswalks in this section.
Bicycle Facilities

Similar to the adjacent segment, there are paved shoulders of inconsistent width, and the bike lane pavement markings are faded or not present at some locations. Bicyclists park their bikes at bike racks on private property or locked to various street furniture such as sign poles.

On-Street Parking

On-street parking is generally permitted throughout the segment. Where there are shoulders without curb and gutter, the edge of the shoulder is often not clearly delineated, so vehicles parking on the shoulders may interfere with bicyclists and pedestrians. Most of the land uses are set back significantly from the roadway and off-street parking is generally available, so on-street parking is lightly used.

SOUTHERN SEGMENT—SAN GABRIEL ROAD TO SR 41

The southern segment of the project is 1.8 miles long and is divided into two smaller segments based on their respective characteristics.

San Gabriel Road to Curbaril Road

El Camino Real from San Gabriel Road to Curbaril Avenue is the southernmost portion of the study corridor. Santa Rosa Road and Curbaril Avenue are the only cross-streets in this segment that cross US 101, and both have interchanges that provide access routes into and out of Atascadero. The curb-to-curb width is 80 feet and there are four travel lanes (two northbound and two southbound) and a two-way left turn lane. The posted speed is 40 mph. There are sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. There is on-street parking throughout the segment, but it is lightly used because most land uses have adequate off-street parking available.
Pedestrian Facilities

Throughout the segment, there are continuous sidewalks, which are approximately 10 feet wide. Sidewalks narrow to approximately 5 feet wide along two segments on the east side of El Camino Real, a 300-foot segment in front of the Taco Roco restaurant extending north from Junipero Avenue and a 230-foot segment extending north from Principal Avenue. Despite the continuous sidewalks, pedestrian access can be challenging due to the cross-traffic from numerous driveways throughout this segment.

There are marked crosswalks at the signalized intersections of El Camino with Santa Rosa Road, Palomar Avenue, Junipero Avenue, and Curbaril Avenue. The uncontrolled crossing at El Bordo Avenue includes a striped pedestrian refuge, yield to pedestrian signs, pedestrian beacons, and advanced yield pavement markings to encourage motorists to yield to pedestrians in advance of the crosswalk.

Bicycle Facilities

There are bike lanes along El Camino Real throughout this segment. There are proposed bike lanes along Santa Rosa Road, El Bordo Avenue, and Curbaril Avenue, all of which intersect with El Camino Real. There is no designated bike parking within the public right-of-way. Bicyclists park their bikes at bike racks on private property or locked to various street furniture such as sign poles.

On-Street Parking

On-street parking is available throughout the segment, although reduced by the number of driveways as well as red-curbed sections, particularly in the vicinity of the Palomar Avenue intersection. On-street parking is lightly used because most businesses are well equipped with off-street parking lots.

Curbaril Avenue to SR 41

The segment from Curbaril Avenue to SR 41 is 0.8 mile long, with two travel lanes in each direction and a two-way left turn lane. The segment has a curb-to-curb width of 80 feet and a posted speed limit of 35 mph. On-street parking is generally available along El Camino Real between San Gabriel Road and SR 41. Because the parking is unstriped and there are a significant number of driveways throughout the corridor, it is not possible to accurately count the parking supply.

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks are continuous throughout this segment. There are marked crosswalks at the intersections of El Camino Real with Curbaril Avenue, the Plaza del Camino Shopping Center/US 101 northbound ramps, and SR 41.
Bicycle Facilities

There are bike lanes along El Camino Real throughout this segment. As noted above, there are proposed bike lanes along Curbaril Avenue. There is no designated bike parking within the public right-of-way. Bicyclists park their bikes at bike racks on private property or locked to various street furniture such as sign poles.

On-Street Parking

On-street parking is available throughout the segment, although reduced by the number of driveways as well as red-curbed sections. On-street parking use is relatively light, as most businesses are well-equipped with off-street parking lots.

TRANSIT FACILITIES

El Camino Real is served by Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Route 9, which provides fixed route service through Atascadero as part of its route between Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo. This service operates from 6:30 am to 8:00 pm on weekdays with approximately one-hour headways. There are only five buses on Saturday and three buses on Sunday. The route is on El Camino Real except in the Downtown, where it includes a stop at the Atascadero Transit Center at 6000 Capistrano Ave. The transit center is also the location for the Amtrak bus stop, which provides a bus connection to the train in San Luis Obispo, where there is one southbound and one northbound train per day.

There are six bus stops in the northern segment and ten bus stops in the southern segment, as shown on Figure 9. In the northern segment, bus stops are at the intersection with San Anselmo Road (northbound and southbound), Kennedy Club (north of Maya Lane, northbound and southbound), and San Benito Road (northbound and southbound). In the southern segment, bus stops are at El Bordo Avenue (northbound and southbound), Solano Avenue (northbound), Plata Lane (southbound), Principal Avenue (northbound), Palomar Avenue (northbound), Pueblo Avenue (northbound and southbound), the El Camino car wash (southbound, near SR 41), and the Vons Center (northbound).

Atascadero Transit is a door-to-door “dial-a-ride” service that is available for those who are unable to independently use the transit system due to a physical or mental disability.

Photo 5. El Camino Real near Pueblo Avenue facing southbound.
Figure 9. RTA Transit Map
EXISTING INTERSECTION LEVELS OF SERVICE

The Existing Conditions scenario provides an evaluation of current operation based on existing traffic volumes during the AM and PM peak periods. Volume data was collected on November 8, 2018 while local schools were still in session.

Under existing conditions, all intersections are operating acceptably at LOS D or better during both peak periods. A summary of the intersection level of service calculations is in Table 3.

FUTURE INTERSECTION LEVELS OF SERVICE

Segment volumes for the horizon year of 2035 were obtained from the City’s gravity demand model and translated to turning movement volumes at each of the study intersections using the “Furness method.” The Furness method is an iterative process that employs existing turn movement data, existing link volumes, and future link volumes to project likely future turning movement volumes at intersections.

Under the anticipated future volumes, the study intersections are expected to continue operating acceptably at LOS D or better during both peak periods except for the intersection of El Camino Real/San Anselmo Road, which would deteriorate to LOS E in the AM peak hour and LOS F in the PM peak hour. Future operating conditions are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Future Peak Hour Intersection Levels of Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Intersection Approach</th>
<th>AM Peak</th>
<th>PM Peak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delay</td>
<td>LOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. El Camino Real/San Anselmo Road</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. El Camino Real/SR 41</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. El Camino Real/Pueblo Avenue</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EB (Pueblo Avenue) Approach</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB (Pueblo Avenue) Approach</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. El Camino Real/Curbal Avenue</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. El Camino Real/Santa Rosa Road</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Delay is measured in average seconds per vehicle. Results for minor approaches to two-way stop-controlled intersections are indicated in italics. LOS = Level of Service; ** = delay greater than 120 seconds; Bold text = deficient operation

COLLISION HISTORY AND SAFETY CONDITIONS

The collision history for the study area was reviewed to determine any trends or patterns that may indicate a safety issue. Collision records for the study intersection were obtained from the California Highway Patrol as published in its Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System reports. The most-current...
The five-year period available for the study intersections is February 2013 through January 2018.

As presented in Table 5, the calculated collision rates for the study intersections were compared to average collision rates for similar facilities statewide, as indicated in 2010 Collision Data on California State Highways, Caltrans.

The calculated collision rates are higher than the statewide average for similar facilities for all five study intersections; however, the calculated injury rates are lower than the statewide averages.

Collision data for the most recent 10-year period was obtained for the segments of El Camino Real between Madera Place and San Anselmo Road and between SR 41 and San Gabriel Road from the Transportation Injury Mapping System. These records only include collisions that involved injuries or fatalities. Figure 10 shows the locations of these collision.

The northern segment of El Camino Real experienced 18 collisions over the 10-year period—7 were near the intersection with northern San Anselmo Road, and 8 were along the northern half of the segment. The entire length of El Camino Real between SR 41 and San Gabriel Road experienced 84 collisions. The locations with the highest number of crashes include El Camino Real near Curbaril Avenue and near El Bordo Avenue.

**POTENTIAL STREET MODIFICATIONS**

With approximately 100 feet of available public right-of-way, there is significant potential to re-envision the El Camino Real corridor. Consideration should be given to reallocating the available space in a way that better accommodates bicyclists and pedestrians. There are a variety of options available which should be considered during this project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Intersection</th>
<th>Number of Collisions</th>
<th>Collision Rate in c/mve*</th>
<th>Injury Rate*</th>
<th>Fatality Rate*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. San Anselmo Rd</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.45 (0.27)</td>
<td>25.0% (41.9%)</td>
<td>0% (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SR 41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.61 (0.27)</td>
<td>17.9% (41.9%)</td>
<td>0% (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pueblo Ave</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.36 (0.15)</td>
<td>28.6% (41.9%)</td>
<td>0% (1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Curbaril Ave</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.43 (0.27)</td>
<td>41.2% (41.9%)</td>
<td>0% (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Santa Rosa Rd</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.29 (0.27)</td>
<td>0.0% (41.9%)</td>
<td>0% (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
Notes: c/mve = collisions per million vehicles entering; Bold text = greater than the statewide average
* Statewide average rates are in parentheses.
Figure 10. Collision Density Along El Camino Real

Collision Density along El Camino Real
Information gathered from the Transportation Injury Mapping System (TIMS) for recent ten year period
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APPENDIX A. MARKETING REPORT