

# **NORTH FREMONT STREET AREA PLAN SEPTEMBER 2000**



**City of Monterey Community Development Department**



# **NORTH FREMONT STREET AREA PLAN SEPTEMBER 2000**

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**CITY OF MONTEREY**

**RESOLUTION NO. 00-237**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONTEREY  
ADOPTING THE NORTH FREMONT STREET AREA PLAN AS AN ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF  
MONTEREY GENERAL PLAN**

WHEREAS, the City Code and the Monterey General Plan encourage the development of area plans to translate the city-wide goals, policies, programs, and land use recommendations from its General Plan into more specific neighborhood recommendations; and

WHEREAS, this Area Plan is an element of the City General Plan and should be used by City Staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council in determining zoning and subdivision consistency with the General Plan when considering all proposed public and private development projects; and

WHEREAS, The North Fremont Street Area Plan was prepared by a committee and reviewed in general meetings of the business/property owners, in neighborhood meetings, and Planning Commission public hearings; and

WHEREAS, the Area Plan includes the following ten policies to achieve the above goals

*Policy 1 Encourage Neighborhood and Resident-Serving Businesses to create a distinct business area identity, in contrast to the mix of incompatible businesses often found in strip commercial areas.*

*Policy 2. Encourage coordination between the hotels and Fairgrounds in order to increase the number of room nights, support the primary goal of improving neighborhood serving uses, and support improved appearance and maintenance.*

*Policy 3. Coordinate with other governmental agencies to improve east and west entrances to North Fremont Street.*

*Policy 4. Street design should continue to support access to businesses, traffic flow without encouraging excess speeds or bypass travel through adjoining residential neighborhoods.*

*Policy 5. Consider pedestrian and non-automobile circulation in transportation planning, street design, crosswalks, and traffic signal design.*

*Policy 6. Continue to pursue parking options that support Fairgrounds events.*

*Policy 7. Improve the overall appearance of the North Fremont Street area. Create the visual impact of a distinct commercial area as opposed to a typical strip commercial area.*

*Policy 8. Improve hotel appearance.*

*Policy 9. Encourage property maintenance to support the design standards creating a safe and high-quality commercial environment.*

*Policy 10. Establish a Business Improvement District to implement the programs in the Area Plan.*

and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on this Area Plan before recommending its adoption to the City Council; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONTEREY that The North Fremont Area Plan is hereby adopted as an element of the City General Plan.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONTEREY this 19th day of September, 2000, by the following vote:

AYES:	5	COUNCILMEMBERS:	ALBERT, CANEPA, EDGREN, ROBERSON, VREELAND
NOES:	0	COUNCILMEMBERS:	NONE
ABSENT:	0	COUNCILMEMBERS:	NONE

APPROVED:

/s/DANIEL ALBERT  
Mayor of said City

ATTEST:

/s/BONNIE GAWF  
City Clerk thereof

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Land Use and Economics .....	7
Traffic, Parking, Transportation and Pedestrian Flow .....	11
Building, Site and Streetscape Design Issues and Objectives .....	15
Organization and Implementation of the Plan .....	19

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Boundary Map.....	Facing 1
Existing Land Use Inventory .....	Facing 2
Types of Businesses and Source of Customers .....	Facing 3
Street Classifications .....	Facing 4
Hotel/Motel Inventory .....	Facing 7



## **LAND USE AND ECONOMICS**

North Fremont Street has a more cohesive sense of place than a typical strip commercial street because many of the businesses serve the adjoining residential areas. Business anchors for the street are Safeway, Longs, the Monterey Fairgrounds, hotels, and restaurants. Most retail and service uses have Citywide or Peninsula-wide market areas but also provide service to adjoining neighborhoods. Visitor-serving uses draw from outside the Monterey Peninsula but also provide support for restaurants and other neighborhood-serving uses. The Plan focus on resident-serving businesses allows creation of a distinct identity, in contrast to the mix of incompatible businesses often found in strip commercial areas.

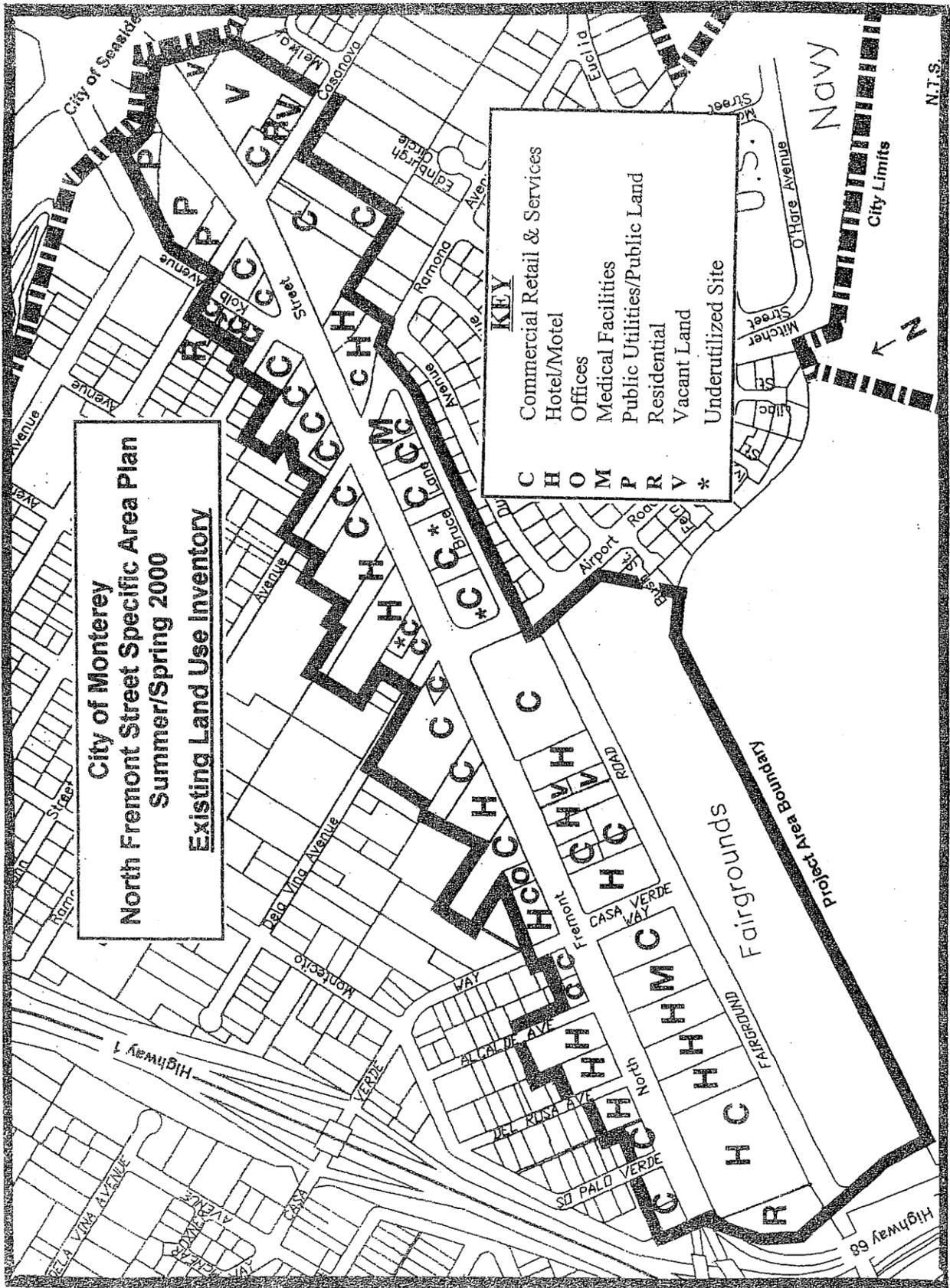
Hotels are the most dominant single use on North Fremont Street. There are seventeen hotels/motels with 673 hotel rooms. Most have design and room rates typical of budget-to medium price hotels. Most were developed when North Fremont Street was the main highway into Monterey, but they are generally well maintained and do not have deterioration or lack of maintenance often found in older hotels. Twelve hotels are at or near maximum allowed density. Added development potential is not an available incentive to modernize those hotels unless the VAF (hotel) zoning ordinance provisions are modified to allow expansion or expansion is allowed to adjoining properties. An additional 171 hotel rooms could be built on North Fremont Street, primarily on five sites. Added rooms could be an incentive to upgrade the existing hotels. North Fremont Street hotels face increased competition from new hotels in Seaside. Also, Peninsula-wide referral services have directed some potential customers to similar hotels in other communities.

There is no unified promotion effort for the North Fremont Street business area. Promotion efforts could include design improvements to identify the street as a distinct commercial area, developing group event packages for events at the fairgrounds with lodging in North Fremont Street hotels, and establishing a Business Improvement District for group advertising, shared promotional activities, holiday lights, etc. Programs to address these issues are included under the design and organization chapters.

Vacant and undeveloped sites will be difficult to develop or redevelop until improved market conditions support higher rents. The Area Plan proposes to improve the quality of the commercial area to improve the market conditions. Incentives to fill the gap between development costs and market rates of return would encourage improved appearance, mitigate impacts of older building designs on adjoining businesses, and minimize the collateral impact of businesses adjoining residential areas.

Neighborhood-serving businesses are the preferred use for undeveloped, underdeveloped, and redeveloped sites. Uses with a neighborhood-serving component help establish the area as a unified business district. Businesses with a larger market area and visitor serving uses could be encouraged on these sites if they provide the economic base for neighborhood-serving uses on site.

The predominant zoning on North Fremont Street is C-2 (Community Commercial) on non-hotel sites and VAF (Visitor Accommodation) on hotel sites. The C-2 zoning allows a broad range of retail, office, service, and other commercial uses.



North Fremont Street Area Plan  
 Adopted September 19, 2000

**Policy 1 Encourage Neighborhood and Resident-Serving Businesses to create a distinct business area identity, in contrast to the mix of incompatible businesses often found in strip commercial areas.**

Program 1.1 Support small businesses that directly serve the adjoining neighborhoods. Banks, clothing stores, and medium-price, family oriented restaurants would be desirable additions to the area.

Program 1.2 Encourage business with a citywide or larger market area if they include a strong neighborhood-serving component. Longs and Safeway are examples of businesses with strong neighborhood service and a citywide market area.

Program 1.3 Establish land use and other city incentives to support neighborhood-serving businesses. (a) Hotels may expand or develop beyond existing VAF sites if the project includes neighborhood-serving commercial component oriented to the street. The neighborhood-serving component and removal of marginal uses is a primary objective in allowing expansion of hotel uses. Voter approval is required for expansion of hotels on non-VAF sites. (b) The City should investigate other incentive programs to directly or indirectly support resident-serving businesses, removal of marginal uses, and improvement of underdeveloped and undeveloped sites..

Program 1.4 Plan policies are intended to encourage an improved business area identity but do not modify the underlying zoning land use provisions.

**Policy 2. Encourage coordination between the hotels and Fairgrounds in order to increase the number of room nights, support the primary goal of improving neighborhood serving uses, and support improved appearance and maintenance.**

Program 2.1. Hotel promotion efforts should focus on coordinated event/hotel packages with the Fairgrounds, improved visibility at Peninsula wide referral services, and a strong presence at the Monterey Visitor Center.

Program 2.2 Hotel and the Fairground coordination should encourage events with a family orientation, so that Fairground and hotel visitors support businesses compatible with the adjoining neighborhoods.

**Policy 3. Coordinate with other governmental agencies to improve east and west entrances to North Fremont Street.**

Program 3.1. Coordinate with the Cities of Seaside and Del Rey Oaks to improve streetscape frontage between Canyon Del Rey and the Monterey City limits.

Program 3.2. Coordinate with CALTRANS to change freeway signs to read "North Fremont Street" or "North Fremont Street, Monterey."

**North Fremont Street Area Plan  
Types of Businesses and Source of Customers**

Type of Business (in alpha order)	#	Neighbor- hood	City/Regional	Visitor/Tourist	Street Traffic (Strip Commercial)
Adult Entertainment	2	X	X	X	X
Auto sales	2	X	X		X
Auto services	4	X	X		X
Bakery	1	X	X	X	
Beauty salon/barber	6	X	X	X	X
Bookstore	1	X			
Bowling alley	1	X	X		X
Car Wash	1	X	X	X	X
Convenience Store	3	X		X	X
Crafts- retail	2	X	X		
Drug/pharmacy	1	X	X	X	X
Fairgrounds	1		X	X	
Florist	1	X	X	X	
Furniture	2	X	X		
Gas station	3	X		X	X
Home Improvement	2	X	X		X
Hotels/Motels	17			X	X
Jewelry repair	1	X	X		
Laundry/Dry Clean	2	X	X	X	
Liquor	2	X	X	X	X
Medical care	3	X	X	X	
Music -- retail	1	X	X		
Pet -- retail	1	X	X		
Restaurant	10	X	X	X	X
Seasonal/Holiday	2	X	X		X
Sporting goods	2	X	X		
Supermarket	2	X	X	X	X
Video rental	2	X	X		

Neighborhood: Businesses that typically serve the day-to-day needs of local residents from the adjacent neighborhoods.

City/Regional: Businesses that typically require a larger than neighborhood customer base to support their operation. This customer base would typically be from Monterey/Seaside or the Monterey Peninsula.

Visitor/Tourist: Businesses that typically serve the visitor or tourist market.

Street Traffic/Strip Commercial: Commercial establishments that typically rely on high traffic from an arterial street as the source of customers.

## **TRAFFIC, PARKING, TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN FLOW**

North Fremont Street does not have significant traffic and parking problems. North Fremont Street has occasional disruptions, but does not reach maximum capacity, where traffic is at Level of Service E or F, or where commercial parking spills into adjoining residential areas. The traffic signals on North Fremont Street are coordinated within the City. The long signal phases at Canyon Del Rey in Seaside do not coordinate with North Fremont Street timing, so that intersection often backs up into Monterey. There is generally sufficient parking on-site or on North Fremont Street to handle commercial parking demand. The commercial properties on Ramona have the potential to create neighborhood parking problems because they front on the side street, and parking tends to move into the neighborhood, rather than to vacant spaces on North Fremont Street.

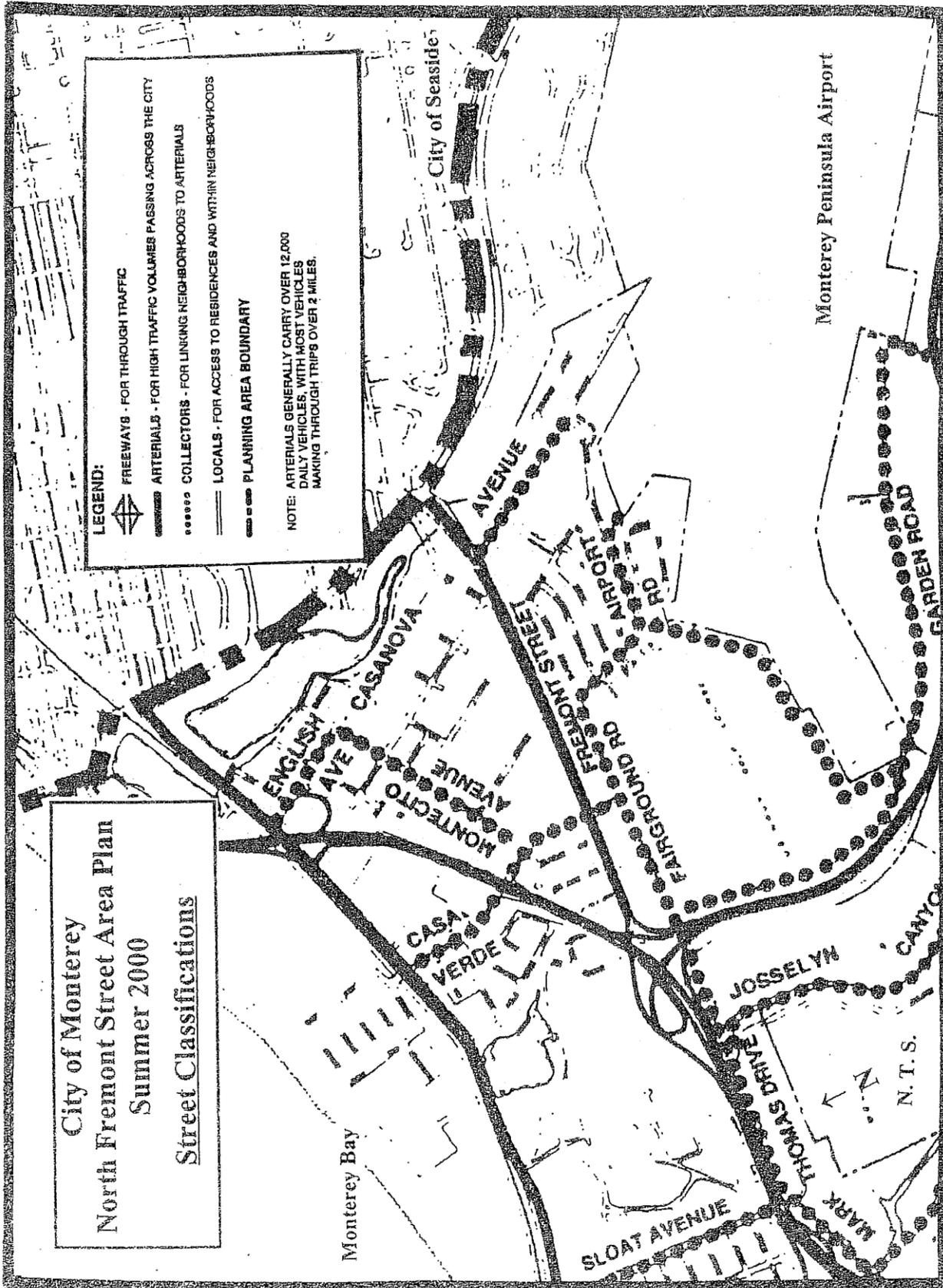
A “U” turn at the North Fremont Street/Canyon Del Rey intersection is necessary to allow a return to Monterey from the Cypress Bowl/Ito and Ralph’s Market site. Also, the Canyon Del Rey “U” turn may reduce the number of cars which use neighborhood streets to return to Monterey, rather than remaining on arterial streets. A U-turn will require approval from the City of Seaside and CalTrans. Alternatives to a “U” turn at Canyon Del Rey include (a) median revisions in front of the Cypress Bowl/Ito Site, (b) design of the Casanova/North Fremont Street to facilitate return to Monterey from the Cypress Bowl/Ito Site if there is access to the site from Casanova Street.

During heavy rains, there is flooding at North Fremont Street and Ramona Avenue, causing street closure. Improvements to the storm drain system are necessary to resolve this flooding.

North Fremont Street sidewalks are narrow in several areas. In many instances, utility poles and bus stop benches are placed in the pedestrian way, reducing the width so that wheelchairs and strollers cannot pass. In general, North Fremont Street is not a strong pedestrian street, so wide sidewalks found in pedestrian commercial areas like downtowns would not be necessary. However, removal or relocation of the sidewalk obstacles is recommended.

Dundee Avenue is sometimes used by North Fremont Street customers and delivery trucks as a return to Monterey, rather than returning to North Fremont Street and going through several traffic signals. Design of undeveloped, underdeveloped, and redeveloped properties can be tailored to reduce the amount of traffic, which would choose to use neighborhood streets. Neighborhood streets are also used to bypass traffic signals in commute periods. Traffic calming solutions within the neighborhood can minimize this through traffic.

Parking for large Fairgrounds events can affect North Fremont Street parking. Fairground parking impacts can only be reduced by a combination of solutions aimed at providing substantial parking areas for large events, shuttles to bring patrons from off-site lots, and encouraging hotel guests to walk to the Fairgrounds. Revenues from parking on the Navy Golf Course are used for security, rather than to support the golf course. The Fairgrounds and City could explore financial arrangements that would make parking more financially attractive to the Navy.



Speeding is not a substantial issue along North Fremont Street, with the exception of the freeway on and off ramps. The on-ramp design from North Fremont Street to Highway 1 encourages acceleration on the City street in anticipation of merging onto the highway. Traffic exiting from Highway 1 to North Fremont Street is often travelling at freeway speeds when entering North Fremont Street.

There are no significant commercial parking problems on North Fremont Street. Street parking demand is low enough that street parking spaces can be removed if needed for streetscape design elements.

**Policy 4. Street design should continue to support access to businesses, traffic flow without encouraging excess speeds or bypass travel through adjoining residential neighborhoods.**

Program 4.1. Work with the City of Seaside and CalTrans to develop a “U” turn at North Fremont Street and Canyon Del Rey. Alternates to the Canyon Del Rey “U” turn include (a) median break in front of the Cypress Bowl/Ito site or (b) design of the Casanova/North Fremont Street to facilitate “U” turns or return to Monterey from the Cypress Bowl/Ito Site.

Program 4.2. Develop physical improvements to reduce speeding from North Fremont Street to the Highway 1 onramp. Solutions could include merging to a single lane in the block between Del Rosa Avenue and Palo Verde, eliminating on-street parking between Palo Verde and the freeway onramp, and landscaping these areas

Program 4.3. Develop physical improvements to reduce speeds from Highways 1 and 68 to North Fremont Street. These programs could include expanding landscape areas or use dense planting so that drivers perceive a narrow roadway rather than a wide street which encourages high speeds.

Program 4.4. Access to Cypress Bowl/Ito site should be consistent with the type of uses desired. Development with a neighborhood-serving component may have access to Casanova Avenue. Development without a neighborhood serving component should have access only to North Fremont Street.

Program 4.5. Bus stops should be evaluated for the entire length of North Fremont Street. Bus turnouts should be provided in areas where bus stops disrupt through traffic. Bus stops locations should be evaluated for impact on traffic flows.

Program 4.6. Coordinate with adjoining residential neighborhoods to reduce the impacts of business customers and delivery vehicles on residential streets.

**Policy 5. Consider pedestrian and non-automobile circulation in transportation planning, street design, crosswalks, and traffic signal design.**

*Program 5.1. Investigate pedestrian bump outs at corners to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance as long as they do not materially reduce traffic capacity.*

Program 5.2. Use countdown signals for pedestrians crossing North Fremont Street.

Program 5.3. Bus stops should be covered and bus enclosures should become a streetscape design element in design considerations on areas of the street where property lines have the space for structured bus stops or where property owners wish to incorporate bus structures on their sites.

Program 5.4. The City should consider extending the WAVE to North Fremont Street. If extended, encourage the WAVE to work with Fairgrounds management so that fairgrounds or downtown visitors will use North Fremont Street businesses when practical.

Program 5.5. Remove sidewalk obstacles. Consider placing bus stop seating and structures behind the pedestrian portion of the sidewalk.

**Policy 6. Continue to pursue parking options that support Fairgrounds events.**

Program 6.1. Pursue parking agreements between the Fairgrounds and the Navy Golf Course. Evaluate the potential for a long-term financial agreement to provide Fairgrounds parking on the Golf Course.

Program 6.2. Investigate on-site parking or other parking options at the Fairgrounds.

## **Building, Site and Streetscape Design Issues and Objectives**

North Fremont Street is a primary gateway into the City of Monterey and should have the streetscape and commercial area design to emphasize its role as a gateway. North Fremont Street was originally part of a state highway with an extended strip of motels and highway commercial fronting uses. It is no longer a state highway, and design elements can support a distinct district identity. Entrances from the east and west should be enhanced. Streetscape features, street medians, building design, landscaping, and sign design should identify North Fremont Street as a distinct area with a unified visual presence.

In many areas, North Fremont Street businesses adjoin single-family or apartment residential areas. Business-related noise, loading, trash, and truck traffic can have an adverse effect on adjoining single-family or apartment areas. In single family area with yards adjoining the commercial zones, there is a concern that uses with evening occupancy above the first floor would overlook private yards. Bruce Lane is a transition alley between commercial and residential uses, which provides both residential and commercial access. A design objective would be to address the impacts of commercial use on adjoining residential areas at a time when a planning permit is required. The Zoning Ordinance allows existing commercial uses to maintain their existing site configuration until a permit is requested. A strong goal of the Area Plan is to develop the commercial strength to support site upgrades, and those upgrades will address the impacts on adjoining residential areas.

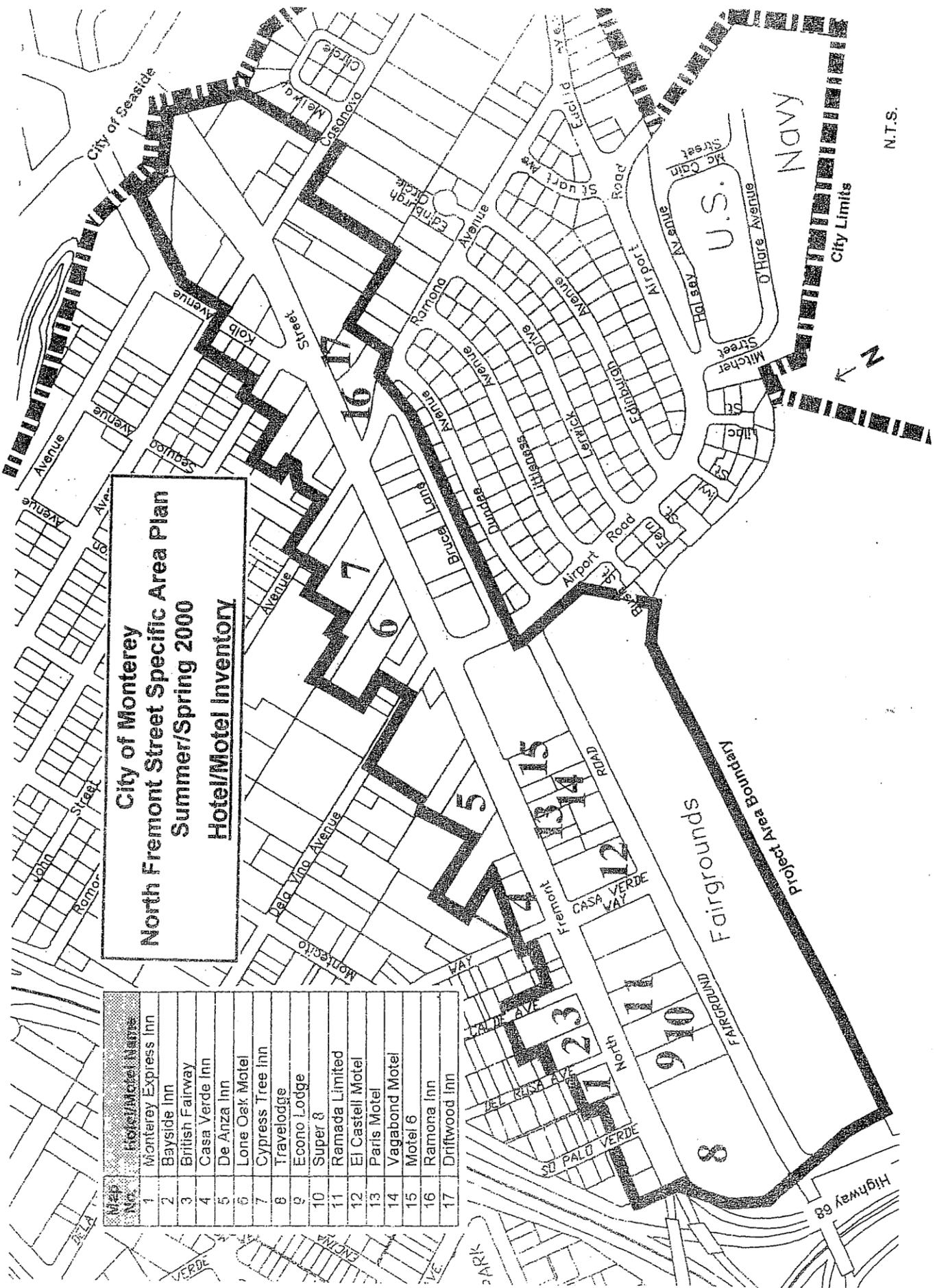
### **Policy 7. Improve the overall appearance of the North Fremont Street area. Create the visual impact of a distinct commercial area as opposed to a typical strip commercial area.**

Program 7.1. The area should be given high priority for undergrounding utilities because North Fremont Street is one of the main entrance streets to the City and is a first impression for visitors coming to Monterey, and the utility poles are sidewalk obstructions in several instances.

Program 7.2. Using streetscape and Economic Development funding, develop design guidelines, which emphasize North Fremont Street as a distinct commercial area with dramatic entrance elements, underground utilities, and coordinated streetscape improvements, signage, and building design. The design guidelines should include the following.

Use landscaping and building design to create a strong entry statement from the east. Coordinate with Seaside and Del Rey Oaks if agreement can be reached on properties between Canyon Del Rey and the Monterey City limits. If not, create a definite entrance point using dense landscaping at the City limit to screen the PG and E substation, behind the Welcome to Monterey Sign, and at the eastern edge of the Cypress Bowl/Ito Site.

Use landscaping in areas proposed for traffic control in Programs 3.2 and 3.3 to create a strong entry statement from the west.



**City of Monterey**  
**North Fremont Street Specific Area Plan**  
**Summer/Spring 2000**  
**Hotel/Motel Inventory**

Map No.	Hotel/Motel Name
1	Monterey Express Inn
2	Bayside Inn
3	British Fairway
4	Casa Verde Inn
5	De Anza Inn
6	Lone Oak Motel
7	Cypress Tree Inn
8	Travelodge
9	Econo Lodge
10	Super 8
11	Remada Limited
12	El Castelli Motel
13	Paris Motel
14	Vagabond Motel
15	Motel 6
16	Ramona Inn
17	Driftwood Inn

Public and private design standards should encourage the appearance of a distinct commercial area, rather than an area without a design identity or a typical strip commercial area. Area plan design standards will be given preference over standardized building and sign designs.

Develop a North Fremont Street business district logo. Encourage use of the logo on signs and in advertisements.

Design and sign standards should encourage remodeling to replace 1950's design themes with more current design. Façade improvement funds should be offered to replace pole signs with monument signs or on-building signs.

New construction should include building elements fronting on and oriented to the street, not buildings to the back of the lot with parking between the street and the building. Alternatives include buildings at the front setback line with parking to the rear or buildings with an element at the street setback line and parking to the side.

Design adjoining residential areas should consider noise, truck loading, truck traffic, and trash impacts on the adjoining residential uses. Uses with night time occupancy should be designed so that windows above the first floor respect private yards if adjacent to single-family zones.

Maintenance of approved design, landscaping, and signage should be encouraged, including code enforcement if needed.

Design for existing and new construction should encourage public safety, including lighting on buildings or in landscaping areas to supplement the existing street lights.

The design standards should consider opportunities for large trees, including street curb bump outs to create the appearance of a narrower street and room necessary for significant trees. Include street corner bump outs to minimize the pedestrian distance to cross the street

## **Policy 8. Improve hotel appearance.**

Program 8.1. Hotels should be encouraged to upgrade appearance. A design objective is to reduce the visual impression that the hotels are obsolete designs from the 1950's. Tools to encourage appearance upgrading could be: (a) increasing the number of rooms as allowed by VAF zoning and (b) improving the number of room nights by coordinated marketing with the Fairgrounds, and (c) allowing expansion to adjoining non-VAF parcels if the expansion includes neighborhood serving businesses and the expansion is approved by public vote, (d) City incentives based on rebating a portion of increased city revenues if the improvements support neighborhood-serving commercial. Such a program does not now exist and would have to be developed considering Citywide financial goals, (e) evaluating Neighborhood Improvement Program funding if improvements meet neighborhood objectives.

**Policy 9. Encourage property maintenance to support the design standards creating a safe and high-quality commercial environment.**

Program 9.1. The Business Improvement District should monitor and encourage cleanliness, weed control, and replacement of burned out lights and sign lighting. The District should have a fixit program to assist in low-cost repairs if the property owner is not able to make repairs.

Program 9.2. Investigate a Citywide property maintenance ordinance. This is not currently a City program and would have to be adopted Citywide. Support appearance improvements with the City Façade Improvement program.

## **ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN**

Previous attempts to create a North Fremont Street Business Improvement District have not been successful. The Area Plan provides finite goals to improve the business climate and appearance of North Fremont Street. The Area Plan goals will not be fully realized without an organization to keep businesses informed, to create a discrete business area identity, and to represent the area to government agencies which affect the economic well-being of the area.

### **Policy 10. Establish a Business Improvement District to implement the programs in the Area Plan.**

Program 10.1. Establish a Business Improvement District using business license surcharge with sufficient funding to achieve the goals of the plan, including full-time staffing for the District. The District by laws should emphasize participation by businesses and property owners. Consideration should be given to a District Board with representatives from businesses, property owners, City Council appointees, Fairgrounds representation, and representation from adjoining neighborhood organizations.