

Consensus Vision

The following discussion provides a summary of the Final Visioning Report and Consensus Vision as presented by Design, Community and Environment to the City of Grover Beach February 2006.

All participants in the workshops collectively endorsed the following common goals with the intent that they would serve as the foundational parameters around which the anticipated LUE update would be guided.

1. Revitalize West Grand Avenue, particularly through promotion of mixed-use development.
2. Create an attractive waterfront that includes tourist amenities.
3. Create defined gateways at the entrances to the City.
4. Preserve and enhance the “beach community” feel through unique style of the Central Coast.
5. Increase and broaden the City’s tax base, and
6. Foster a resort and destination community.

These common goals were then refined to address eight specific segments of the community which formed the Consensus Vision. They are defined and summarized as follows:

West Grand Avenue

- Create a defined “Civic Center” node between 8th and 10th Street, one block north and south of West Grand Avenue. This node should incorporate the Ramona Park complex (part of the South County Transit Facility) as a public space, with pedestrian connections to Grand Avenue.
- Create a Distinct Tourist-Serving Retail node at 4th Street and West Grand Avenue. This area should extend west to the railroad tracks, one block on each side of West Grand Avenue. The vision is to include cafes, restaurants, lodging and other related venues that cater to visitors and residents.
- Limit building heights to three stories, except in key areas. Buildings along West Grand Avenue should be limited to two and three stories in most cases. Taller buildings (three or four stories) could be considered on a case-by case basis in limited areas such as at the intersection of 4th Street and West Grand Avenue, 16th Street and Oak Park Blvd., and the new Civic Center Node. Five story buildings should not be allowed on West Grand Avenue.
- Add pedestrian amenities. Pedestrian amenities should extend along the entire West Grand Avenue corridor to improve the pedestrian experience and to create a sense of place. Suggestions for amenities include street trees, pedestrian-oriented light fixtures, benches and wider sidewalks.
- Employ traffic calming techniques. To ensure a pedestrian-friendly environment, traffic calming tools such as defined crosswalks, landscaped medians, and bulb-outs should be incorporated, especially in the Civic Center Node and the 4th Street and West Grand Avenue Node. Adding one-way couplets on either side of West Grand Avenue also help reduce vehicle traffic on West Grand Avenue, thereby creating a more pedestrian friendly environment.

Beachfront Lodge Site

There was broad support for developing a lodging facility and conference center on the Beachfront Lodge site at Pismo State Beach, at the end of West Grand Avenue adjacent to Pacific Coast Highway.

Mobile Home Park Site

Consensus was reached that occupied mobile home park units on the parcel bounded by Park Lane and the Pacific Coast Highway should be preserved as a source of affordable housing, which could be integrated with new retail and other commercial uses. Retail and other commercial uses should only be allowed in the short-term camping area between Le Sage Drive and West Grand Avenue, and only if the monarch butterfly preserve remains protected.

Existing Industrial Areas

Consensus was reached to preserve the industrial area south of Farroll Road. These industrial properties contribute to the City's job base and should not be moved out of the community. In the areas immediately to the north and south of West Grand Avenue, a mix of uses, including commercial, residential, workforce housing and light industrial uses should be allowed to avoid conflicts with residential uses and to create better synergies with the West Grand Avenue commercial corridor.

4th Street Corridor

Although opinion varied regarding changes to the 4th Street corridor, consensus was reached on the following items:

- Residential uses north of Newport Avenue should be preserved and encouraged.
- Office and limited retail uses just north of Grand Avenue, between West Grand Avenue and Newport Avenue, should be allowed.
- The existing design character of buildings along 4th Street (no taller than two stories) should be maintained.
- Given the primarily residential character of 4th Street, incorporation of traffic calming measures and beautification strategies would be appropriate.

Open Space

Consensus was reached on preserving the open space along Grover Beach's northern border, including the following:

- Creating a continuous system of hiking trails that links open space to beach trails.
- Preserving the existing parks (Ramona Park and Grover Heights Park) and encouraging new parks.

Residential Neighborhoods

During the visioning process, consensus was reached regarding the following issues:

- Grover Beach's existing residential neighborhood should be preserved.
- Appropriate infill opportunities for new affordable housing should be identified in existing residential neighborhoods, such as second or "granny" units.

Strawberry Fields

Consensus was reached regarding preserving the agricultural land south of Highland Way (otherwise known as "Strawberry Fields") as an attractive use that contributes to Grover Beach's small town character. When agricultural production on the site is no longer feasible for the property owner, the following could be considered:

- Allow commercial, industrial and residential uses as part of a mixed-use project on parcels currently designated for agricultural usage.

Other Ideas for Consideration

Many ideas were discussed during the visioning workshops. Several of the ideas, listed below, are taken from the Visioning Project that might warrant further exploration and could be addressed in the Scope of Work for the LUE update, should the City Council so direct. They are as follows:

- Examine the feasibility of building a pier at the end of West Grand Avenue
- Consider a pedestrian bridge over Highway 1
- Emphasize "Eco-tourism" uses on the waterfront
- Run a trolley for shoppers and beach goers on West Grand Avenue.
- Study solutions for increased parking in downtown
- Move auto sales and service uses off of West Grand Avenue
- Increase Grover Beach's affordable housing options

###