



Fort Ord Assimilation



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Introduction

What is Fort Ord Assimilation?

The Fort Ord Army Base closed down in 1994. The land was divided into chunks to be managed by Seaside, Marina and Monterey County among other entities as designated by the Fort Ord Base Reuse Plan. Seaside East (Figure 1), is a strip of this old army base land that will be developed by the City of Seaside. Seaside plans to build a new city hall on the property, in addition to allowing up to 800+ residential units with accompanying retail, 2000-3000 new jobs in a business park development designed for medical research and light industrial, and connected green space that would include flexible community fields for events like youth soccer and community gathering places (Figure 3). Our Capstone project was to find out what the community thought of this plan, interview a wide variety of stakeholders, and report back with concrete information and our vision for what this land could be.



Figure 1. Seaside East Area (in orange).

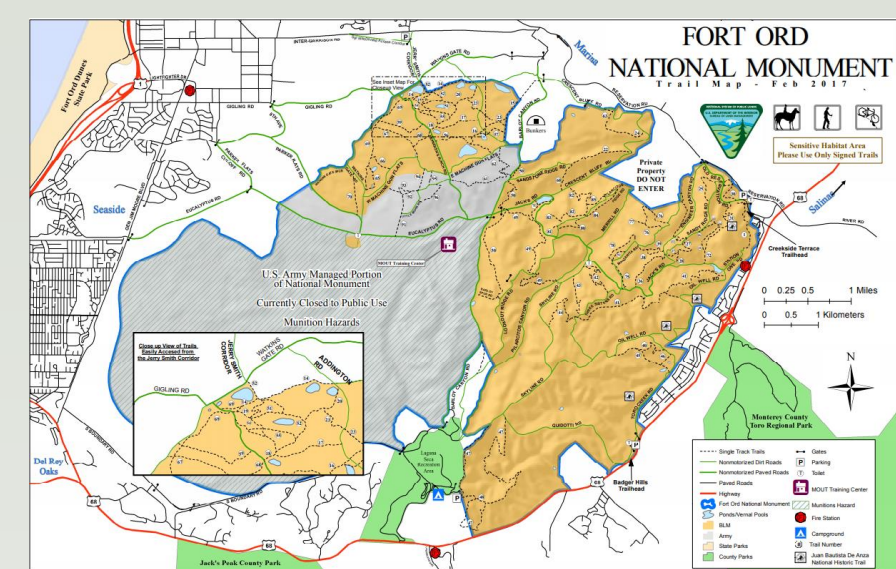


Figure 2. Fort Ord National Monument.

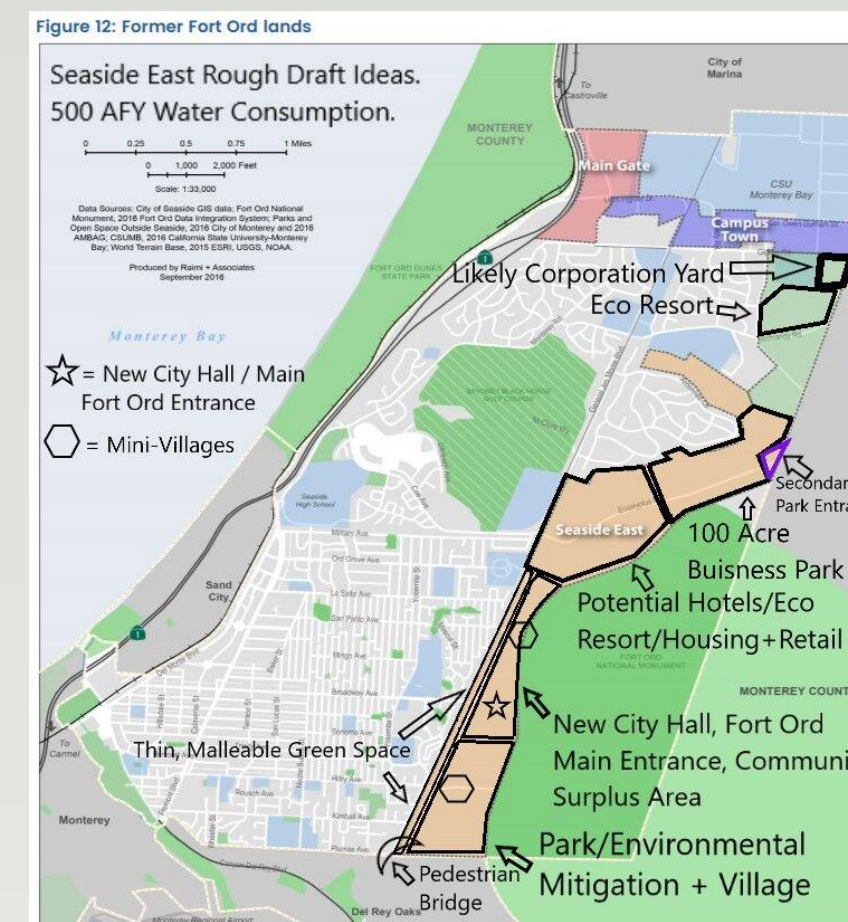


Figure 3. Seaside East City of Seaside Proposal

Project Goals

1. Gather Seaside's community input for Seaside East priorities by April.
2. Identify the challenges and possible solutions for Fort Ord's integration into the larger community by April.
3. Present a cohesive, well reasoned set of ideas for the community to discuss and use by May.

Background and History

When Fort Ord Army base was closed down, the community was left with a substantial economic void to replace in addition to filling out 28,000 acres (the size of San Francisco) with new purposes. Under the Fort Ord Base Reuse Plan, 20,700 acres were set aside for conservation while 7,300 acres were designated for future development (Figure 4). The 7,300 acres of land designated for development were fully environmentally offset. Legally, you could clear-cut this land because other parts of the base were preserved under the Fort Ord Base Reuse Plan. Seaside East falls entirely within the offset 7300 acres.

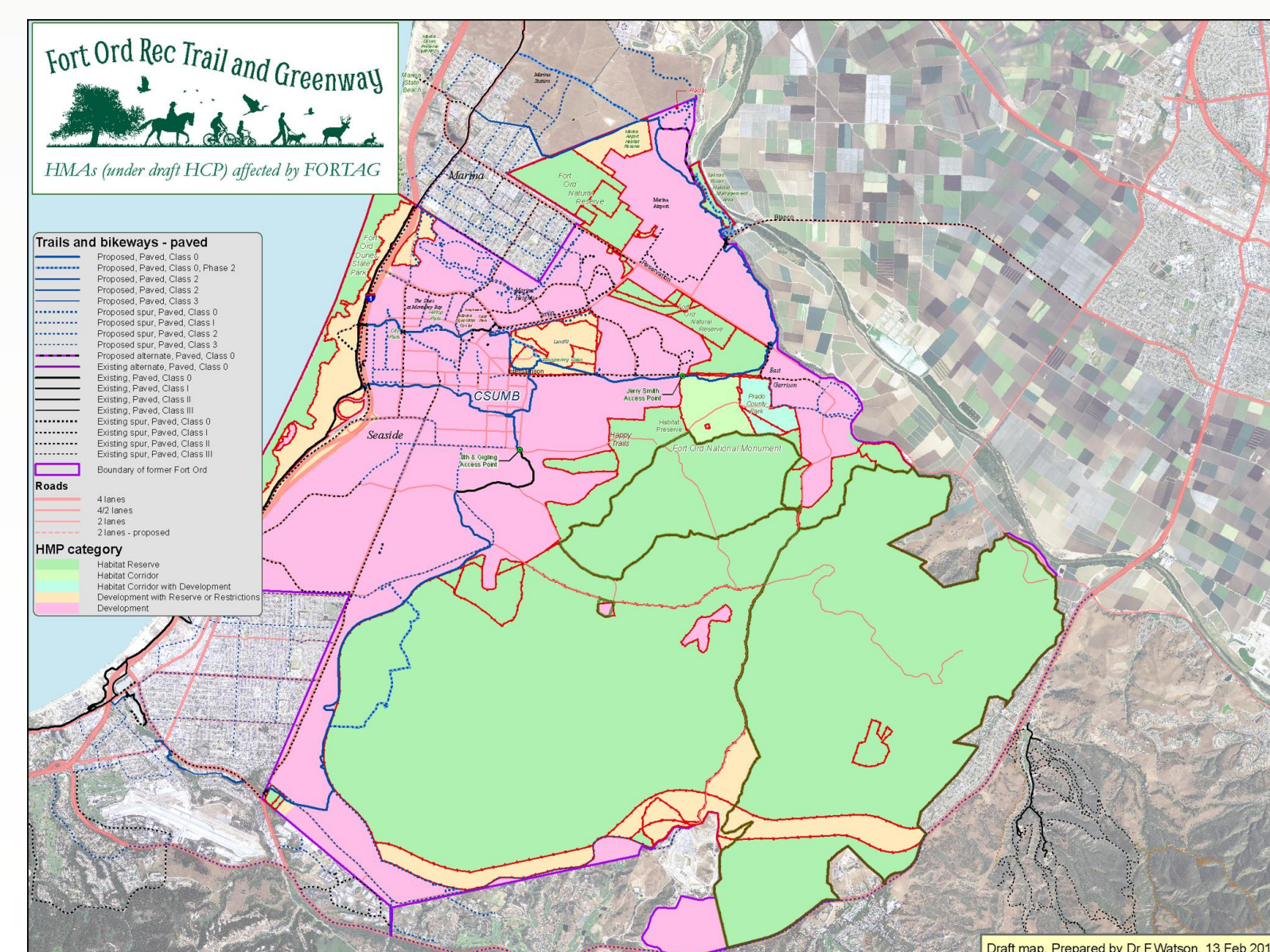


Figure 4. The old Fort Ord Base footprint, and the land now dedicated to Conservation or Development.

Methods

Our group utilized interviews with snowball sampling as our primary tool for gathering information (Given, 2008). In our case, faced with scarce information, we interviewed an expert, gathered knowledge, and reached out to another expert based on the new knowledge and questions we acquired. This qualitative research approach was used to understand the underlying motivations and reasons of the various stakeholders we identified. By April our group had conducted 8 interviews and reached a saturation point of information (Given, 2008). At this point, we felt confident about the identity of the current landscape, and our ability to draw conclusions from what we knew. In addition to asking broad questions of stakeholders, we also used geospatial analysis to flesh out more specific and relevant information pertaining to our project that encapsulates the land planning of Fort Ord and Seaside East.

February	March
Focus shifted to Seaside East exclusive project per Seaside recommendation. Preliminary Interview conducted.	Seaside East development concepts explored through interviews with diverse stakeholders. Broader Realization that Fort Ord assimilation needed to be addressed for a holistic solution.
April	May
Found model for land management with Cal Poly's Swanton Ranch, for a CSUMB/MPC join management concept	Group finished information gathering process. Started synthesizing data for final presentation.
	Completed final analysis and presentation posters. Final presentation.

Discussion

Fort Ord Assimilation & Ecotourism

Ecotourism has been the tool used to uphold conservation of the environment. It is one of the tools governing bodies, agencies, and non-profit organizations utilize to manage regional environments through tourism. Ecotourism can lessen impacts on the environment, implement environmentally sustainable methods at certified cites, and provide conservation funding for endangered habitats (Cater & Cater, 2007). For Seaside East and Fort Ord our team envisioned:

- Hotels
- Well managed parks
- Bike rentals
- Camping
- Eco-resorts

Moving on to the county land in the base footprint of Fort Ord, the land should be operated by CSUMB and MPC. Cal Poly followed this strategy and now operates Swanton Ranch for the purpose of a living laboratory. This would benefit CSUMB and MPC by:

- Providing hands on education
- Improving majors
- Potential job opportunities

Seaside East

During our project with the Fort Ord Assimilation, we established 3 main focuses pertaining to what should be developed south of Eucalyptus and General Jim Moore Road. The three main ideas here are the relocation of Seaside's city hall and corporate yard, introducing a business technology office strip, and development of affordable residential housing supported by retail. From stakeholder interviews, we believe that the new city hall be located between Seaside's active Broadway Ave and General Jim Moore Road. The city hall would be accompanied by green space allowing for events and gatherings for the community to host and attend. The introduction of the Business Technology strip would allow Seaside to expand its technology sector and start increasing economic revenue by employing more educated graduates with high paying salaries. This strip would be best utilized if put along Seaside's current job heat sector south of the city (as seen in Figure 7) and stretching potentially eastward. There is a demand for more affordable housing in the community so development of residential housing with retail could potentially provide affordable housing with close walking distance to retail centers and the city hall green space for events and recreational sports like soccer.

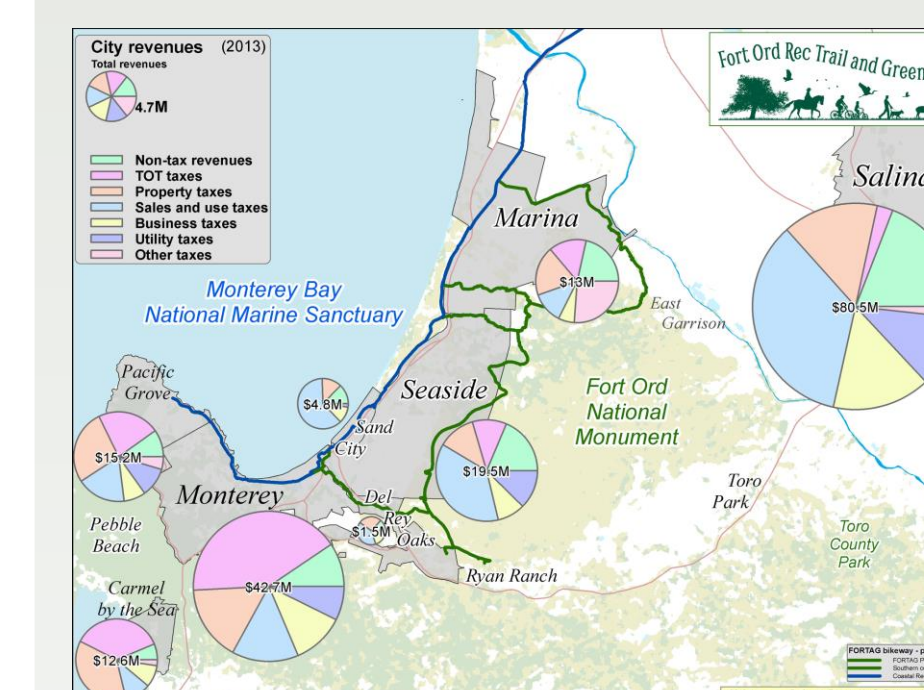


Figure 5. Seaside Economic Revenue

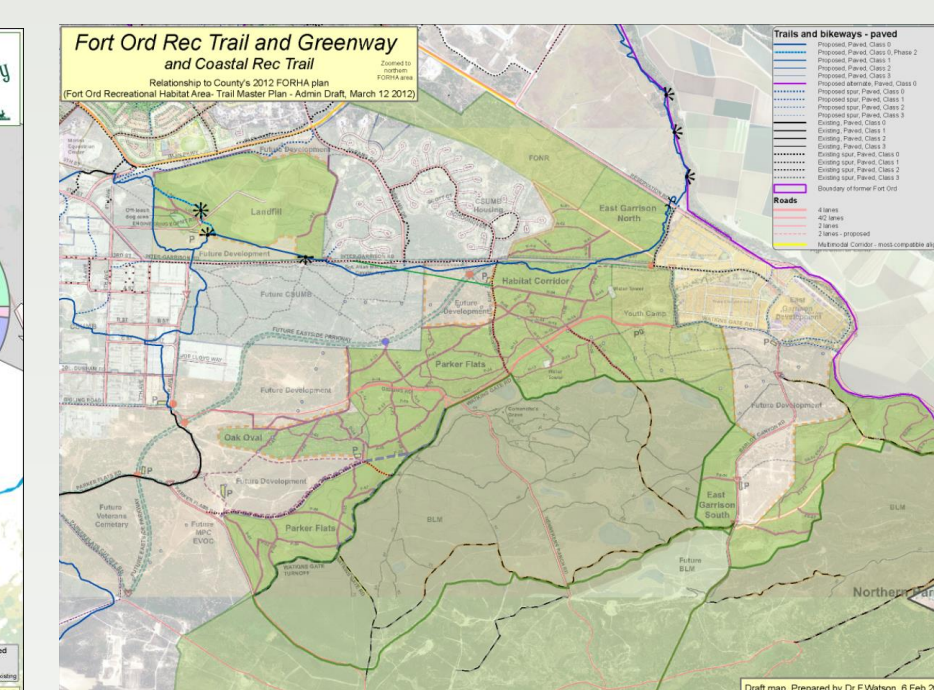


Figure 6

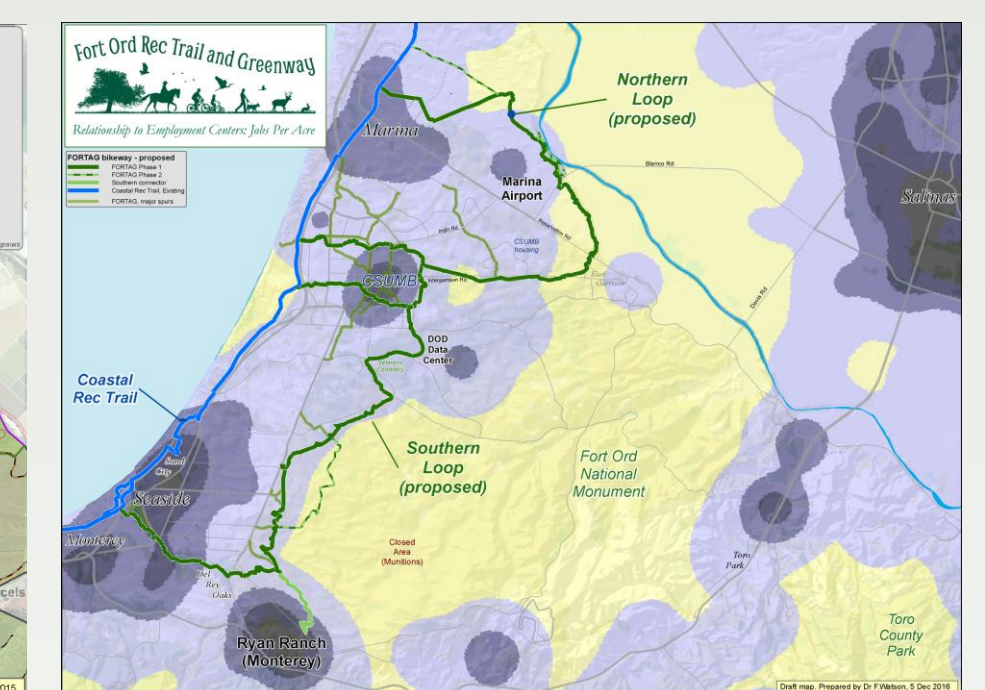


Figure 7. Seaside Employment Heat map

Acknowledgments

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