EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

Sand City Sustainable Transportation Plan

July 29, 2020







Prepared by EMC Planning Group

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SAND CITY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

PREPARED FOR

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Introduction

Policy Context

The *California Transportation Plan 2040* establishes sustainability as a key part of the State's transportation vision:

California's transportation system is safe, sustainable, and globally competitive. It provides reliable and efficient mobility and accessibility for people, goods, and services while meeting our greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and preserving community character. This integrated, connected, and resilient multimodal system supports a prosperous economy, human and environmental health, and social equity.

The California Transportation Plan 2040 also sets forth the following six goals:

- Improve Multimodal Mobility and Accessibility for All People
- Preserve the Multimodal Transportation System
- Support a Vibrant Economy
- Improve Public Safety and Security
- Foster Livable and Healthy Communities and Promote Social Equity
- Practice Environmental Stewardship

Toward an Active California - State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan seeks to fulfill the six goals laid out in the California Transportation Plan 2040 and offers the following vision:

By 2040, people in California of all ages, abilities, and incomes can safely, conveniently, and comfortably walk and bicycle for their transportation needs.

Sand City's Sustainable Transportation Plan implements the California Transportation Plan 2040 and Toward an Active California at the local level.

Local Setting

Sand City covers about 347 acres of land, situated adjacent to the City of Seaside and a short distance northeast of Monterey, with about 1.5 miles of Monterey Bay shoreline. Sand City's population is about 380 persons, but the City's businesses attract about 10,000 workers and shoppers. The State Route 1 freeway, the former Union Pacific Railroad line, and the California Coastal Trail pass through the city. This report presents the existing conditions in Sand City as they pertain to transit, walking, bicycling, handicapped access, and other forms of transportation.







Figure 1-2, Regional Context, shows Sand City's location in relation to nearby cities and existing major transportation routes, and Figure 1-2, Study Area and Vicinity, shows the area of Sand City on which this report focuses, as well as adjacent areas that connect to the study area.



Figure 1-1









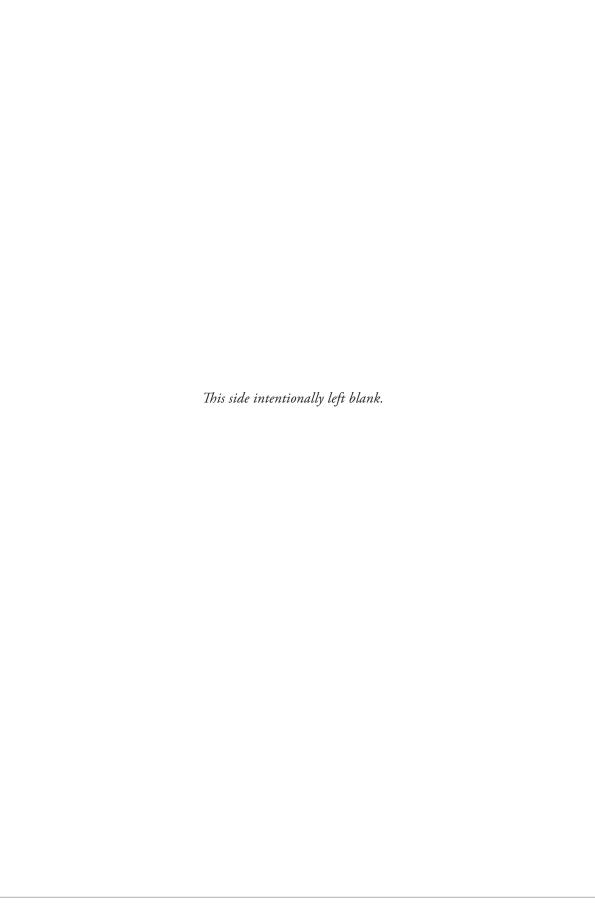


Figure 1-2

Study Area and Vicinity







Background and Local Policy

This section provides transportation background information for the areas within and near Sand City, and an overview of transportation policy. In addition to the State-level plans noted in Section 1, Introduction, there are a number of regional and local plans that provide policy direction and transportation priorities for the area.

Transit

The Monterey Branch rail line runs along the eastern edge of Sand City within a 100-foot-wide corridor. The Southern Pacific Railroad began standard-gauge rail service on the Monterey Branch Line in 1880, following eight years of narrow-gauge service by the Monterey and Salinas Valley Rail Road Company. Passenger service ended in 1971 and freight service beyond the Sand City sand mines ended in 1979 (Santa Cruz Trains 2020). The Transportation Agency for Monterey County purchased the line in 2003. Resumption of rail service was planned through the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan; however, the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan does not include immediate plans for rail use of the Monterey Branch line (Transportation Agency for Monterey County 2005, 2010, 2014, 2018).

The Final Project Report Monterey Bay Area Feasibility Study of Bus on Shoulder Operations on State Route 1 and the Monterey Branch Line ("Bus Study") was completed in June 2018, concurrently with the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan. The Bus Study considered eight alternatives on or parallel to State Route

1 in Monterey County and concluded that the most cost-effective plan was to use the Monterey Branch Line for rapid bus service. Based on the Bus Study results, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County is now proposing to use the Monterey Branch Line from Marina to Sand City as part of the Salinas to Monterey rapid bus line. Preliminary plans call for using the railroad corridor for southbound bus service in the morning and north-bound bus service in the afternoon, with busses entering



and exiting the railroad corridor near Playa Avenue and Del Monte Boulevard (Monterey Salinas Transit and Santa Cruz County Metro 2018).

Monterey Salinas Transit provides bus service in Monterey County and Sand City. The bus routes serving Sand City use the northern segment of California Avenue and Playa Avenue within the City, and Del Monte Avenue and Fremont Boulevard in the City of Seaside. The Sand City Transit Center is located on Playa Avenue, between the City's two regional shopping centers. More detailed information on bus service is provided in Section 3, Current Conditions.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, which is planned to extend from Santa Cruz to Pacific Grove, passes through Sand City. Better known as the Rec Trail in Monterey, this paved multi-use Class I trail was first conceived in the mid-1970s, and the first segment was completed in 1980. By the late 1980s the trail was completed from Pacific Grove to State Route 218.

There was considerable debate regarding the alignment of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail through Sand City. The *Monterey Peninsula Recreation Trail: Seaside-Sand City Alignment Study* was prepared for the Coastal Conservancy in October 1988. This study showed two feasible alternative alignments for the coastal trail: one continuing along the railroad corridor and one to the seaward side of State Route 1. On September 15, 1988, the Sand City Council passed Resolution SC-23 determining that the bike path should be located within the railroad corridor, with Sand Dunes Drive to be considered as an alternate. On April 17, 1990, the Sand City Council Resolution SC-18 rescinded Resolution SC-23, directing staff to continue study of the Sand Dunes Drive alignment and purchase of the railroad right-of-way (California



Coastal Commission 1990). The Sand Dunes Drive/Eolian Dunes alignment was constructed in the mid-1990s, except for a gap between Tioga Avenue and Playa Avenue, that has yet to be completed. This missing segment would be constructed as a part of the King Ventures resort project, which was approved by the City in December 2013, but has been appealed to the Coastal Commission.

The Sand City General Plan 2002 – 2017 ("2002 General Plan") Figure 3-3, Bikeways, shows Class II bicycle lanes on California Avenue (continuous from Monterey Road to Contra Costa Street), Contra Costa Street, Tioga Avenue, Playa Avenue, and Metz Road. A Class I bicycle path is shown along Sand Dunes Drive and connecting to the pathway along State Route 1 at Fort Ord Dunes State Park, and two Class I bicycle paths entering the Edgewater Shopping Center from California Avenue near Monterey Road. Policy 3.9.3 calls for the City to pursue development of a recreational trail within the railroad corridor.

The 2002 General Plan proposes a pedestrian crossing of State Route 1 at the end of Contra Costa Street. The West End Sand City Urban Design and Parking Implementation Plan (2004) briefly identifies the need

for a pedestrian connection to the Coastal Trail, and shows a pedestrian bridge over State Route 1 at the end of Catalina Street. The *Sand City Vibrancy Plan* included both of those options, as well as a third optional pedestrian bridge location near Calabrese Park, and the concept of a trail connection to the existing Tioga Avenue bridge.

Sand City adopted its *Bikeway Master Plan Bicycle Transportation Plan* on June 5, 2001. The bicycle transportation plan meets the requirements of California Streets and Highways Code section 891.2. Planned bicycle facility improvements in the bicycle transportation plan are completion of the Class I trail between Tioga Avenue and Playa Avenue, development of a Class I trail along the railroad corridor, and signing of Class III routes on Tioga Avenue, the West End District and missing segments of California Avenue, and Contra Costa Street.

The Sand City Vibrancy Plan recommended a pedestrian route and a bicycle route through the City's West End District, as well as the creation of a greenway and trail within the railroad corridor connecting State Route 218 and Fort Ord Dunes State Park. The recommended pedestrian route included a trail connection between City Hall and Tioga Avenue.

The *Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Master Plan* was adopted in July 2007. The Sand Dunes Drive alignment is the principal route through Sand City, but the Master Plan recommends that a pathway be included in the railroad corridor if feasible to provide a good access route to the scenic trail and provide an opportunity for environmental enhancements. The City of Seaside. Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Plan also shows a trail along the railroad corridor, identified as Trail T-5 in Table 29 on page 81.

The 2018 Monterey County Active Transportation Plan ("Active Transportation Plan") was adopted by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County in June 2018. This plan shows Class I trail extensions in two locations between Tioga Avenue and Playa Avenue: an extension of the Sand Dunes Drive path and a path along the railroad corridor to connect the southern and northern segments of California Avenue. Sand City's top-ranked bicycle improvement in the Active Transportation Plan is the addition of bicycle lanes on Playa Avenue from Metz Road into Seaside; this project is ranked 12th priority county-wide. The Class I trail along the railroad corridor is ranked 16th county-wide.

The Active Transportation Plan section for City of Seaside includes public input that pedestrian and bicyclist connectivity improvements are needed between Fremont Boulevard and the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (at Fort Ord Dunes State Park), a comment that equally applies to the connection from California Avenue in Sand City to the trail. The Seaside & Marina Safe Walking & Biking to School: Complete Streets Plan ("Walk Bike to School Plan") identified this location as a problem for access to Seaside High School. The Active Transportation Plan ranked improvements to this location at 20th priority in Seaside and 260th priority county-wide, with an estimated cost of \$402,000. The Walk Bike to School Plan defers improvements at this location to a future not-yet-defined intersection improvement project. At least two designs for this intersection have been proposed, most recently a linked pair of roundabouts.

The Regional Pedestrian and Bicyclist Wayfinding Plan for Monterey County provides county-wide coordination of route signing, including the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail through Sand City.

Handicapped

The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990, and establishes design criteria for handicapped access. Other than ingress and egress from parking spaces to building entrances, the ADA does not address outdoor access such as sidewalks, although draft guidance has been developed. The Sand City Vibrancy Plan includes a recommended handicapped route network to avoid hills between the lower portions of the City near the railroad corridor, and the higher elevation areas near City Hall.

Other Forms of Transportation

The *Bicycle Sharing Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan* was prepared by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County in 2013. It provided recommendations for a program in coastal areas of Monterey and Pacific Grove, but did not propose a bikeshare program for Seaside or Sand City, both of which had lower suitability scores. The Transportation Agency for Monterey County developed best practices guidance for dockless shared bicycles and scooters in 2019.

Current Conditions

Transit

The Sand City Transit Center serves 13 bus routes. One of these routes stops on California Avenue, three of these routes stop on Del Monte Avenue, and several stop on Fremont Boulevard. There are three routes that come from and return to State Route 1, stopping only at the Transit Center. Figure 3-1, Map of Current Sand City Bus Service, shows the locations of bus routes and stops within and near Sand City. Table 3-1, Current Sand City Bus Service, provides a summary of routes, frequency, and destinations.

Table 3-1 **Current Sand City Bus Service**

Route, Type, and Destinations		Weekday Runs	Weekend Runs	Notes	
8*	Local	Sand City - Ryan Ranch	5	0	
11	Local	Sand City - Carmel	6	0	
18	Regional	Monterey - Marina	32	25	
19*	Local	CSUMB – Del Monte Center	8 (Fri only)	8 Sat; 6 Sun	Weekend shopping
20	Regional	Monterey — Salinas	48	34	
55*	Regional	Monterey — San Jose	4	6	Amtrak thruway service
75*	Local	Presidio — Marshall Park	10	0	
78*	Regional	Presidio — Santa Cruz	0	4	
91	Local	Sand City — Pacific Meadows	4	4	
94	Local	Sand City — Carmel	8	8	Discounted senior shuttle
A/B	Local	Sand City Aquarium	41	35 Sat; 26 Sun	
DRO*	Local	Sand City — Del Rey Oaks	4	0	

SOURCE: MST 2020 (https://mst.org/maps-schedules/route-list/ accessed March 10, 2020) **NOTE**: When Sand City is terminus for round-trips, only departures have been counted.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail is mostly complete through Sand City, with the exception of the segment between Tioga Avenue and Playa Avenue, where it follows streets to the back side of the

[&]quot;*" indicates routes that are temporarily suspended in wake of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. All other routes are operating on a modified Sunday schedule during the pandemic.

Sand Dollar Shopping Center. The completed portions follow Sand Dunes Drive south of Tioga Avenue, and are within the Eolian Dunes Regional Preserve north of Playa Avenue. At the north end of the City, this trail joins the Class I bicycle path along State Route 1, and a parallel trail on the former Beach Range Road through Fort Od Dunes State Park.

A Class I spur of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail follows the Union Pacific railroad corridor parallel to Del Monte Boulevard between Roberts Road and State Route 218 (Canyon del Rey Boulevard), within the City of Seaside.

There are Class II bicycle lanes on California Avenue from Monterey Road to Playa Avenue; on Playa Avenue from California Avenue to Metz Road; and on Metz Road from Playa Avenue to Tioga Avenue. Metz Road is a private street that is functionally a part of the City's street network. The City of Seaside has recently added Class II bicycle lanes on Del Monte Avenue between Canyon del Rey Boulevard and Broadway Avenue, and on Broadway Avenue between Del Monte Boulevard and Fremont Boulevard.

Bicycle racks are located in multiple locations within the two regional shopping centers. There are also bicycle racks at The Independent mixed-use development and between City Hall and Calabrese Park.

Figure 3-2, Map of Existing Bicycle Facilities, shows the location of the Class I and Class II bicycle facilities and bicycle racks in and near Sand City.

Most streets in the City have incomplete sidewalks. Frequently, cars and trucks park across the sidewalk in front of buildings, because the buildings are close to the street right-of-way, leaving inadequate space for both parking and sidewalks.

The regional shopping centers have sidewalks directly in front of the buildings, but these don't all connect to the sidewalks at other groups of buildings or to sidewalks along nearby streets.

In a couple of places, trails take the place of traditional sidewalks, or provide connections where no street exists. Along Sand Dunes Drive there is no sidewalk, but the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail serves as the pedestrian facility. Likewise, this trail provides a pedestrian connection through the Eolian Dunes Regional Preserve between Playa Avenue and Monterey Road.

In the past ten years the City completed missing sidewalks along Tioga Avenue and Hickory Street, and has developed plans to complete a sidewalk on Contra Costa Street.

Figure 3-3, Map of Existing Sidewalk Locations, shows the locations of sidewalks, gaps in the sidewalk system, and locations with inadequate wheelchair ramps.



Figure 3-1

Map of Current Sand City Bus Service







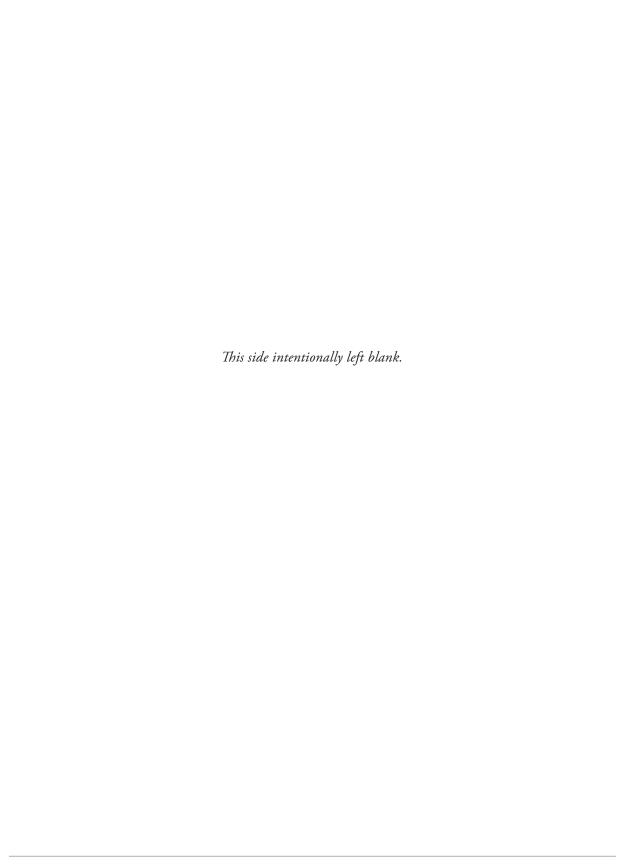






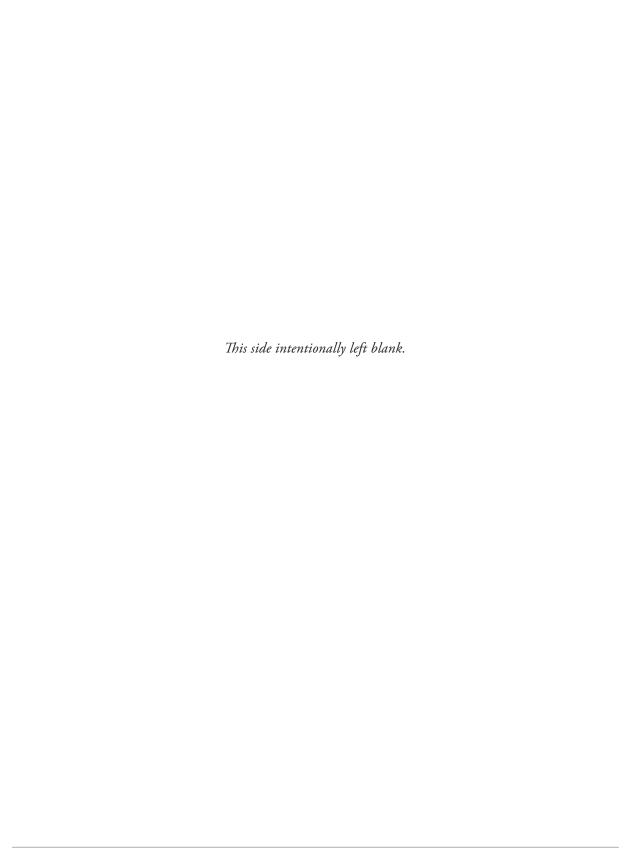
Figure 3-2











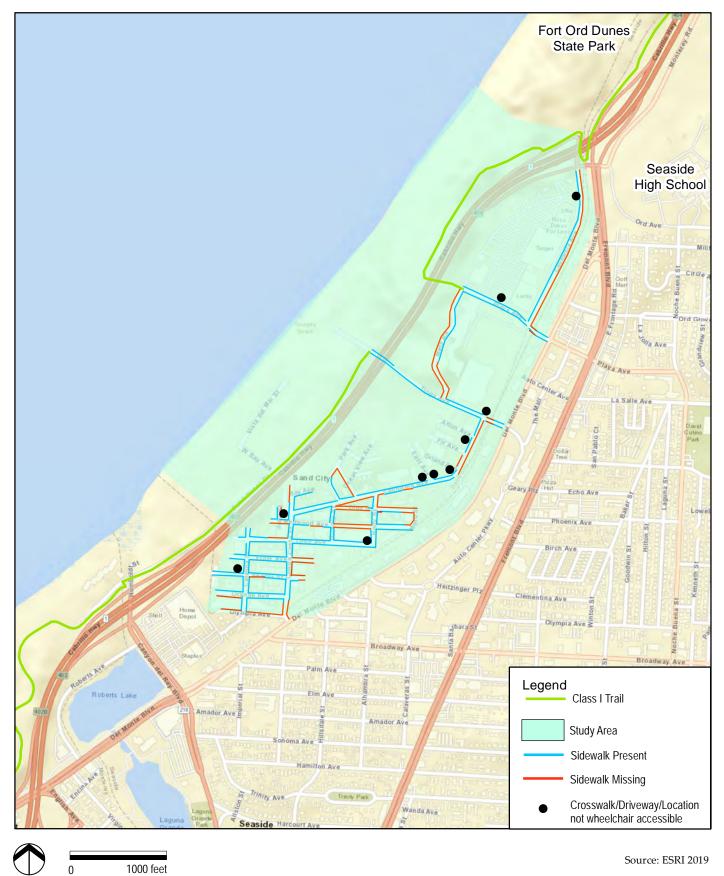


Figure 3-3







Handicapped

Persons dependent on wheelchairs, or of otherwise impaired mobility, face several significant challenges. In addition to incomplete sidewalks, as discussed in the Pedestrian section above, there are intersections that lack curb cuts, a limited number of handicapped parking spaces in the older parts of the City, and inclines that may be too steep to be negotiated. The City only has one traffic light, and there are no audible signals at this light to alert the blind.

Figure 3-4, Map of Existing Handicapped Parking Spaces, shows the location of existing handicapped parking spaces within the City. Refer also to Figure 3-3 Map of Existing Sidewalk Locations for the locations of missing sidewalks and curb ramps. The regional shopping centers were constructed since adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and handicapped parking there meet the standards of that act. Handicapped parking in the older West End District is unevenly distributed, with about 16 total spaces. The shopping centers have approximately 58 handicapped parking spaces. There are no handicapped parking spaces to the west of State Route 1 near the beaches.

Other forms of Transportation

The City has three electrical vehicle charging stations, all located in the Edgewater Shopping Center near the supermarket. The stations have two connector types (CHAdeMO and CCS/SAE) and charge at 50 kilowatts (up to 125 miles of range in one hour).

Uber and Lyft ride services, at least three conventional taxi services, and hotel/airport shuttles are available on the Monterey Peninsula. The nearest car sharing service is located at California State University Monterey Bay, about five miles to the north. There are no bike-share or scooter share programs in Sand City or in Seaside.

Photographic Survey

Section 4, Photographs of Existing Conditions, presents photographs and locational maps of existing conditions in and near the study area, with text describing the context.



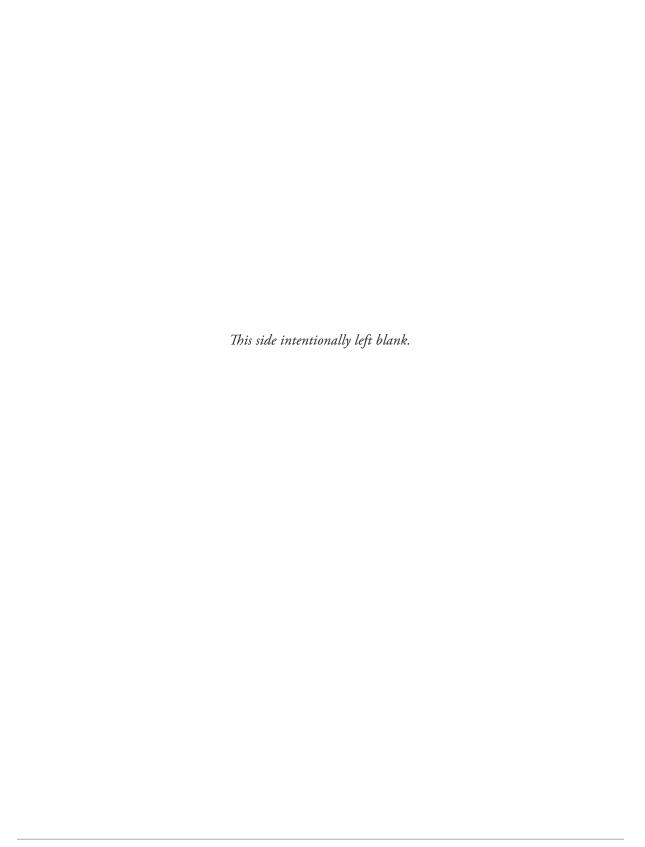


Source: ESRI 2019

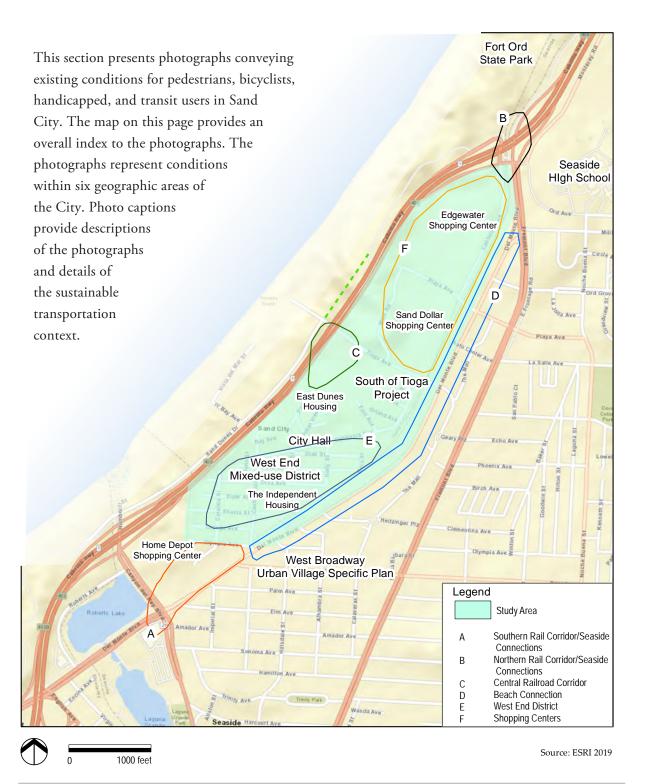
Figure 3-4







Photographs of Existing Conditions



Southern Rail Corridor/Seaside Connections



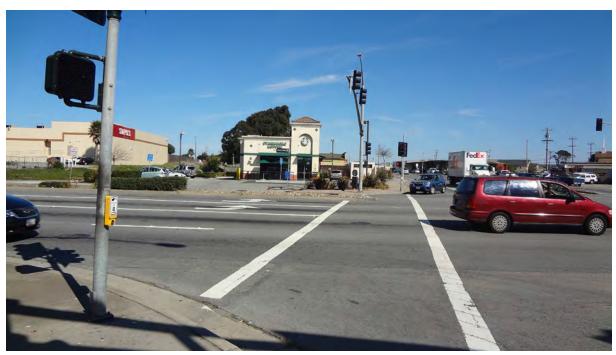


Photo A1: Looking north across Canyon del Rey Boulevard (State Route 218) from the end of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail spur along Del Monte Boulevard. As seen in the photo, the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail does not continue on the north side of the Canyon del Rey Boulevard (State Route 218) and Del Monte Boulevard intersection. The railroad corridor runs between Staples and Starbucks.



Photo A2: This view is west across Canyon del Rey Boulevard (State Route 218) along the west side of Del Monte Boulevard and the former Union Pacific Railroad corridor. A spur of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail currently ends in the landscaped area near Canyon del Rey Boulevard in the photo. A trail extension within the railroad corridor would provide a direct connection to local streets within Sand City.



Photo A3: Former Union Pacific Railroad corridor. This segment runs from Canyon del Rey Boulevard (State Route 218) to Olympia Avenue and is within the City of Seaside.

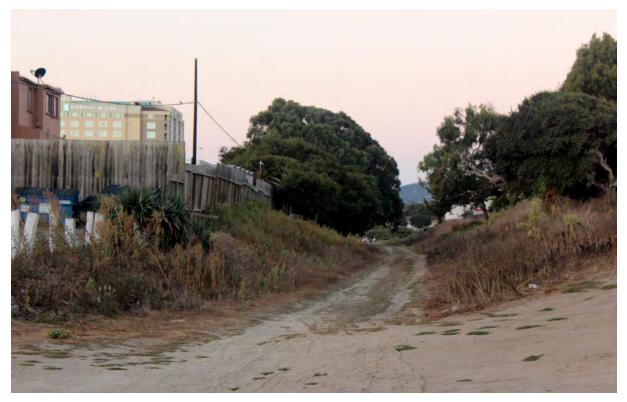


Photo A4: his section of the former Union Pacific Railroad corridor is within the City of Seaside. This view is southward from Olympia Avenue near the Seaside/Sand City limits. The planned rapid bus/rail station location is to the left of this photograph.



Photo A5: Pedestrian crossing of Del Monte Boulevard between Contra Costa Boulevard and Broadway Avenue in the City of Seaside. This intersection is off-set, with Contra Costa Street about 200 feet to the left of the photo location. The planned rapid bus/rail station location is behind this photo location.

Northern Rail Corridor/Seaside Connections





Photo B1: These three photographs show a bicyclist making his way to the City of Seaside from the Caltrans bicycle trail junction with the Monterey Road/Fremont Blvd/California Avenue intersection in Sand City/Seaside. In this first photograph the cyclist is waiting on the trail for a walk sign southward across Monterey Road. The photographs show the lack of bicycle-friendly connections between the two cities.



Photo B2: In the second photo, the cyclist is riding south with the green light from the State Route 1 off-ramp onto Fremont Boulevard to the opposite corner. Note that some traffic exiting the freeway will be turning right across this path of travel onto Monterey Road to enter Sand City.



Photo B3: n the third photo the cyclist is riding east with the green light along Monterey Road into Seaside. Seaside High School is in the background.



Photo B4: View from Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail across Monterey Street to California Avenue. The railroad corridor is immediately to the left. The pedestrian has come from Seaside and is headed toward the Sand City shopping centers. Bicyclists heading north (toward the photo location) in the California Avenue bicycle lane have no direct path of travel to the trail, and compete with a predominant automobile right-turn movement.



Photo B5: his view shows the Caltrans bicycle trail junction with the Monterey Road/Fremont Blvd/ California Avenue intersection in Sand City/Seaside. Monterey Road is in the foreground, Del Monte Boulevard is to the far right, and California Avenue is in the center. To the far right are off-ramps and on-ramps for northbound State Route 1.

Beach Connection

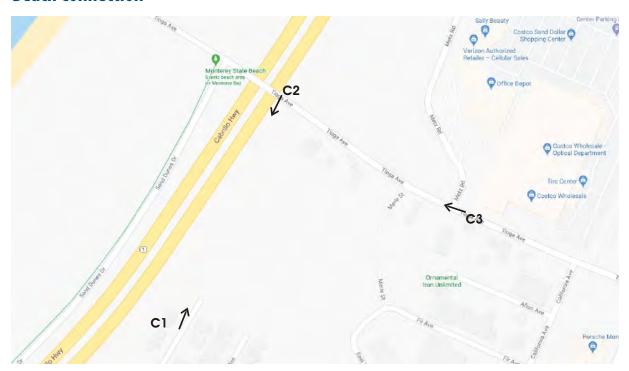




Photo C1: The General Plan and the Urban Design and Parking Study both suggested construction of a bicycle/pedestrian bridge to provide a connection of the State Route 1 freeway between the West End District and the beach, and two potential locations for a bridge were identified. The Vibrancy Plan investigated options for a connection using the existing Tioga Avenue bridge. A pathway between the end of Park Avenue and Tioga Avenue would provide this connection.



Photo C2: The only continuous public land between the eastern landing of the Tioga Avenue bridge over State Route 1 and Park Avenue is the Caltrans right-of-way, marked by the fence line below the bridge. The East Dunes area contains sensitive habitat with three federally protected species present. The intervening land outside the Caltrans right-of-way is either private of discontinuous un-built street rights-of way.



Photo C3: Tioga Avenue west of Metz Road climbs steeply to the bridge over State Route 1. This street provides the temporarily alignment of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail until a Class I trail is built within the King Ventures property as part of the Collections at Monterey Bay Resort. Tioga Avenue is too steep to provide handicapped access between the West End District and the beach.

Central Railroad Corridor

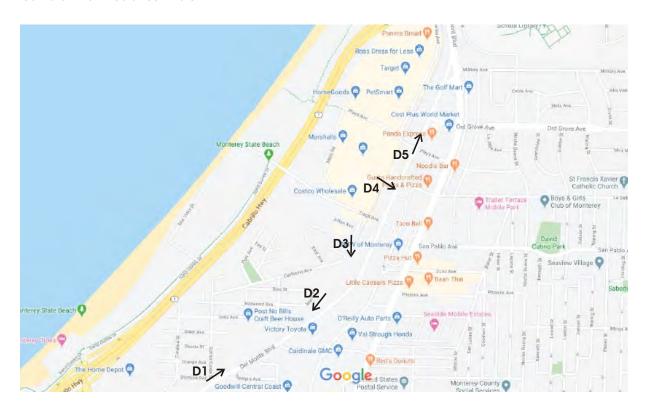




Photo D1: This section of the railroad corridor just north of Contra Costa is used for parking by nearby businesses. Some businesses within Seaside have leases from the Transportation Agency of Monterey County and conditional use permits from Sand City to operate within a portion of the railroad corridor adjacent to those businesses.



Photo D2: The railroad corridor behind a business located on Redwood Avenue. The tracks in the photograph are a siding; the main tracks continue behind the warehouse where cars are parked.



Photo D3: The tracks run through the Granite Construction yard. The company has a retail building on Del Monte Avenue in Seaside and a batch plant on California Avenue in Sand City. Granite Construction has a lease with the Transportation Agency for Monterey County and a conditional use permit from Sand City for this portion of the railroad corridor that runs between its two sites.



Photo D4: A footpath crosses the railroad corridor between Del Monte Avenue in Seaside and the Costco parking lot in Sand City.



Photo D5: North of Playa Avenue the railroad corridor is empty as it runs between California Avenue in Sand City and the backs of building located on Del Monte Boulevard in Seaside.

Shopping Centers

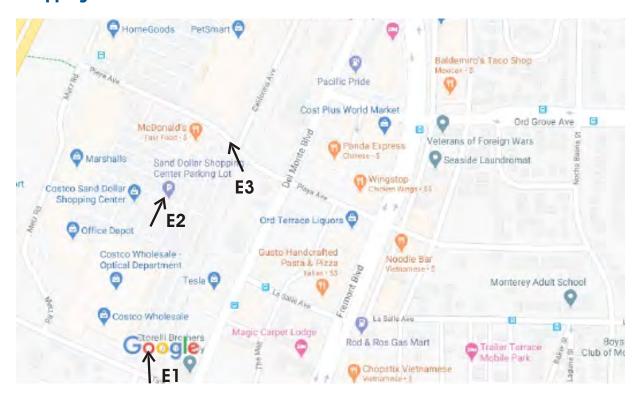




Photo E1: The driveway to the Sand Dollar Shopping Center at Tioga Avenue. The sidewalks end as they curve into the driveway. There is no pedestrian access between the corner of California Avenue and Tioga Avenue and the Costco store entrance. The only walking path is through the landscaping and the parking lot for the Costco Tire Center, or on the driveway.



Photo E2: This is the end of the walkway that provides access between the Costco entrance and the handicapped parking spaces. Pedestrians use the parking lot between this point and the McDonalds. The Sand City Transit Center is across Playa Avenue from McDonalds.



Photo E3: The Sand City Transit Center along Playa Avenue adjacent to the Edgewater Shopping Center. California Avenue to the right has sidewalks. The sidewalk in front of the bus stops continues along the font of the supermarket; most of the stores in the Edgewater Shopping Center are connected by sidewalks from this location.

West End District

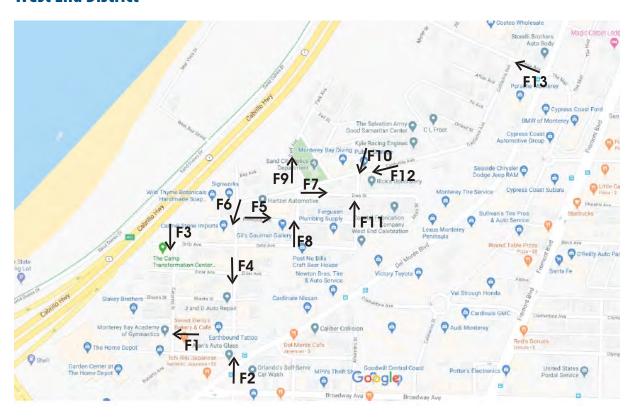




Photo F1: On-street handicapped parking space on Catalina Street serving the adjacent business. There are approximately 16 handicapped parking spaces in the West End District.



Photo F2: This photograph is taken from Contra Costa Street upon entering Sand City from Del Monte Avenue, and shows the lack of sidewalk within the railroad corridor. Both sides of Contra Costa Street are missing sidewalks in this area.

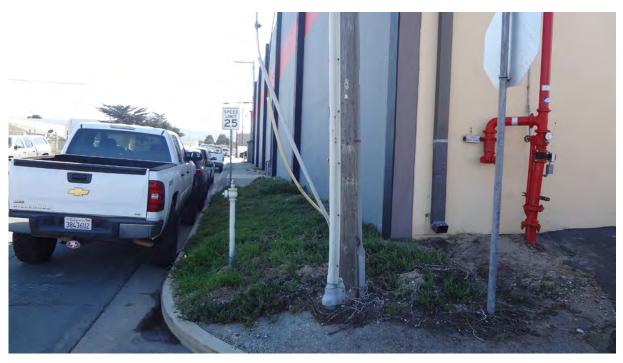


Photo F3: This photograph shows the lack of wheelchair ramps and the lack of complete sidewalks at the southeast intersection of Catalina Street and Ortiz Avenue.



Photo F4: This block of Contra Costa Street is used for parking by the adjacent business. The City is applying grant money to design and construct sidewalks on this block and portions of two connecting streets.



Photo F5: Vehicles park across the sidewalk on Redwood Avenue due to a lack of depth between the street and the building front.



Photo F6: Carmel Stone has a reciprocal parking agreement, whereby the parking spaces are partially on the private lot and partially within the street, but a pedestrian walk area is reserved adjacent to the building.



Photo F7: Dias Street as viewed from the Community Garden. Dias Street is gated off at the Community Garden, so has only local traffic, much of which is residential.



Photo F8: This photograph is taken at the Redwood Avenue and Hickory Street intersection, looking north towards the City Hall, and shows how the grade of Hickory Street is too steep for wheelchair access. This block was recently rebuilt to add sidewalks on the right side, but the grade and narrow right-of-way precluded attaining a slope suitable for wheelchairs.



Photo F9: Pendergrass Way in front of City Hall and Calabrese Park has steep grades. Because the City owns the land in addition to the right-of-way, there is potential that an appropriate slope for wheelchairs could be accommodated here.



Photo F10: This photograph is taken at the corner of California Street and Holly Street and shows the lack of sidewalks and wheelchair ramp.



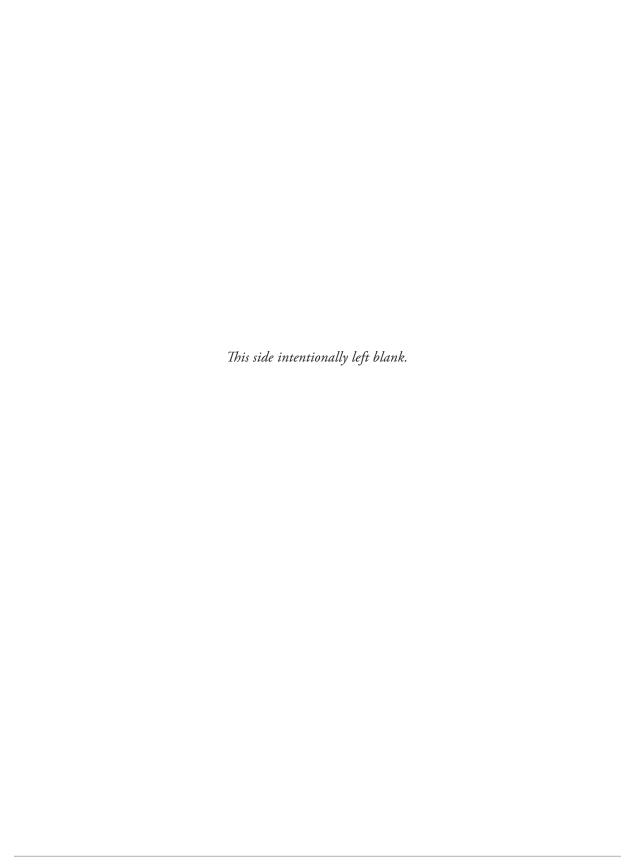
Photo F11: This photograph shows the missing sidewalk and ramp at the southeast corner of the Holly Street and Dias Street intersection.



Photo F12: This photograph is taken on California Street just north of City Hall, where there is a sidewalk on one side of the street frequently blocked by parked vehicles, and no sidewalk on the other side.

Photo F13: The sidewalk on Tioga Avenue is missing a sidewalk where it crosses the railroad corridor. There is a bus stop near the intersection of Tioga Avenue and Del Monte Boulevard, about 300 feet from here.





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