



**council agenda**  
CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO  
CITY HALL, 990 PALM STREET

**Tuesday, May 25, 2004**

**11:30 A.M.**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**Council Hearing Room  
990 Palm Street**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Dave Romero

**ROLL CALL:** Council Members John Ewan, Christine Mulholland,  
Allen K. Settle, Vice Mayor Ken Schwartz,  
Mayor Dave Romero

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:** You may address the Council on any item described in this agenda by completing a speaker slip and giving it to the City Clerk prior to the meeting. The Mayor will open the floor to and invite public comments before the Council takes action on each item. (Gov. Code Sec. 54954.3(a)). Your speaking time is limited to three (3) minutes. (CC&P Sec.1.3.7).

**STUDY SESSION**

**1. REVIEW OF DESIGN OPTIONS FOR THE PALM-NIPOMO PARKING STRUCTURE.**  
**(MCCLUSKEY/P. MANDEVILLE – 2 HOURS)**

**RECOMMENDATION:** 1. Review the eight design options and direct staff to proceed with Site Plan Options "D" and "H" as the preferred design options for further study. 2. Provide staff with further direction regarding potential uses on the site, in addition to the parking.



City Council regular meetings are televised live on Charter Channel 20. The City of San Luis Obispo is committed to include the disabled in all of its services, programs, and activities. Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (805) 781-7410. Please speak to the City Clerk prior to the meeting if you require a hearing amplification device. For more agenda information, call 781-7103.



# Council agenda report

Meeting Date	May 25, 2004
Item Number	SS 1

CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

**FROM:** Mike McCluskey, Director of Public Works *MM*  
**Prepared By:** Peggy Mandeville, Principal Transportation Planner *PM*  
Robert Horch, Parking Services Manager  
**SUBJECT:** REVIEW OF DESIGN OPTIONS FOR THE PALM-NIPOMO PARKING  
STRUCTURE

## CAO RECOMMENDATION:

1. Review the eight design options and direct staff to proceed with Site Plan Options "D" and "H" as the preferred design options for further study.
2. Provide staff with further direction regarding potential uses on the site, in addition to the parking.

## DISCUSSION

### Background

The Palm-Nipomo parking garage project was established by the City Council as a major City goal with the adoption of the 2003-2005 Financial Plan (see Attachment 1). The Financial Plan calls for the development of a conceptual design for a parking structure near the corner of Palm and Nipomo Streets as the first step in the process of evaluating the site for its potential use as a multi-level parking structure. The proposed parking garage site (see Attachment 2) is currently occupied by City-owned surface parking lots and five residential units (all City owned with the exception of a single family residence at 614 Monterey Street).

Chong Partners Architecture (formally Gordon H. Chong and Partners) has been hired by the City to prepare a variety of conceptual design options. The firm recently performed similar services for the City as part of the North Area Regional Facility (NARF) project. The consultant was asked to evaluate three different types of parking structures: a standard parking structure design, a mechanical parking design, and a hybrid design. Each design option was to take into consideration City regulations and the City's agreement with the San Luis Obispo Little Theater to develop a community theater on a portion of Parking Lot #14 at 630 Monterey. The plans were also to assume full ownership of the entire site.

The approved work program calls for the following tasks to be completed:

1. Conduct project research.
2. Prepare concept plans and massing elevations of design options.

3. **Present to City Council for approval of "Preferred" Plan for further study** (*subject of this staff report*).

### **The Parking Numbers**

Staff gave the consultant a goal of creating 400 parking spaces on the site, while providing for the uses intended by the Physical Concept Plan for the Downtown and being mindful of the City's height regulations. The design options developed range from 300-500 parking spaces. Because of numerous combinations and permutations possible in calculating the number of spaces desired (ranging from a low of 328 to a high of 873), staff used a "best call" of 400 to produce a structure of reasonable capacity while also getting a good idea of what the site might be able to physically provide. Councilman Schwartz suggested that this project be expanded to include the sale and development of three nearby City surface lots. Those lots currently provide 66 spaces and these spaces, along with any added demand created by the development of these lots, were not calculated into the broad range stated above.

### **Site Plan Options**

After gathering information about the site and the project components, the consultant developed eight site plan options (see Attachment 3, Options A-H) recommending that the City proceed with site plan Option D and H as the preferred plans. **Option D** was recommended as the self park design because it provides the most efficient self parking scheme in terms of space and maintains a cultural facility frontage on Monterey Street. **Option H** was recommended as the mechanical parking scheme because it places the parking structure behind other uses fronting Palm and Monterey Streets and locates parking structure driveways away from adjacent intersections. The consultant also evaluated the potential for developing a hybrid parking structure design (mechanical and self park), however, it was determined that given the size of the site, providing both self park and mechanical parking proved to be an inefficient use of space.

The consultant will provide the Council with a more detailed description of the pros and cons of each option at the study session.

### **Potential Uses/Design Features**

As stated above, the consultant's first effort was to develop conceptual design options for Council review. These options locate a parking structure, approximately 15,000 square feet of potential theater space, and "other uses" on the site. The design options also preserve a large oak tree that is located in the front yard of 614 Monterey Street incorporating the tree into an open space plaza feature. To assist the consultant in further refining the Council preferred site plan(s), staff recommends that the Council provide direction regarding which of the following project features Council expects to be included in the refinements to the preferred site plan option(s):

1. **Potential theater use.** In June 2000, the City entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the San Luis Obispo Little Theater (SLOLT) regarding provisions of a proposed lease of the existing City parking lot (Parking Lot #14) at 630 Monterey Street for the purpose of

constructing a community theater on the site. The Agreement was approved with an allowance for a change to a second alternative using the City-owned property at 610 Monterey Street plus property at 614 Monterey Street, if the 614 Monterey Street property becomes available to the City before SLOLT is ready to finalize its construction drawings. Unfortunately, over the last 15 years, during which time the City has had various agreements with SLOLT, almost no progress has been made in the development of a community theater. While Council may wish to assume that SLOLT or other cultural facility will be accommodated at this location, it is important to recognize that funding for the development of a theater may be decades away. Thus, our design will be assuming a site feature (and an area "constraint") that may not come to pass for a very long time, if at all.

2. **Residential use** (including number of dwelling units). Three single-family residences and one duplex are located on the subject site. The General Plan encourages the preservation of existing housing and calls for no net loss of housing in the Downtown. The General Plan allows for housing to be relocated or replaced under certain conditions. Staff would like Council direction regarding whether or not residential uses should be incorporated into refinements to the site plan(s)
3. **Potential for expanded parking**, Conceptual Site Plan Options A-H provide between 300-500 parking spaces. All options could provide additional parking if the parking structure had additional levels or more of the site was devoted to parking. The latter would result in a reduction in size and/or elimination of the potential theater and "other use" space. Direction regarding the ultimate number of parking spaces Council envisions at this location would help direct refinements to the site plan(s).
4. **Preservation of large trees**. There are many trees located within the project boundaries. Preservation of all of them in conjunction with the development of a parking structure would be difficult if not impossible. In this conceptual plan phase, staff directed the consultant to make an effort to preserve a large oak tree in the front yard of 614 Monterey Street. Direction regarding the prioritization of tree preservation would help guide refinements to the site plan(s).

### Consistency with City Plans

The General Plan land use designation for the site is Office and Medium-High Density Residential (recently acquired 633 Palm Street property). The property's zoning designation is Office and R-3 (633 Palm Street property). The Office zone allows the development of multi-level parking structures with Planning Commission approval.

The Land Use Element, Circulation Element, Housing Element and Conceptual Physical Plan for the City's Center contain many policies about land use, parking, housing supply and preservation and cultural facilities that pertain to this property (see Attachment 4). A policy from each document is highlighted below. All of the policies must be applied and interpreted collectively in order to give full consideration to all the applicable public desires. Considering all of the policies collectively

may result in some individual policies not being fully realized in order to achieve other policy objectives in the final decision. This does not constitute an inconsistency; it is a product of the Council's weighing of competing priorities.

**Land Use Element Policy LU 4.10: Downtown Parking.** There should be a diversity of parking opportunities. Any major increments in parking supply should take the form of structures, located at the edges of the commercial core, so people will walk rather than drive between points within the core. Retail uses outside the core (see Attachment 5) and professional office developments, may have on-site parking for customers and clients. *All options presented allow close and easy pedestrian access to the core downtown facilities.*

**Circulation Element Policy CI 12.7: Additional Parking Structures.** Additional parking structures should only be built after a comprehensive parking study (that includes the evaluation of alternative transportation possibilities) is completed and the results considered. *The study has been completed and the Council chose to judge the need and locations for future parking rather than relying on numerical "triggers". In July 2001, the Council designated this location for a future parking structure. Additionally, the Conceptual Physical Plan for the City's Center identifies this location for a parking structure.*

**Housing Element Policy 3.3.5: Downtown Dwellings.** Preserve the number of dwellings in the Downtown Core (C-D Zone) and the Downtown Planning Area by adopting a "no net housing loss" program by amending the Downtown Housing Conversion Permit ordinance. The amendment shall ensure that within each area, the number of dwellings removed shall not exceed the number of dwellings added. *With the redevelopment of this property, the City has the option of relocating the housing on site or making up the housing loss with a new downtown housing project such as the Chinatown project.*

**The Conceptual Physical Plan for the City's Center** calls for this area to be developed with cultural facility uses fronting Monterey Street, retail uses fronting Nipomo Street, and a parking structure use fronting Palm Street (see Attachment 6, Partial Graphic from Conceptual Physical Plan). The Plan recommends that vehicle congestion in the downtown be minimized by locating parking facilities at the core's periphery along key streets that enter the City. *Since the Conceptual Physical Plan is meant to be conceptual in nature, staff believes all of the options generally meet the intent of the Conceptual Physical Plan for the City's Center.*

### **Next Steps**

With Council direction to proceed with one or two preferred site plan options, the property owner at 614 Monterey Street will be contacted and the consultant will be asked to further refine the preferred design(s). This work will include identifying the possible costs and environmental constraints of developing a parking structure at this location. The project design will then be refined if necessary to address environmental or cost constraints and the project will go through the environmental review and public hearing process with review by the Tree Committee, Cultural Heritage Committee, Architectural Review Commission, Planning Commission, and City Council (final approval).

**FISCAL IMPACTS**

Directing staff to proceed with further study of a site plan option does not have a direct fiscal impact because the City Council has already budgeted \$ 150,000.00 for study and design services. Approximately \$ 141,000 remains available for completion of conceptual design services.

No funds have been allocated for construction of the Palm Nipomo parking garage.

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. Direct staff to proceed with Site Plan Options "D" and "H" with modifications to these site plans as directed by the City Council.
2. Direct staff to proceed with one of the other site plans developed by the consultant.
3. Direct staff to discontinue work on the project (which is currently a Council goal), identify the reactivation of the project as a potential Council goal for the next two-year goal setting process.
4. Other alternatives as directed by the City Council.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. City's 2003-05 Financial Plan, Appendix B, page 206-07
2. Property Location/Ownership Map
3. Site Plan Options A-H
4. Land Use and Housing Element policies
5. Downtown Planning Area Map
6. Partial Graphic from Conceptual Physical Plan for the City's Center

**PROVIDED TO COUNCIL & AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW IN THE COUNCIL OFFICE**

11x17 copy of Site Plan Options A-H

## TRANSPORTATION

### PALM-NIPOMO PARKING GARAGE

---

#### Project Summary

Developing the Palm-Nipomo Parking Garage will cost \$150,000 for conceptual design 2003-04 and \$300,000 for environmental review in 2004-05.

#### Project Objectives

1. Satisfy the demand for more parking downtown.
2. Examine the potential for the reuse of surface parking lots for housing and/or commercial needs.

#### Existing Situation

The proposed parking garage site at Palm and Nipomo, as envisioned by the Conceptual Physical Plan for the City's Center, is currently occupied by City-owned surface parking lots, a single family residence fronting on Monterey Street, and an apartment building fronting on Palm Street. Because the General Plan contains policies for preserving housing in the downtown, strictly following the Conceptual Plan would cause conflicts with the General Plan unless housing options were a part of the proposal. Thus, design options need to be studied that could lessen or eliminate the need for acquisition of one or either of these properties or incorporate housing at this location or another.

Once preliminary design studies have been completed and the Council has chosen a preferred option, a follow-up environmental assessment will be needed in order to determine environmental consequences. From there, the Council will be able to decide whether or not to proceed with property acquisition and design.

The Draft Pedestrian and Downtown Access Plan identified this site as third priority for additional parking garages following the higher needs a) near the intersection of Palm and Morro and b) east of Santa Rosa Street. The Copeland Palm-Morro Garage is on tract to fulfill the needs of the first and the NARF project will satisfy the needs for the second. Given the long time frames it takes to get all approvals and build a parking garage in our City, this is the appropriate time to begin the early conceptual design phase/environmental review aspects of the project to meet the estimated 2012 timed need anticipated by the PDAP study.

Land acquisition would occur only after a project conceptual design has been adopted and its EIR considered and adopted.

#### Goal and Policy Links

1. Downtown Concept Plan (1994)
2. Adopted Access and Parking Management (2002)
3. Major City Goal, 2003-05 Financial Plan

#### Project Work Completed

None.

#### Environmental Review

Given the project location in the downtown and past history with other highly visible projects, an EIR will be needed for this project.

**TRANSPORTATION****PALM-NIPOMO PARKING GARAGE****Project Phasing and Funding Sources***Project Costs by Type*

	<i>Project Costs</i>					Total
	To-Date	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
Study		150,000				150,000
Environmental review			300,000			300,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>150,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>			<b>450,000</b>

*Project Funding Source: Parking Fund***Department Coordinator and Project Support***Department Coordinator:* Parking Manager*Project Support:*

Project management – Transportation Planning and Engineering Program

Project coordination – Parking Program, Public Works Administration Program

Environmental Review -- Ron Whisenand, Deputy Director of Community Development

**Alternatives**

*Defer or Deny the Project.* This project has been identified as a new Council goal to study the options to construct a parking facility at this location. The timing could be deferred to future years depending on other projects and funding available for this project

**Project Effect on the Operating Budget***Staff Resources:*

CIP Project Engineering Program: 40 hours total

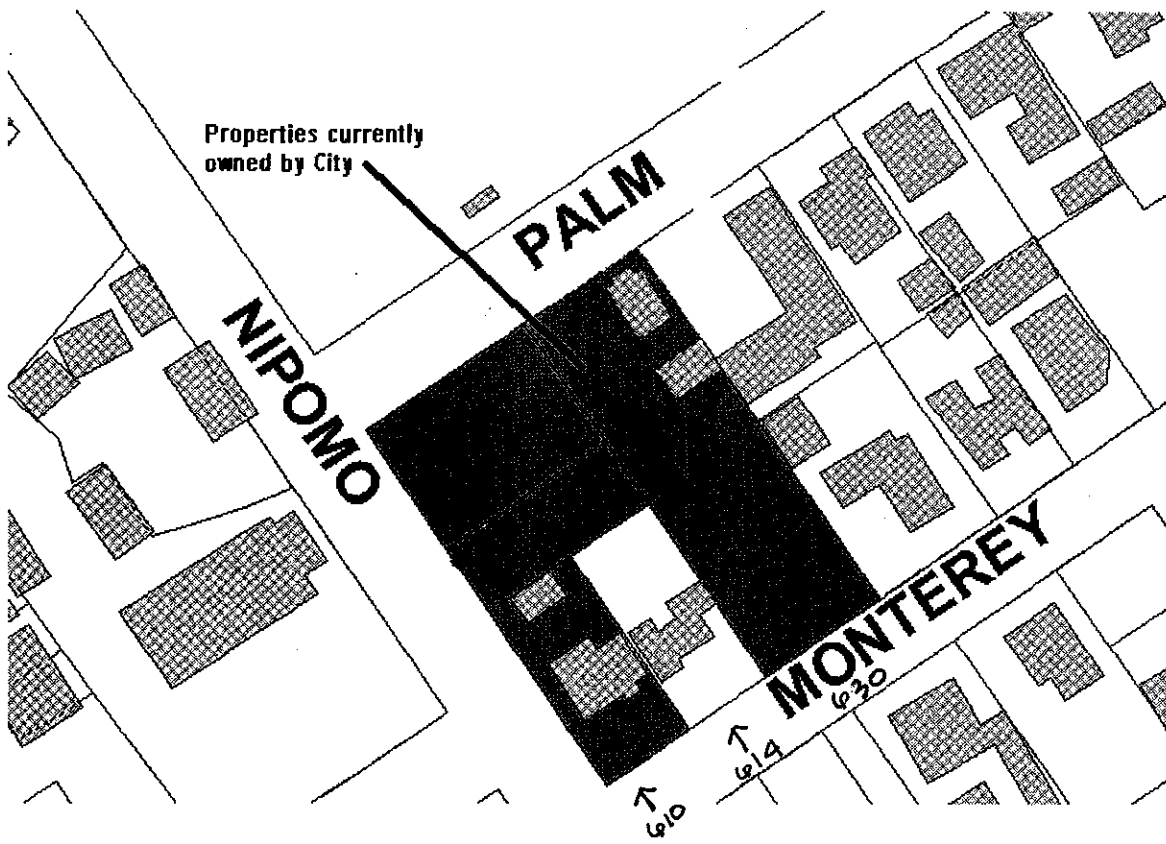
Parking Program: 200 hours per year (Parking Manager)

Public Works Administration: 100 hours per year (Deputy Public Works Director)

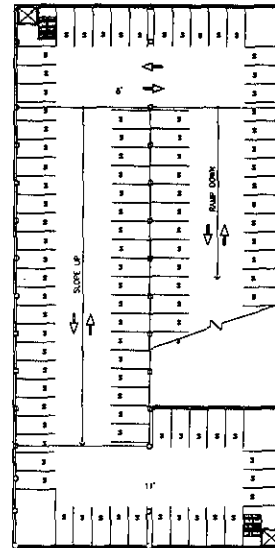
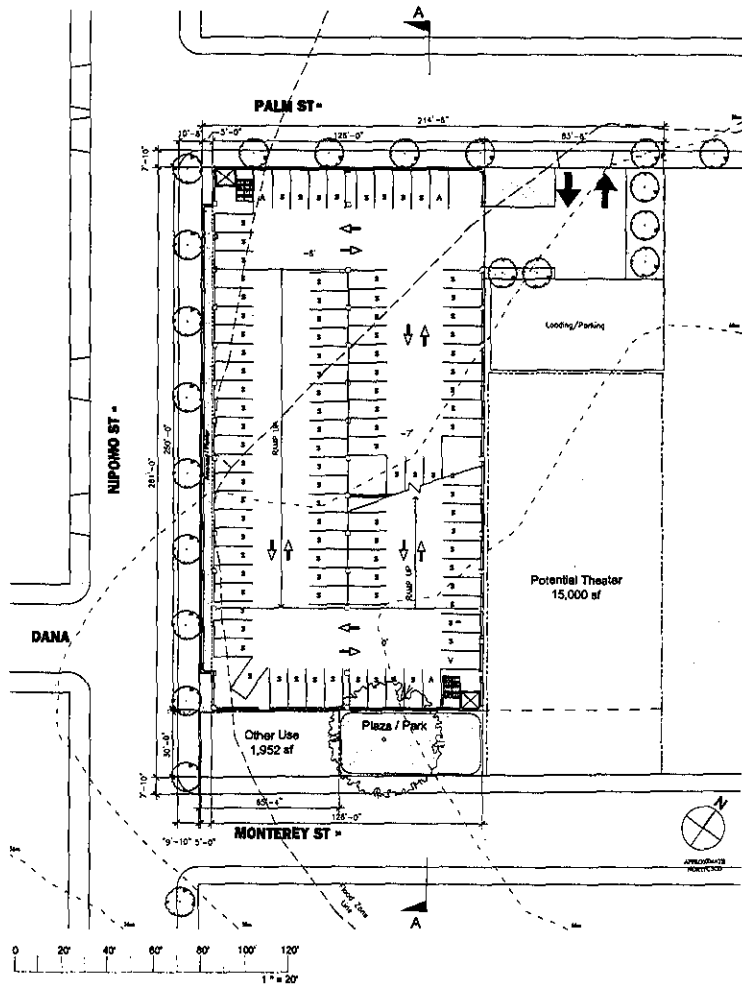
Development Review Program: 100 hours total

This project will have significant, but unestimated, future costs for operations and maintenance.

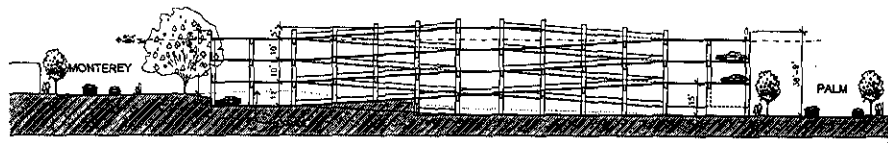
PROPERTY LOCATION/OWNERSHIP MAP







TYPICAL LEVEL



SECTION A-A

**STATISTICS**

Ground:	85
Typical:	104
Roof:	97
Lot:	20

**Parking Count Estimates**

3 Levels:	287
4 Levels:	404

**Building Height Estimates**

	South	North
3 Levels:	19.2'	28.7'
4 Levels:	29.2'	38.7'

**EFFICIENCY**

3 Levels:	91,810 / 299 = 307 sf/car
4 Levels:	123,310 / 403 = 306 sf/car

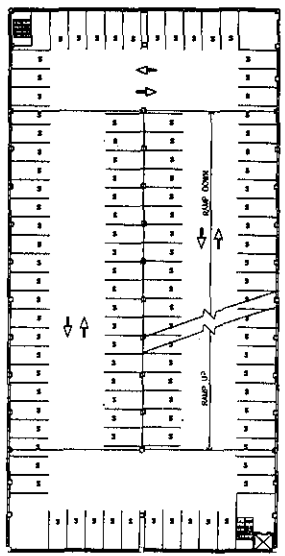
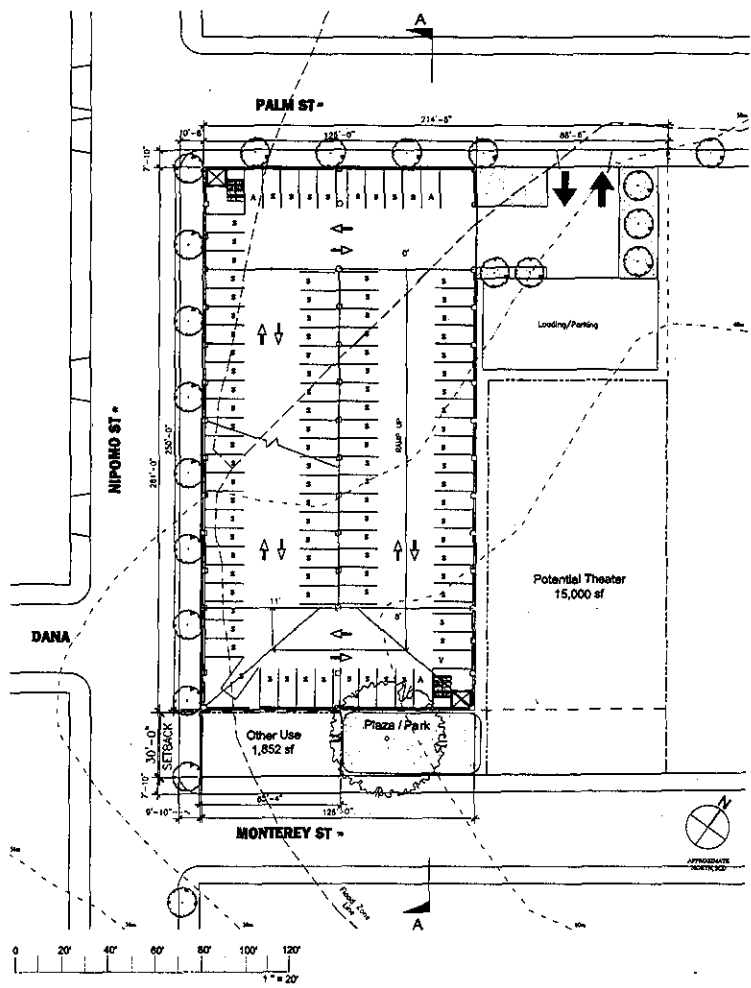
**Scheme B**

10 May 2004

Palm / Nipomo Parking Structure  
City of San Luis Obispo

CHONG | PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE

1-110



**STATISTICS**

Ground:	85
Typical:	104
Roof:	97
Lot:	20

**Parking Count Estimates**

3 Levels:	287
4 Levels:	400

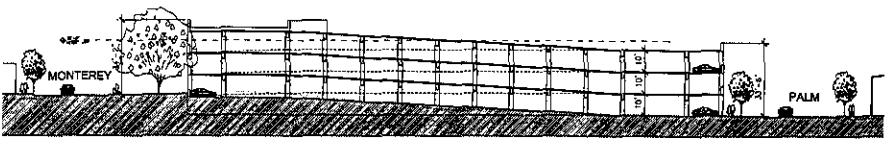
**Building Height Estimates**

	South	North
3 Levels:	24.2'	23.5'
4 Levels:	34.2'	33.5'

**EFFICIENCY**

3 Levels:	$91,810 / 300 = 306 \text{ sf/car}$
4 Levels:	$123,310 / 400 = 308 \text{ sf/car}$

TYPICAL LEVEL



SECTION A-A

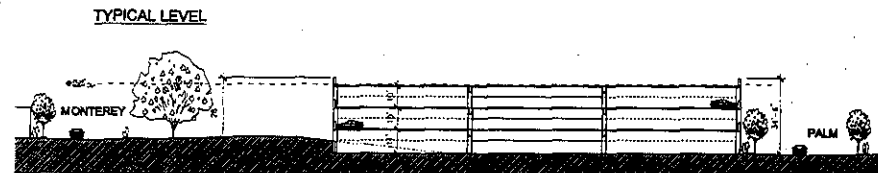
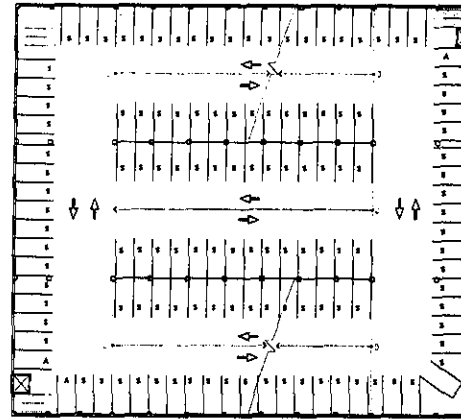
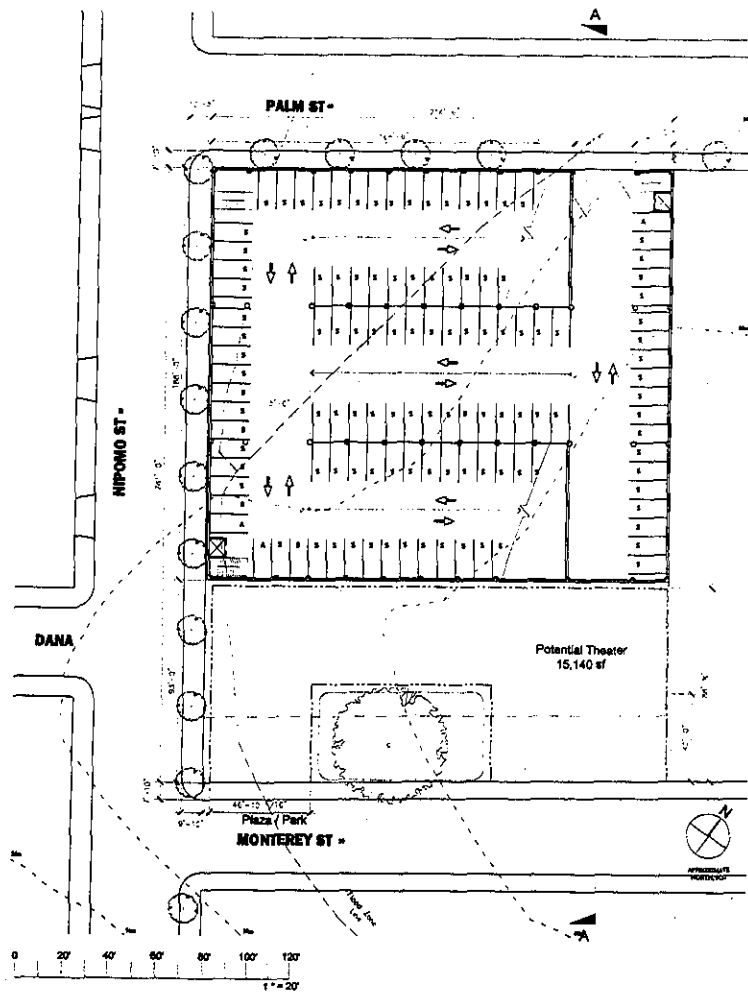
**Scheme C**

10 May 2004

Palm / Nipomo Parking Structure  
City of San Luis Obispo

CHONG | PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE

1-11



**STATISTICS**

Ground: 123  
 Typical: 129

**Parking Count Estimates**

3 Levels: 381  
 4 Levels: 510

**Building Height Estimates**

	South	North
3 Levels:	24.2'	23.5'
4 Levels:	34.2'	33.5'

**EFFICIENCY**

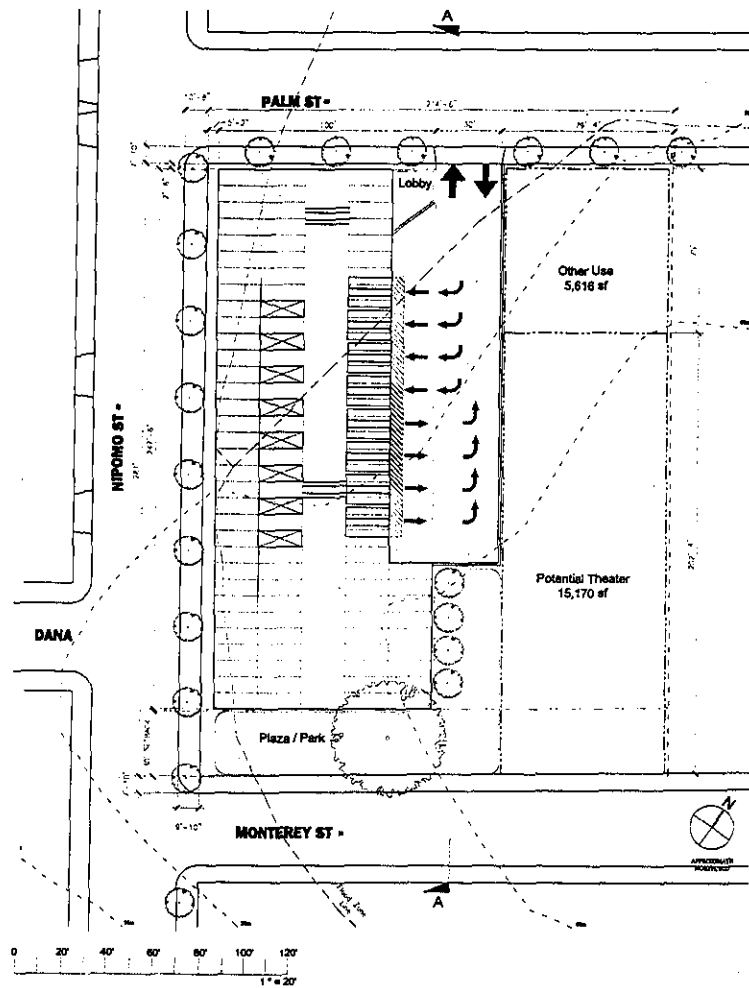
3 Levels:	120,978 / 381 = 317 sf/car
4 Levels:	161,304 / 510 = 316 sf/car

**Scheme D**

10 May 2004

Palm / Nipomo Parking Structure  
 City of San Luis Obispo

CHONG | PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE



**STATISTICS**

Ground: 72  
 Typical: 108

**Parking Count Estimates**

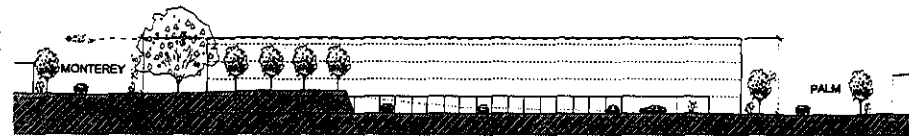
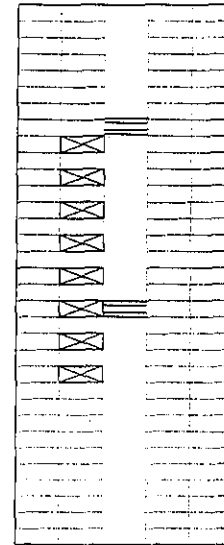
3 Levels: 304  
 4 Levels: 412  
 5 Levels: 520 (Not Shown)

**Building Height Estimates**

	South	North
3 Levels:	17.6'	27'
4 Levels:	25.6'	35'

**EFFICIENCY**

3 Levels:	68,380 / 288 = 237 sf/car
4 Levels:	93,110 / 396 = 235 sf/car

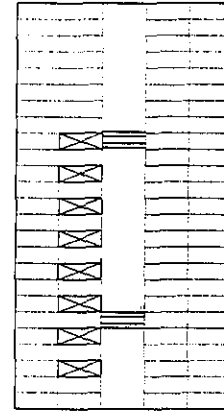
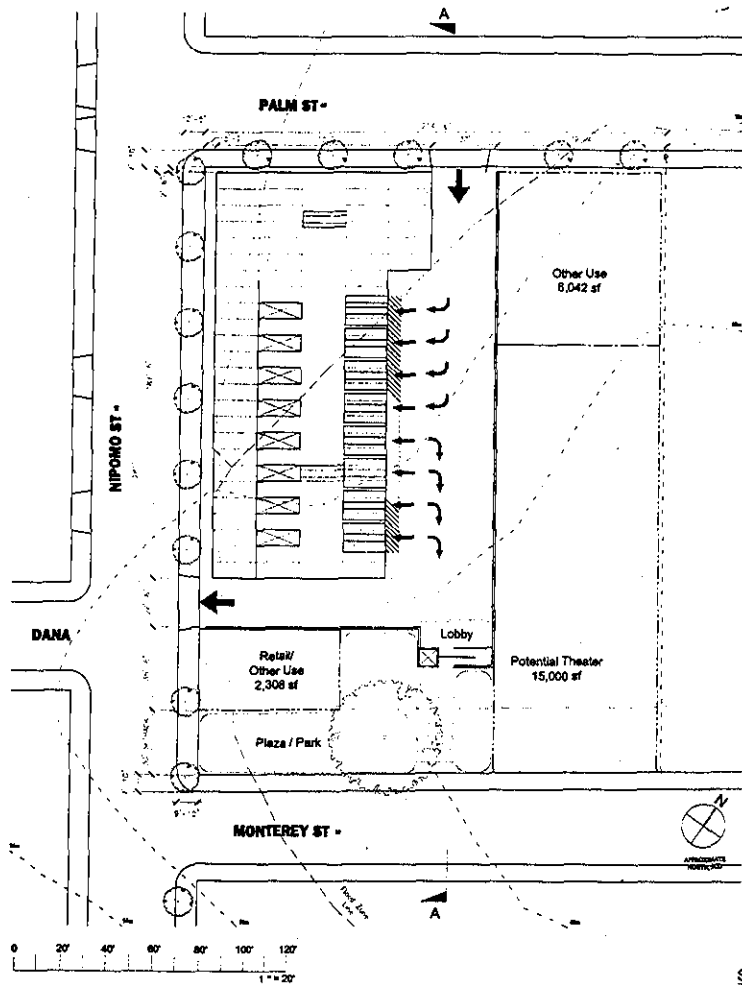


**Scheme E**

10 May 2004

Palm / Nipomo Parking Structure  
 City of San Luis Obispo

CHONG | PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE



**STATISTICS**

Ground: 58  
 Typical: 92

**Parking Count Estimates**

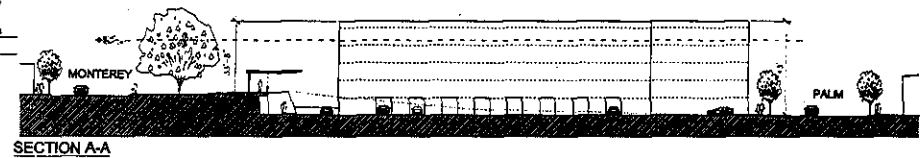
4 Levels: 332  
 5 Levels: 424

**Building Height Estimates**

	South	North
4 Levels:	25.6'	35'
5 Levels:	33.6'	43'

**EFFICIENCY**

4 Levels:	$72,120 / 332 = 217$ sf/car
5 Levels:	$90,860 / 424 = 214$ sf/car



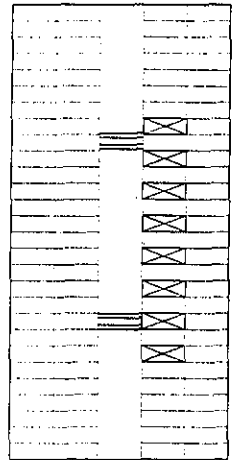
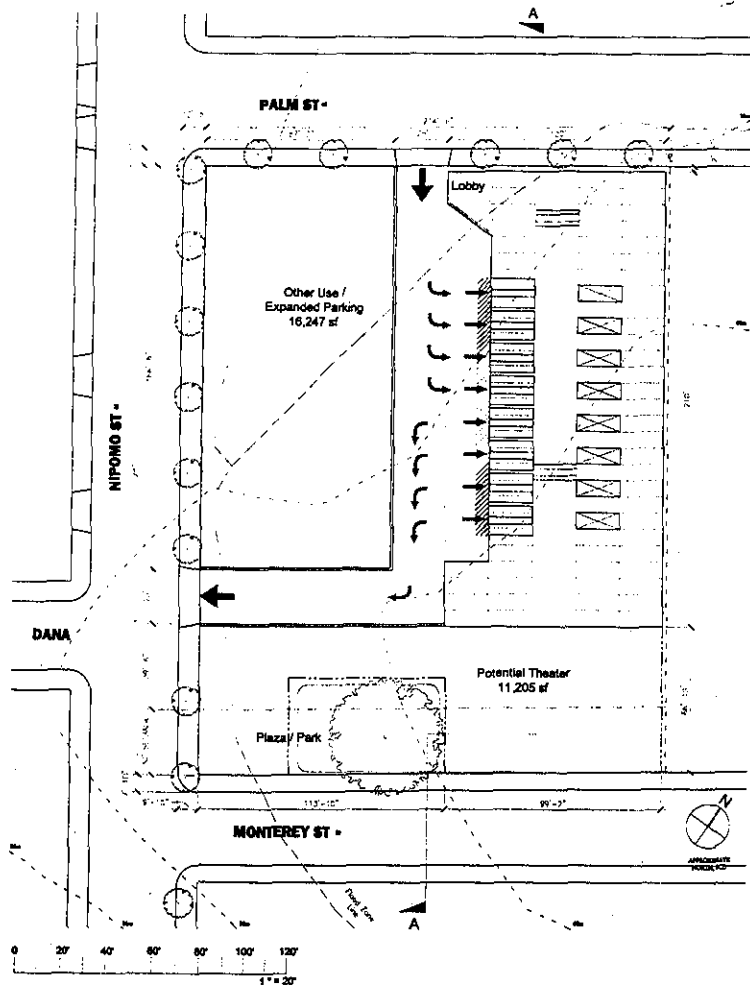
**Scheme F**

10 May 2004

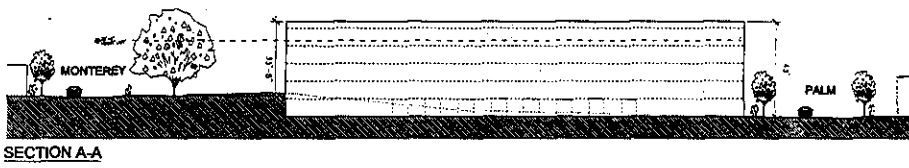
Palm / Nipomo Parking Structure  
 City of San Luis Obispo

CHONG | PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE

pt-1



TYPICAL LEVEL



**STATISTICS**  
 Ground: 68  
 Typical: 104

**Parking Count Estimates**  
 4 Levels: 375  
 5 Levels: 479

**Building Height Estimates**

	South	North
4 Levels:	25.6'	35'
5 Levels:	33.6'	43'

**EFFICIENCY**

4 Levels:	$81,130 / 380 = 214 \text{ sf/car}$
5 Levels:	$102,124 / 484 = 211 \text{ sf/car}$

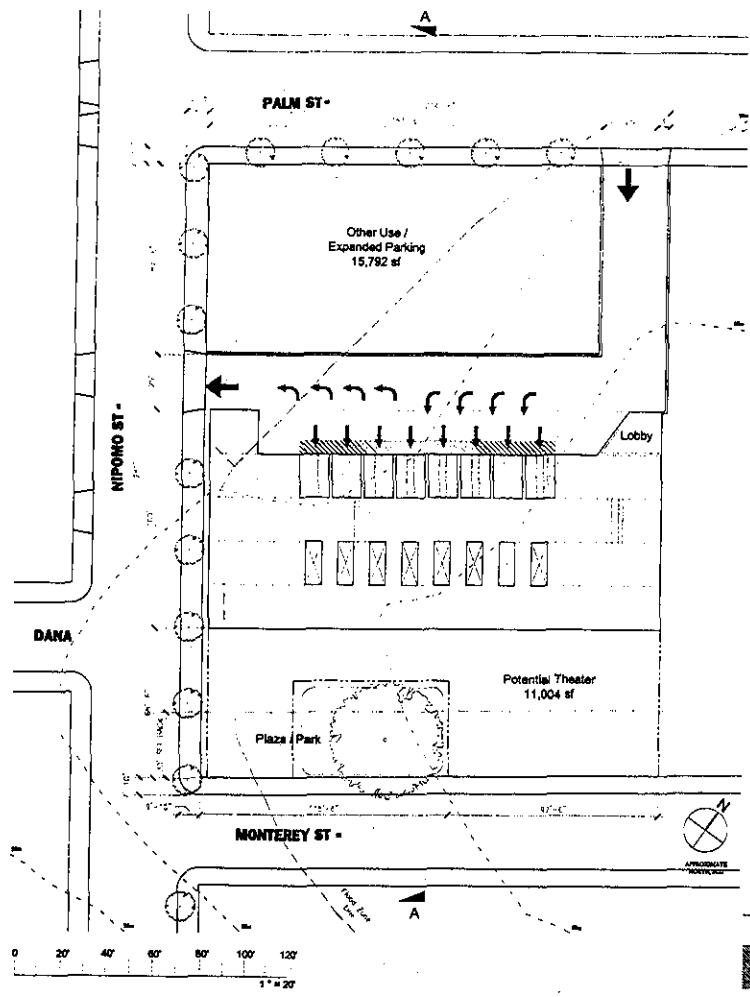
# Scheme G

10 May 2004

Palm / Nipomo Parking Structure  
 City of San Luis Obispo

CHONG | PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE

1-15



**STATISTICS**  
 Ground: 68  
 Typical: 104

**Parking Count Estimates**  
 4 Levels: 374  
 5 Levels: 478

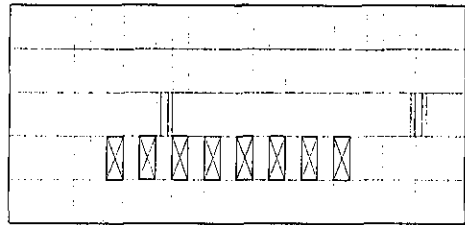
**Building Height Estimates**

	South	North
4 Levels:	25'	35'
5 Levels:	33'	43'

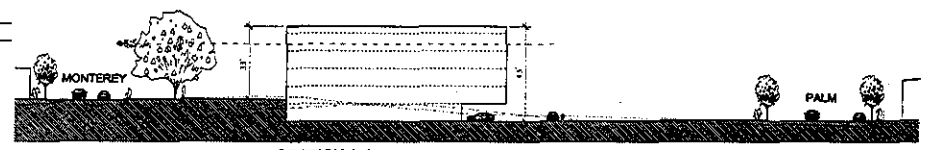
**EFFICIENCY**

**PHASE 1**

4 Levels:	81,150 / 380 = 214 sf/car
5 Levels:	102,150 / 484 = 211 sf/car



TYPICAL LEVEL



SECTION A-A

# Scheme H

10 May 2004

Palm / Nipomo Parking Structure  
 City of San Luis Obispo

CHONG | PARTNERS ARCHITECTURE

1-16

## LAND USE ELEMENT

### **Approach to Planning *San Luis Obispo should:***

1) Choose its future, rather than let it happen. San Luis Obispo should be proactive in implementing its vision of the future, and should work with other agencies and institutions to create our desired mutual future.

### **Society & Economy**

San Luis Obispo should be a well balanced community. Environmental, social, and economic factors must be taken into account in important decisions about San Luis Obispo's future. A healthy economy depends on a healthy environment. The social fabric of the community for both residents and visitors must also be a part of that balance. Therefore, complementary to the goals and objectives of this element, the City shall maintain and bi-annually review goals and objectives that promote the economic well being of the community.

### ***San Luis Obispo should:***

- 10) Provide goods and services which substantial numbers of area residents leave the area regularly to obtain, provided doing so is consistent with other goals.
- 11) Retain existing businesses and agencies, and accommodate expansion of existing businesses, consistent with other goals.
- 12) Emphasize more productive use of existing commercial buildings and land areas already committed to urban development.
- 13) Provide an adequate revenue base for local government and public schools.
- 14) Provide high quality public services, ensuring that demands do not exceed resources and that adequate facilities and services can be provided in pace with development.
- 24) Serve as the county's hub for: county and state government; education; transportation; visitor information; entertainment; cultural, professional, medical, and social services; community organizations; retail trade.
- 28) Maintain the town's character as a small, safe, comfortable place to live, and maintain its rural setting, with extensive open land separating it from other urban development.
- 33) Develop buildings and facilities which will contribute to our sense of place and architectural heritage.
- 35) Focus its government and cultural facilities and provide a variety of business services and housing in the downtown.
- 36) Provide a safe and pleasant place to walk and ride a bicycle, for recreation and other daily activities.

### **LU 1.14: Costs of Growth**

The costs of public facilities and services needed for new development shall be borne by the new development, unless the community chooses to help pay the costs for a certain development to obtain community-wide benefits. The City will adopt a development fee program and other appropriate financing measures, so that new development pays its share of the costs of new services and facilities needed to serve it.

### **LU 2.1.4: Neighborhood Connections**

All areas should have a street and sidewalk pattern that promotes neighborhood and community cohesiveness. There should be continuous sidewalks or paths of adequate width, connecting neighborhoods with each other and with public and commercial

services to provide continuous pedestrian paths throughout the City.

#### **LU 2.2.7: Housing and Businesses**

Where housing can be compatible with offices or other businesses, mixed-use projects should be encouraged.

#### **LU 2.2.9: Parking**

Large parking lots should be avoided. Parking lots should be screened from street views. In general, parking should not be provided between buildings and the street.

#### **LU 2.2.12: Residential Project Objectives**

Residential projects should provide:

- A) Privacy, for occupants and neighbors of the project;
- B) Adequate usable outdoor area, sheltered from noise and prevailing winds, and oriented to receive light and sunshine;
- C) Use of natural ventilation, sunlight, and shade to make indoor and outdoor spaces comfortable with minimum mechanical support;
- D) Pleasant views from and toward the project;
- E) Security and safety;
- F) Separate paths for vehicles and for people, and bike paths along collector streets;
- G) Adequate parking and storage space;
- H) Noise and visual separation from adjacent roads and commercial uses. (Barrier walls, isolating a project, are not desirable. Noise mitigation walls may be used only when there is no practicable alternative. Where walls are used, they should help create an attractive pedestrian, residential setting through features such as setbacks, changes in alignment, detail and texture, places for people to walk through them at regular intervals, and planting.)
- I) Design elements that facilitate neighborhood interaction, such as front porches, front yards along streets, and entryways facing public walkways.
- J) Buffers from hazardous materials transport routes, as recommended by the City Fire Department.

#### **LU 2.9: Old Town**

In *downtown* residential areas (Figure 4), the City should encourage the rehabilitation and maintenance of existing housing. Additional dwellings may be permitted, in keeping with density limits, provided that the existing character of the area is not significantly changed. Demolition of structurally sound dwellings shall be strongly discouraged.

#### **LU 2.12: Downtown Residential Development**

The City will consider adopting special development standards to guide addition of dwellings within downtown residential areas, to implement LU Policy 2.9. The following should be included when evaluating new standards for this area:

- A) A new density category between the current Low-Density (R-1) and Medium-Density (R-2) designations;
- B) Requirements that new dwellings on lots with existing houses be

above or behind the existing houses, and that the added building area be modestly sized and of similar architecture in comparison with the principal residences on the site and in the surrounding area;

C) Requiring new buildings to reflect the mass and spacing of existing, nearby buildings;

D) Requiring special parking and coverage standards;

E) Requiring minimum amounts of usable open space.

#### **LU 3.1.6: Building Intensity**

The ratio of building floor area to site area shall not exceed 3.0, except that downtown sites which receive transfers of development credits for open space protection shall not exceed 4.0. The Zoning Regulations will establish maximum building height and lot coverage, and minimum setbacks from streets and other property lines, as well as procedures for exceptions to such standards in special circumstances. Architectural review will determine a project's realized building intensity, to reflect existing or desired architectural character in a neighborhood. When dwellings are provided in General Retail districts, they shall not exceed 36 units per acre. So long as the floor area ratio is not exceeded, the maximum residential density may be developed in addition to nonresidential development on a site.

#### **LU 3.7: Mixed Uses**

Compatible mixed uses in commercial districts should be encouraged.

#### **LU 4.1: Downtown's Role**

Downtown is the cultural, social and political center of the City for its residents, as well as home for those who live in its historic neighborhoods. The City wants its commercial core to be economically healthy, and realizes that private and public investments in the downtown support each other. Downtown should provide a wide variety of professional and government services, serving the region as well as the city. The commercial core is a preferred location for retail uses that are suitable for pedestrian access, off-site parking, and compact building spaces. Civic, cultural and commercial portions of downtown should be a major tourist destination. Downtown's visitor appeal should be based on natural, historical, and cultural features, retail services, and numerous and varied visitor accommodations.

#### **LU 4.2: Downtown Residential**

##### **LU 4.2.1: Existing and New Dwellings**

Downtown residential uses contribute to the character of the area, allow a 24-hour presence which enhances security, and help the balance between jobs and housing in the community. Existing residential uses within and around the commercial core should be protected, and new ones should be developed. Dwellings should be provided for a variety of households, including singles, couples, and groups. Dwellings should be interspersed with commercial uses. All new, large commercial projects should include dwellings. Commercial core properties may serve as receiver sites for transfer of development credits, thereby having higher residential densities than otherwise allowed.

#### **LU 4.3: Entertainment and Cultural Facilities**

Cultural facilities, such as museums, galleries, and public theaters should be downtown. Entertainment facilities, such as nightclubs and private theaters should be in the

downtown, too. Locations outside downtown may be more appropriate for facilities that would be out of character or too big for downtown to accommodate comfortably, such as the major performing arts center planned for the Cal Poly campus.

#### **LU 4.4: Public Gatherings**

Downtown should have spaces to accommodate public meetings, seminars, classes, and similar activities in conjunction with other uses. Downtown should provide a setting which is festive, and comfortable for public gatherings.

#### **LU 4.5: Walking Environment**

Downtown should provide safe, exciting places for walking and pleasant places for sitting. To invite exploration, mid-block walkways, courtyards, and interior malls should be integrated with new and remodeled buildings, while preserving continuous building faces on most blocks. Downtown streets should provide adequate space for pedestrians. There should be a nearly continuous tree canopy along sidewalks, and planters should provide additional foliage and flowers near public gathering areas.

#### **LU 4.12: Building Conservation and Compatibility**

Architecturally and historically significant buildings should be preserved and restored. New buildings should be compatible with architecturally and historically significant buildings, but not necessarily the same style.

#### **LU 4.13: New Buildings and Views**

New downtown development should respect views of the hills, framing rather than obscuring them.

#### **LU 4.15: Sense of Place**

To keep the commercial core's sense of place and appeal for walking, it should remain compact and be the City's most intensely developed area.

#### **LU 4.16: Design Principles**

The following principles should guide construction and changes of use within the commercial core:

##### **LU 4.16.1: Street Level Activities**

The street level should be occupied by stores, restaurants, and other uses benefiting from and contributing to pedestrian traffic, such as offices with frequent client visits. Stores and restaurants may occupy upper levels. Offices not having frequent client visits should be located above street level.

##### **LU 4.16.2: Upper Floor Dwellings**

Existing residential uses shall be preserved and new ones encouraged above the street level.

##### **LU 4.16.3: Continuous Storefront**

There should be a continuous storefront along sidewalks, at the back of the sidewalk, except for the Courthouse and City Hall blocks, plazas, recessed building entries, and sidewalk cafes.

**LU 4.16.4: Building Height**

New buildings should fit within the existing vertical scale. They should respect streetlevel views of the hills, allow sunlight to reach public open spaces, and defer to a few tall, "landmark" buildings. Generally, new buildings should not exceed two or three stories (about 35 to 50 feet). Where necessary to protect significant views, sunlight, and street character, new buildings should be limited to two stories, or about 25 to 35 feet tall. A few taller, landmark buildings (about five stories or 75 feet) may be developed where they will not obstruct views or sunlight for public spaces. These taller buildings would be more appropriate at mid-block than at corners, and their floors above the second or third level should be set back to maintain a lower street facade. The tall buildings should include publicly accessible, open viewing spaces at the upper levels.

**LU 4.16.5: Building Width**

New buildings should maintain the historic pattern of storefront widths.

**LU 4.16.6: Sidewalk Appeal**

Street facades, particularly at the street level, should include windows, signs, and architectural details which can be appreciated by people on the sidewalks.

**LU 4.19: Implementing the Downtown Concept Plan**

The City will consider including features of "A Conceptual Physical Plan for the City's Center," as appropriate, in its Zoning Regulations, architectural review guidelines, engineering standards, and capital improvement program.

**LU 5.2: Cultural Facilities****LU 5.2.1: Cooperation**

The City should cooperate with other agencies and with community groups to help provide facilities for a library, and for arts and sciences which meet broad community cultural needs.

**LU 5.5: Community Arts Support**

The City will continue to support community arts programs through a variety of means, such as loans, grants, and help in obtaining sites.

**LU 5.6: Land Acquisition**

The City will attempt to acquire land for cultural facilities or Mission Plaza extension as sites become available.

**LU 5.8: Public Art**

The City will encourage inclusion of appropriate public art in all projects.

**HOUSING ELEMENT**

**Goal 3.1 Housing Conservation.** Conserve existing housing and prevent the loss of safe housing and the displacement of current occupants.

**3.2 Policies**

1.2.1 Encourage the rehabilitation, remodeling or relocation of sound or habitable housing rather than demolition. Demolition of non-historic housing may be permitted where conservation of existing housing would preclude the achievement of other housing objectives or adopted City goals.

1.2.2 Discourage the removal or replacement of housing affordable to very-low, low and moderate income households by higher-cost housing, and avoid permit approvals, municipal actions or public projects that remove or adversely impact such housing unless such actions are necessary to achieve General Plan objectives and: (1) it can be demonstrated that rehabilitation of lower-cost units at risk of replacement is financially or physically infeasible, or (2) an equivalent number of new units comparable or better in affordability and amenities to those being replaced is provided, or (3) the project will correct substandard, blighted or unsafe housing; and (4) replacement will not adversely affect a designated historic resource.

1.2.3 Encourage seismic upgrades of older dwellings to reduce the risk of bodily harm and the loss of housing in an earthquake.

3.2.4 Encourage the construction, preservation, rehabilitation or expansion of residential hotels, group homes, integrated community apartments, and single room occupancy dwellings.

3.2.5 Preserve historic homes and other types of historic residential buildings, historic districts and unique or landmark neighborhood features.

### **3.3 Programs**

3.3.1 When the City finds affordable unit removal is necessary in connection with a municipal project, it shall help displaced residents find affordable replacement housing and assist with relocation costs.

3.3.2 When the City permits private development projects that displace affordable housing, it will require the developer to assist displaced residents find affordable local replacement housing. Such measures may include: first priority in purchasing or renting new affordable dwellings to be developed onsite, assistance with relocation costs, or other financial measures.

3.3.3 Evaluate, and where necessary, revise building, zoning and fire code requirements which discourage housing and encourage the conversion of housing to other uses.

3.3.4 Using State or Federal grant funds such as Community Development Block Grants, or other funding sources, the City will establish a housing rehabilitation program offering low-cost loans or other rehabilitation assistance to those who cannot afford or obtain conventional financing. The purposes of the program shall be to remove unsafe, unsanitary or illegal

conditions, maintain safe housing, and preserve neighborhoods.

3.3.6 Identify residential properties and districts eligible for local, State or Federal listing and prepare guidelines and standards to help property owners repair, rehabilitate and improve properties in a historically and architecturally sensitive manner.

3.3.7 To encourage housing rehabilitation, amend the Affordable Housing Standards to allow a reduced term of affordability for rehabilitated units, to the extent allowed by State or Federal law, with a minimum term of three years and in proportion to the level of City assistance.

3.3.8 Establish a monitoring and early warning system to track affordable housing units at-risk of being converted to market rate housing.

4.2.4 In its discretionary actions, housing programs and activities, the City shall affirmatively further fair housing and promote equal housing opportunities for persons of all economic segments of the community.

5.2.2 Encourage mixed-use residential/commercial projects to include live-work and work-live units where housing, offices or other commercial uses are compatible.

4.2.3 Encourage the development of housing above ground-level retail stores and offices to provide housing opportunities close to activity centers and to use land efficiently.

6.2.2 New commercial developments in the Downtown Core (C-D Zone) shall include housing, unless the City makes one of the following findings:

- .. Housing is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or welfare of residents or employees;
- .. The property's shape, size, topography or other physical factor makes dwellings infeasible.

6.3.2 Amend the Zoning Regulations to allow flexible parking regulations for housing development, especially in the Downtown Core (C-D Zone), including the possibility of reduced or no parking requirements where appropriate guarantees limit occupancies to persons without motor vehicles or who provide proof of reserved, off-site parking.

6.3.3 Provide incentives to encourage additional housing in the Downtown Core (C-D Zone), particularly in mixed-use developments. Incentives may include flexible density, use, height, or parking provisions, fee reductions, and streamlined development review and permit processing.

6.3.4 Amend the Parking Management program to promote housing in the

Downtown Core (C-D Zone) by allowing flexible use of city parking facilities by Downtown residents, where appropriate. Such use may include requirements for parking use fees, use limitations and enforcement provisions.

6.3.4 Amend the Parking Management program to promote housing in the Downtown Core (C-D Zone) by allowing flexible use of city parking facilities by Downtown residents, where appropriate. Such use may include requirements for parking use fees, use limitations and enforcement provisions.

6.3.12 Financially assist in the development of 90 new ownership or rental units affordable to very-low, low- and moderate income households during the planning period using State, Federal and local funding sources.

6.3.16 Assist in the production of long-term affordable housing by identifying vacant or underutilized City-owned property suitable for housing, and dedicate public property, where feasible and appropriate, for such purposes.

7.2.6 Housing shall be sited to enhance safety along neighborhood streets and in other public and semi-public areas.

7.2.7 The physical designs of neighborhoods and dwellings should promote walking and bicycling, and should preserve open spaces and views.

8.2.1 Encourage housing development that meets a variety of special needs, including large families, single parents, disabled persons, the elderly, students, the homeless, or those seeking congregate care, group housing, single-room occupancy or co-housing accommodations, utilizing universal design.

9.2.3 Preserve the physical neighborhood qualities in the Downtown Planning Area that contribute to sustainability. Some ways to do this include:

- a) Maintain the overall scale, density and architectural character of older neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown Core.
- b) Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of historically designated housing stock.

**Goal 11.1 Suitability.** Develop and retain housing on sites that are suitable for that purpose.

**11.2 Policies**

11.2.1 Where property is equally suited for commercial or residential uses, give preference to residential use. Changes in land use designation from residential to non-residential should be discouraged.

Land Use Element

Figure 4 - Downtown Planning Area



1-25

# DOWNTOWN SAN LUIS OBISPO CALIFORNIA

Conceptual Uses:  
Cultural Facility  
Parking  
Retail

