

Los Osos Library Alternatives Analysis and Feasibility Study

March 2018



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Executive Summary

Reiss Design Studio was hired by the County of San Luis Obispo in September of 2017 to investigate the feasibility of various options for providing a new library facility for the Los Osos Community;

- Option A - the retrofit and expansion of the existing facility,
- Option B - a new facility on a vacant portion of a developed parcel,
- Option C - a tenant improvement/remodel to an existing building,
- Option D - a new facility on a vacant parcel,

in order to assist the County of San Luis Obispo and the Friends of the Los Osos Library in decision making for the future of the Los Osos Library.

The County of San Luis Obispo assembled a team to work with Reiss Design Studio consisting of:

- Chris Barnickel* - County of San Luis Obispo Director of Libraries
- Chase McMunn* - County of San Luis Obispo Assistant Director of Libraries
- Phil D'Acri* - County of San Luis Obispo Central Services Real Property Manager
- Sauna Heintz* - County of San Luis Obispo Central Services Associate Real Property Agent
- Kerry Brown* - County of San Luis Obispo Planning and Building
- Kate Ballantyne* - County of San Luis Obispo Environmental Division Manager

The Library Building Program was created, reviewed, and refined with library staff by the Director of Libraries.

Meetings were held with various County of San Luis Obispo departments to get their input and insight into the process.

Los Osos as a Community

Area: 12.7 sq. mi.

Elevation: 200 ft.

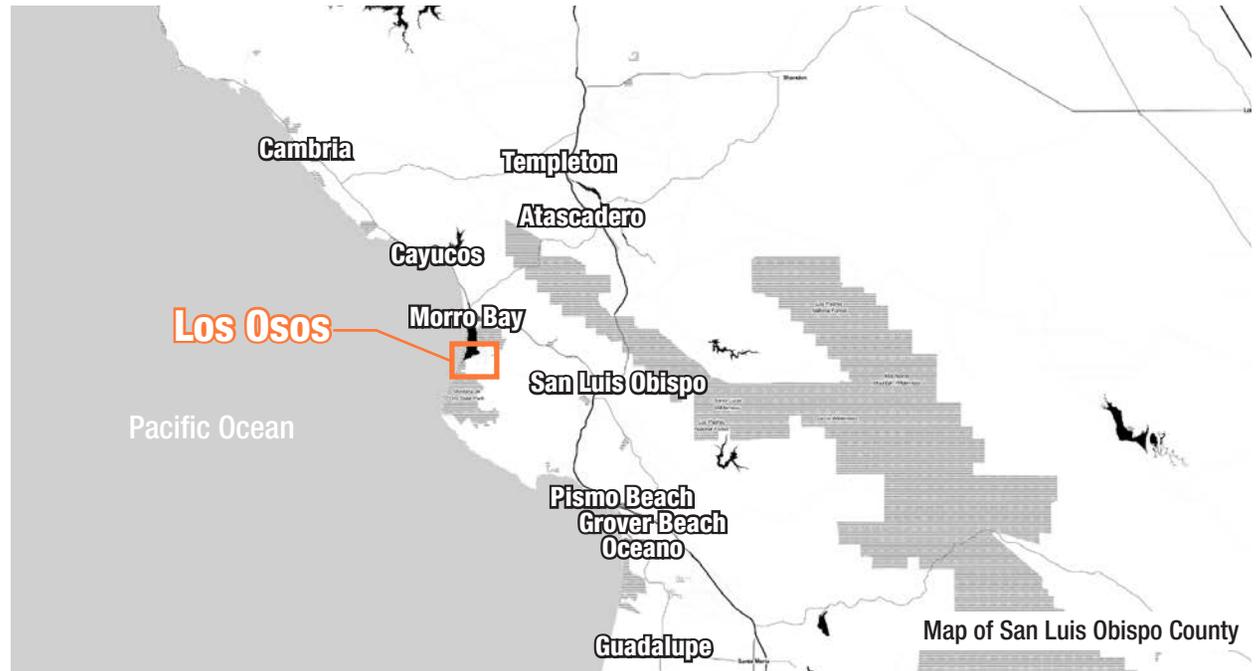
Population: 15,388

Density: 1,100 people/sq. mi.

Los Osos is an unincorporated area of San Luis Obispo County on the central coast of California. The town is situated along the southern end of Morro Bay Estuary and lies between Morro Bay State Park to the north, and Montaña de Oro State Park to the south.

Located away from Hwy 1 and Hwy 101, Los Osos is a hidden gem with an abundance of natural resources and environmental assets that define the area's character and contribute to a high quality of life. You can arrive to Los Osos from San Luis Obispo by a scenic 20 minute drive through agricultural country side, or a 3 mile drive from Morro Bay along the estuary.

The Los Osos community consists mostly of residential neighborhoods. Serving these residential areas are two commercial zones: the downtown area, or Central Business District, centered around Los Osos Valley Road and the Baywood commercial area centered around Second Street in the Baywood Park neighborhood. Casual reference of "Los Osos" is usually inclusive of Baywood Park.



Community Wide Development Considerations

Los Osos Community Plan

The County of San Luis Obispo Department of Planning and Building is in the process of updating the Los Osos Community Plan of the County's General Plan and Local Coastal Plan. This community plan determines how the community will grow and develop over the next 20 years.

Development of vacant lots within the sewer service area are restricted from development until the County amends the Estero Area Plan - Los Osos Urban Area (referred to as the Los Osos Community Plan) to incorporate the following:

- A sustainable buildout target that indicates that there is water available to support such development with out impacts to wetlands and habitats
- A community wide Habitat-Conservation Plan (HCP) for the long-term preservation of sensitive habitats

3 Major Prerequisites to Development are:

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

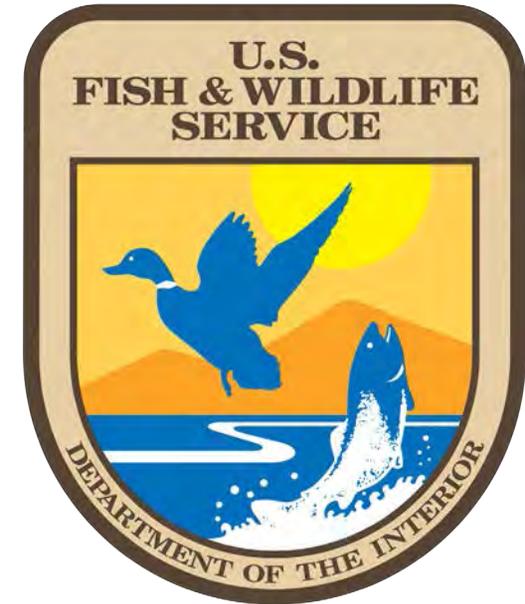
The Habitat Conservation Plan will include measures necessary to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the effects of the taking for four federally listed species resulting from private development, capital projects, activities operation, and maintenance.

Los Osos Wastewater Project

Construction on the Los Osos Sewer Project began in 2012 and the Sewage Treatment Plant opened in 2016. The system serves 4,500 homes in a "prohibition zone" of Los Osos where septic systems must be removed because nitrates have been contaminating the ground water. New development had been prohibited since 1983 until a sewer system was installed.

Aquifer Salinization or Los Osos Groundwater Basin

The aquifer, or groundwater basin, serving Los Osos is the only source of water for the community. Due to water quality degradation of the Upper aquifer from septic systems (nitrates), water purveyors pumping from the Lower aquifer have begun to draw salt water from the bay due to community well locations in areas that are not sustainable. The water purveyors have developed a Basin Management Plan (BMP) to deal with this issue. The BMP will include abandonment of the offending wells and installation of new wells in sustainable locations and other infrastructure projects. Development has been restricted until this is resolved.



Morro shoulderband snail - one of the species covered in the HCP, is located on the current library site and played a role in stopping additions/renovations to the library in the past.

Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Los Osos Library first organized in the mid-1970's by community members pushing for a larger library.

Since the late 1990's, the Friends of the Los Osos Library have been raising funds for a new facility. Currently, they have raised **\$1.2 million** and have a history of advocating for the community and library's needs.

The County of San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors has a policy where funding of library capital projects, for new library buildings or major improvements to existing libraries, is only considered if at least 50% of the project cost is provided by the community in which the library is located. The Friends of Los Osos Library retains an integral role in the library's weekly operation by facilitating book discussions and helping fund classes and programs for library users of all ages.



A list of several of the programs that the Friends of Los Osos Library help to facilitate

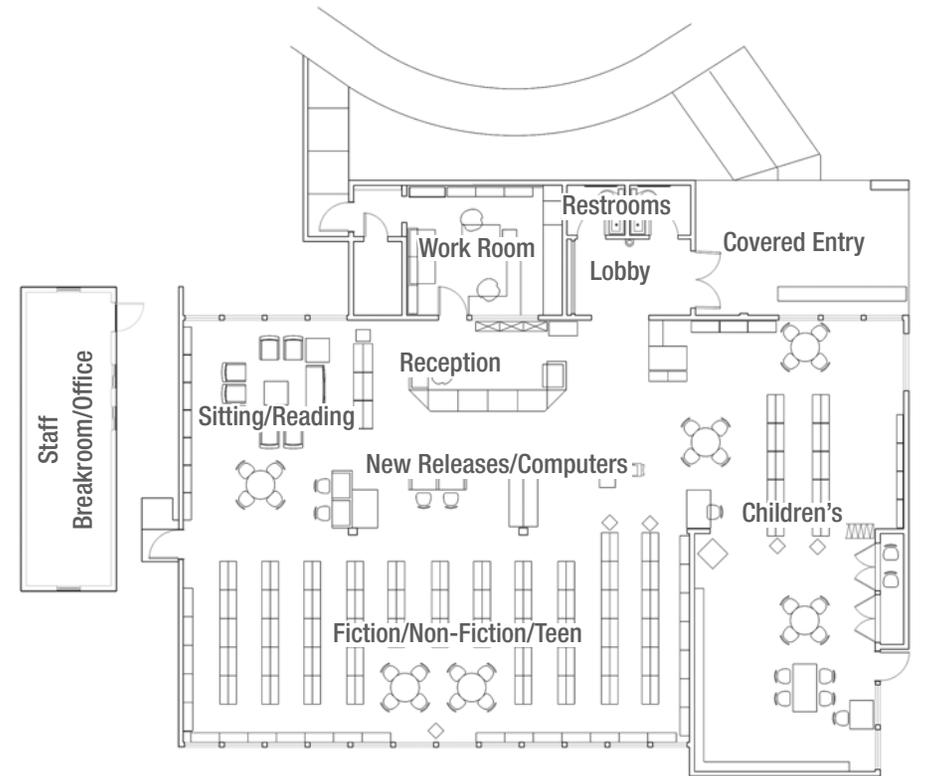
- Early Childhood Storytimes
- Kids Movies
- Paws to Read
- Share a Tale
- Make 'n Take Kids Crafts
- Book Discussion Group
- Poetry

Building History

The origin of the community library began in 1940 when it opened as a room in a home located in Baywood Park. The library has moved at least 9 times over the years, always looking for more space. The current facility was built in 1981 and was designed to serve a population of 10,000.

In 1999, the Friends of the Los Osos Library and the County of San Luis Obispo began planning for a new facility on the existing site. The project got as far as construction documents, but ended up being halted by the community wide Habitat Conservation Plan. Changes that have been made to the current facility preventing its expansion include: added storm water retention basin, a well, and an emergency sewer lift station. Given these restrictions to the site, it has been recommended that other sites be considered for a future library location.

The current community has outgrown its facility and are in need of a larger facility that can better meet the demands of a 21st century library.



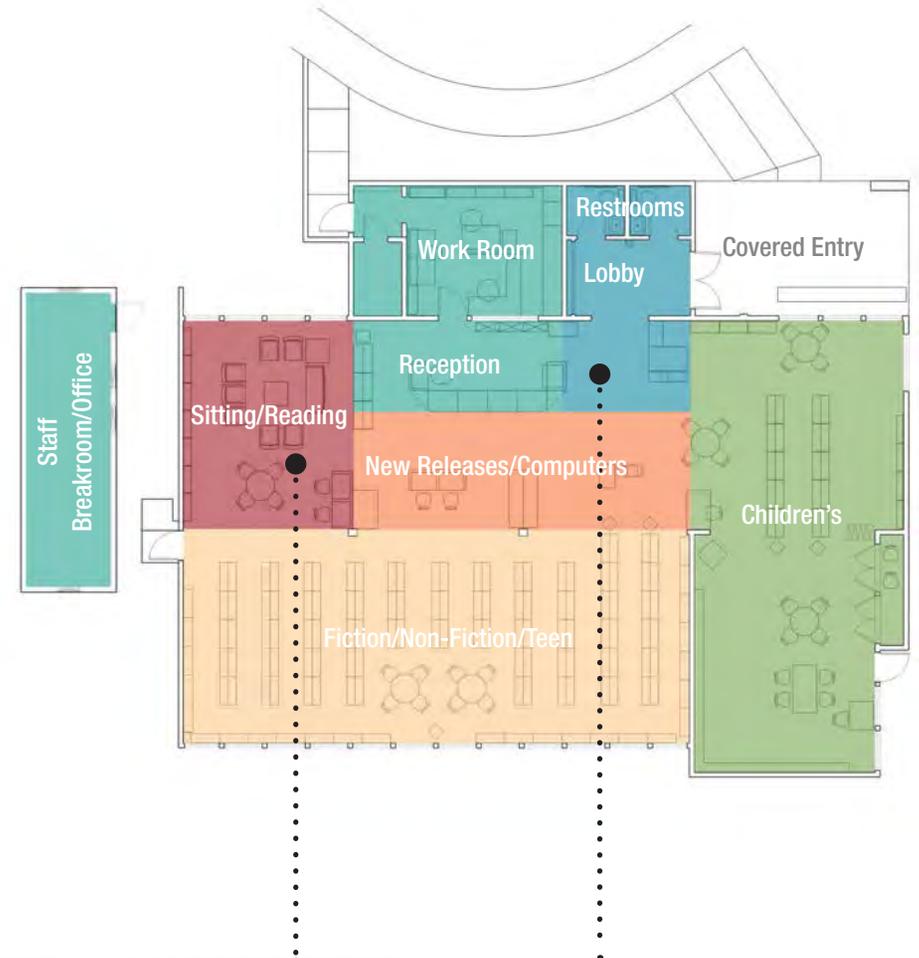
Current Facility Floor Plan



Existing Los Osos Library

Current Facility Assessment

	Current
Lobby/Restrooms	327 s.f.
Reception/Front Desk	219 s.f.
Work Room	1136 s.f.
Childrens	1,064 s.f.
Fiction/Non-Fiction/Teen	1,235 s.f.
New Releases	100 s.f.
Computers	338 s.f.
Sitting/Reading	380 s.f.
TOTAL S.F.	4,799 s.f.
PARKING SPACES	22 (10,000 s.f.)



Desired Program

	Current	Space Increase	Desired	% Increase
Lobby/Restrooms	327 s.f.	x 2.45	800 s.f.	145%
Reception/Front Desk	219 s.f.	x 1.37	300 s.f.	37%
Work Room	1136 s.f.	x 1.14	1300 s.f.	14%
Childrens	1,064 s.f.	x 1.88	2,000 s.f.	88%
Fiction/Non-Fiction/Teen	1,235 s.f.	x 1.38	1,700 s.f.	38%
New Releases	100 s.f.	x 2.00	200 s.f.	100%
Computers	338 s.f.	x 1.48	500 s.f.	48%
Sitting/Reading	380 s.f.	x 2.11	800 s.f.	111%
Meeting Rooms	-	-	450 s.f.	-
Conference Room	-	-	750 s.f.	-
TOTAL S.F.	4,799 s.f.	x 1.83	8,800 s.f.	83%
PARKING SPACES	22 (10,000 s.f.)	-	44 (20,000 s.f.)	

Existing Library



Digital Media



Children's



Children's



Staff Workroom



Entry Lobby



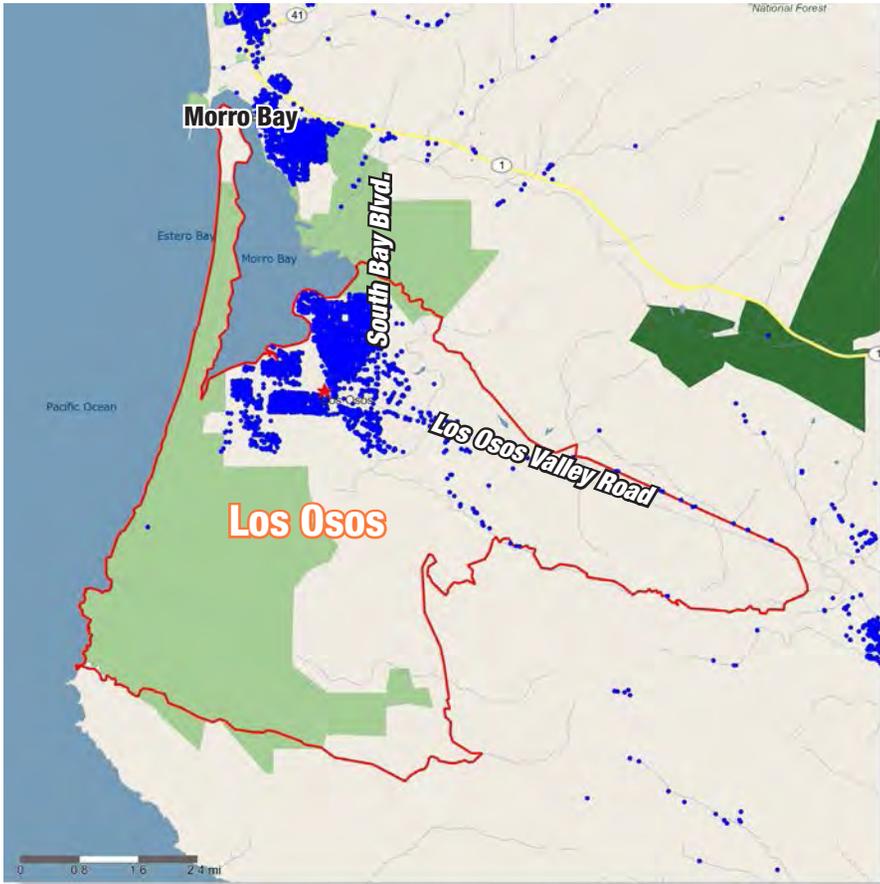
Sitting/Reading

New Library Precedents



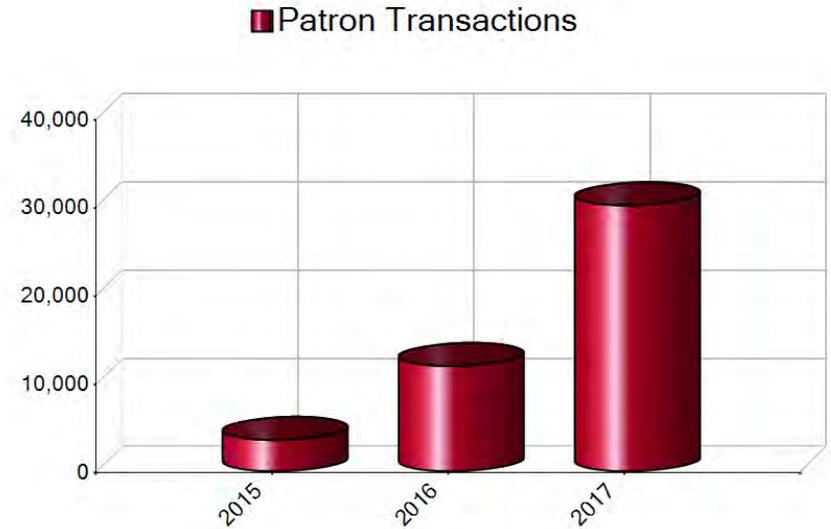
Library Usage Data

Library Patron Households



A large portion of patrons live north of Los Osos Valley Road. This can be helpful in determining an appropriate location for a new Library. A significant amount of patrons travel from Morro Bay to utilize the library.

Patron Transactions



Patron transactions are steadily increasing the past several years proving that the demand for the Los Osos Library is very high.

Comparing Recent Library Upgrades in SLO County

Location	Upgrade	Old s.f.	Ratio of old s.f. per resident	New s.f.	Ratio of new s.f. per resident	Timeline	Cost	Cost/s.f.
San Luis Obispo population: 47,536	partial renovation, space reallocation	17,000 s.f.	2.8 people per 1 s.f.	20,000 s.f.	2.4 people per 1 s.f.	2016-2017	\$504,058	\$25.20**
Morro Bay population: 10,648	full renovation, space reallocation	5,133 s.f.	2.1 people per 1 s.f.	6,500 s.f.	1.6 people per 1 s.f.	2014-2015	\$589,957	\$90.76
Cambria population: 6,032	move to a new location, tenant improvements	2,331 s.f.	2.6 people per 1 s.f.	5,000 s.f.	1.2 people per 1 s.f.	2013-2014	\$534,625	\$106.93
Atascadero population: 30,330	move to a new location	7,000 s.f.	4.3 people per 1 s.f.	11,000 s.f.	2.8 people per 1 s.f.	2013-2014	\$1,264,230	\$114.93
Los Osos population: 15,388	-	4,799 s.f.	3.2 people per 1 s.f.	8,800 s.f.	1.7 people per 1 s.f.	-	-	-

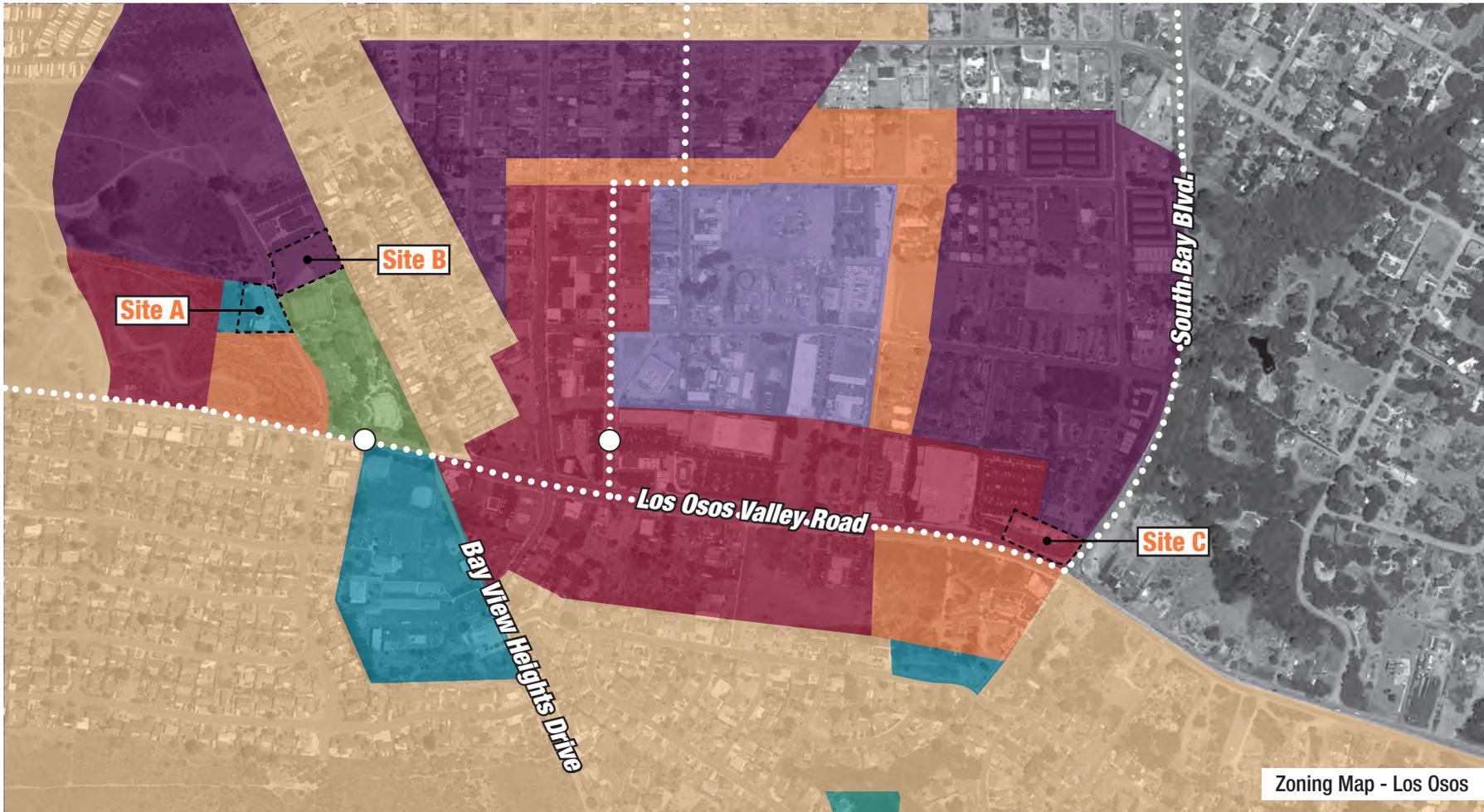
A general analysis of the four most recent library upgrades in San Luis Obispo County reveals, in every instance, that the improvements proportionally align the library square footage with the city's population. The Morro Bay, Cambria, and Atascadero Libraries set a good precedent for cost per square foot of a library remodel and/or tenant improvement to an existing building.

** The San Luis Obispo Library remodel was a very selective remodel that only focused on certain spaces in the library.

Alternative Site Analysis Overview Map



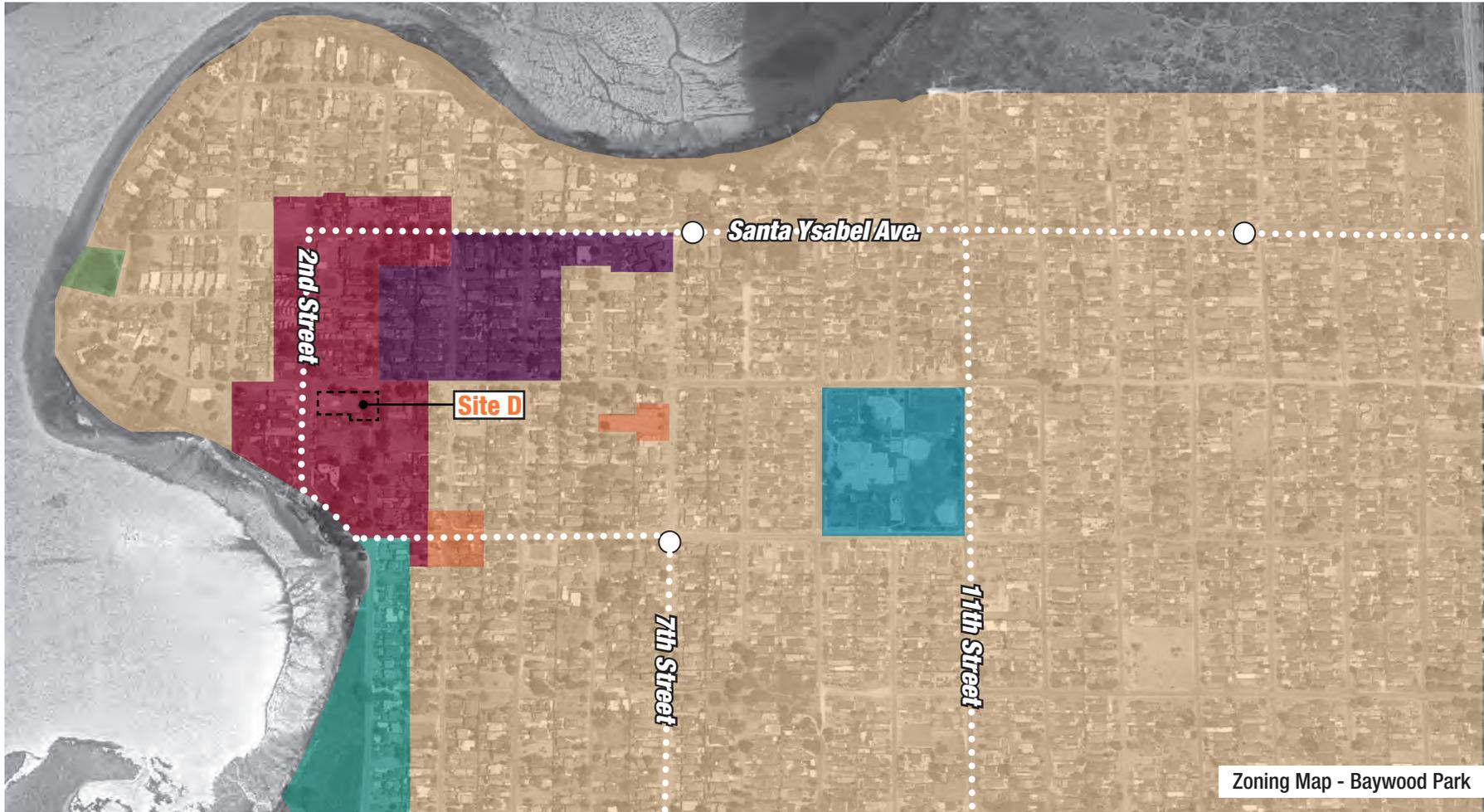
Los Osos Zoning and Site Options



Zoning Map - Los Osos

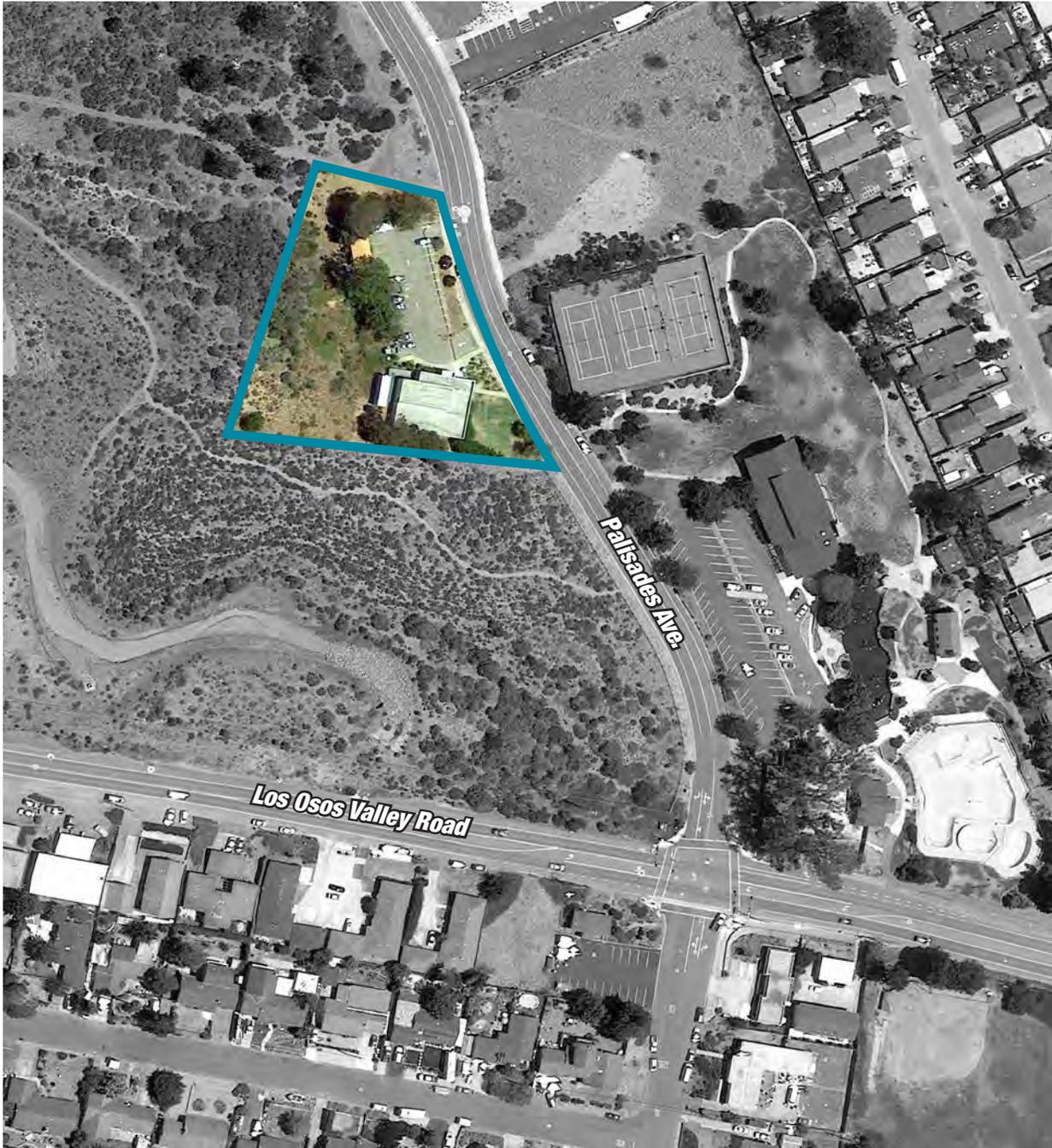
- Commercial Service
- Public Facility
- Open Space
- Recreation
- Residential Single Family
- Office Professional
- Commercial
- Residential Multi Family
- Bus Stop
- Bus Route

Baywood Park Zoning and Site Options



- Commercial Service
- Public Facility
- Open Space
- Recreation
- Residential Single Family

- Office Professional
- Commercial
- Residential Multi Family
- Bus Stop
- Bus Route



Site A - Demolition/Extensive Retrofit of Existing Building

APN: 074-229-008
Address: 2075 Palisades Avenue
Lot Size: 0.85 acres
Zoning: AS - Archaeological Study Area
 LCP - Local Coastal Plan Area
 PF - Public Facilities

Land Use: Public Facility

Constraints:

- Lack of parking
- HCP - morro shoulderband snail is on site
- Addition to facility would likely be a second story and require an extensive structural retrofit/demolition of existing building
- Library would have to rent temporary building during construction
- Storm water retention basin may require work if disturbed for new footings
- Real estate lost in demolition

Opportunities:

- Proximity to park and Community Center
- Community already familiar with location
- Sell existing facility to help fund a new branch

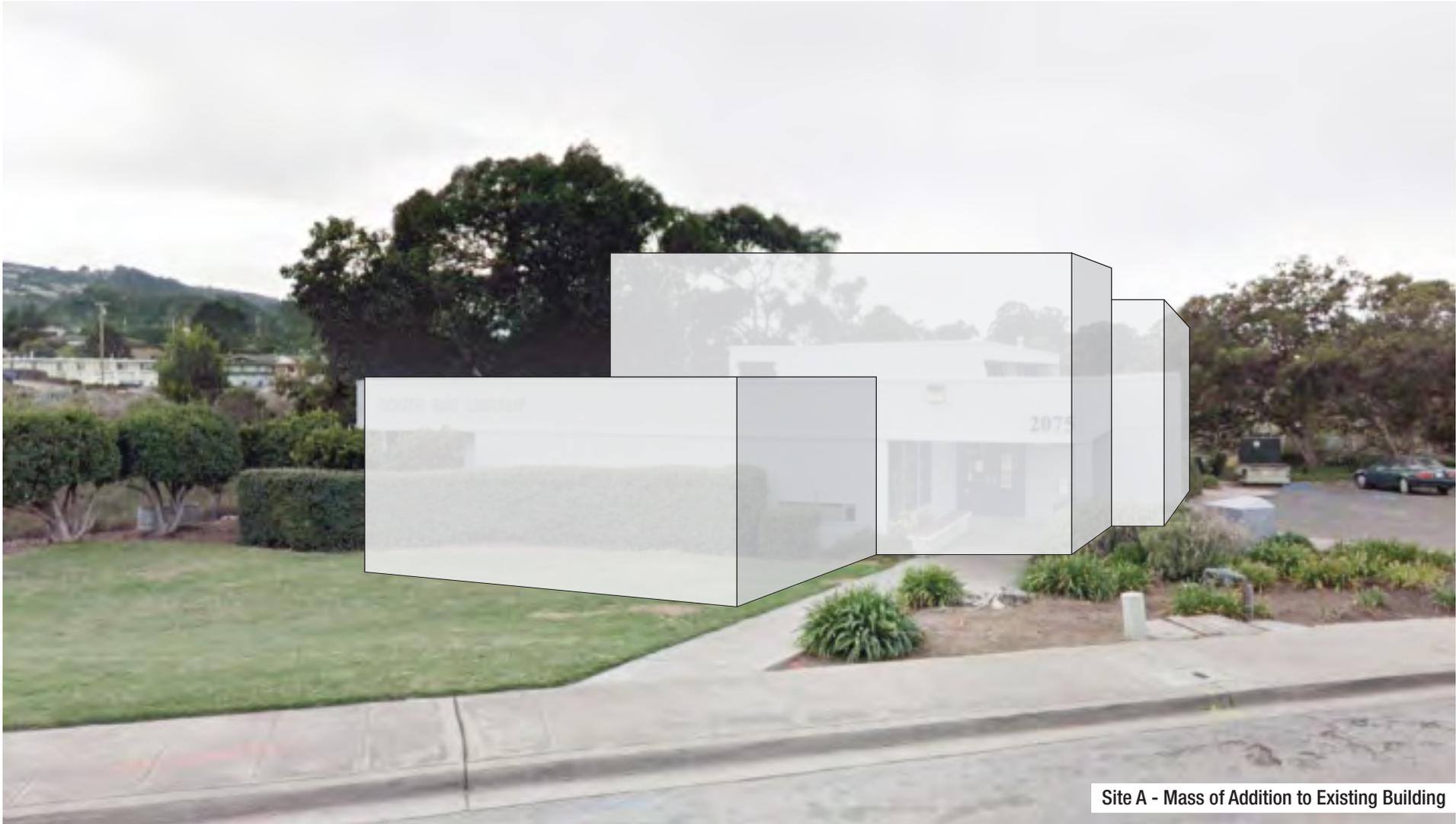
Approximate Cost: \$\$

- Extensive demolition to prepare for 2nd story
- New footings/foundations
- Rental of temporary facility
- Relocation to temporary facility
- Relocation back to new facility
- New HVAC system

Approximate Timeline: ⌚ ⌚

- HCP would delay project

Site A - Demolition/Extensive Retrofit of Existing Building



Site A - Mass of Addition to Existing Building



Site B - New Facility on Vacant Portion of Developed Parcel

APN: 074-229-027
Address: 2060 Palisades Avenue
Lot Size: 6.78 acres (1.33 acres for proposed library)
Zoning: AS - Archaeological Study Area
 H - Historic Site/Building
 LCP - Local Coastal Plan Area
 REC - Recreation
 RMF - Residential Multi-Family

Land Use: Recreation

Constraints:

- HCP
- Reallocation of recreation use within the County
- Redo community plan
- Need to rezone

Opportunities:

- Connection with park and Community Center
- Space for additional parking
- Existing facility could be used by Parks and Recreation or other county department
- Community familiar with location

Approximate Cost: \$\$\$

- Starting from ground up

Approximate Timeline: ⌚⌚⌚

- Starting from ground up
- HCP and sewer issues





Site C - Tenant Improvement/Remodel

APN: **1** 074-302-033
2 074-302-034
3 074-302-019

Address: **1** 1352 Los Osos Valley Road
2 1352 Los Osos Valley Road
3 1398 Los Osos Valley Road

Lot Size: **1** .05 acres
2 .26 acres
3 .48 acres

} 0.79 acres total

Zoning: AS - Archaeological Study Area (Lots **1,2,3**)
 CBD - Central Business District (Lots **1,2,3**)
 CR - Commercial Retail (Lots **1,2,3**)
 LCP - Local Coastal Plan Area (Lots **1,2,3**)

Land Use: Commercial Retail

Constraints:

-2 separate buildings, would need to be combined

Opportunities:

- Adjacency to retail/shopping
- Could become iconic building at gateway to Los Osos
- Plumbing and all infrastructure is already there
- Adequate parking that is not a thru-way for traffic
- No HCP issues of mitigation or associated delays
- Use existing facility during renovation
- Sell existing property to fund new facility

Approximate Cost: \$

-Building in great shape

Approximate Timeline: ⌚

-Ready to begin improvements



Site C - Mass of Retrofit to Existing Building



Site D - New Facility on Vacant Parcel

APN: **1** 038-182-001
2 038-182-050
3 038-182-049

Address: **1** 1300 2nd Street
2 1305 3rd Street
3 1317 3rd Street

Lot Size: **1** 0.2 acres
2 0.14 acres
3 0.13 acres } 0.47 acres total

Zoning: AS - Archaeological Study Area (Lots **1,2,3**)
 CR - Commercial Retail (Lot **1,2,3**)
 CSC -Coastal Special Community (Lot **1**)
 LCP - Local Coastal Plan Area (Lots **1,2,3**)

Constraints:

- Small lot - would require (2) stories
- Would have to utilize street parking

Opportunities:

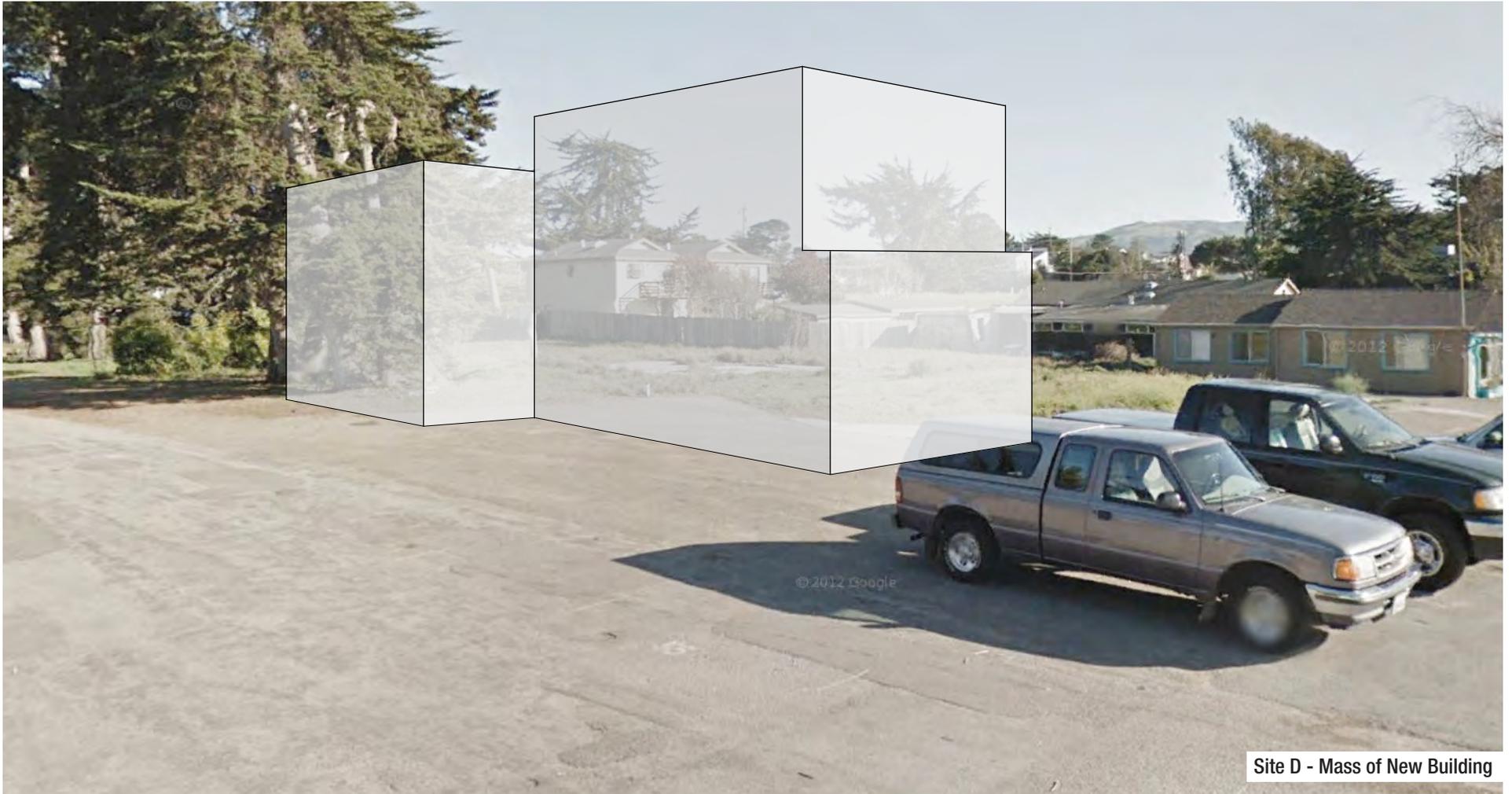
- Access to beach
- In the heart of the Baywood neighborhood
- Proximity to grade school

Approximate Cost: \$\$\$

- Starting from ground up

Approximate Timeline: ⌚⌚⌚

- Starting from ground up
- HCP and sewer issues



Site D - Mass of New Building

Conclusions

This Alternatives Analysis and Feasibility Study examined various options on how the Los Osos Library could either expand their current facility or build a new library to fulfill their growing needs. After working with the San Luis Obispo County Library Staff and various San Luis Obispo County agencies including Planning, Building, and Environmental; an analysis of several approaches of obtaining a larger library space was completed. The following are conclusions that should be considered when making a decision on which direction to move forward with.

The Existing Library

The current library holds great value in that the community is already familiar with the location, the proximity to the Community Center, and it is landed in a very scenic location in Los Osos. Due to these reasons, a building addition at this location needed to be analyzed. Some of the constraints to this site that would either severely delay or halt an addition include: lack of parking, the Habitat Conservation Plan, and the structural retrofit to prepare for an addition and second story would be extensive.

New Facility on Vacant Lot

This option was considered for two similar conditions; one on a vacant portion of a developed lot and the other on a vacant lot. The specific site choices for these options were identified as being key locations in the city where the community could embrace a new library; one near the already familiar location of the current library, and one in the heart of the Baywood Park neighborhood. The benefit to a new facility on a vacant lot is that a blank canvas is available to design a new facility tailored to the exact needs of the community. In addition, the current facility could remain open during construction of a new building on a different lot and the current facility could be sold to fund the cost of a new building. Building on a undeveloped lot does come with its own set of constraints in Los Osos including: the Habitat Conservation Plan, possible rezoning, and development on vacant lots is currently restricted until the County amends the Estero Area Plan. While this option seems appealing, it is unclear how long the process could actually take and this would be the most expensive option to obtaining a new library.

Tenant Improvement/Remodel

A tenant improvement option was explored due to the frequency of vacant buildings becoming available in cities. Furthermore, there is precedent for libraries and other businesses moving into old retail spaces. The challenge will be to find a location in the city that makes sense for a library to live. Sites with adjacent businesses and amenities, such as grocery stores and eateries, would attract additional foot traffic. Some of the benefits of a tenant improvement option are: sufficient parking, plumbing and infrastructure are already there (no community development considerations would delay/halt the project), the existing facility could still be used during renovation, and the current facility could be sold to fund the cost of the remodel + purchasing/renting a building. This option would be considerably less expensive than the other two options and the construction/remodel time would be the quickest of the options available.