



City of Grover Beach

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: 6, 2004

Ronald C. Anderson, Jr., City Manager

GROVER BEACH CITY COUNCIL TAKES ACTION TO STIMULATE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

At the meeting of Monday, October 4, 2004, the Grover Beach City Council directed staff to revise the Grover Beach Municipal Code (GBMC) to facilitate the revitalization of established neighborhoods. This was in response to concerns that had surfaced over the past year or so regarding the financial disincentives that exist in the current GBMC regarding the completion of the infrastructure. The elements of the infrastructure involved include the following:

- **Underground Utilities** – The GBMC requires that electric, telephone, and cable TV transmission wiring be installed underground.
- **Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk** - The GBMC requires that these concrete improvements be installed.
- **Water Main Upgrades** - City policy requires that applicants either wait for the City to upgrade substandard water mains before they remodel or build in-fill homes, or extend a standard main to serve their property at their own cost.

In the case of the **underground utility** requirement, the City Council directed staff to initiate the process to amend the GBMC to exempt remodeling and in-fill projects in established neighborhoods from this requirement. There were two reasons for this. The first is that the policy has been ineffective in eliminating visual blight. In fact in many cases additional utility poles have had to be installed in order to provide an underground service to a remodeling or in-fill project. The second was that the costs for this requirement could exceed \$10,000 to \$15,000, which has acted as a financial disincentive to revitalizing established neighborhoods.

With regard to the **concrete improvements** requirement, the Council directed staff to initiate the process to amend the GBMC to revise the formula that is used to trigger the requirement to install concrete improvements. The new trigger formula will be based on square footage, and it will trigger the requirement for concrete improvements whenever the remodeling project exceeds 40 percent of the current structure. The current trigger is based on valuation, and because it has not been updated in over ten years, even minor remodeling projects were being required to install concrete improvements.

Water main upgrades were only triggered in locations that have substandard mains. The Council directed staff to revise City policies to require the Water Fund to pay to install the upgrades to the water distribution system. This will involve investigating options for spreading these improvements out over a five- to ten-year period or selling revenue bonds to make the improvements over a one- to two-year construction period. If bonds are sold, the costs would be spread out over time through the payment of debt service.

The bottom line is that the City Council has acted to make it *less expensive* for City residents to revitalize their established neighborhoods, and the Council has given direction that will result in *improving the public infrastructure* in those neighborhoods.

In related matters, the City Council has established a Second-Story Roof-Deck Policy, and will be considering a Coastal View-Shed Policy next month. The lack of clear policies in these areas has also had a negative impact on the revitalization of established neighborhoods.

#

Distribution:

Media: Times Press Recorder / The Tribune
Mayor and City Council Members
Department Directors
Managers