



## CIRCULATION ELEMENT

### Introduction and Purpose

The Circulation Element is a required element of the City’s General Plan. Government Code Section 65302(b) states that a circulation element shall consist of: “...the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the plan.”

The overall purpose of the Circulation Element, as outlined by the State of California General Plan Guidelines is to:

- Coordinate the transportation and circulation system with planned land uses;
- Promote the efficient transport of goods and the safe and effective movement of all segments of the population;
- Make efficient use of existing transportation facilities;
- Protect environmental quality; and
- Promote the wise and equitable use of economic and natural resources.

This Element provides goals, objectives and policies that will help to control traffic volume and reduce traffic congestion in Carmel. Because the City is largely built-out, the focus of these policies is to maintain a safe environment for vehicle and non-motorized transportation (e.g. pedestrians and bikes) and encourage alternative modes of transportation to help minimize the adverse affects associated with single cars. Many of the policies in this Element are also part of the Local Coastal Land Use Plan and are noted as such (LUP).

This Element also includes supporting information that describes existing traffic volumes, traffic safety, parking, and alternate modes of transportation as well as findings gathered through the Community Survey (Survey). The Survey was prepared as part of the public outreach process to gain a broader response from the community, property owners, and businesses on issues facing Carmel. The complete Survey report can be found in Appendix A.

### Issues of Local Significance

Traffic in the City of Carmel is unique in that it experiences heavy peak periods during weekends and over the summer when there are a high number of tourist. Many of the visitors can be considered short-term or “day visitors,” who travel by car from other bay areas to Carmel and the Monterey Peninsula for the day. This “day visitor” phenomenon often places a burden on



Carmel's circulation and parking facilities, particularly in the downtown area and the Del Mar parking lot located at the west end of Ocean Avenue.

This Element addresses the following issues of local significance.

- Traffic Congestion and Circulation Patterns:
  - Traffic congestion in the commercial district,
  - Delivery trucks double parking,
  - Tour buses,
  - Seasonal traffic patterns, and
  - Pedestrian safety and auto/pedestrian conflicts at many of the downtown intersections.
- Parking:
  - Parking for residents, employees and visitors, and
  - On- and off- street parking supply.
- Alternate Modes of Transportation:
  - Bus service,
  - Local shuttle service, and
  - Bike routes.

## Goals, Objectives and Policies

**G2-1** Provide and maintain a transportation system and facilities that promotes the orderly and safe transportation of people and goods while preserving the residential character and village atmosphere of Carmel. (LUP)

**O2-1** Preserve the traditional grid pattern and two-way flow of most streets and ensure that street projects enhance pedestrian circulation in the community while minimizing the impact of motorized vehicles. (LUP)

**P2-1** Maintain the current street configurations. Maintain or reduce paving widths in the residential areas to maintain safe speeds compatible with pedestrian safety and circulation and to preserve the residential character. Ensure that changes to street configurations do not conflict with emergency vehicle access requirements and/or the requirements of the Emergency Operations Plan. (LUP)



- P2-2** Continue the City policy of not developing residential streets to full width.
- P2-3** Prohibit the construction of formal sidewalks and concrete curbs in the R-1 district. Allow informal pedestrian paths and drainage improvements where needed. Control other construction (e.g., retaining walls, pavement, etc.) in the City's public rights-of-way. (LUP)
- P2-4** Implement road maintenance and reconstruction practices that will preserve the hand-made appearance of City streets (e.g. meandering alignments, non-uniform surfaces, variable contours and informal edges). (LUP)
- P2-5** Continue to restrict street signs and only permit those signs that are necessary and essential for public safety. (LUP)
- P2-6** Maintain and encourage informal landscaped median strips and natural landscaped areas within public rights-of-way. (LUP)
- P2-7** Discourage high volume through-traffic. (LUP)
- P2-8** Prohibit the removal of significant trees within public rights-of-way except when required for health and safety. (LUP)
- P2-9** Review the traffic patterns on Scenic Road.
- P2-10** Continue to maintain the designated bus, truck, and bicycle routes as shown on Figure 2.2.
- O2-2** Ensure safety improvements are undertaken in response to the changing travel environment.
  - P2-11** Establish a program to collect and evaluate traffic collision data at critical collision locations for automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians.
  - P2-12** Improve traffic safety by installing and maintaining traffic signs, pavement markings, traffic calming measures such as pedestrian islands, and other pedestrian-friendly features, where necessary. Speed humps may be considered on a limited basis.



- P2-13** Ensure pedestrian safety in high traffic areas such as the intersection of Ocean and Junipero Avenues, and near the beach.
- O2-3** Preserve and enhance the qualities that contribute to the residential character of the community, including quiet neighborhoods, low levels of illumination, lack of nighttime activity, safe environment, pedestrian use of streets, and maintenance of property values by mitigating the adverse impacts of high volume through-traffic. (LUP)
- P2-14** Design and construct, where appropriate, roadway improvements which eliminate the adverse impacts of high volume through traffic. (LUP)
- P2-15** Recognize that the impact of a large number of non-resident vehicles including tourist buses is not consistent with the residential character of Carmel. Mitigate impacts on visual quality, circulation and ambience to the extent possible. (LUP)
- P2-16** Limit the distribution, character and intensity of land uses that generate increased levels of traffic beyond the capacity of the existing street system.
- P2-17** Consider ways to improve air quality as part of the review of land use and transportation projects.
- P2-18** Evaluate opportunities to improve parking and congestion near quasi-public land uses in the R-1 District, such as the Forest Theater and the Golden Bough Theater.
- O2-4** Recognize that it is not practical to provide sufficient parking that meets total demand at every location; but that it is desirable to provide, where practical, alternate parking where it could be removed from public view and in a scale appropriate to Carmel. (LUP)
- P2-19** Benefit to and impact on residents of Carmel-by-the-Sea and its visitors shall be the primary factors to be considered when evaluating and deciding upon development of off-street parking facilities. (LUP)
- P2-20** Encourage mixed-use developments on City owned lots in the downtown area (e.g. parking and housing).



- P2-21** Investigate possible public parking locations in the commercial areas, in the R-4 area, and existing sites devoted exclusively to parking in the R-1 district. If a parking structure is considered, encourage underground parking, and ensure that the structure is compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with the Design Guidelines.
- P2-22** Review and consider changes to the in-lieu parking regulations and develop a plan for utilization of the in-lieu fees.
- P2-23** Continue to maintain the residential parking permit system in designated residential areas and explore expanding the program to other impacted residential areas.
- P2-24** Work with local businesses in establishing ways to reduce employee parking impacts on neighboring residential and commercial areas.
- P2-25** Evaluate a paid parking program for the downtown.
- O2-5** Require that all new developments provide sufficient off-street parking facilities. (LUP)

  - P2-26** Adopt and enforce off-street parking and loading regulations that incorporate realistic requirements based on broad categories of land use as well as the amount of floor space and location of the property. Apply these requirements for all new development and for changes in use that will result in increased parking demand. (LUP)
  - P2-27** Avoid overbuilding parking capacity by using average demand factors instead of peak demand when establishing parking requirements and recognizing that street parking resources are part of the supply. (LUP)
  - P2-28** Use off-site parking and fees in-lieu of parking to meet parking demand generated by downtown commercial land uses. (LUP)
- O2-6** Encourage and participate in programs promoting alternative modes of transportation in Carmel.

  - P2-29** Evaluate pedestrian, bike, and local mass transit improvements. Implement improvements when appropriate through the Capital Improvement Program.



- P2-30** Work with appropriate agencies to seek funding for pedestrian and bicycle projects.
  - P2-31** Explore alternative forms of transit services, such as a bus shuttle, for the downtown, beach, and Carmel Mission.
  - P2-32** Establish an employee parking strategy that includes remote parking and shuttle services for the business district.
  - P2-33** Encourage businesses and their employees to participate in ridesharing, bus pass, and shuttle programs.
  - P2-34** Work with local business to provide information pamphlets on transit alternatives for distribution at local stores and hotels.
- O2-7** Maintain a sufficient supply of short-term parking with frequent turn over for the primary benefit of residents. (LUP)
- P2-35** Retain short-term parking spaces at the corner of each block to serve short-term parking needs. (LUP)
  - P2-36** Consider a parking management program for the commercial area to provide for the needs of residents, employees and visitors in the most appropriate locations in the commercial area. The parking program shall ensure that the City maintains adequate, convenient parking for residents and visitors alike. (LUP)
  - P2-37** Continue the City's strict enforcement of parking regulations.
  - P2-38** Continue to allow handicap parking without time limits in the Commercial District with the display of a handicap placard.
- O2-8** Establish and maintain a smooth flow of traffic within the City and support efforts to establish smooth traffic flows within the City's Sphere of Influence.
- P2-39** Recognize that truck deliveries and double parking are a traffic circulation problem and evaluate legal methods for improving circulation patterns; enforce the City's current policy which limits deliveries to one side of the street under certain conditions specified by law.



- P2-40** Explore removal of some on-street parking on some narrow commercial and residential streets concurrent with the addition of new off-street parking and the creation of loading zones to improve traffic circulation.
  
- P2-41** Establish traffic volume counting and monitoring procedures on an annual and seasonal basis for the purpose of establishing an accurate local database.



## Supporting Information

### Historical Background

The first streets in Carmel were unpaved paths between scattered structures. For many years after incorporation in 1916 the streets of Carmel remained unpaved although streets were ultimately developed in accordance with the original City plat as proposed by S.J. Duckworth.

Early photographs of the village reveal Ocean Avenue as an unpaved road extending through what would become the center of the commercial area. At that time, there was little need for sophisticated management of a circulation system. Automobile, pedestrian and equestrian traffic was low in volume and generally meant to serve the residents and the few occasional and seasonal visitors. During those early years of the twentieth century, gradual growth was encouraged by local realtors and merchants, but in keeping with a truly village atmosphere; paved streets, gas and electric service and plumbing were nonexistent. The paving of streets was considered “destructive” (Orth, 1970).

Regional transportation accompanied settlement of the Monterey Peninsula and the Carmel Valley area. The original highways were wagon trails. In the 1920s, several years after Carmel's incorporation, the Monterey Highway (now State Highway 1) was constructed.

In 1931, Ocean Avenue was paved for the first time. Median parking was provided in the now planted median strip. During the late thirties and early forties, median parking was removed from Ocean Avenue and by 1968, diagonal parking along both sides of Ocean Avenue was replaced by parallel parking (Askew, Department of Public Works, 1981). This transition greatly altered the appearance of Ocean Avenue; its present paved condition is in sharp contrast to the original unpaved road bisecting the sparsely settled village.

The streets are narrow in width, 26 to 34 feet, with few gutters or sidewalks. This lack of formal development of streets throughout Carmel (with the exception of some of the downtown thoroughfares) has been a conscious effort on the part of residents to maintain a “village in a forest” atmosphere.

### Traffic and Circulation Background

Carmel-by-the-Sea is a fully developed community with a distinct “village” character. The City’s charm along with cultural and recreational amenities attract many visitors to Carmel. As a developed community with a centralized commercial core surrounded by residential land uses, Carmel experiences many unique situations relating to traffic, circulation, parking and pedestrian safety.





The City has approximately 30 miles of paved roadway, the majority of which are narrow and with the exception of some thoroughfares in the downtown commercial district, the streets have no gutters or sidewalks. This design was intentional, to preserve the small village character desired by the residents and sought after by visitors. Contributing to the village character, streets are rarely paved to their full width and often meander around trees and landscaped areas.

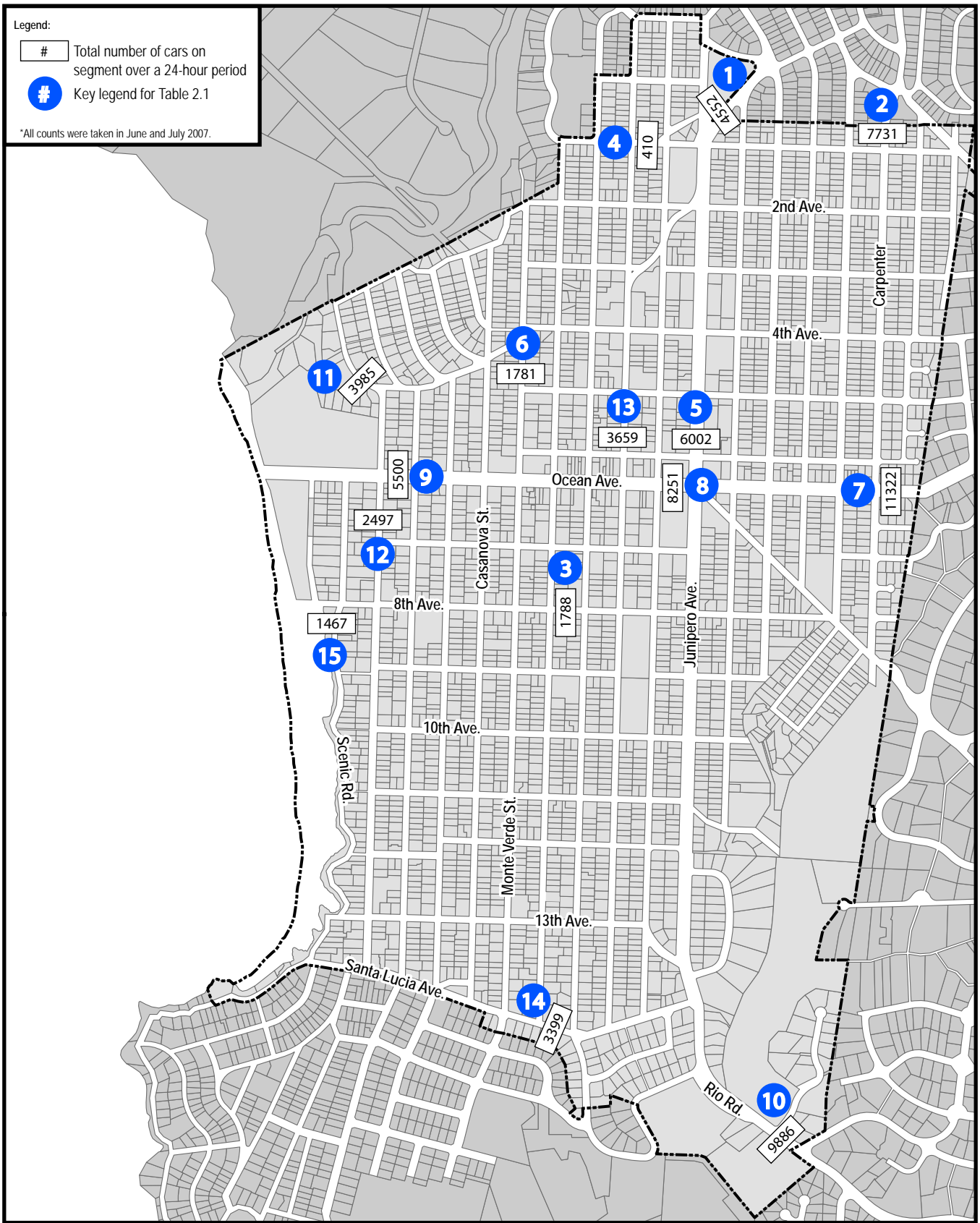
### Traffic Congestion/Circulation Patterns

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea traffic volumes are somewhat variable, depending upon the season, day of the week, or even time of the day. In summer and on most weekends throughout the year large numbers of tourists and smaller numbers of employees cause traffic volumes to increase on the major thoroughfares, particularly on Ocean Avenue.

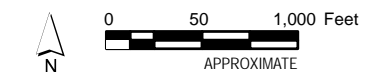
### Traffic Volumes

**Table 2.1: Traffic Volumes on Selected Carmel Streets**, provides traffic counts for various locations within the City, including areas within the commercial district, beach, and truck route. The traffic counts were performed during the months of June and July to record the highest traffic volumes experienced in the City.

As shown in **Table 2.1: Traffic Volumes on Selected Carmel Streets** and **Figure 2.1: Traffic Counts**, the highest volumes were recorded along the truck route (Carpenter Street, Junipero Avenue, and Rio Road) and Ocean Avenue. These roadways act as gateways into central Carmel and the Pebble Beach gate located on San Antonio Street and are the principal roadways within the City. In addition, traffic volumes on Ocean Avenue are partly due to motorists who make a scenic loop through Carmel by driving down Ocean Avenue to the beach, turning southbound onto Scenic Road and exiting on Santa Lucia Avenue/Rio Road back to Highway 1.



Source: RBF Consulting (2007)



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## Traffic Counts

Figure 2.1



Table 2.1: Traffic Volumes on Selected Carmel Streets

Key	Street	Segment	Volumes *
1	Camino Del Monte	At Junipero Avenue	4,552
2	Carpenter Street	North of First Avenue	7,731
3	Eighth Avenue	East of Lincoln Street	1,788
4	First Avenue	At Mission Street	410
5	Junipero Avenue	North of Sixth Avenue	6,002
6	Monte Verde Street	North of Fifth Avenue	1,781
7	Ocean Avenue	East of Carpenter Street	11,322
8	Ocean Avenue	West of Junipero Avenue	8,251
9	Ocean Avenue	East of San Antonio Avenue	5,500
10	Rio Road	At Ladera Drive	9,886
11	San Antonio Avenue	North of Fourth Avenue	3,985
12	San Antonio Avenue	North of Seventh Avenue	2,497
13	San Carlos Street	North of Sixth Avenue	3,659
14	Santa Lucia Avenue	West of Dolores Street	3,399
15	Scenic Road	South of Eighth Avenue	1,467

Notes:

\* The number represents total number of cars on the identified segment over 24-hour survey. The counts were performed in June and July of 2007.

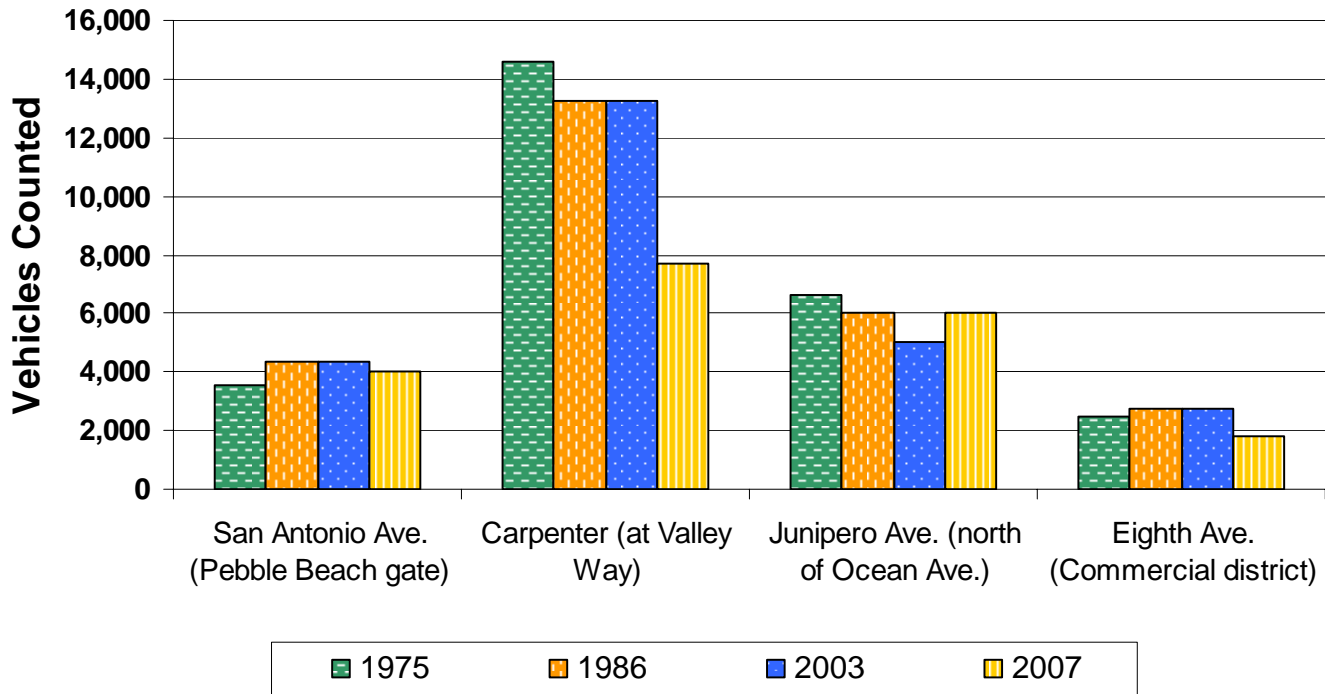
Source: RBF Consulting, 2007.

Graph 2.1: Daily Traffic Volume Comparison, illustrates traffic volumes for four areas within the City over the period of approximately 30 years. The areas compared include San Antonio Avenue (at Pebble Beach gate), Carpenter Street (at Valley Way), Junipero Avenue (north of Ocean Avenue), and Eighth Avenue (within the commercial district).



With the exception of Carpenter Street, daily traffic volumes have remained fairly consistent over the 30 year period. The segment of Carpenter Street in the vicinity of Valley Way has experienced a reduction in daily traffic volumes, particularly between 2003 and 2007<sup>1</sup>.

Graph 2.1: Daily Traffic Volume Comparison



Source: City of Carmel-by-the-Sea traffic volume counts (1975, 2003), RBF Consulting (2007).

<sup>1</sup> The reduction in daily traffic volume at the Carpenter and Valley Way intersection, was verified by comparing RBF Consulting’s 2007 counts to 2008 Higgins Associates counts. The 2008 counts for this intersection were prepared as part of a Traffic Impact Analysis for the Villas de Carmelo EIR. Counts were performed in August 2008. Based on the data provided in the Higgins Associates report, the daily traffic volume at Carpenter Street and Valley Way intersection is approximately 9,045 vehicles. This is consistent with the reduction of daily vehicle trips observed between 2003 and 2007.



### Commercial District Traffic

As a result of externally generated traffic associated with visitors and tourists, many of the downtown streets and intersections in the commercial district carry traffic volumes that exceed their design capacity, especially during the peak season and peak hours of use in the downtown area. Most of the visitors have destinations in the central six square block area of the downtown business district. This extremely heavy volume of traffic traveling into Carmel's small central business district was never anticipated many years ago.

There are two aspects to congestion downtown. One is congestion caused by too many cars; the other is the conflict between motorists and pedestrians. High vehicular travel counts are closely related to high pedestrian counts. The intersection most directly affected by vehicular/pedestrian conflicts is the San Carlos Street/Ocean Avenue intersection. Often, cars must wait for several pedestrians to cross before proceeding. This situation is compounded by the fact that there are no traffic signals in Carmel. The lack of traffic controls has been a specific directed action over the years in Carmel in order to preserve the residential character; although additional stop signs have been added in some locations to improve safety.

In addition, the flow of auto traffic is often impeded by the presence of trucks double parking on downtown commercial streets. On some streets two-way traffic is channeled into a single lane, resulting in traffic constrained by truck double parking. On Ocean Avenue, the problem of two-way traffic being channeled into a single lane is avoided due to the two-lane roadway in each direction. However, the higher traffic volume on Ocean Avenue, eliminates any benefits that the two lane layout provides.

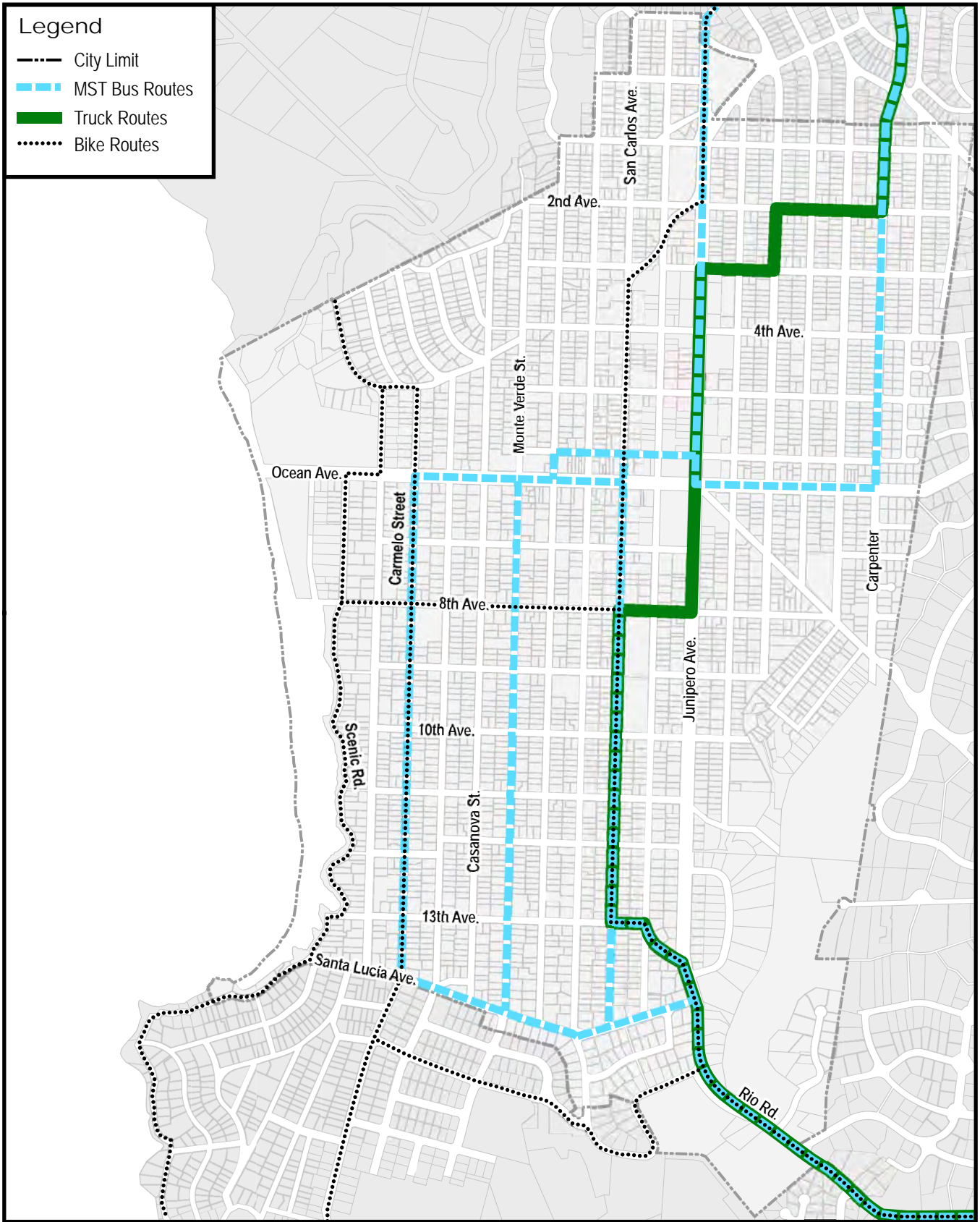
### Beach Traffic

During most of the year there is not enough vehicular traffic at the beach to cause congestion; but during the summer or on sunny weekends, there is congestion at the western terminus of Ocean Avenue at the Del Mar Parking lot. During peak periods the parking at the Del Mar parking lot and along Scenic Road is inadequate, and causes an intrusion of beach parking into nearby residential neighborhoods. However, much of the time there is more than adequate parking along Scenic Road, even when parking areas in the commercial districts are congested. In addition, the visual qualities of a drive on Scenic Road and the fact that it is a one-way street encourage low speeds and keeps traffic moving at all times.

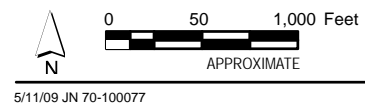
### Bus and Truck Routes

The width constraints due to design and topography affect not only residential streets, but also the access routes into the commercial district that serve larger vehicles such as trucks and buses. The City-designated truck and bus route forms a circular route from Highway 1 via Carpenter Street, Second Avenue, Santa Fe Avenue, Junipero Avenue, Eighth Avenue, San Carlos Street, Thirteenth Avenue, and Rio Road back to Highway 1 (see [Figure 2.2: Bus, Truck, and Bike Routes](#)).





Source: City of Carmel (2009), MST (2009), Carmel Bike Plan (1997)



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**Bus, Truck, and Bike Routes**

**Figure 2.2**



Vehicular Pedestrian Conflicts/Safety

Monterey Peninsula’s unique location, history, and cultural and recreational events attract as many as 10 million visitors each year and Carmel is one of the most popular tourist destinations (Carmel 2003b). The popularity of Carmel’s specialty shops, restaurants, and walkable downtown result in a significant number of pedestrians, particularly during the summer months. These large numbers of pedestrians, coupled with heavy traffic, often results in vehicle-pedestrian conflicts. A 2003 City-Wide Safety Study identified areas within the City which experienced accidents involving pedestrians. A majority of these incidents occurred within the commercial district area. Roadways in the vicinity of the ocean (Scenic Road, San Antonio Avenue, Ocean Avenue west of Carmelo Street) also experienced some accidents (Carmel 2003b).

As shown in Table 2.2: Traffic Accident Record for Carmel (2004 to 2008), the number of injury and non-injury accidents have been decreasing over the last five years. The highest number of incidents was recorded in 2004 and the lowest number of incidents was in 2007. The highest number of collisions with injury was recorded in 2004 and 2006, where 15 of the total incidents for each respective year resulted in an injury.

**Table 2.2: Traffic Accident Record for Carmel (2004 to 2008)**

Type of Accident	Average 2004-2008	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Collision without injury	85.8	105	97	96	61	70
Collision with injury	12.4	15	11	15	13	8
Total	98.2	120	108	111	74	78
Note: The values provided in this table represent accidents that were reported to the police. In addition to the reported incidents, there are cases in which parties involved in an accident exchange insurance information and do not notify police.						
Source: City of Carmel Police Department, 2009.						

Table 2.3: Vehicular-Pedestrian Conflicts for Carmel (2004 to 2008), provides the traffic accident records for incidents involving pedestrians. Of all the incidents reported between the 2004 and 2008, 14 were conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. The highest number of vehicle-pedestrian incidents were recorded in 2004 and 2007. The only fatality resulting from traffic accidents over the past five years occurred in 2007 at the intersection of Junipero and Ocean Avenues.



**Table 2.3: Vehicular-Pedestrian Conflicts for Carmel (2004 to 2008)**

Type of Accident	Average 2004-2008	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Vehicle-pedestrian Collision	2.8	4	2	2	4	2
Source: City of Carmel Police Department, 2009.						

The Survey performed by the City as part of the General Plan update process (2008) revealed that most respondents perceived a majority of the City’s neighborhoods as being safe for pedestrians. Areas identified as potentially unsafe included the intersections along Ocean Avenue within the commercial district (particularly Ocean and Junipero Avenues), as well as some areas around the beach and along Scenic Drive. Because these areas experience higher vehicular and pedestrian traffic, the chances of conflict increase.

### Parking

#### Parking Supply Off-Street

##### *Off-Street Parking Requirements*

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea Zoning Code defines parking requirements for each zoning district. Requirements for different land uses within residential and commercial zoning districts are listed below in [Table 2.4: Parking Standards](#). No on-site parking is required for residential apartments in the Central Commercial District.





**Table 2.4: Parking Standards**

Land Use	Basis for Requirement	R4	CC	SC	RC
Permanent Residential Use	Spaces per unit	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.5
Affordable Housing for Moderate, Low, or Very Low Income	Spaces per unit	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Senior Housing, Cooperative Housing or Group Care Facilities	Spaces per unit	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33
Nursing Home or Other Residential Care Facilities	Spaces per patient or resident	0.33	N/A	0.33	0.33
Transient Residential	Spaces per rental unit	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Commercial Retail and Other Uses	Spaces per 600 square feet of commercial floor area or per business/shop space, whichever is greater	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Hotels and Motels	Spaces per rental unit, including manager's unit	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: City of Carmel-by-the-Sea Zoning Code, 2009.

Existing developments are exempt from these requirements. However, if a development proposes remodeling or expansion, the new development would be required to comply with the above defined parking standards. In cases when unique circumstances such as site topography, shape or size, prevent a development from meeting the parking standard, City regulations allow for some flexibility, such as parking at another location.

The City also allows for payment of in-lieu of parking fees, as long as a development is not a hotel or a motel. The money goes into the City's In-Lieu Parking Fund and is used only for the acquisition and development of off-street parking in or near the commercial district. The amount of the fee is determined based on current construction costs of a 400 square foot parking space, plus 50 percent to reflect the cost of land. This fee is required for each full in-lieu parking space.

*Public Off-Street Parking*

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea owns and maintains 14 public parking lots providing 423 parking spaces within and adjacent to the City's commercial district. [Figure 2.3: Public Off-Street Parking](#) and [Table 2.5: Off-Street Parking Facilities](#), provide the location and number of spaces provided in each facility.



Source: RBF Consulting (2007)



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**Public Off-Street Parking**

**Figure 2.3**

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**Table 2.5: Off-Street Parking Facilities**

Key	Lot Name	Street	Between/At	Total Spaces
1	Vista Lobos	Torres Street	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenues	63
2	Norton Court	Dolores Street	5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	40
3	Post Office	Dolores Street	5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	18
4	Harrison Library	6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	Lincoln Street	5
5	Park Branch Library	6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	Mission Street and Junipero Avenue	17
6	Ocean Avenue	Ocean Avenue	Camino Real and Casanova Street	10
7	Ocean Avenue	Ocean Avenue	Casanova and Monte Verde Streets	17
8	Ocean Avenue	Ocean Avenue	Camino Real and Casanova Street	14
9	Ocean Avenue	Ocean Avenue	Casanova and Monte Verde Streets	12
10	City Hall	Monte Verde Street	Ocean and 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenues	8
11	Sunset Center	8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	Mission Street	137
12	Sunset Center	San Carlos Street	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	34
13	Sunset Center	San Carlos Street	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	18
14	Sunset Center	Mission Street	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	30
TOTAL				423
Source: City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, 2007.				

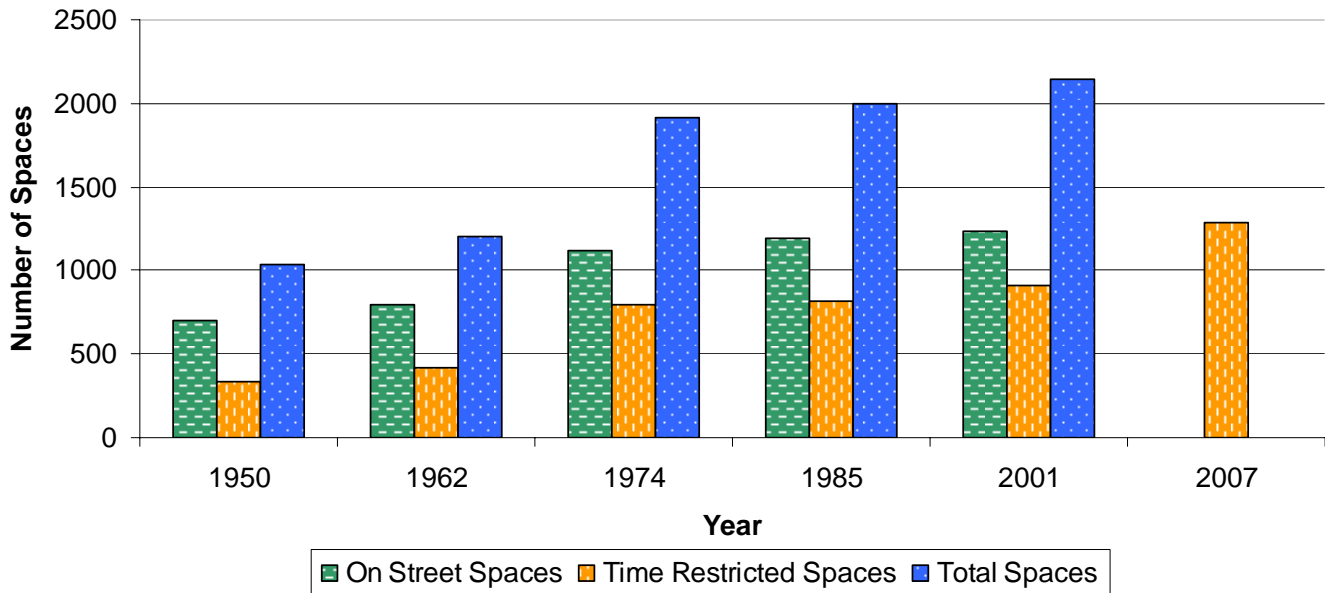
Parking Supply On-Street

In addition to off-street parking, the City also includes a substantial number of on-street parking. As shown in [Graph 2.2: Commercial District Area Parking Supply](#), the number of parking spaces provided within the City’s core has increased significantly over the years. As of 2007, about 1,790 parking spaces exist throughout the business district. 1,284 of these spaces are timed curbside stalls. The remaining spaces are scattered throughout the City including Sunset Center, Del Mar, Scenic Drive, Vista Lobos, the Park Branch Library, and City Hall. Of the 1,284 timed spaces in the business district there are 773 public curbside parking spaces designated as 2-hour timed zones. In addition, there are 113 thirty minute (green) zones, many of which are located on Ocean Avenue or on side streets that run north and south of Ocean Avenue.



Graph 2.2: Commercial District Area Parking Supply

### Commercial District Area Parking Supply



Note: The 2007 parking survey focused on the time restricted spaces in the business area.  
Source: City of Carmel by-the-Sea, 2009.

#### Residential Parking Permit

Two factors contribute to heavy use of the residential area surrounding the commercial district for parking by nonresidents. First is the minimal number of long-term parking spaces within the commercial district itself, which forces the all day parker into surrounding areas. Second, the consistent use of short-term spaces within the commercial district by all-day employee parkers perpetuates the practice of visitors being forced to park in the commercial periphery.

To limit tourist and visitor parking in the residential areas, the City established a residential parking permit program in the R-1 and R-4 residential zoning districts in 1981. The permit can be issued to persons residing in either of these zones, who can prove ownership of the residence and vehicle subject to the permit. The residential permit also allows residents to park in the downtown area for extended periods (three hours in parking spaces marked for 120-minute parking and double time in green parking spaces, with the exception of 10-minute timed zones).



### Parking for Individuals with Disabilities

The City of Carmel has a total of 54 parking spaces in downtown marked as handicapped zones. Twenty six of these spaces are either on public streets or publicly owned/maintained parking lots. The remaining 28 spaces are on private lots with commercial uses such as banks and shopping center parking lots.

In addition to these pre-designated spaces, the City is subject to the California Vehicle Code. Section 22511.5(a) allows disabled persons to park for unlimited periods of time in any metered parking space without being required to pay a parking meter fee. This requirement allows all persons with handicapped license plates and/or tags to park in any time-enforced parking zone within the City for unlimited periods of time.

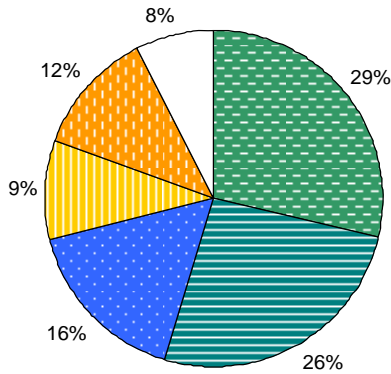
### Community Opinion on Parking

Based on the Survey, residents do not perceive parking in the commercial district as a problem in their daily lives. The respondents reported finding adequate parking in the commercial district without much frustration. However, the respondents recognize that this is not often the case for the tourist and visitors to the commercial district, who often have a hard time finding parking.

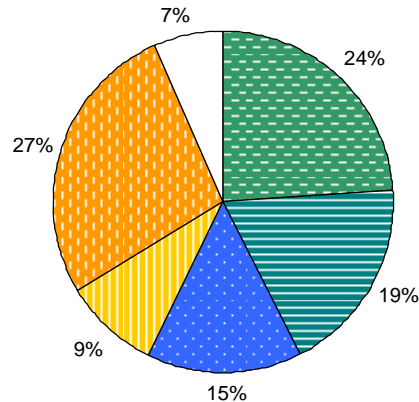
As illustrated in [Graph 2.3: Commercial District Parking Needs](#), over 50 percent of respondents agreed that the City needs more parking serving the commercial district. However, only slightly over 40 percent agreed that the City should build a parking structure (see [Graph 2.4: Parking Structure Opinion](#)).



Graph 2.3: Commercial District Parking Need



Graph 2.4: Parking Structure Opinion



■ 1 = strongly agree	■ 2 = somewhat agree	■ 3 = Neutral/ No opinion
■ 4 = Somewhat Disagree	■ 5 = Strongly disagree	□ No Response

Source: City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, 2008.

Most respondents felt that a parking structure built either at Sunset Center or Vista Lobos would primarily serve shoppers and visitors to Carmel’s commercial district, and therefore, those users should pay for the parking structure while residents and employees should park for free (see Appendix A).

### Public Transit and Alternate Modes of Transportation in Carmel

#### Bus Service

The Monterey/Salinas Transit (MST) serves a 280 square-mile area of Monterey County and Southern Santa Cruz County, including Carmel-by-the-Sea. The MST has 37 bus routes, five of which travel through Carmel (Routes 4, 5, 7, 11, and 22). Three of the routes (Routes 5, 7, and 11) travel to Ocean Avenue and return north, to Highway 1 and other Peninsula cities. The remaining two bus routes (Route 4 and 22) service more extensive areas within the City, which include the neighborhoods south of Ocean Avenue and west of Junipero Avenue. These two routes exit on Highway 1 south of the City and travel to the Crossroads Center (Route 4) and then further south down the coast (Route 22). Figure 2.2: Bus, Truck, and Bike Routes, shows the location of the bus routes within the City of Carmel.

In cooperation with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, MST also offers the MST RIDES ADA program. The MST RIDES ADA program offers curbside-to-curbside transportation service to eligible passengers as a ride-share program.



### Bike Route

The bike routes within the City of Carmel are designated Class III bike paths. Class III bike paths require signage identifying the bike route. However, no pavement markings are required. [Figure 2.2: Bus, Truck, and Bike Routes](#), shows the location of bike routes within the City (Carmel 2000).

Scenic Road is considered a prime bike route in the City. However, as cyclists cannot legally ride north on Scenic Road, riders in this direction are directed onto Carmelo Street. San Carlos Street provides a good north-south route in the uphill and downtown areas due to its convenience, good pavement and wide shoulders, medium levels of traffic, and visual quality (Carmel 2000).

### Shuttle Service

The City continues to evaluate a possibility for a local shuttle, which would service the areas within the City limits. The most probable shuttle route would likely commence at the Vista Lobos parking lot, travel through the commercial district, west to the beach, then back east to the Sunset Center, ending at the Mission.

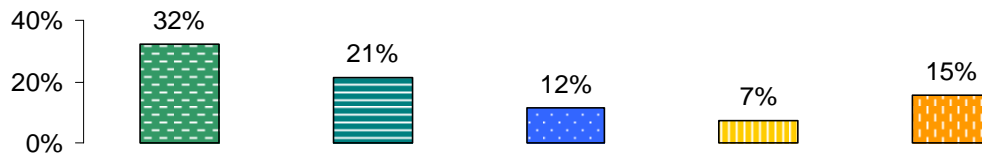
### Community Opinion on Public Transportation

Based on the findings of the Survey, most of Carmel residents do not currently use public transportation and would not use a bus, even if it becomes more convenient. While most of the residents don't see themselves using public transportation, there is support for introducing a local shuttle that would serve visitors, tourists, and shoppers in the City (see [Graph 2.5: Carmel-by-the-Sea Local Shuttle](#)).

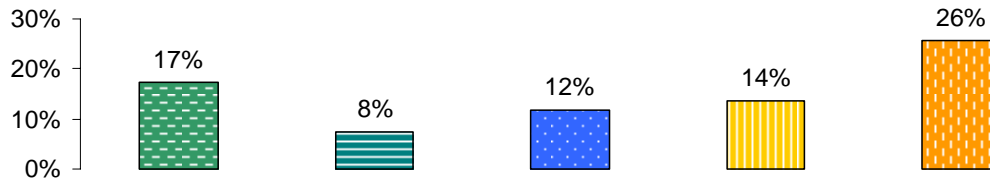


**Graph 2.5: Carmel-by-the-Sea Local Shuttle**

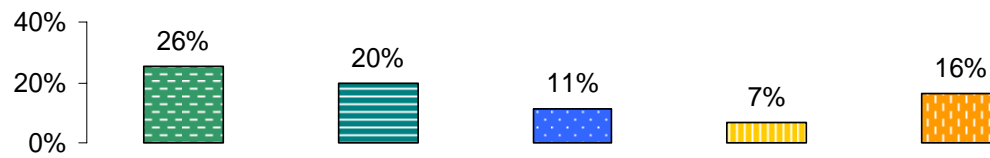
*Provide Local Shuttle in Carmel-by-the-Sea*



*Shuttle Not Appropriate for Carmel-by-the-Sea*



*Provide Local Shuttle for Visitors*



1 = strongly agree    2 = somewhat agree    3 = Neutral/ No opinion  
4 = Somewhat Disagree    5 = Strongly disagree





### Circulation Element References

City of Carmel, 2000, Consideration of the Carmel-by-the-Sea Bikeways Plan, October 2000.  
(Carmel 2000)

City of Carmel, 2003, City of Carmel-by-the-Sea, California: City-Wide traffic Safety Study,  
October 2003. (Carmel 2003b)