

Sustainable Land Use & 3 Transportation Pattern

This chapter presents illustrations of the pattern and type of new development envisioned by the Sustainable Santa Cruz County Plan. These illustrations show examples of high-quality infill development that utilizes land resources efficiently, increases housing choices, supports a balanced transportation system, and enhances the character of the existing community. In the words of one workshop participant, this chapter illustrates “what we can say yes to” to achieve a more sustainable development pattern in Santa Cruz County.

This chapter illustrates a sustainable development pattern at four different scales and settings:

- Plan Area
- Neighborhood Activity Center
- Corridor Infill
- Village Center Infill

Specific locations for where these types of development could be applied are shown in the Community Land Use and Transportation Pattern diagrams in Chapter 4.

The illustrations are a tool to help the community visualize how new development could support the goals of this Plan. The type of development shown in these illustrations would enhance the quality of life for current and future residents by introducing new urban amenities into existing communities. High-quality infill development will increase housing choices for singles, young families, and seniors. Additional retail and services close to existing neighborhoods and work places will make it easier for residents and employees to walk and bike to destinations. New development could incorporate public spaces to build community and enhance resident and worker access to parks and open space.

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PATTERN

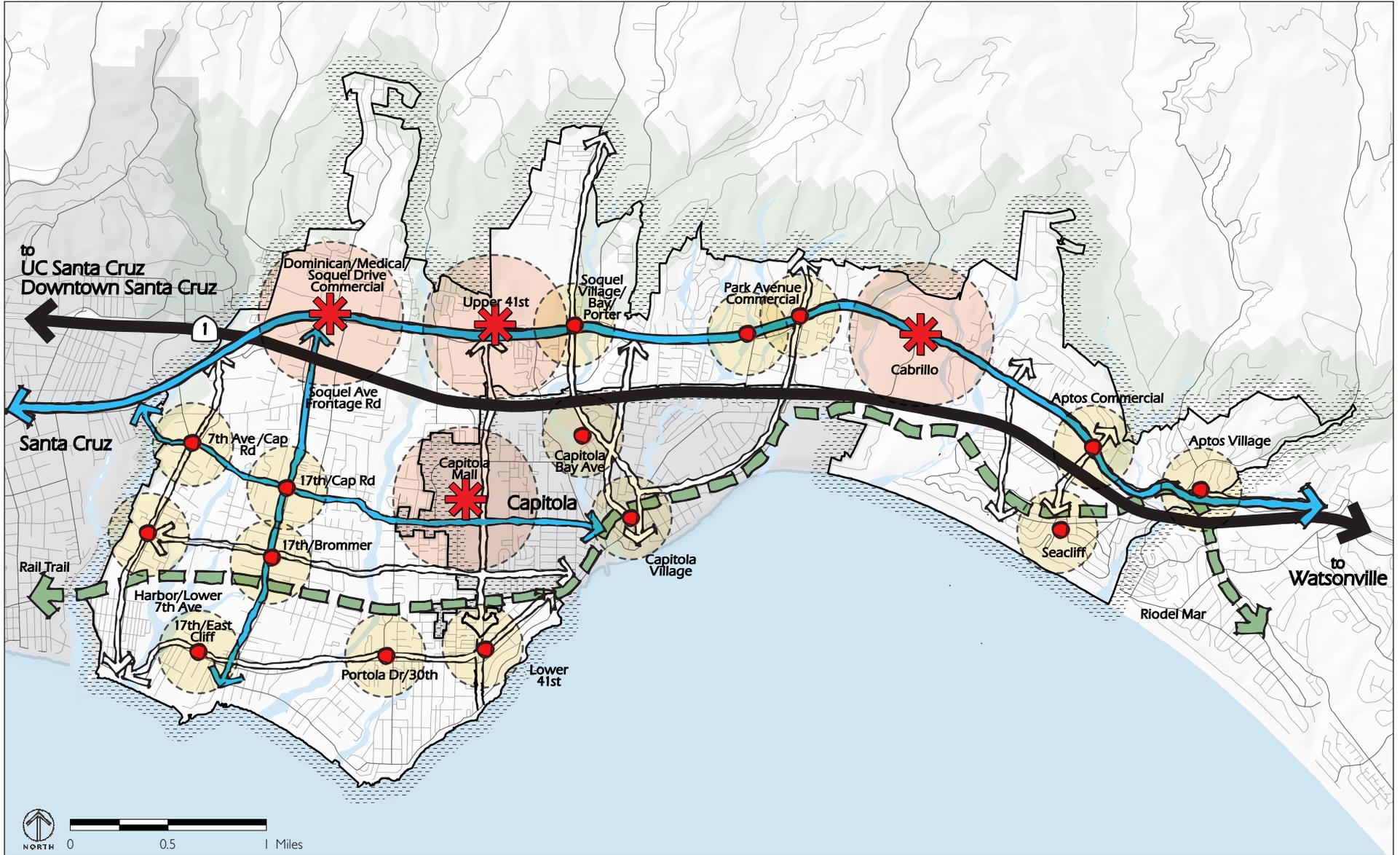
Figure 3-1 presents the general future land use and transportation pattern described by the Vision for the Plan area. This diagram graphically illustrates the guiding principles presented in Chapter 2 of this Plan.

The figure illustrates a set of regional and neighborhood activity centers distributed throughout the Plan area. Growth would be focused in and around these centers, which would support open space preservation elsewhere and help create walkable neighborhoods with convenient access to goods and services.

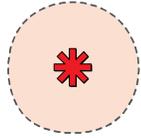
An integrated multimodal network would effectively connect activity centers to each other as well as surrounding areas. Enhanced pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities could help improve mobility along the three major east-west corridors. New Highway 1 crossings would create new local-serving north-south connections for all modes of transportation.

Additional details about the features shown in this diagram are provided in Chapter 4 and 5.

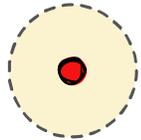
FIGURE 3 - 1 FUTURE LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PATTERN



Future Land Use and Transportation Pattern Symbols



Regional Employment Center



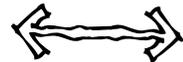
Neighborhood Activity Center



Highway 1



Primary Transit Corridor



Secondary Transit Corridor



**Monterey Bay Sanctuary
Scenic Trail Network (MBSST)
and Santa Cruz Branch Rail
Line**

Important features of this concept that are highlighted in Figure 3-1 include the following:

Multimodal Transit Corridors

Regional destinations shown within the Plan area are connected by three primary multimodal transit corridors: Soquel Drive, Capitola Road, and 17th Avenue. Secondary transit corridors connect to neighborhood destinations. Land use density, design, and diversity along these corridors support more frequent and convenient transit service. Bicycle storage, shared parking structures, and park-and-ride lots support transportation alternative along the corridors.

Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST) and Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

The MBSST is shown as an important recreational amenity and east-west connector. Access to the trail is enhanced from adjacent uses. Land uses adjacent to the trail complement its recreational and transportation functions. The Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line, owned by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, hosts portions of this scenic trail. The rail line is also being studied for a range of passenger rail options.

Highway 1

Highway 1 is improved to become a more functional, important east-west connector through the Plan area. Increased transportation options and new local multimodal connections within the urban area will help to alleviate traffic congestion on the highway, or at least better enable residents to avoid highway congestion.

Regional Employment Centers

Regional employment centers are focused around the Dominican and Sutter/Palo Alto Medical Foundation medical district, 41st Avenue, and Cabrillo College in the Plan Area, and Capitola Mall in Capitola. New employment uses and transit infrastructure will be concentrated in these centers as well as at new nodes such as 17th and Brommer and along Soquel Avenue south of Highway 1. New housing is located in places where residents can more easily walk, ride bicycles, or take transit to employment centers.

Neighborhood Activity Centers

Neighborhood activity centers contain commercial and public uses to serve surrounding neighborhoods. Community gathering places are well connected to neighborhoods through bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Residential and mixed-use development in appropriate locations enhances the vitality of the activity centers.



Example of a community-serving activity center within walking distance of nearby housing

INTRODUCTION TO CONCEPT FIGURES

The following concepts for the Plan area represent three different types of locations, which are presented to illustrate concepts of sustainable design appropriate for each type of location. The three settings differ in the type of surroundings into which new buildings and transportation improvements must fit and the needs they should serve. The different concepts reflect the unique character of different neighborhoods within the Plan area.

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITY CENTER CONCEPT

Figure 3-2 presents an illustration of a prototypical neighborhood activity center as envisioned by this Plan. This concept is based on the intersection of 41st Avenue and Portola Drive in Pleasure Point, but the ideas apply to other neighborhood activity centers that incorporate a variety of housing, commercial, employment, and public uses. Additional ideas about neighborhood activity centers are provided in Chapter 4. Important features of this concept include the following:

Community Character

New development depicted by Figure 3-2 maintains and enhances the unique Santa Cruz character. Building and site design is eclectic, creative, and respectful of the surrounding neighborhood. New development maintains the area's pedestrian scale and strengthens a sense of place.

Economic Vitality

The illustration shows additional retail and restaurant uses that increase pedestrian activity and enhance

economic vitality. Public gathering places create destinations that attract shoppers and encourage them to linger. Additional housing accommodates working households whose expenditures support local independent businesses. Office spaces accommodate businesses and employees that earn living wages.

Natural Resources

Natural resources are protected, and new development incorporates rooftop photovoltaic panels, green building practices, and urban agriculture. Existing structures are improved to accommodate modern uses. Redevelopment of vacant and underutilized lots in the urban area supports the wise and efficient use of land resources.

Transportation Choices

Increased residential and commercial intensity supports more frequent bus service. Bike lanes, enhanced crosswalks and other infrastructure improvements increase safety, comfort, and convenience for bicyclists and pedestrians. Mixed-use development creates more destinations that are accessible to area residents by bus, bicycles, and walking. Shared structured parking allows visitors to park once and walk to different destinations.

FIGURE 3 - 2 NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITY CENTER CONCEPT

Frequent transit service

Additional Street Trees

Stores and services close to residents

Variety of housing

Eclectic building design

Reinvest in existing structures

Urban agriculture

Public gathering places

Renewable energy

Enhanced design and safety at intersections

Pedestrian-scale building design

Shared structured parking

Pedestrian improvements

Improved bicycle facilities

Diversity: vertical and horizontal mixed-use



CORRIDOR INFILL CONCEPT

Figure 3-3 illustrates an example of a mixed-use infill project along a primary transit corridor near a regional employment center. Some important features of this concept include the following:

Housing

The increased supply and variety of housing expand housing choice. Housing types include single-family homes, townhomes, small apartments, and mixed-use buildings. New housing can be conveniently located close to stores, services, and transit. More dense housing is located along travel corridors and not within the interior portions of single family areas.

Land Use

The illustration includes a variety of housing types, including townhomes and apartments, which are located close to jobs and transit. High quality commercial spaces accommodate retail and service uses serving residents and nearby workers. A destination is created by the mix of businesses and services.

Public Spaces

Public plazas, courtyards, and outdoor dining provide outdoor gathering places for residents, workers, and the general public. Outdoor spaces can be designed for public safety and comfort.

Building Design

Buildings in the illustration feature varied architectural styles and design character. Architecture is pedestrian friendly and human-scale, with active ground floor uses. Primary building entrances are oriented to the street or

public courtyards. Public safety is enhanced with increased “eyes on the street.”

Parking

As shown here, off-street parking can be located and designed to support pedestrian activity. Parking can be provided behind buildings and buffered from adjacent residential uses. Structured parking could be economically feasible with increased residential density and commercial vitality.

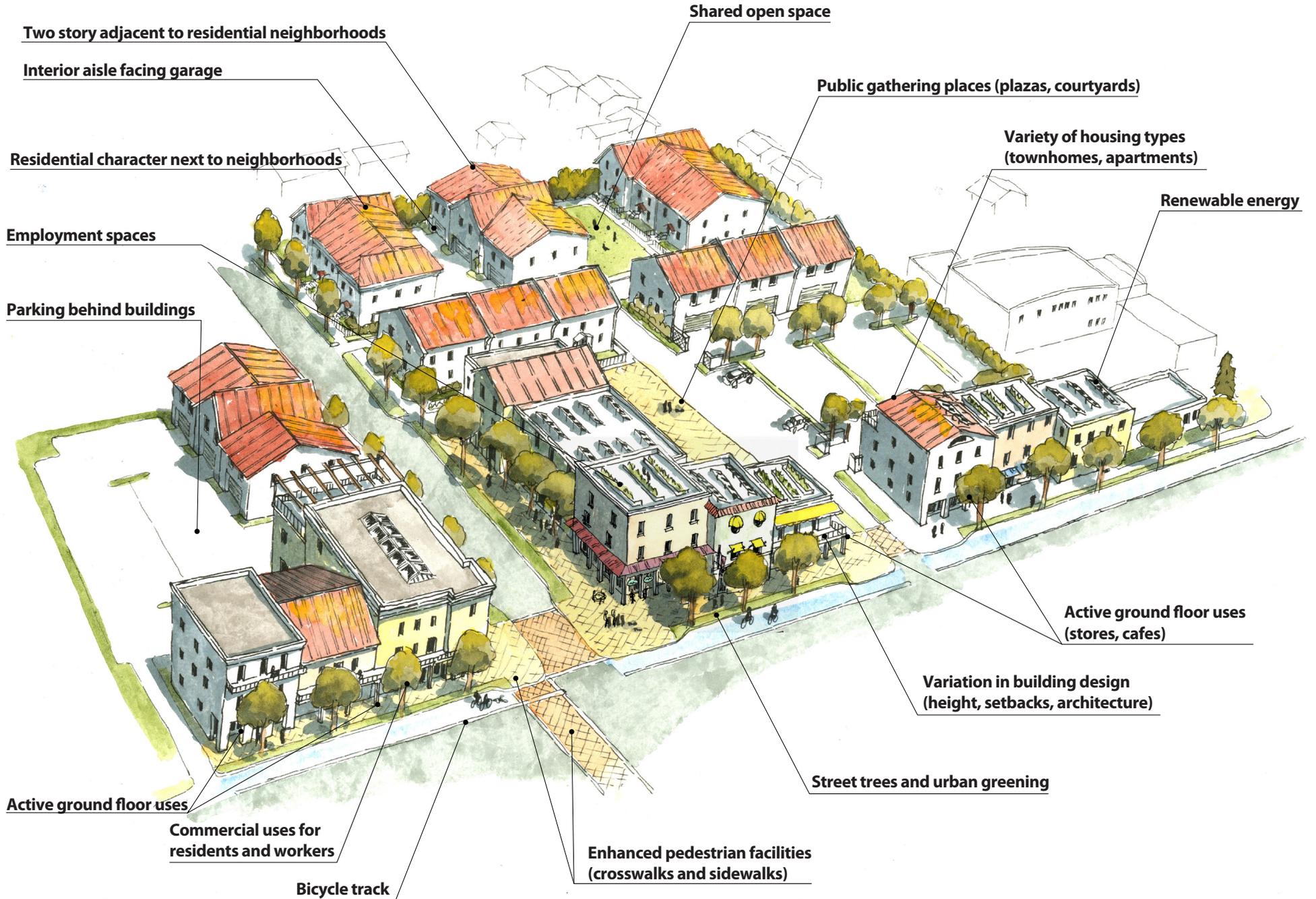
Neighborhood Context

New development should minimize impacts on adjacent residential uses. Taller and larger buildings should be located away from adjacent homes, as illustrated. Landscaped buffers are shown between parking lots and adjacent homes. Buildings that adjoin single family areas adjacent to homes are limited to two stories at the transition area and respect the surrounding residential character.

Economic Vitality

Infill development on an underutilized site along a key transportation corridor can increase the vitality of an employment center. As illustrated, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development complements medical uses and educational institutions and helps attract additional investment to an area.

FIGURE 3 - 3 CORRIDOR INFILL CONCEPT



VILLAGE CENTER INFILL CONCEPT

Figure 3-4B presents a visual simulation of one idea for a mixed-use, infill project at the corner of Center Street and Broadway in Seacliff Village. The concepts shown in this simulation are applicable to other village center locations. Important ideas in this simulation include the following:

Land Use

The illustrated mixed-use development includes ground floor retail and restaurants to serve residents and visitors. Upper floor residential uses add to the vitality of the village center and expand housing choices. A small boutique hotel at the rear of the site could provide visitor accommodations.

Site Design

The entire site has been envisioned as an integrated project consistent with the Seacliff Village Plan. Courtyards, public gathering places, and areas for outdoor dining enhance the vitality of the village and increase pedestrian activity.

Building Design

Active ground floor businesses are shown to reflect the scale and character of existing buildings on the opposite side of Center Street. Buildings are human scale and feature rhythm and variation in building forms, material, and colors.

Parking

A parking district could manage the supply and demand of parking for all of Seacliff Village. Required on-site parking could be reduced through payment of in-lieu fees and coordinated shared use of the State beach parking lot. On-site parking could be located to the rear and interior of the development site.

Streetscape Improvements

In the foreground of the simulation, pedestrian safety and convenience has been enhanced with widened sidewalks, textured street crossings, and street lighting. Undergrounded utilities and street trees further enhance the public realm.



Seacliff Village, south side of Center Street

**FIGURE 3 - 4A
(EXISTING)**

SEACLIFF VILLAGE, NORTHEAST CORNER OF CENTER STREET AND STATE PARK DRIVE VISUAL SIMULATION



FIGURE 3 - 4B SEACLIFF VILLAGE, NORTHEAST CORNER OF CENTER STREET AND STATE PARK DRIVE VISUAL SIMULATION (WITH A MIXED-USE, INFILL PROJECT)



