

Seaside Main Gate Project
Notice of Preparation
City of Seaside

To: _____
(Responsible Agency/Interested Person or Entity)

From: City of Seaside Redevelopment Agency
(Lead Agency)

City of Seaside
Redevelopment Agency
440 Harcourt Avenue
Seaside, CA 93955
(831) 899-6737

Subject: Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft Environmental Impact Report for Seaside Main Gate Project

Project Applicant: Clark/General Growth

Public Review Period: NOP response period is from July 26, 2007 to August 25, 2007

NOP Scoping Meeting: A scoping meeting will be held to receive input on the EIR:
Tuesday, August 7, 2007 at 7:00 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall
440 Harcourt Avenue, Seaside

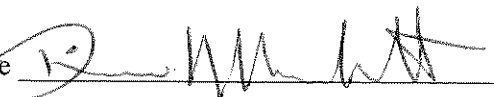
The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are discussed below.

The City of Seaside Redevelopment Agency will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Seaside Main Gate Project. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15082, states that once a decision is made to prepare an EIR, the lead agency must prepare a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform all responsible agencies of that decision. The purpose of the NOP is to provide responsible agencies and interested persons with sufficient information describing the proposed project and its potential environmental effects to enable them to make a meaningful response as to the scope and content of the information to be included in the EIR.

An NOP was previously released for this project in January 2007. The project was subsequently modified and this updated NOP is being circulated to address the most current design. This NOP requests comments from the public and public agencies on the scope of the EIR. Responses to the NOP will help the City of Seaside determine the scope of the EIR and ensure an appropriate level of environmental review. Documents related to the proposed project are available at Seaside City Hall, 440 Harcourt Avenue, Seaside.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. Please send your written responses to Diana Hurlbert, Senior Planner, at the address above. Please include in your response the name of a contact person in your agency.

Date 7/26/07

Signature 

I. INTRODUCTION

PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located in the City of Seaside, directly north of the City of Monterey and approximately 115 miles south of San Francisco, in Monterey County (refer to Figure 1). The project site is located on approximately 53 acres at the northwest corner of Lightfighter Drive and Second Avenue. The site is generally surrounded by the following: Highway 1 and state park land along the Pacific Ocean to the west; open space and existing military structures on lands planned for residential, retail, and office development to the north; recreational facilities of the California State University at Monterey Bay to the east; and lands within the City of Seaside planned for mixed uses to the south.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a Specific Plan and Tentative Subdivision Map to allow for two developments on the site: 1) a retail center on an approximately 46.17 acre parcel, and 2) a full service hotel/spa/conference center on an approximately 7.75 acre parcel. Two conceptual site plans showing the locations of proposed uses are attached for illustrative purposes (refer to Figures 2 and 3).

The proposed retail center will include up to 498,500 square feet of retail space and 61,000 square feet of restaurant space (with a department store anchor) *or* 378,500 square feet of retail space, 61,000 square feet of restaurant space, and a multiplex cinema (with no department store anchor). The retail center may include a two-story department store or a 16-screen multiplex cinema, along with bookstores, sporting goods stores, houseware stores, clothing stores, market/specialty foods, specialty retailers, and entertainment uses.

The proposed full service hotel/spa/conference center will include a 250-room nine-story hotel, and up to 24,000 square feet of spa facilities, 27,000 square feet of conference space, and 8,000 square feet of restaurant/dining space.

Structured and open-air parking is proposed to support all uses. Because the precise composition of the project will depend on City requirements and market conditions, the project includes an equivalency program to allow for the conversion of non-retail uses to retail uses, or retail uses to restaurant uses based on a maximum development scenario. For example, the multiplex cinema use may be replaced with a department store, or be reduced and replaced with other retail uses. The EIR will evaluate the maximum development scenario. Required entitlements for this project include, but are not limited to, approval of the Specific Plan, Tentative Subdivision Maps, Disposition and Development Agreements, and Statutory Development Agreements.

II. PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The environmental review of the project will focus on the following issues and probable environmental effects, as identified to date. The environmental analysis will address short-term (construction) and long term impacts.

Aesthetics: The EIR will evaluate the visual effects of the project, based on existing visual characteristics, impacts to scenic views, proposed site layout/design, and density of development. The visual analysis will consider the City's policies on protection of views and aesthetics and the Highway 1 Design Corridor Design Guidelines.

Agricultural Resources: According to the Important Farmlands Map, the site is designated as "urban/built-up or other" land, and would not impact agricultural operations or resources.

Air Quality: The EIR will describe the air quality of the area and provide an assessment of the potential air quality impacts of the project in compliance with the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District guidelines. Short-term air quality impacts associated with construction related activities will also be addressed.

Biological Resources: There are a number of sensitive biological resources that may occur on the project site, including Monterey spineflower, Smith's blue butterfly, and nesting raptors. A biological assessment will be performed as part of the EIR to identify site conditions, determine the presence/absence of sensitive species and habitats, and assess potential impacts from the project on these resources. The site also includes numerous trees that may be affected by proposed development. A tree survey and analysis of tree impacts will be included in the EIR.

Cultural Resources: The EIR will include an evaluation of cultural resources in the area and identify potential impacts from the project on any historic or archaeological resources.

Geology and Soils: The EIR will address potential soil, geologic, and geotechnical hazards on the site, based on a preliminary geotechnical/geologic report prepared for the property. Such hazards may include seismic concerns, problematic soil conditions, grading, and erosion.

Hazardous Materials/Health and Safety: The EIR will address potential hazards associated with development of the project site, including the presence of any hazardous materials associated with past or current uses, including former use of the area for military operations. Such materials may include agricultural chemicals, asbestos, and unexploded ordnance.

Hydrology, Drainage and Water Quality: The EIR will address drainage, flooding, and water quality conditions on the site, and evaluate proposed drainage facilities. Potential impacts from development could include increases in runoff and flooding potential, as well as potential degradation of water quality from increased erosion and sedimentation.

Land Use and Planning: The EIR will address land use compatibility and project compliance with applicable land use policies, including conformance with the City's General Plan, Redevelopment Plan and Updated Zoning Ordinance, as well as the Fort Ord Reuse Plan.

Noise: The EIR will describe the existing ambient noise levels in the vicinity, which are dominated by vehicular traffic. The EIR will assess the short-term (construction) and long-term (operational) noise impacts of the proposed project.

Public Services/Utilities: The EIR will describe the existing public service systems serving the project area and evaluate the public service impacts of the project, including increased demands for sanitary sewer, storm drain, and park services. The EIR will describe the available water supply resources and projected demand. This assessment will also address the proposed water system infrastructure to assess compliance with relevant standards and the adequacy of proposed storage and transmission capacity.

Traffic and Circulation: The EIR will describe the existing roadway system, and evaluate traffic impacts from development of the shopping center, based on a traffic analysis prepared for the project. Traffic impacts, including degradation of levels of service on affected roadways and freeways, adequacy of site access, and provision of parking will be addressed in the traffic study.

Growth Inducement: The EIR will evaluate the potential growth-inducing effects of the proposed development, including the creation of local jobs, impacts to city-wide jobs/housing balance and any improvements that may remove impediments to growth.

Cumulative Impacts: The EIR will evaluate the potential cumulative impacts of the project when combined with past, present and reasonably anticipated projects in the region. This evaluation will address (at a minimum) traffic, air quality, and public services.

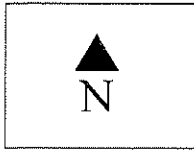
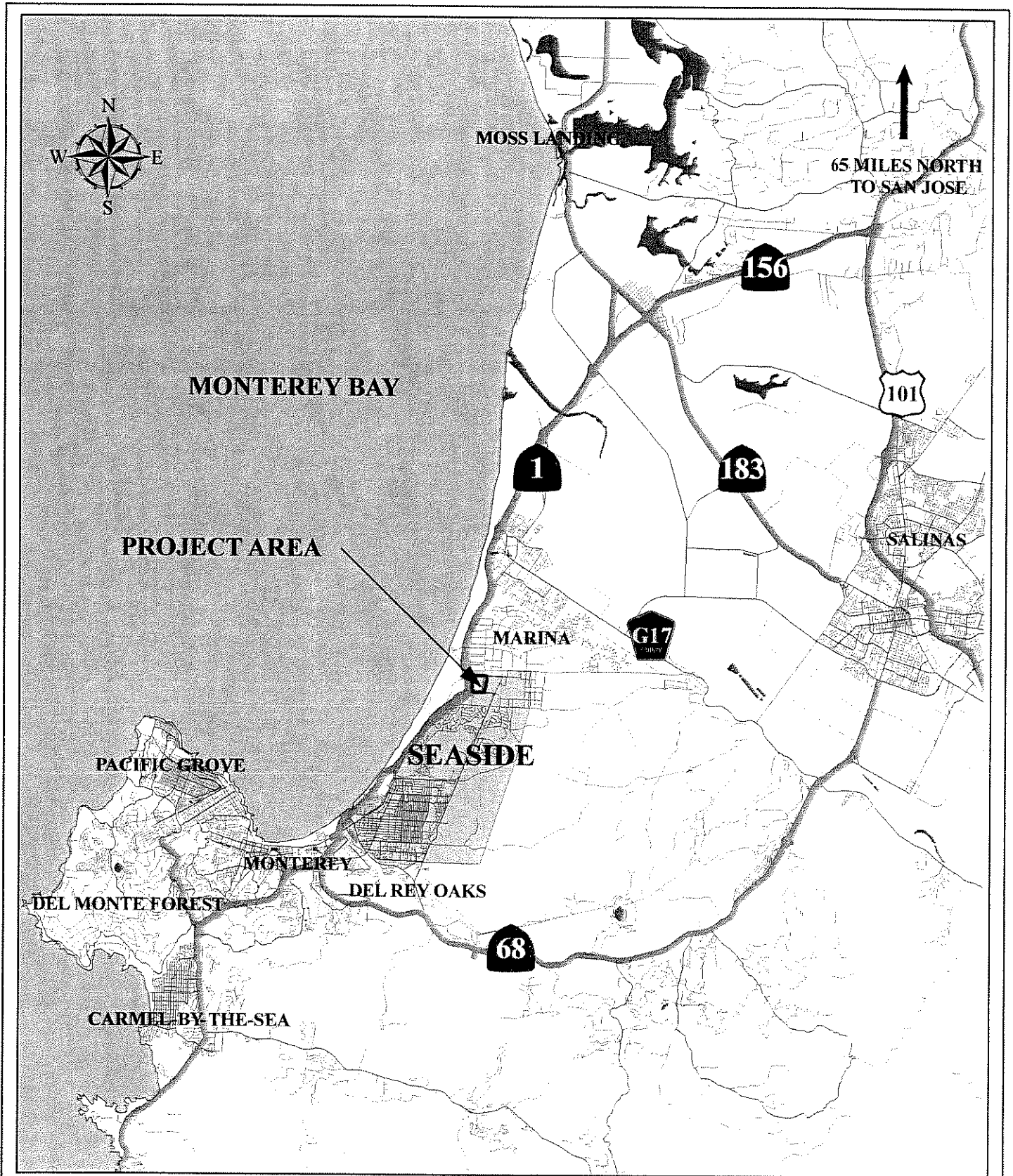
Alternatives: The EIR will consider a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that could feasibly obtain most of the basic objectives of the proposed project, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6.

Attachments:

Figure 1 Vicinity Map

Figure 2 Site Plan – Department Store Option

Figure 3 Site Plan – Cineplex Option



Project Vicinity Map

Figure
1

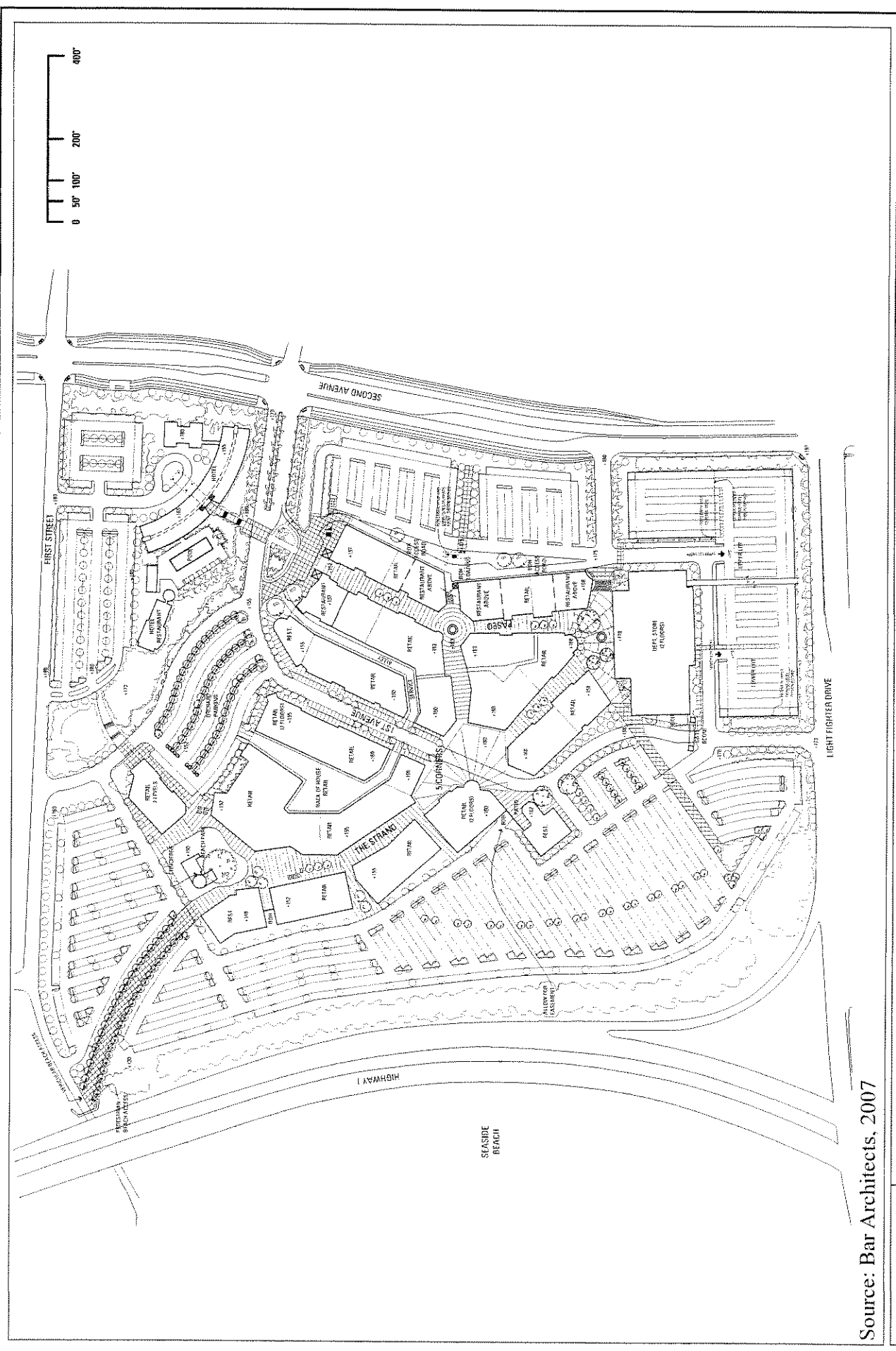
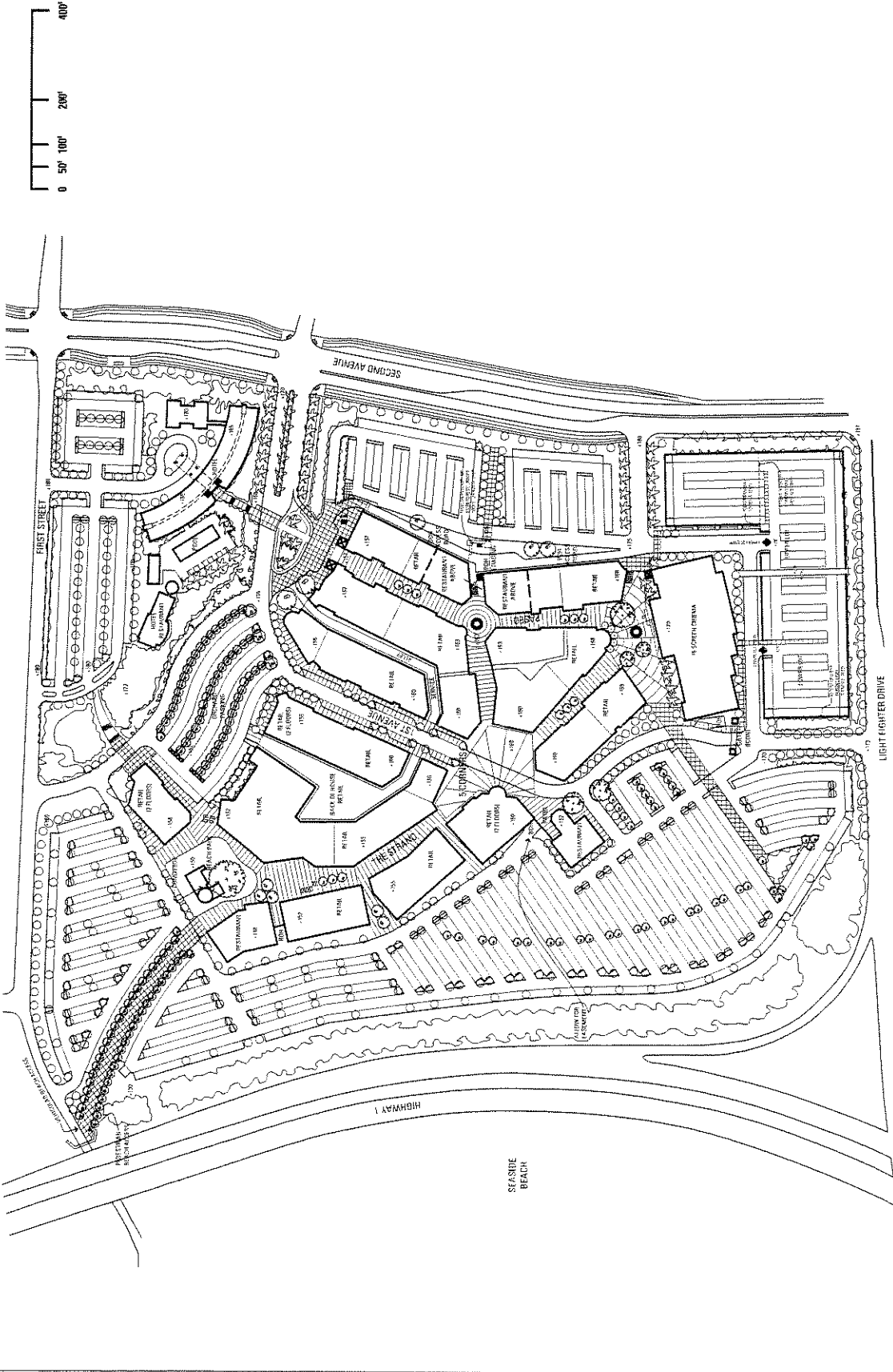


Figure 2

Site Plan Department Store Option

Source: Bar Architects, 2007





Source: Bar Architects, 2007



Site Plan Cineplex Option

Figure 3