E A S T  G R A N D  A V E N U E
E N H A N C E M E N T  P L A N

CITY OF ARROYO GRANDE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
214 EAST BRANCH STREET
ARROYO GRANDE, CA 93420
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INTRODUCTION

East Grand Avenue is one of the City of Arroyo Grande’s four major commercial areas. The other three are:

1) the historic Village area including East Branch Street and Traffic Way;
2) the regional commercial shopping centers along West Branch Street, and
3) the service and industrial district along El Camino Real.

Each of these areas involves a different collection of uses, distinctive design character and specialized functions that each provides to the community and South County region. These commercial areas took decades to develop and plans for their enhancement will be evolutionary as well.

East Grand Avenue is a classic example of “strip commercial” development, most of which occurred during the last forty years. Its character and conditions as well as its opportunities for enhancement can be described best in three, half-mile long segments extending west from Freeway 101 to the Arroyo Grande City limits near Oak Park Boulevard: “Highway”, “Midway” and “Gateway”.

ENHANCEMENT PLAN SUBAREAS

Generally, the East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan includes only those properties fronting onto this arterial street, but the lot depths vary from 100 feet to more than 650 feet. Some side street property frontages are also included, often because of ownership or development in common with adjoining East Grand Avenue properties, or contiguous General Commercial and Highway Commercial zoning.

The “Highway” segment extends from Freeway 101 interchange to the intersection with Halcyon Road, a north-south cross street that extends from its Freeway 101 southbound ramps and El Camino Real, past the Arroyo Grande Hospital and medical office area to the historic colony of Halcyon.

The “Midway” segment extends from Halcyon Road to Brisco Road and Elm Street intersections. Brisco Road connects from West Branch Street, northbound Freeway 101 ramps, and El Camino Real to East Grand Avenue where it terminates just east of Elm Street. Elm Street extends north-south as an arterial past Elm Street Park and Soto Sports Complex to the community of Oceano, while to the north of East Grand Avenue, Elm Street is a residential collector street terminating near Oceanview Elementary School.

The “Gateway” segment extends from Elm Street to the Arroyo Grande City limits near Oak Park Boulevard, a north-south arterial street which connects to Noyes Road, James Way, West Branch Street, Freeway 101, El Camino Real and many local streets north of East Grand Avenue. To the south, Oak Park Boulevard...
connects to Mentone/Ash Avenue, Farrall Road, The Pike and into Oceano where it becomes 22nd Street which intersects Highway I.

Map No. 1 shows these three segments and the generalized boundary of the East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan Areas.

PRIOR TRAFFIC STUDIES AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

The City of Arroyo Grande has conducted numerous studies of the East Grand Avenue corridor during the last 15 years, including:

- Grand Avenue/Branch Street Corridor Study, July 1999.

During the 2001 General Plan Update additional land use and circulation studies considered the community-wide and regional importance of this major east-west arterial street. East Grand Avenue connects to Highway 227 and the Village area to the east near the Freeway 101 interchange, and extends west one and a half miles within the City of Arroyo Grande. Near Oak Park Boulevard it enters the City of Grover Beach and continues west to Highway 1 and the Pacific Ocean as West Grand Avenue.

All of East Grand Avenue within the City of Arroyo Grande provides at least four travel lanes generally allowing 35 miles per hour traffic. Existing signalized intersections include northbound and southbound ramps at the Freeway 101 interchange and the major cross streets of Halcyon Road, Elm Street, and Oak Park Boulevard and the additional collector Courtland Street which parallels Oak Park Boulevard near the western edge of the City. Other important, but unsignalized intersections include Barnett Street (El Camino Real) and Brisco
Road. A midblock pedestrian crossing between Halcyon and Elm is controlled by signal near the center of the long block between Alder Street and Brisco Road intersections.

The 2000 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on East Grand Avenue range from approximately 19,500 trips on the Highway segment to almost 23,000 on the Gateway segment, increasing from east to west. Comparison with previous counts show traffic growth of greater than 1% per year from 1986 to 1994, but reduction in traffic during the last seven years due to new commercial center development on the Freeway 101 corridor in the 1990's. Morning and evening peak hour traffic counts conducted in February 1999 ranged from 400 to 800 trips westbound and 500 to 740 trips eastbound in the morning and 730 to 1040 trips westbound and 840 to 940 eastbound in the afternoon.

Summer is the peak traffic season, indicating the importance of East Grand Avenue as an access from Freeway 101 toward the beach and its connection to East Branch Street, which extends further northeast to access Lopez Lake recreational areas.

Intersection levels of service (LOS) currently operate at LOS ‘C’ or better except during some peak summer weekends. The corridor has an accident rate history slightly less than statewide average for similar facilities except the Highway segment east of Halcyon Road, which lacks a left turn lane. Elm Street and Halcyon Road intersections also have accident histories above state averages.

Right-of-way width in the Highway segment is 80 feet with street pavement width ranging from 56 to 62 feet. In the Midway and Gateway segments East Grand Avenue has a 100-foot right-of-way and 80 foot street section. This condition will be discussed in more detail later.

EAST GRAND AVENUE WORKSHOPS AND PREFERENCE STUDY

In 2001, concurrent with and following General Plan Update adoption hearings, the City and Chamber of Commerce co-sponsored several property owner, business and citizen workshops to refine ideas and discuss enhancement alternatives for the East Grand Avenue corridor.

A Cal Poly City and Regional Planning class assisted by preparing two alternative design concepts – Main Street and Boulevard – including architectural, landscape, and “streetscape” ideas and area plans. The City staff assembled photographic examples of streetscape features in other California cities and the City Manager conducted a series of informational presentations to service clubs and other organizations.
An informal preference survey was compiled to determine the features receiving the most support regarding design concepts, including:

- orientation of buildings to street corners
- location of parking in front or behind buildings
- architectural character of mixed use projects
- landscape treatments of median islands and yards
- crosswalk and bulb-out design options
- street furniture and fixtures such as benches, trash receptacles, lighting and shelters
- outdoor café and plaza features, and
- entry or directional and identification signage.

Although no single theme or design concept was identified that would be clearly applicable for unified enhancement of all of East Grand Avenue, many features received more than 2 to 1 favorable review, including the following photographic examples:
East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan

Substantial Landscape Treatment, Especially Trees

Attractive Street Furniture
Sidewalk Retreats such as “Paseos” and Sidewalk Cafes

Special Pedestrian Pavement Features such as Stonework, Patterned or Colored Concrete, Brick or Pavers in Plazas, Paseos and Crosswalks
PURPOSE OF PLAN

The East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan is intended to define a design framework for both future public improvements and further private developments that will enhance the functions and aesthetics of this particular area and subareas as hereinafter identified. The Enhancement Plan anticipates proposed Development Code revisions for 2001 General Plan consistency, that will create new “Mixed Use” zones to be applied to the General Commercial and Highway Commercial zones including those regulating development of East Grand Avenue properties.

The “Mixed Use” zone is a proposed land use district that originated in response to General Plan workshops and citizen survey results that revealed substantial public support for:

- Increased job opportunities.
- More retail, service and tourist commercial choices, particularly more attractive, pedestrian-oriented shopping.
- Encouraging senior housing, town-homes and low-rise rental and ownership housing developments.

The 2001 General Plan outlines many policies intended to implement the Mixed Use (MU) concept, with priority given to East Grand Avenue for refinement of land use and design proposals. In particular, the Land Use Element itemizes more than a dozen policies relevant to the East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan including LU3-4.2, LU3-5.1, and LU5-1 through 5-11.5 specifically describing Mixed Use area policies, incorporated herein by reference.

This Enhancement Plan is intended as a draft implementation program for both the 2001 General Plan and subsequent Development Code revision, which will require formal adoption public hearings. Proposed Enhancement Plan objectives are derived from General Plan policies and are briefly outlined as follows to provide a foundation for consideration of both public improvement design ideas and preliminary land use and development standards considered appropriate for the East Grand Avenue Mixed Use zones.

OBJECTIVES OF PLAN

- Enable development of multiple family residential uses, with good access to transportation in Mixed Use zones, including housing for low and moderate income households, special-needs populations and senior citizens, where compatible with existing and planned commercial and office uses.
- Provide for a diversity of retail and service commercial, offices, residential and other compatible uses, in size and scale to fit the “rural setting and small town
character” of Arroyo Grande, without duplication of the function or character of other commercial areas.

- Define different Mixed-Use overlay or combining designations to clarify allowed, conditionally permitted and prohibited uses in each MU subarea.
- Plan for a revitalized East Grand Avenue Mixed-Use corridor that has less of a strip commercial aspect and more consistent, coordinated mixed-use boulevard ambiance with district activity subareas: Highway, Midway and Gateway.
- Include appropriate site planning and urban design amenities to encourage travel by walking, bicycling and transit as well as automotive access, along the entire corridor.
- Provide better shopping opportunities, adaptive reuse of existing buildings having characteristics worth preserving and integrated into a coordinated, distinctive design motive for each functional segment.
- Promote development of buildings along a landscaped sidewalk frontage with rear yard and side street parking. Include substantial landscaping and streetscape improvements.
- Propose functional design including specialized open space such as squares courtyards and plazas whose frequent use is encouraged through placement and design such as proximity to public transit stops. Allow density bonuses and shared or public parking reduction to increase development intensity and enable more efficient utilization.
- Propose designs for attractive streetscape including street trees and other landscaping, building façade improvements, better signage and more consistent and coordinated development design, including fewer driveways and enhancement of off-street parking areas.
- Provide phased implementation programs for streetscape improvements which provide for elements such as landscape, street furniture, signage and pedestrian-scaled lighting, entry identification, improved storm drainage, conversion to underground utilities, and provision of adequate water and sewer services for planned development.

EXISTING ZONING AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN MIXED USE REZONING PROPOSALS

Most of the East Grand Avenue frontage is zoned either General Commercial or Highway Commercial as shown on Map No. 2. These conventional commercial districts discourage or prohibit residential uses, but allow a broad range of retail, office and service type uses, some of which are problematic. Almost all uses currently require conditional use permit approval. A few uses such as mini-storage; auto parts and repair, and service stations; and wholesale or bulk-materials such as lumber yards or car lots are now perceived as inappropriate or incompatible in some sub-areas. Mixed Use rezoning has not yet been revised to determine where various types of uses should be allowed.
Concurrent with planning for East Grand Avenue Enhancement, the City’s Development Code will be revised for consistency with the 2001 General Plan Update policies and map proposing Mixed Use districts and design overlays to replace the GC and HC existing zoning of this area. It is expected that there will be some “legally non-conforming” existing uses that will remain and should be encouraged to improve and be more compatible and attractive neighbors.

Until the Development Code revision is completed and new Mixed-Use zones, design overlay and combining districts established by adoption following public hearings, the 2001 General Plan provides:

“LU5-12 Mixed-Use developments in current VC, HC, GC, or I zones – Any combination of mixed uses, or any project proposing a residential component in a commercial or industrial district shall be considered pursuant to Conditional Use Permit approval (Development Code Section 9-3.050) or Planned Unit Development Permit approval (Development Code Section 9-03.160). In addition, where affordable housing is proposed in a Mixed Use designation, density incentives exceeding 25% may be considered.”

Therefore, the City will consider any proposed uses and development project applications by Conditional Use Permit public hearing process in the interim period.

**DESIGN CONCEPTS**

The East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan is also intended to provide a guide for phased public improvements and gradual evolution of most existing private developments that occupy the majority of the frontage. Design concepts proposed are described hereinafter.

**OVERALL “STREETSCAPE”**

The East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan recognizes certain existing conditions as design constraints requiring practical consideration. The limited
width of the existing right-of-way and the available distance between buildings on both sides of the street preclude widening, at least for most segments during the next twenty years. Despite this basic design constraint there are many opportunities for streetscape improvements and area enhancement. Some variations in optimum engineering design standards will be required due to the existing right-of-way and curb to curb width constraints, and are integrated into the following proposals.

Along the entire corridor the existing curb to curb cross-section requires reduction of standard twelve-foot (12’) wide travel and turn lane widths, normally recommended for new arterial and collector streets. In the Highway segment, the fifty-six (56’) to sixty-two (62’) foot curb to curb section requires the elimination of approximately twenty four (24) on-street parking spaces to accommodate a twelve foot wide two-way left-turn median lane and two eleven foot wide travel lanes in each direction.

The elimination of on-street parking to establish a two-way left turn lane was previously recommended for traffic safety by engineering consultants. The Enhancement Plan proposes that the Council reconsider recommended restriping to provide the two-way left turn lane after future public hearings and/or when adjoining new developments are occurring that would increase left-turn movements, and provide additional off-street parking.

To accommodate on-street parking in addition to the travel and turn lanes would require at least sixteen to twenty feet of additional right-of-way and street widening at substantial expense and loss of many existing buildings and businesses. The Enhancement Plan instead proposes supplemental off-street parking in each block of the Highway Segment and a parallel "bike bypass" described later.

In the Midway and Gateway segments of East Grand Avenue, where curb to curb section is generally eighty feet (80’), twelve foot wide for the median turn one and four eleven foot wide travel lanes consume fifty-six feet, enabling a twelve foot curbside parking and bike lane along the shoulder. At major intersections, or mid-block crossings the parking and bike lane can be eliminated to enable additional left or right turn lanes and/or special crossing features such as bulbouts or median refuge areas.

Along the entire corridor the sidewalk and street tree parkway width is generally ten feet (10’), and typically improved with integral curb and sidewalk with street tree cutouts or wells spaced approximately sixty feet apart. Power poles, fire hydrants, traffic control signs, street lights and other obstructions such as news racks and portable planters in addition to street trees complicate pedestrian traffic, often limiting effective sidewalk width to four or five feet. (This is considered the minimum width for ADA compliance for handicap access.)
FRONT YARD SETBACKS AND BOULEVARD TREATMENT

To enable a boulevard treatment consisting of a double row of street trees on both sides, accommodate wider sidewalks or shallow front yard landscape enhancement, and to minimize potential building conflicts if a standard right-of-way width of 110 feet, is ever required. A variable front yard setback of 5 to 15 feet is proposed for all future buildings. The front yard may generally remain part of the private property, but include sidewalk extensions, underground utilities, pedestrian-level lighting and landscaping easements for streetscape enhancement. Private monument signs, low walls and some roof or trellis structures and benches may be allowed within the front yard setback and or sidewalk areas subject to encroachment permits.

The front yard setback will enable all new developments would provide for a secondary tier of street-trees planted parallel to the curb to compliment the existing street-trees within the existing right-of-way. This will almost double the shade canopy and landscape screen along both sides of the street, creating a consistent “boulevard” treatment.

In the Gateway and Midway segments the minimum of five feet (5’) front yard setback for all new buildings would be sufficient for proposed boulevard treatment except where pedestrian entries or activity areas such as sidewalk cafes or plazas are intended. To maintain a consistent sense of building orientation to the sidewalk, a maximum setback of fifteen feet (15’) is proposed for the majority of frontage development except where landscaped plazas are provided at intersections and driveways. The recommended typical cross-section of the 100' wide right-of-way portions of East Grand Avenue is depicted on Exhibit 3.

The Highway segment, however, would eliminate on-street parking on both sides to enable the two-way left turn median and four travel lanes where curb to curb width is only fifty (56’) to sixty-two (62’) feet total.

Where existing parking lots separate the buildings from sidewalk orientation, low screen walls or hedges should be encouraged to reduce pedestrian and public exposure to vehicular areas.
In the Highway segment, the size and depth of parcels, the configuration of existing uses and the location of existing buildings, make potential right-of-way widening more feasible on the south side rather than the north or equally on both sides. Although this expensive and disruptive potential widening should be avoided as long as possible, a front yard setback of at least 20 feet on the south side is recommended to minimize additional building conflicts if or when widening is determined necessary. On the north side of East Grand Avenue in the Highway segment, a 5’-15’ variable front yard setback will provide future flexibility and a consistent boulevard treatment as suggested for other segments.

**MEDIAN TURN LANES AND LANDSCAPE ISLANDS**

Most segments of East Grand Avenue have a two way left turn lane or median island separating the two travel lanes in each direction. This is an important safety feature for left-turning vehicles entering or leaving the street and also provides some pedestrian refuge for crossing the street. Between Oak and Rena Streets east of Halcyon Road, however, a four block long segment lacks this two way left turn and crossing refuge, contributing to an above average accident rate. Some portions of the median lane near Halcyon Road, Brisco Road and Elm Street intersections are improved with raised, landscaped median islands to better protect exclusive left turn and merging vehicles.

Concurrent with other streetscape improvements and frontage developments, on a phased basis starting with the Gateway segment, some portions of the two-way left turn median island will become exclusive left turn lanes and raised landscaped median island to better channelize traffic and enhance safety and appearance of the boulevard character. The initial proposed landscaped median island between Oak Park Boulevard and Courtland Street enables an ideal location for a Gateway entry identification monument sign near the western City limits on East Grand Avenue. A similar landscaped median island and entry identification sign is also proposed in the future at the Freeway 101 southbound off-ramp to East Grand Avenue at the opposite end of the enhancement project area. Additional landscaped median islands are proposed in the western portion of the Gateway segment where few existing or potential driveways require two-way left turn. Major private driveways and all public street intersections in this segment will be provided exclusive left-turn lane and median island breaks, including pedestrian crosswalk improvements.

The recommended landscape median islands will generally contain a row of trees, shrubs and ground cover and decorative pavement or rocks requiring minimal maintenance: No lawn or extensive flower beds will be included unless special maintenance district or similar provisions are assured. Irrigation will be bubpler, drip, or shrub heads on automatic timer systems, where feasible. An illustration of median island landscape character including gateway entry monument signage is shown on Exhibit 4.
CROSSWALKS

In the Highway segment, two crosswalks are proposed at local street intersections of Bell and Alpine Streets as well as at Halcyon Road and Freeway 101 ramps. This provides a designated crossing every other block or approximately 700 feet apart, enabling no more than a 400 feet distance to the nearest designated crossing.

In the Midway segment, crosswalks at Halcyon Road, Alder Street and Elm Street intersections would be supplemented by the existing mid-block signalized crossing near Fair Oaks Plaza, and two new mid-block crosswalks further west, approximately 600 feet apart, enabling no more than 300 feet distance to the nearest designated crossing. Each of these mid-block crosswalks would be accompanied by a landscaped raised median island to provide a safer center refuge area for pedestrians and more prominent crosswalk treatment visible to motorists.

In the Gateway section, intersection crosswalks will be provided at Oak Park Boulevard, Courtland Street, Juniper Street, mid-block east of Fairview Street and at Elm Street, approximately 600 feet apart. All new crosswalks constructed on a phased basis starting with the Gateway segment intersection of East Grand Avenue at Courtland Street would feature flagstone patterned, color stained concrete pavement treatment to accent pedestrian crossings as well as corner and sidewalk areas.
At some crosswalk locations, where curb and gutter drainage is not blocked and where on-street parking or turn lanes are not required, bulbouts will be considered. A recommended local street crosswalk design including bulbouts is illustrated on Exhibit 5.

The recommended Gateway intersection crosswalk design at Courtland Street and Grand Avenue is illustrated on Exhibit 6.

TRAVEL, BIKE AND PARKING LANES

With the exception of the narrower Highway segment, the right-of-way section and curb to curb width on most segments of East Grand Avenue are marginally adequate for on-street bike and parking lane at curbside on both sides. The 80 foot width curb to curb requires reduction of the four travel lanes to 11 feet each rather than the 12 foot standard. The median turn lane and landscaped median islands are proposed at 12 feet width allowing a 10-foot wide turn lane and 2 foot wide nose at street intersections. A combination 12-foot wide parking and bike lane on both sides of the street complete the typical midblock curb to curb street section. At intersections the curbside bike and parking lane can be converted to a right turn lane, merge lane, bus stop or eight-foot (8') wide projecting corner
bulbou. These alternative corner design features and specific locations will be considered during engineering design.

“Bike Bypass”- Because the Highway segment right-of-way and curb to curb street section is too narrow without widening to accommodate separated bike traffic, the Enhancement Plan proposes a “bike bypass”. A bike route or recommended bike lanes, would be striped and signed along Cornwall Avenue, a local residential street one block north of and parallel to East Grand Avenue. To connect with Cornwall Avenue one block of Barnett Street (El Camino Real) would be restriped and signed eliminating on-street parking on the east side and providing four foot wide bike lanes on both sides. At the west end of Cornwall Avenue, Rena Street would be signed as a bike route with or without bike lanes.

PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

New developments will be encouraged to provide optional sidewalk extensions, activity and passive areas adjoining the public right-of-way and transit stops within front yard setback along portions of their frontage. Generally, new buildings will be expected to locate near and orient toward East Grand Avenue. Where existing buildings already exist with parking lot between the building and sidewalk, the enhancement plan proposes a low stone walk or hedge to screen the drive aisle or adjoining parking spaces within the front yard setback, except at driveways or walkways. Otherwise, the enhancement plan intends fixed or portable benches; trash and recycle receptacles; permanent and portable flower, shrub and tree planters; drinking and decorative fountains, kiosks, sidewalk cafes, lighting fixtures or other plaza and paseo pedestrian amenities within front yard setbacks. Unless specifically accepted by the City, whether in or out of public rights of way these sidewalk features will be maintained by adjoining property owner or tenants.

Examples of several streetscape layouts and typical sidewalk furniture and fixtures recommended are shown on Exhibits 7, 8, 9 and 10. Exhibit 7 illustrates low walls, concrete bench, street and pedestrian lighting, street trees and other landscape and pavement details along sidewalk and front yard setback areas.
Exhibit 8 illustrates recommended furniture and fixture designs appropriate to East Grand Avenue.
Exhibits 9 and 10 illustrate design variations with different stained or patterned stamped color concrete, pavers, planters and possible public art or tree island features.

**TRANSIT STOPS**

Because of the limited right-of-way, curb to curb width, resultant reduced lane widths and relatively heavy traffic volumes along East Grand Avenue, South County Area Transit (SCAT) does not make stops except at designated locations along this busy arterial street portion of the bus route. When the bus stops at
existing curbside locations it totally occupies both the on-street parking and bike lanes and partially obstructs one of the two travel lanes. In the narrower Highway segment the designated transit stops obstruct the curbside travel lane, restricting traffic flow and reducing safety.

While this undesirable condition is unavoidable in the interim, the East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan proposes transit turnouts at reasonable half-mile intervals to provide for future, safer transit stops without obstruction of bike and travel lanes. Tentatively the proposed turnouts are located adjoining Freeway 101 ramps, west of Elm Street, and west of Courtland Street. An initial transit turnout has been constructed on the north side of East Grand Avenue between Courtland Street and Oak Park Boulevard for westbound transit route stops. Similar turnouts will be considered concurrent with adjoining private frontage developments or as part of phased public improvements at the other recommended or alternative locations. Wherever practical, the City will encourage transit bench, signage and shelter improvements to be integrated with adjoining buildings and front yard streetscape extensions, rather than allowing conventional freestanding sidewalk shelter structures.

It is recognized that neither SCAT or other public transit currently provides service at all of these proposed stops, but these turnouts are recommended for future routing and public transit access. In the interim the turnouts will provide more convenient drop-off and pick-up points for private shuttle services and vehicles, or for loading and unloading service vehicles: Yellow or white zones can designate the appropriate interim functions.

**OFF-STREET PARKING AND DRIVEWAY ACCESS**

New developments will be required to provide adequate off-street parking with reduction allowances for shared use. The enhancement plan proposes that all new off-street parking lots utilize side street or shared common access driveways to minimize driveway crossings of East Grand Avenue. New parking lots will be required to locate behind existing or proposed buildings whenever possible: Parking should not be located in front of buildings.

Although retrofit of existing parking lots will generally not occur unless or until additional development is proposed on the property, all new projects will be encouraged or required to provide more extensive “orchard” pattern shade tree planting throughout. Additional perimeter, yard, and end of aisle landscaping areas will also be encouraged to make larger parking lots more attractive, comfortable and compatible with the small town character and rural setting of Arroyo Grande. The recommended tree planting pattern for off-street parking lots is illustrated on Exhibit 11.
Existing parking lots located adjacent to sidewalk areas, particularly along East Grand Avenue will be encouraged to provide low screenwall and/or landscape buffer whenever feasible.

**STREET AND MEDIAN TREES**

One of the most economical and effective streetscape enhancement features are trees. Currently, one or two uniform and commonly used evergreen species of trees, typically Brisbane Box or Carrotwood, are planted near the curb about sixty feet (60’) apart. Additional types of trees and closer spacing would be more attractive, provide more effective shade and prevent or reduce possible spread of disease that attack single species. Several low maintenance, more colorful and drought tolerant tree species are recommended by landscape architects to diversify the mix and reinforce the pattern and spacing of street and median planting.

Six species of trees considered appropriate for street and median planting along East Grand Avenue are illustrated on Exhibit 12. The Enhancement Plan proposes a secondary tier of street trees be planted in front yard setback, staggered between curbside trees and clustered in focus areas to create a consistent boulevard treatment. Selection of specific species, placement, size, irrigation and similar design details will be determined as part of engineering design for each phase of street improvements and enhancement. Where new buildings will adjoin the sidewalks along portions of East Grand Avenue, the private developments will provide and maintain front yard landscaping and street tree enhancements.
The City’s Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for street tree and median landscaping maintenance within public street rights of way, unless otherwise assigned by Council direction. To minimize operational impacts on this department associated with East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plans, the City proposes to utilize Lantana as the principal ground cover and a combination of Magnolia, Ginko, Chinese Pistashio, and Liquid Amber trees for all median and street tree planting. The other varieties and more extensive shrub and ground cover alternatives may be proposed and provided outside public right-of-way in front yard or other private property locations where City maintenance is not involved. This acceptable plant pallet is also applicable to other public maintenance areas such as the perimeter of Poplar Ponding basin. In all public maintenance areas the landscape design will include automatic irrigation systems.

Exhibit 12

Pyrus calleryana “Bradford
Lagerstroemia indica
Tristania conferta
Quercus agrifolia
Liquidambar styraciflua
Pistacia chinensis
PASEOS AND PLAZAS

As part of proposed new retail office developments, particularly near transit stops or restaurants where pedestrian traffic facilitates use of larger front yard “plazas” of “paseos” between buildings the Enhancement Plan encourages these activity areas. Exhibit 6 shows part of a corner plaza proposed near Courtland Street and Grand Avenue, while Exhibit 13 illustrates the between building paseo concept. The latter design feature can also be integrated in existing developed areas between adjoining buildings where side-yard entries and pedestrian traffic concentration makes such areas functional. A paseo concept is proposed in the new retail and office development on the north side of East Grand Avenue, west of Courtland Street, adjoining the existing transit turnout and linking through to a proposed senior housing complex.

STORM DRAINAGE

While the existing storm drainage inlet and collection pipeline systems along East Grand Avenue are generally 20 or more years old and not designed for larger storms, most segments of the street do not have surface ponding problems. Several 18” to 24” CMP pipelines collect water from Drop Inlets (DI’s) at Courtland Street and Juniper Street with outlet to Poplar Ponding Basin, maintained by the City east of Courtland Street. Larger 24” to 48” RCP pipelines collect storm drain DI’s at Elm and mid-block between Brisco Road and Alder Street with outlet to large basins at Elm and Ash Streets within Soto Sports Complex. Near Alder Street the DI’s connect to 16” by 25” CMP draining to Sunset Drive surface flow. Similarly, the 24” RCP and DI’s at Halcyon Road bubble up to surface flow further south on Halcyon Road then into Arroyo Grande Creek. At the opposite end of the Highway segment of East Grand Avenue, 24” RCP connects DI’s near Barnett Street (El Camino Real) with outlet to open ditch near Freeway 101 to drain to Arroyo Grande Creek.

The Enhancement Plan proposes that the undeveloped properties in the western portion of the Gateway segment between Oak Park Boulevard and Juniper Streets cooperate to expand the undersized Poplar Ponding Basin rather than
rely on individual private storm drainage retention basins as previously required. A proposed Poplar Ponding Basin expansion project would double the area and triple the detention capacity to serve the remaining undeveloped large parcels in the vicinity of Courtland Street. New drop inlets and 24" RCP pipeline to Poplar Ponding Basin expansion would also enable replacement of the existing private ponding basin on the East Grand Avenue frontage of the Town and Country (Albertson’s) Shopping Center. If necessary the City or Redevelopment Agency will fund these storm drainage improvements, subject to reimbursement by benefited properties when private developments occur.

In future phases of the Midway segment of East Grand Avenue, additional new DI’s and larger storm drainage collection pipelines should be considered to connect to Elm and Ash Street basins to the southwest. Any substantial new Highway segment reconstruction should also integrate new DI’s and pipeline connecting East Grand Avenue drainage to Arroyo Grande Creek to the southeast. (Drainage should not be allowed to disrupt adjoining agricultural areas nor should improvement costs be assessed to agricultural properties).

**UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Water and Sewer**

The City’s water distribution and sewer collection systems along East Grand Avenue are also in need of phased improvements. The water mains in Gateway and Midway segments of East Grand Avenue are old 6” and 8” ACP while the Highway segment east of Halcyon Road was recently upgraded to 12” PVC mains.

Similarly, 6” 8” and 12” VCP compose the gravity flow sewer collection lines along East Grand Avenue Gateway and Midway segments, while new 8” and 10” PVC mains serve the Highway segment frontage.

The Enhancement Plan proposes that new 12” PVC water main and where necessary new 8” and 10” PVC sewer mains be installed prior to or concurrent with phased Gateway and Midway street reconstruction or new development projects.

**Underground Power and Communication Lines**

The City of Arroyo Grande anticipated conversion to underground power and communications and installed conduit in the prior Highway Segment street reconstruction project. The design and actual conversion to serve existing developments is programmed for Spring-Summer 2002 and a budget of $200,000 has been funded for this purpose. This will complete the Highway segment conversion, but new decorative street lighting or supplemental pedestrian-level lighting is not included nor programmed as part of this conversion project.
Additionally the City has received approval for $625,300 for future underground power and communication conversion in a portion of the Gateway Segment. Design will take several years before actual conversion, but the conduit placement can be coordinated with street and utility improvements this year. Until undergrounding is accomplished it would be counterproductive to install new street and pedestrian-level lighting with overhead lines, but lighting fixtures should be selected and included in the design for conduit and riser spacing.

The Enhancement Plan proposes that pedestrian level or landscape lighting systems be located within the front yard setback at the back of sidewalk to facilitate coordination with adjoining private developments. This will facilitate phased pedestrian-level and landscape lighting improvements as private enhancement features to City standards rather than require additional public project expense.

Future street lighting and/or median landscape and entry sign lighting are not included in the initial Enhancement project budget, but would be part of power undergrounding design and subsequent conversion. Cost-estimates, phasing and funding for further conversion will be considered when Gateway segment utility design is compiled by the respective power and communication companies, but it is intended that new lighting systems will commence with the western part of the Gateway segment concurrent with conversion projects.

MIXED USE OVERLAYS AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

New developments will be encouraged to provide pedestrian scale design features including display windows, sidewalk entries, awning and trellis shade structures, façade lighting and pedestrian oriented signage. Development Code revisions will allow one and two-story mixed use buildings, not to exceed 30 feet height. In exceptional cases some architectural features or three story elements may be allowed for design diversity with maximum height not to exceed 35 feet.

No uniform architectural style is prescribed along East Grand Avenue, but distinctive and traditional rather than ultra-modern or extremely stylistic structures will be favored. The City will discourage duplication of Historic architectural styles which are concentrated in the Village area and large scale complexes of stucco walls and mission tile roof, “Spanish” or Mission style buildings typical of Southern California and prevalent in the Five Cities Shopping Center and Rancho Grande area.

The City will prepare more detailed Mixed Use Overlays and/or Architectural Design Guidelines for the East Grand Avenue segments with a basic expectation that “form follows function” for the diverse Mixed Use permitted and conditional uses. In all instances, however, the street frontage will be expected to be pedestrian, bike and transit oriented even for predominantly automotive related uses. The latter, including new and used auto sales, service stations and repair shops, drive-up windows and tire, muffler, transmission and other vehicle or parts
stores, will be among conditional uses. Some locations will not be acceptable for certain vehicle service uses due to proximity to existing or potential residential uses, professional offices, or retail uses that may be noise sensitive or experience adverse exposure to incompatible conditions. This Enhancement Plan and future Development Code revisions will seek to group or cluster similar uses within sub-areas of the Mixed-Use district and conditionally allow consideration of a broad range of diverse commercial, office and residential uses.

Service commercial, warehouse and industrial type uses, particularly those involving outdoor display or not compatible with pedestrian activity will be considered by Conditional Use Permit or in some instances, not allowed in some subareas.

The architectural character of new developments will be guided by interim Architectural Review Committee approvals and when adopted, by proposed Development Code revisions, development standards, and subarea Design Guidelines.

**FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT LOAN PROGRAM**

To encourage remodel and enhancement of existing buildings, future signage and landscape that does not conform to the new Design Guidelines, the Enhancement Plan also proposes a future façade improvement loan program. After the City completes Development Code revisions and subarea Design Guidelines, the Redevelopment Agency will be asked to establish a revolving low or no interest loan program particularly to assist relatively small scale private building, exterior signage and front yard improvement projects, when redevelopment or CDBG funding is available.

**HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION**

Most commercial and office buildings along East Grand Avenue are less than 50 years old and none are considered essential for historic preservation. Several features however, should be considered for architectural preservation if feasible, including the East Grand Avenue and Alpine Street office complex in the Highway segment, Fair Oaks theatre marque, Coast National Bank, Grand Avenue Professional Complex and Mid-State Bank buildings in the Midway segment; and Juniper Street intersection professional office buildings in the Gateway segment.

It is evident from the design diversity of these existing examples that there is no single architectural style appropriate to all segments of East Grand Avenue. One and two story, moderate scale, distinctive individual buildings are more prevalent than small structures or large scale building complexes. The western half of the Gateway segment offers an apparent opportunity for major aesthetic enhancement due to predominantly undeveloped and relatively large properties fronting on East Grand Avenue near Courtland Street.
The enhancement plan illustrates similar potential for evolution of substantial portions of the east half of Gateway segment and the south side of the Midway segment as well. The Highway segment will probably exhibit the least apparent aesthetic change due to street section constraints and the scale and extent of existing development.

ENHANCEMENT PLAN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Three graphic aerial photo overlay plans depict conceptual private development potential in the Gateway, Midway and Highway sections of East Grand Avenue.
GATEWAY SEGMENT ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

Exhibit 14 illustrates the predominant opportunity for new development in the west half of the Gateway segment centered on Courtland Street intersection. It also shows additional redevelopment and new buildings west of the Elm Street intersection, in the east half of the Gateway Section.

The western segment of East Grand Avenue known as Gateway is composed of relatively large parcels at both ends and moderate sized parcels in the middle. The large parcels near Courtland Street intersection are predominantly undeveloped on three corners while the Town and Country/Albertson’s Shopping Center occupies the fourth. Two large Mixed-Use development projects are pending consideration at the Courtland Street intersection which is entirely within the City. At the eastern end of the Gateway segment on the south side of East Grand Avenue at Elm Street intersection, the older Tri-W Shopping Center (former Williams Bros./Vons) buildings are now occupied by retail, restaurants, auto parts and other tenants, but the property is considered under-developed.

The Enhancement Plan illustrates preliminary development plans at the northwest and southeast corners of Courtland Street intersection reflecting current land use and site planning applications. These include the proposed Poplar Ponding Basin expansion on the east side of Courtland Street that would correct an existing storm drainage retention deficiency in the area and enable replacement of the existing private ponding basin on the Town and Country

Exhibit 14
Shopping Center frontage. The Enhancement Plan proposes that this frontage be redeveloped with two freestanding retail and/or restaurant buildings to reinforce pedestrian activity and aesthetics on the street frontage as well as improve internal function of the shopping center. Additionally the Enhancement Plan implies possible expansion of the supermarket to modern size standards.

To the southwest of Courtland Street and Grand Avenue the Enhancement Plan proposes coordinated Mixed-Use residential, office and retail development of two separate relatively large undeveloped parcels. Conceptually this would include several driveways to Courtland Street, but not more than a single shared access driveway to East Grand Avenue. A transit turnout and pedestrian enhancement should be integrated into this conceptual future mixed use development, including a multiple family residential transition to the adjoining Berry Gardens neo-traditional single family detached subdivision.

As previously noted, the Enhancement Plan provides for the expansion of Poplar Ponding Basin including open decorative perimeter fence, trees and screen planting such as shrubs perimeter and slopebank stabilization hydroseeding.

The Enhancement Plan illustrates additional redevelopment potential at the eastern end of the Gateway segment involving the Tri-W shopping center. Several new retail buildings are proposed along this East Grand Avenue frontage, but more substantial potential exists if the older shopping center structures are redeveloped for Mixed-Use including second story offices and/or multiple family residential uses.
MIDWAY SEGMENT ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

This portion of East Grand Avenue between Halcyon Road and Elm Street is predominantly developed with moderate sized, deep lots composing long blocks. The commercial uses include larger stores such as drug, furniture, appliance, food, pet, and antique stores. Office uses include several banks, mortgage companies, financial services, medical and dental offices. Other diverse uses include several restaurants, coffeehouses, bagel shop, and a movie theatre.

Most of these uses provide individual off-street parking lots commensurate with the size of the related business. A few, such as Fair Oaks Plaza, provide larger, shared parking serving several adjoining businesses facilitating multi-purpose trips. With the exception of the Arroyo Trailer Park, very few residential uses remain along this segment of East Grand Avenue, but many adjoin on parallel streets, Sunset and Linda Drives, one block to the south and north. The enhancement plan proposes that pedestrian and bike paseos should be provided in the middle portions of these long blocks to facilitate circulation between residential and commercial/office uses, including several mid-block crosswalks along East Grand Avenue.

Exhibit 15 illustrates a major redevelopment potential in the triage bounded by Elm Street, Linda Drive and Brisco Road, where truck terminal and recreation vehicle storage uses adjoin Oceanview Elementary School and residential development on two sides, substantial new commercial retail and/or office development with rear yard parking is also illustrated along the south side of East Grand Avenue and east of Brisco Road. Similar potential new development of
redevelopment is shown on both sides of East Grand Avenue near Alder Street, including frontage commercial and rear yard parking where Arroyo Trailer Park units now abut East Grand Avenue.

Although new developments are probable on several underdeveloped lots on both sides of East Grand Avenue, most of the potential enhancement will require private redevelopment that may occur over an extended period of time. Two examples of this type of evolution are implied by the enhancement plan.

For example, by relocation of approximately 17 trailer park spaces, enabled by Mixed Use zoning to make residential uses conditionally permitted rather than legally non-conforming, the East Grand Avenue frontage could be redeveloped with new commercial and/or office buildings. Off-street parking lots behind the commercial frontage would be accessed from the private driveway entry/exit to the trailer park, with secondary driveway connections to Halcyon Road or East Grand Avenue. Similarly, the adjacent lumber company could be replaced by an administrative office complex similar to Mid-State Bank's financial office center. This new office complex could also include multi-family residential or special needs housing components oriented to Bennett Avenue or Linda Drive.

On the south side of East Grand Avenue, many of the individual lots can be further developed with commercial and office uses oriented to the street providing coordinated off-street parking behind the frontage buildings. The Enhancement Plan proposes that shared access driveways be required to minimize driveway crossings of East Grand Avenue sidewalks, yet enable convenient entry/exit to rear parking lots. Additionally, these private parking lots should be linked together rather than separated to enable users and service vehicles to eventually move parallel to East Grand Avenue. The rear yard parking lot design will require a consistent block wall and landscape treatment as well as subdued lighting to provide a compatible neighbor for the residential lots fronting on Sunset Drive, including one or more pedestrian/bike paseos to improve mid-block circulation.

Along this segment of East Grand Avenue the median will initially retain a two-way left turn lane except at selected mid-block crosswalks where raised landscape medians can create a safer pedestrian refuge. After individual driveways are consolidated by the proposed shared access and interconnected parking areas, additional landscaped median islands can be encouraged to replace the two-way left turn lane, facilitating cross-street pedestrian movement.
HIGHWAY SEGMENT ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

Exhibit 16 illustrates possible infill of new developments in the Highway section of East Grand Avenue. This segment is particularly convenient for tourist services and lodging such as service stations, restaurants, motels and auto parts sales and services including tire, muffler, lube, transmission and parts stores, repair shops and vehicle sales.

Exhibit 16

EAST GRAND AVENUE HIGHWAY SECTION

The Highway segment adjoins the historic Village to the east of Freeway 101 and modest homes in a traditional residential neighborhood to the north. The commercial frontage of East Grand Avenue is composed of relatively small shallow lots in short blocks with small-scale stores, offices, services and residual houses intermixed on the north side of the street. Several service stations and a fast food restaurant with a drive-up window and a small convenience center are included in this generally shallow strip adjoining side and parallel street single-family houses. Most commercial and office uses have small individual off-street parking lots. The larger uses and the convenience center have larger front or side parking lots. Due to numerous driveways and the limited street width, on-street parking along this entire Highway segment consists of a less than a total of twenty-four on-street spaces which would be eliminated to enable the proposed two way left turn lane as an essential traffic safety feature.

Adjoining the Freeway 101 southbound ramps, undeveloped frontage, due to adjoining slopebank, enables a public vista overlooking the Arroyo Grande Creek valley floor which is a prominent irrigated and cultivated agricultural field also visible from the Freeway. This agricultural open space provides an important first
impression and public vista which is proposed as an entry feature to be permanently integrated into the East Grand Avenue gateway from Freeway 101. Further west along the south side frontage of East Grand Avenue are a series of Highway Commercial uses including a used car sales yard, transmission and muffler repair shops, quick lube, mini-storage complex, motel, two restaurants, several office buildings, and a few retail stores. Most of these uses would remain unless or until East Grand Avenue requires widening. The Enhancement Plan intends that widening be avoided and that each business provide supplemental or shared off-street parking instead of on-street.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The City of Arroyo Grande has previously constructed two East Grand Avenue improvement projects during the 1990’s for water and sewer line replacement, pavement reconstruction and preparations for future underground utility conversion. Phase one in the Highway segment cost $762,000 and included a short median island and landscaping east of Halcyon Road, but no other enhancement elements. Phase two in the Midway segment cost $2.2 million for water and sewer utilities and street reconstruction and included median islands at Brisco Road east of Elm Street for traffic safety. The third phase of street and utility reconstruction for the Gateway segment was budgeted at an estimated cost of $1.0 million, but 2001 construction was intentionally deferred to coordinate with East Grand Avenue Enhancement project proposals. The principal funding sources for the current project are $38,300 from sewer facility account; $513,400 from water fund account, and $431,600 from State Transportation Improvement Project (STIP) allocations. These include funds for design administration/inspection/testing and construction now supplemented by the 2002 budget addition of $250,000 of STIP funding for street enhancements.

Based on preliminary schematic design and initial cost estimates for East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan proposals, the Community Development Department staff recommends a focused “demonstration project” composed of the west half of the Gateway segment. The primary reason for a focused area is the budget limitations and to concentrate aesthetic enhancements within the mile and half long street right-of-way in a manner to demonstrate effectively the intended design character of proposed streetscape improvements. It should also be emphasized that the west half of the Gateway segment between Juniper Street and Oak Park Boulevard, currently adjoining undeveloped acreage, is the site of two new major private development projects, of the northwest and southwest corners of East Grand Avenue and Courtland Street intersection. Thus the two blocks of East Grand Avenue at the west edge of the City of Arroyo Grande, centered on Courtland intersection will be dramatically changing with or without the proposed streetscape enhancements.

Streetscape improvement preliminary cost estimates indicate the following construction costs for the western portion of the Gateway segment features:
**East Grand Avenue Enhancement Plan**

1. Median island, landscaping, trees and irrigation:
   a. Oak Park Boulevard to Courtland Street $32,000
   b. Courtland Street to mid-block driveways $29,200

2. Sidewalk/driveway repairs and stained concrete treatment
   Oak Park Boulevard to Juniper Street, both sides $43,100

3. Courtland/East Grand Crosswalk construction
   Patterned concrete, stained @ 10’ width- 4 legs $72,500

4. Street trees (median landscape and irrigation in #1.) $11,500

5. Tree well grates, stained concrete $24,200

6. Street furniture (4 benches and 4 trash/recycling receptacles $9,400

7. Entry signage monument base and other street signs $5,400

8. Contingency fund $22,700

Total: $250,000

To complete other priority enhancement elements west of Juniper Street along the Gateway segment of East Grand Avenue would require:

9. Additional median island landscaping trees and irrigation
   (mid-block driveways to Juniper Street) $22,000

10. Bus turnout on southwest corner of Courtland and Grand Ave. $15,400

11. Juniper Street and Grand Avenue intersection crosswalks (two legs at 10’ wide stamped and stained concrete and bulbouts) $36,200

12. Screen-walls at two locations
    (3 foot tall and 100 linear feet each) $20,700

13. Contingency $9,400

This second phase of enhancement would total $103,700

The preliminary cost estimate for the eastern half of the Gateway segment, tentatively considered second priority, for similar enhancement construction totals $266,600 exclusive of design administration and contingency allowances. The itemized elements include five short median islands, one of two bus turnouts, sidewalk staining from Juniper to Elm Streets, crosswalks at both Fair View Avenue and Elm Street intersections; street trees and grates, but no additional
street furniture, bulbouts or screenwalls. With design and contingency this third phase would cost approximately $300,000.

It should be noted that these cost estimates do NOT include for Midway and Highway segment enhancements, underground power conversion, Poplar Ponding Basin expansion or street pavement and water and sewer reconstruction.