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Seaside Co. buys oceanfront motel for \$1.7 million

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SANTA CRUZ — The owner of the Beach Boardwalk added a prime oceanfront property to his holdings Tuesday.

Charles Canfield, owner of the Seaside Co. which operates the Boardwalk, closed a deal to buy the Sea and Sand Motel on West Cliff Drive. It is next door to the city's second biggest hotel, the 10-story, 163-room

Dream Inn. The Holiday Inn on Ocean Street has 170 rooms.

Canfield bought the 20-unit motel for nearly \$1.7 million from the previous owners, J.R. and Mary H. Carlisle, according to documents on file at the county Recorder's Office. Escrow on the property closed Tuesday.

The Seaside Co. plans to refurbish and then re-open the motel, according to company General Manager Ed Hutton. The motel closed Tuesday and will remain

closed "a short while," Hutton said.

The company owns another local motel, the Carousel, as well as significant holdings in the beach area, including the aging La Bahia apartments on Beach Street, across from the Boardwalk.

The La Bahia has been long seen as the site for a Seaside Co.-owned hotel, a deal that has involved considerable wrangling with city officials. At present, a La Bahia hotel is not "financially feasible" for the

Seaside Co., Hutton said, although the company is looking at a smaller project for the site that may make better financial sense.

He said the company has no plans to use the Sea and Sand property for a hotel. For one thing, Hutton said, the parcel is too narrow and for another, parking is limited.

What it does have is a "spectacular ocean view," Hutton said, adding, "that's why Mr. Canfield got excited about it."