CITY OF GROVER BEACH
GENERAL PLAN

SCENIC ROUTES ELEMENT

ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. 81-121
NOVEMBER 2, 1981

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THE GENERAL PLAN

Grover Beach's General Plan is composed of sections called "elements". Each element focuses upon a topic as required or allowed by State law. Each element carries equal weight and must be consistent with the other elements. The following elements comprised the General Plan on July 1, 1999:

Element Title	Adoption or Last Major Revision Date
Land Use	12/7/92
Housing	10/4/93
Circulation	1/18/88
Open Space and Conservation	8/6/73
Parks and Recreation	7/15/91
Noise	6/21/93
Scenic Routes	11/2/81
Safety	1/3/77
Seismic Safety	9/2/75

The City Planning Department is currently updating and combining the Safety and Seismic Safety elements. Some elements may be combined in the future.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. AUTHORITY

Government Code Section 65302(h) requires a scenic highways element of all city and county general plans, as follows:

> The Plan shall include a "scenic highway element for the development, establishment, and protection of scenic highways pursuant to the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with Section 260) of Chapter 2 of Division 1 of the Streets and Highways Code."

B. THE SCOPE AND NATURE OF THE SCENIC HIGHWAYS ELEMENT

This element provides for the local planning for official and unofficial scenic highways. Official scenic highways are so designated by the State Scenic Highway Advisory Committee after plans have been adopted and submitted by the local jurisdiction. Highways eligible for such designation are listed in the Streets and Highways Code Section 263. Official County Scenic Highways are also designated by the State Scenic Highway Advisory Committee upon application from the local jurisdiction.

Standards for official designation of scenic highway rest on the analysis, planning and protection of the scenic corridor through which the highway traverses. The California Department of Transportation has prepared a guide on official scenic highway designation which is available at their local district offices.

The scenic highways element is the initial step leading toward the official designation as a scenic highway. As such, the element provides the basis for the preparation of specific scenic corridor plans. The element is not a scenic highway corridor study, but rather provides the basis for scenic corridor studies by the California Department of Transportation or by the local jurisdiction. For cities and counties in which a scenic corridor study has been completed, the element may be a more specific plan or set of policies to protect and enhance the scenic corridor.

Although the emphasis of the scenic highway element is on the designation of state highway routes as "scenic" routes, this does not preclude local agencies from developing and adopting local scenic routes.

1. Identification and evaluation of scenic corridors in the planning area, consideration of special features such as entryways, river or bay front highways, park drives and similar important natural or landscaped and beautified arterials. Inclusion of a bikeway system within the scenic highway corridor may be considered.

2. Statement of Policy with diagram-map indicating the communities scenic highway system and the routes therein.

3. Guide to implementation measures.

C. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

The scenic highways element relates directly to the open space and the circulation element and to the land use element. Its strongest relationship is with the open space element inasmuch as the scenic corridor, by definition, will transverse significant natural and urban open space areas.

II. SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY SCENIC HIGHWAY SYSTEM

The San Luis Obispo County Scenic Highway System is composed of eligible and designated state, county, and city scenic routes. The state highways are those shown on the California Scenic Highway System Master Plan, while the county and city routes are those which are a part of this report. The standards for the selection of the city and county scenic routes are comparable to those utilized by the State Scenic Highway Advisory Committee.

A. DESIGNATED SCENIC ROUTES IN SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

In 1976, San Luis Obispo had zero miles officially designated as "Official State Scenic Highways" in the State Scenic Highway Master Plan. In addition, about 30 miles were "Officially Designated County Scenic Routes" as provided by the State's Scenic Highway County Program.

B. DESIGNATED AND PROPOSED STATE SCENIC HIGHWAYS

San Luis Obispo County has several State Highways or highway segments already suggested by the State for consideration but to date, none of these have been designated. Detailed studies have been designated and have been completed for two of the State highway segments, but neither could be qualified because of property owner resistance. Route 41 from Morro Bay to Atascadero was heavily promoted, but met such determined opposition that the project was abandoned.

Route 46, Cambria to Paso Robles, remains undesignated for similar reasons. Other State Highway routes qualifying for consideration, but lacking County implementation are:

1. Route 166
2. Route 46, Paso Robles to Route 33
3. Route 101
4. Route 1 through most of County
5. Route 227

C. DESIGNATED AND PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY SCENIC ROUTES

City and County streets and highways may also be designated as City or County Scenic Routes. Only one in the County has received such designation - combination of Nacimiento Road, Interlake Road, and portions of County Road G14.

Studies of Lopez Road from Arroyo Grande to Lopez Lake were undertaken, but did not proceed to a definitive stage.

Several other County roads qualify aesthetically, but, at the present time, lack implementation. The following routes have been proposed:

Nacimiento Lake Drive
Santa Rosa Creek Road
Cypress Mountain Drive
Simmler/Bitterwater Road
Palo Prieta/Cholame Road
Los Osos Valley Road
Perfumo Canyon Road
Lopez Drive
Santa Margarita Mountain Road
Chimney Rock Road
San Simeon Creek Road
Simmler/Soda Lake/San Diego Creek Road
Simmler Road Turri Road
South Bay Boulevard See Canyon Road
Hi Mountain Road

The City of Pismo Beach and the City of Arroyo Grande have also designated the following roads as scenic routes:

Pismo Beach Scenic Route:	Price Canyon Road
Arroyo Grande Scenic Routes:	U. S. Highway 1 Grand Avenue Branch Street Huasna Road Branch Mill Road Fair Oaks Boulevard/Valley Road Corbett Canyon Road Oak Park Boulevard James Way

III. CITY OF GROVER BEACH LOCAL SCENIC ROUTE SYSTEM

CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

The standard of scenic protection called for in the enabling legislation must be applied to the scenic corridor, which is a band of land adjacent to the designated route right-of-way, but excluding this right-of-way. It must be recognized that scenic corridors and, thusly, scenic routes do not necessarily stop or start at jurisdictional boundary lines. In many cases, the view from the road changes very little as one passes from county to city, and from city to county. Therefore, many of the standards, goals, objectives, and policies reflect an area wide concern.

The criteria described in this section serve as factors to consider in order to specifically delineate scenic corridors.

A. AESTHETIC JUDGEMENT

No exacting specifications can be established where personal preference is the basis for determining what is visually attractive. What is scenic in nature to one person, may not be to another. One must rely on the judgement of trained and experienced persons from State and local agencies, private firms, and citizens.

B. ANGLE AND DURATION OF VISION

Passengers generally have a wide sweep of vision offered by modern cars, oriented in the direction of travel by the seating arrangement. The driver, however, must operate in a narrow cone of vision, centered on the roadway ahead. Thus, the corridor delineation depends upon the angle at which scenic features of the landscape are viewed from the road, the foreground features framing them, and the period of time that they can be observed. Consequently, design speed and geometries of the road, and the existence or possibility of vista points or roadside rest areas must be taken into consideration.

C. TOPOGRAPHY

Changes in elevation along a roadway should be considered as a contributing factor to the scenic corridor. When a land form, such as the crest of a ridge, brings the range of vision closer to the right-of-way, the entire visible area should be included in the corridor.

D. DISTANT VISIBILITY

Where distant views and vistas are visible from the roadway a corridor boundary which extends further than the adjacent right-of-way should be selected. Although enforcement of the Local Scenic Routes Element should be confined to areas with the greatest visual impact, the protection and enhancement of the distant views should receive equal treatment.

E. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

All types of landscape, whether natural or urban may have scenic values and should be included in the scenic corridor. The scenic qualities along the roadway should be a total and continuous, though varied, visual experience.

F. VISUAL IMPACT

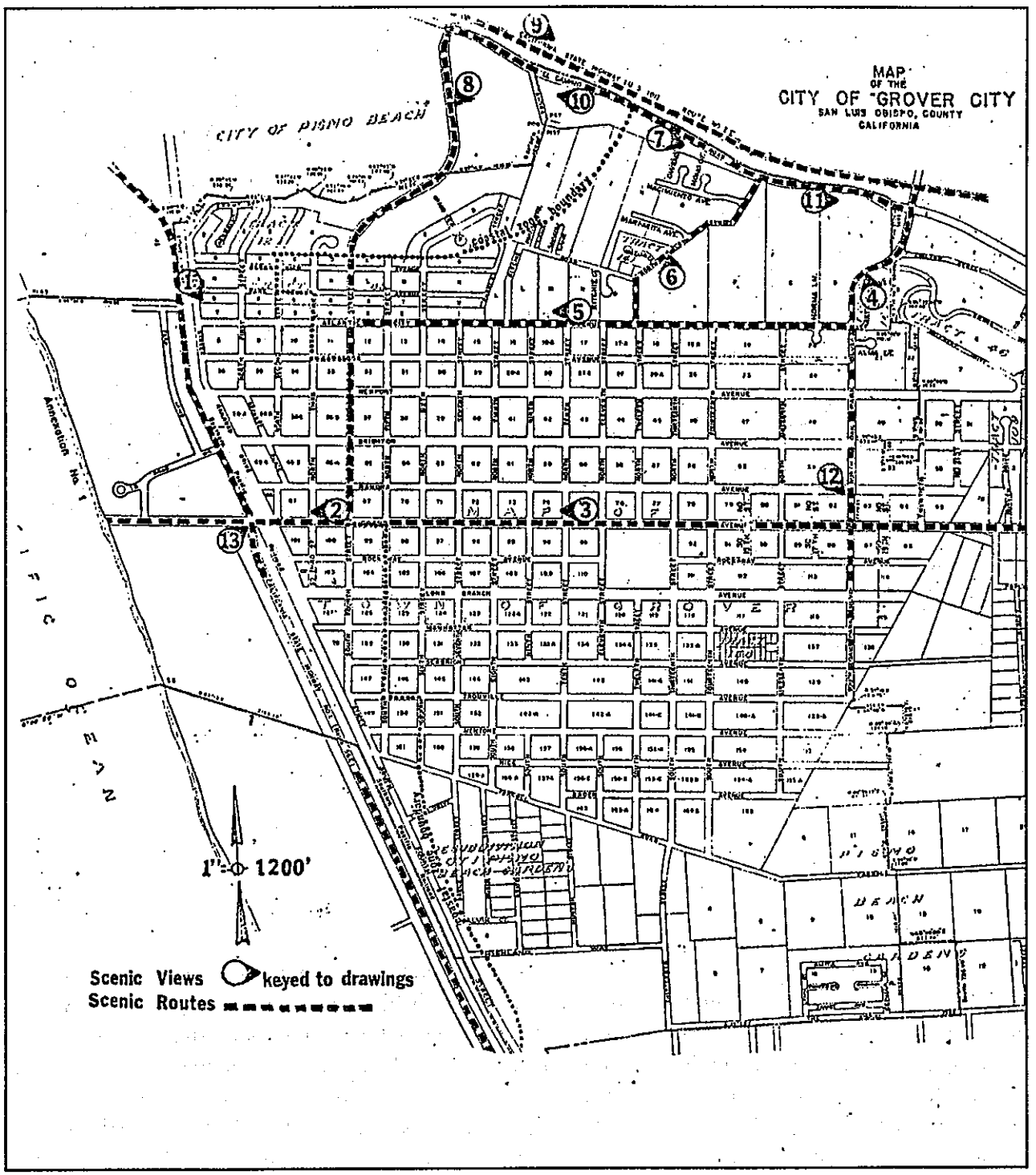
The visual impact of an area may be defined in terms of its uniqueness, its size, the scale of its details, and boldness of land forms in respect to its distance from the viewer, and the duration of the visual experience. The degree of this impact is a factor of how the scenic corridor is protected and enhanced through implementation techniques.

ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

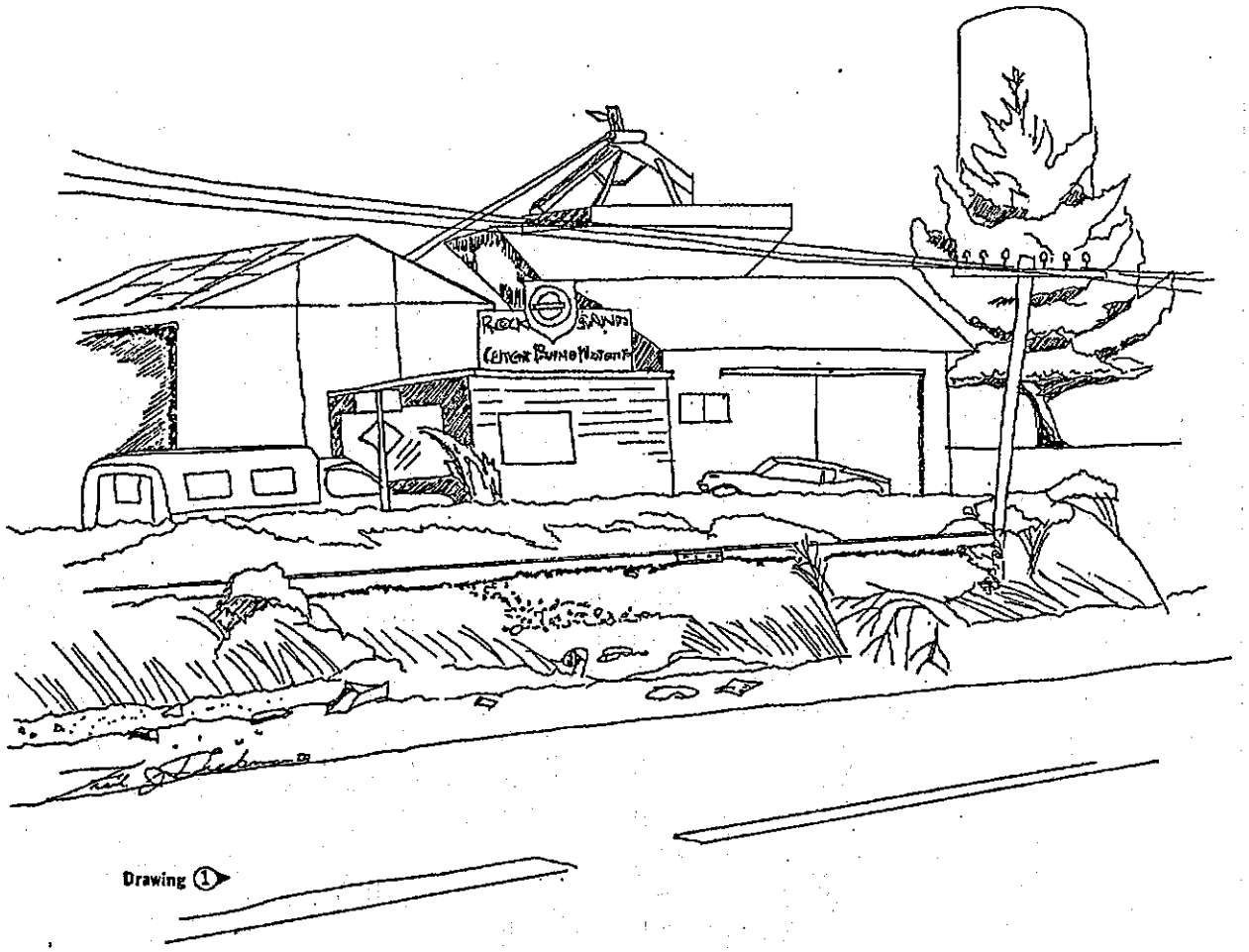
There are several scenic routes which either pass through or originate within the corporate boundaries of the City of Grover City. In addition, there are routes within Grover City which are not scenic in nature, but are important links between recreational areas of regional and statewide significance. These are, therefore, included in the scenic route system with special implementation techniques suggested for the enhancement of their scenic attributes.

The routes as shown on the Plan Map are listed below:

1. California State Highway 1, entire length within city boundaries
2. Grand Avenue, from Oak Park Boulevard west to the ocean
3. Fourth Street, Grand Avenue north
4. Oak Park Boulevard, entire length
5. Atlantic City Avenue, from Fourth Street east to Oak Park Boulevard
6. North Twelfth Street, Atlantic City Avenue to El Camino Road
7. El Camino Road, Oak Park Boulevard to Fourth Street
8. Highway 101


MAP OF THE CITY OF GROVER CITY
SAN LUIS OBISPO, COUNTY CALIFORNIA
CITY OF PISMO BEACH
Coastal Zone Boundary
Annexation No. 1
1" = 1200'
Scenic Views keyed to drawings
Scenic Routes

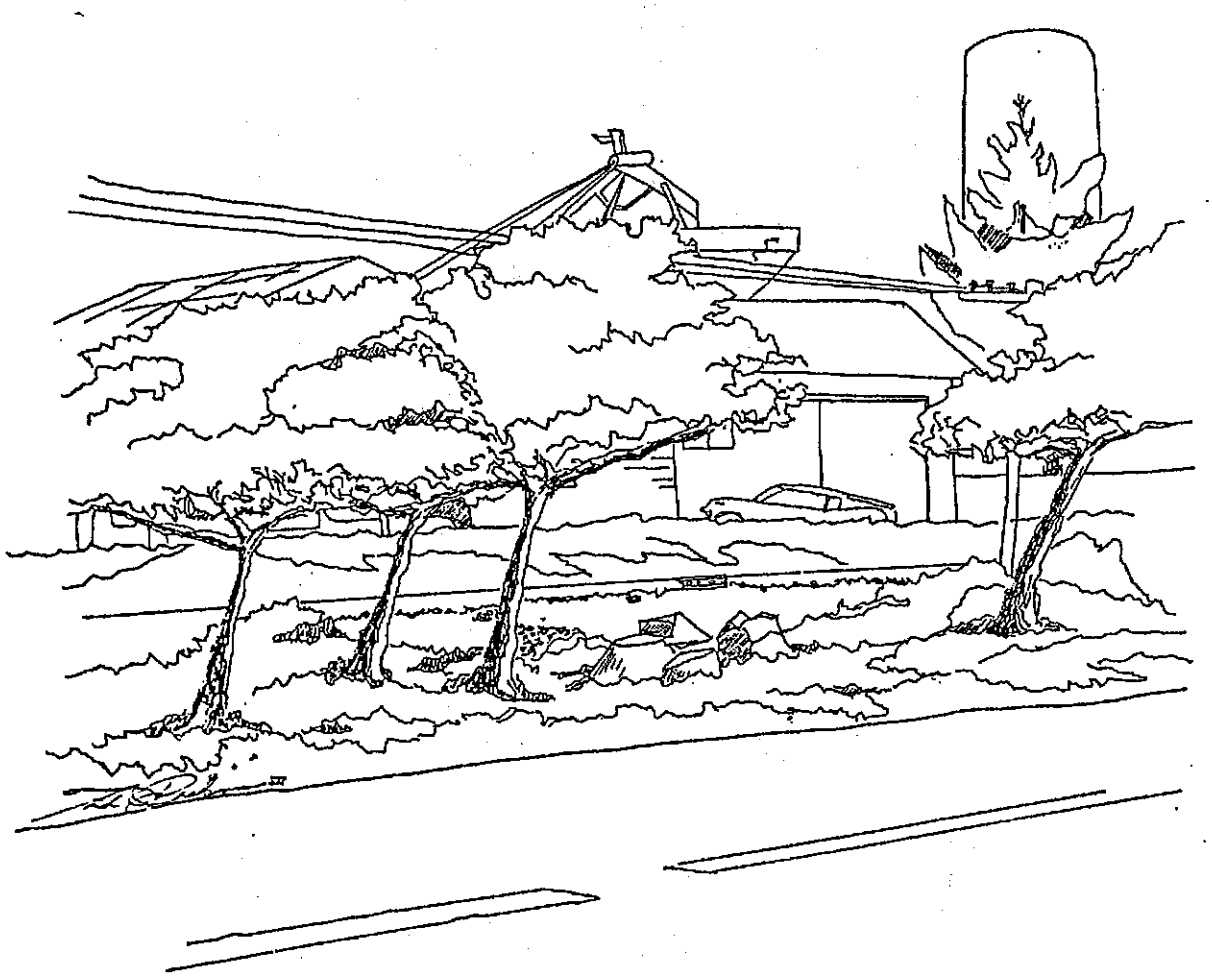
Highway 1 - Existing



Drawing 1

HIGHWAY 1: Highway 1 has long been in the State Scenic Highway Master Plan for future scenic highway designation. All along the California coastline, this highway provides highly scenic vistas to the traveler, within Grover Beach. Highway 1 is flanked to the east by Southern Pacific Railroad tracks and to the west by Pismo State Beach Property. The highway crosses Pismo Creek as it enters Grover Beach from the north, where there is a large Eucalyptus grove. Because the area east of the railroad right-of-way has developed into light industrial uses, the scenic quality east of Highway 1 is not highly desirable. Several mitigation measures to alleviate this condition are discussed under the section Plan Policies.

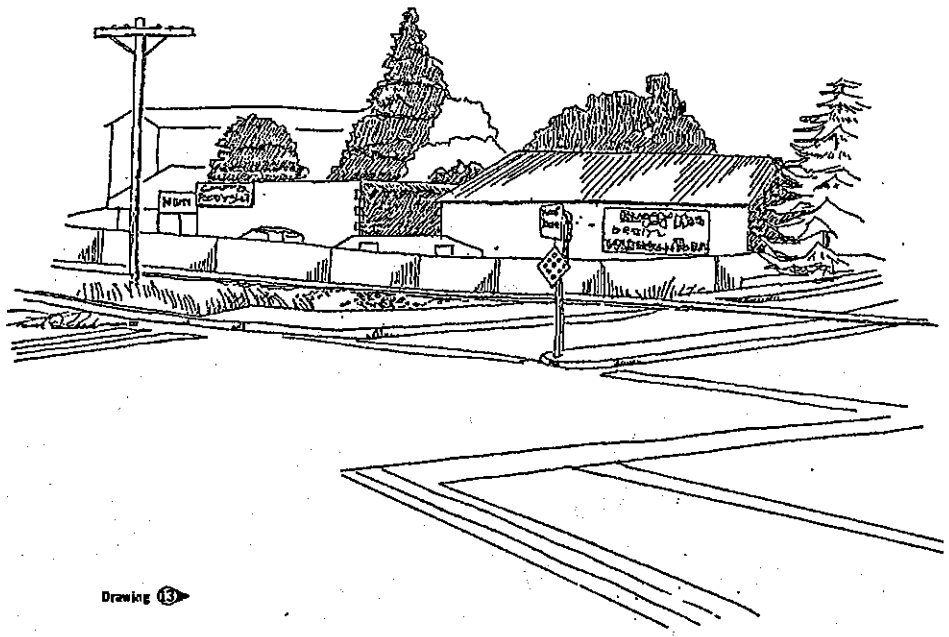
Highway 1 - Proposed



HIGHWAY 1: Along Highway 1 south of Grand Avenue, there is a tall row of Eucalyptus trees blocking the view to the industrial land uses east of the railroad. To the west of the highway is undisturbed State Beach property. There are sand dunes with relatively heavy vegetation in this area.

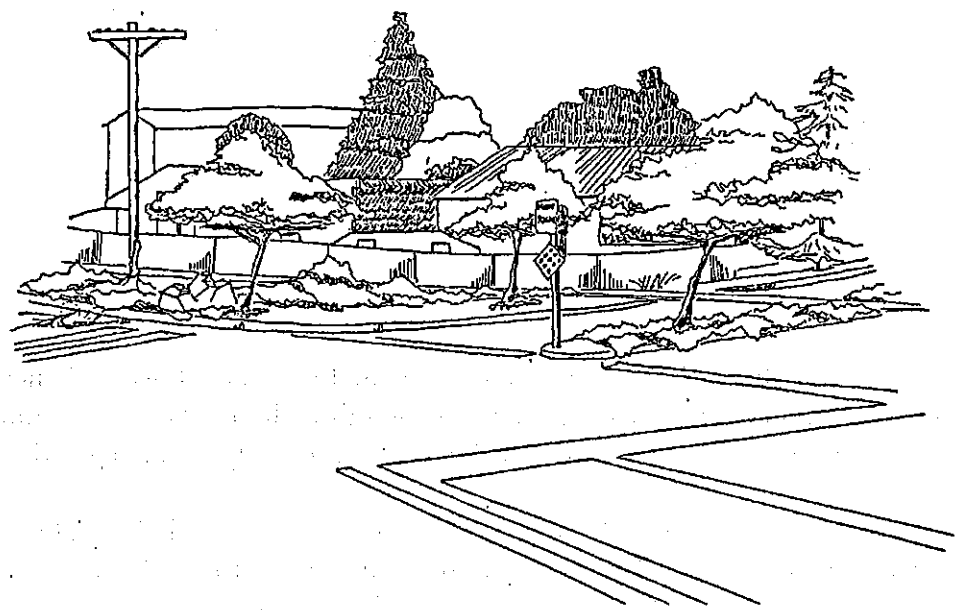
Landscaping along California State Highway 1 can effectively screen the industrial land uses in the railroad right-of-way and beyond. The inclusion of plant material can also create an attractive appearance from the highway, while providing a harmonious and continuous visual experience.

Highway 1/Grand Avenue - Existing

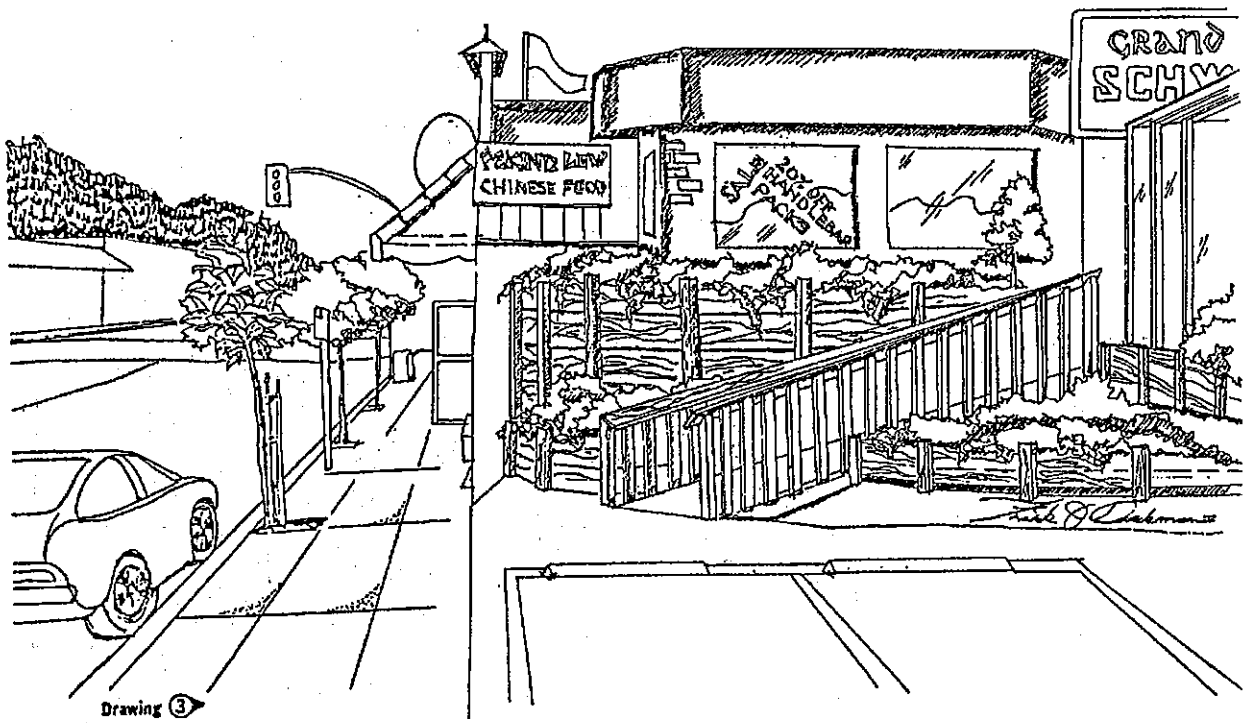


Drawing 13

Highway 1/Grand Avenue - Proposed



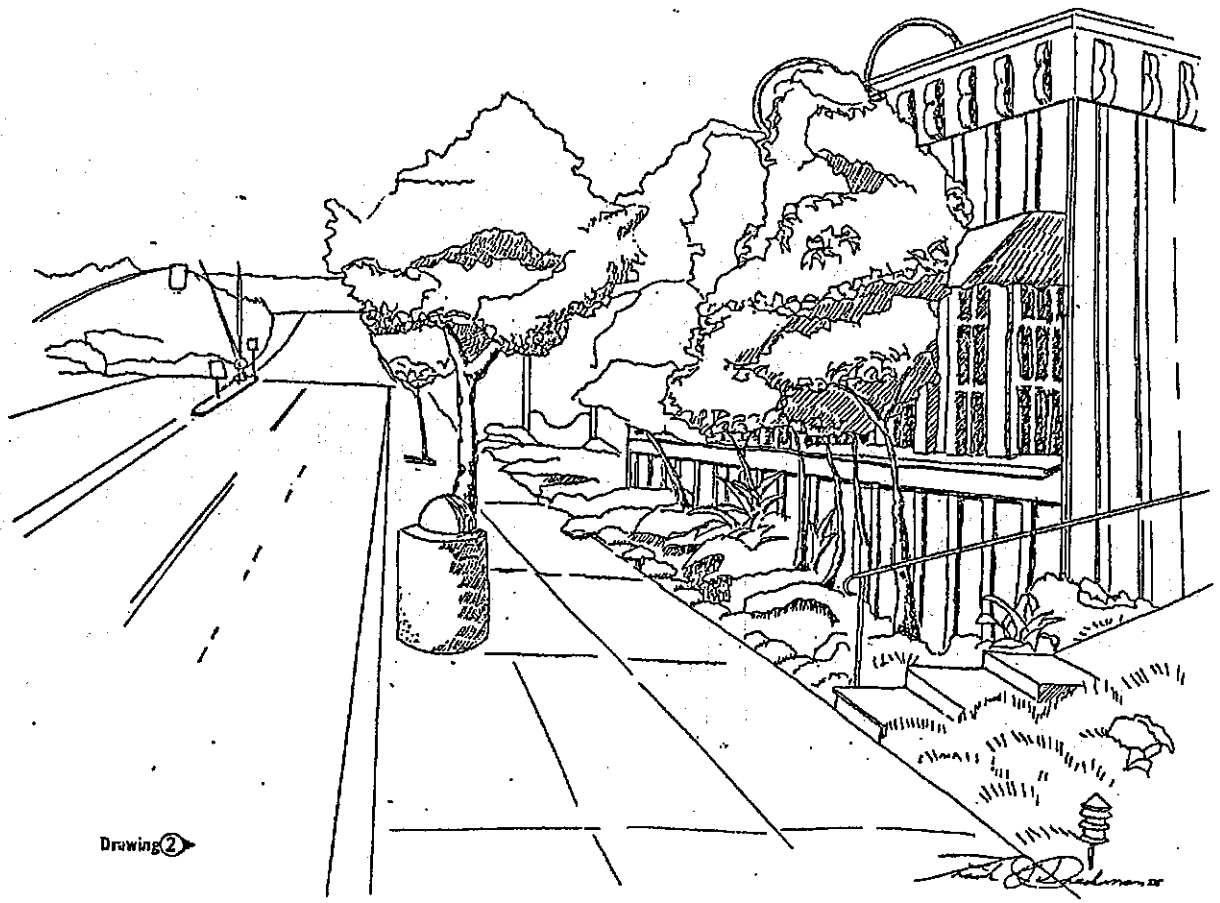
Grand Avenue - Central Business District



Drawing 3

GRAND AVENUE: Grand Avenue, from the ocean east, provides an important linkage between two recreational areas of statewide importance, Pismo State Beach and Lopez take Recreational Area. It is also the primary arterial in Grover Beach's Central Business District, and is so designated in the City's Circulation Element.

Grand Avenue



GRAND AVENUE: Through a complete study of the visual impacts of this corridor, policies and methods could be devised to provide a more contiguous, rationale street scape. This would greatly enhance the community appearance.

Arroyo Grande recently designated all of Grand Avenue within its boundaries a scenic highway. To provide continuity, it is highly appropriate that Grand Avenue be included in Grover Beach's Scenic Route Element.

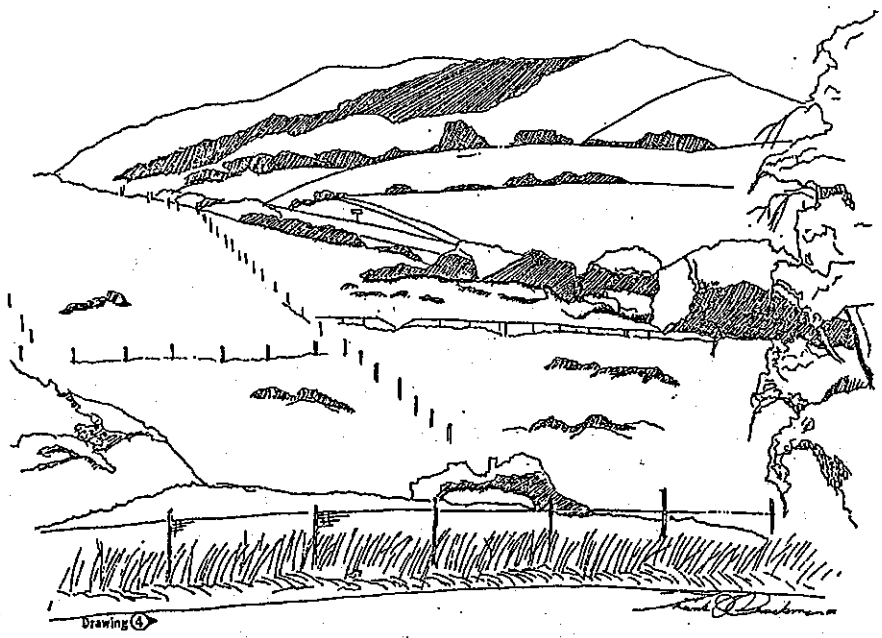
Fourth Street

Drawing 8

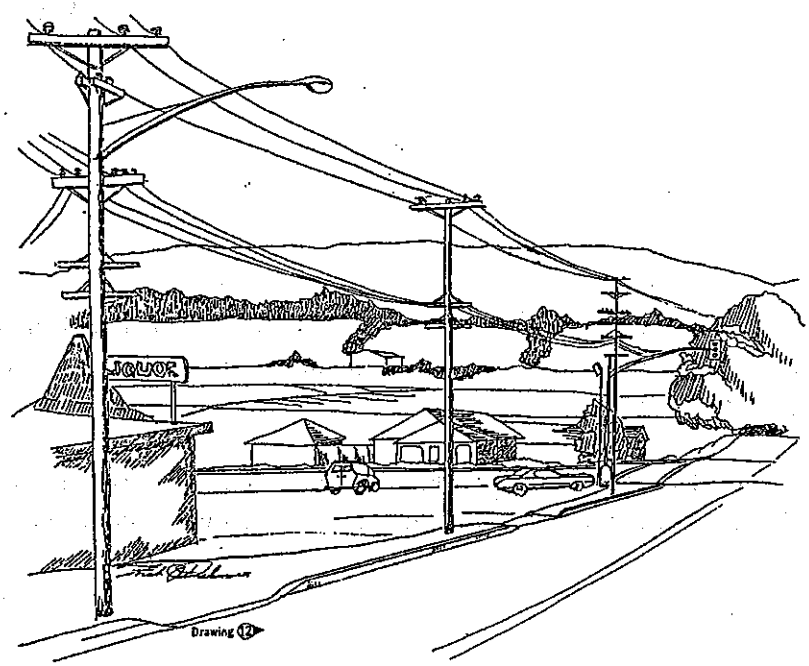
FOURTH STREET: Fourth Street is an entryway into Grover Beach from Highway 101 and provides close-up views of the Pismo Lake and Marsh area, a state designated ecological reserve. It is the only adjacent access to this reserve area.

The collector street also offers views of the Oak Park Heights viewshed area and as it peaks just north of the Ocean View Avenue intersection, an expansive view of San Luis Bay.

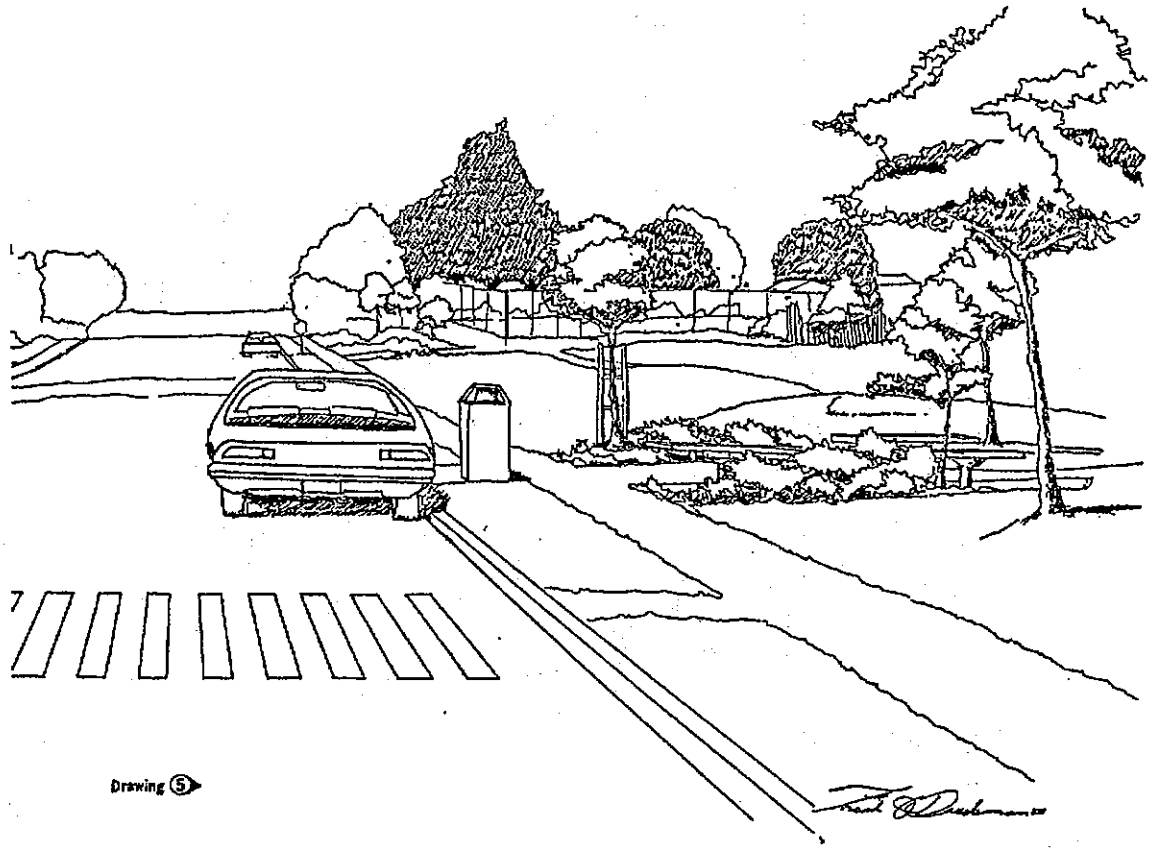
Oak Park Boulevard



OAK PARK BOULEVARD: This road is also an entryway into Grover Beach from Highway 101. On the north side of the ridgeline, views of the oak-studded hills north of Highway 101 and the northern end of the Bay are unsurpassed. South of the ridgeline, Oak Park Boulevard offers a wide view of the ocean and Nipomo Dune System.

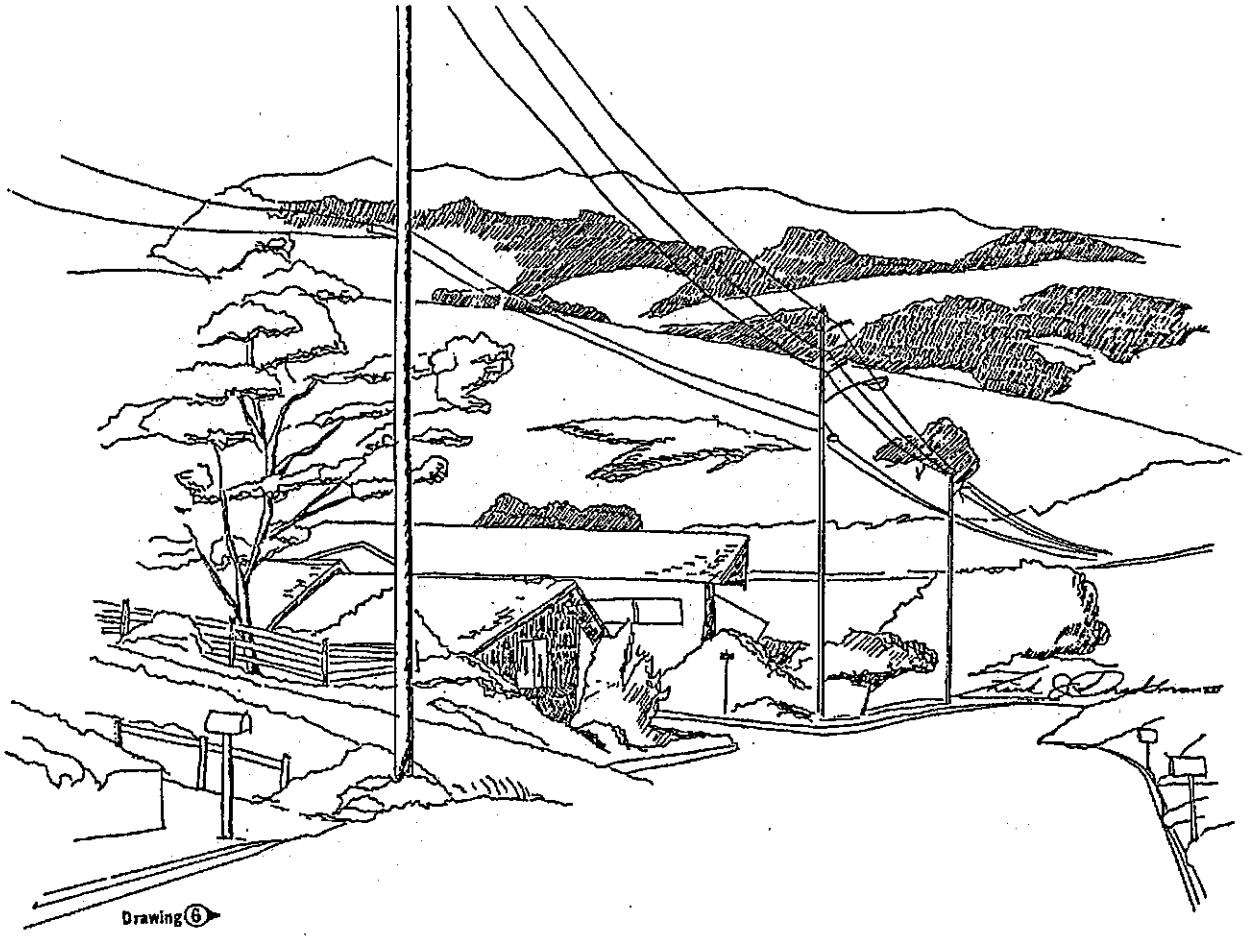


Atlantic City Avenue



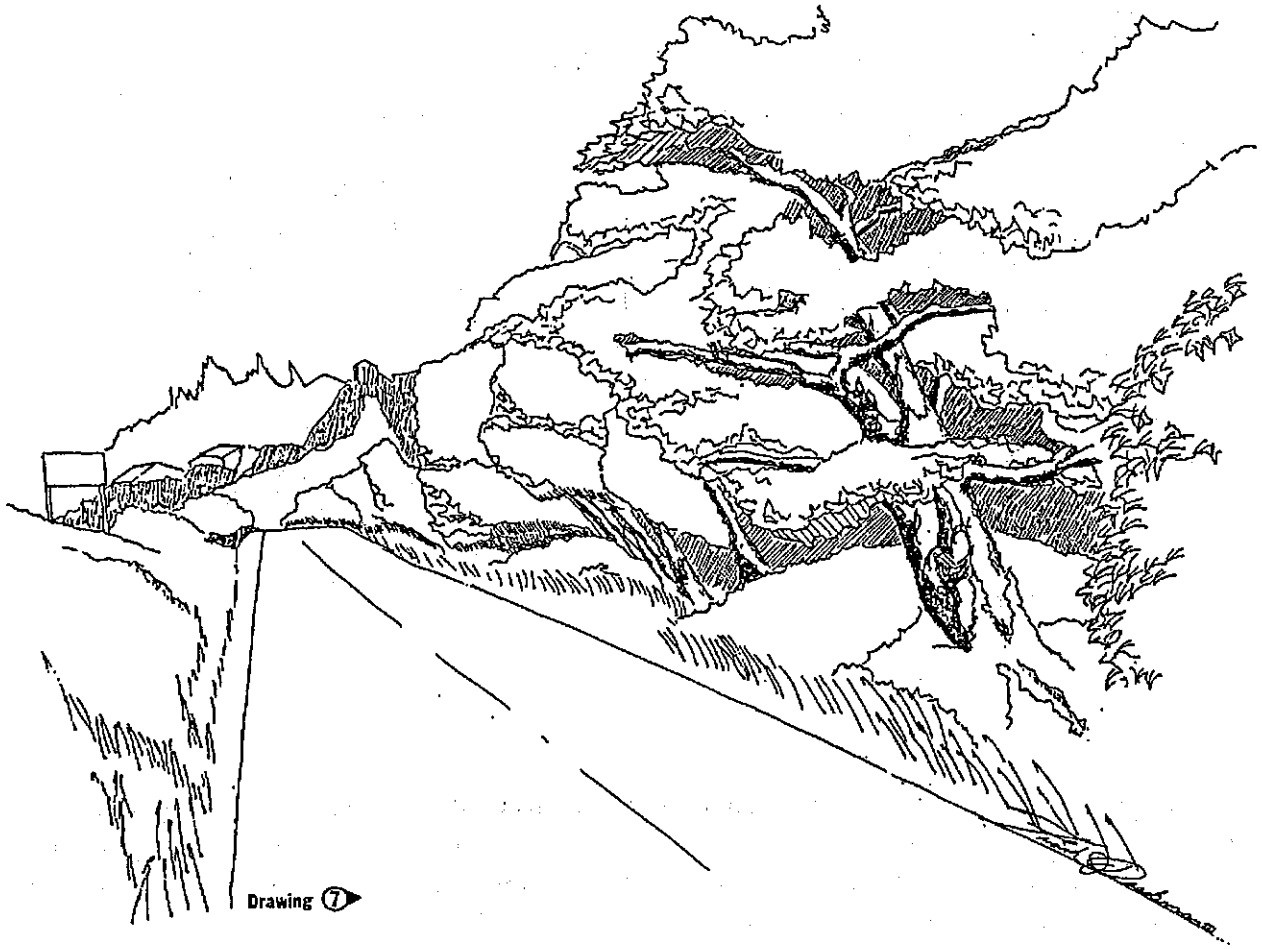
ATLANTIC CITY AVENUE: This collector street provides scenic opportunities of the Oak Park Hills and the Pacific Ocean. The avenue runs along a high ridge providing a sharp contrast in views from the northside to the southside. Residential development exists along the full length of Atlantic City Avenue, with a community park midway between the route as shown on the map.

North Twelfth Street



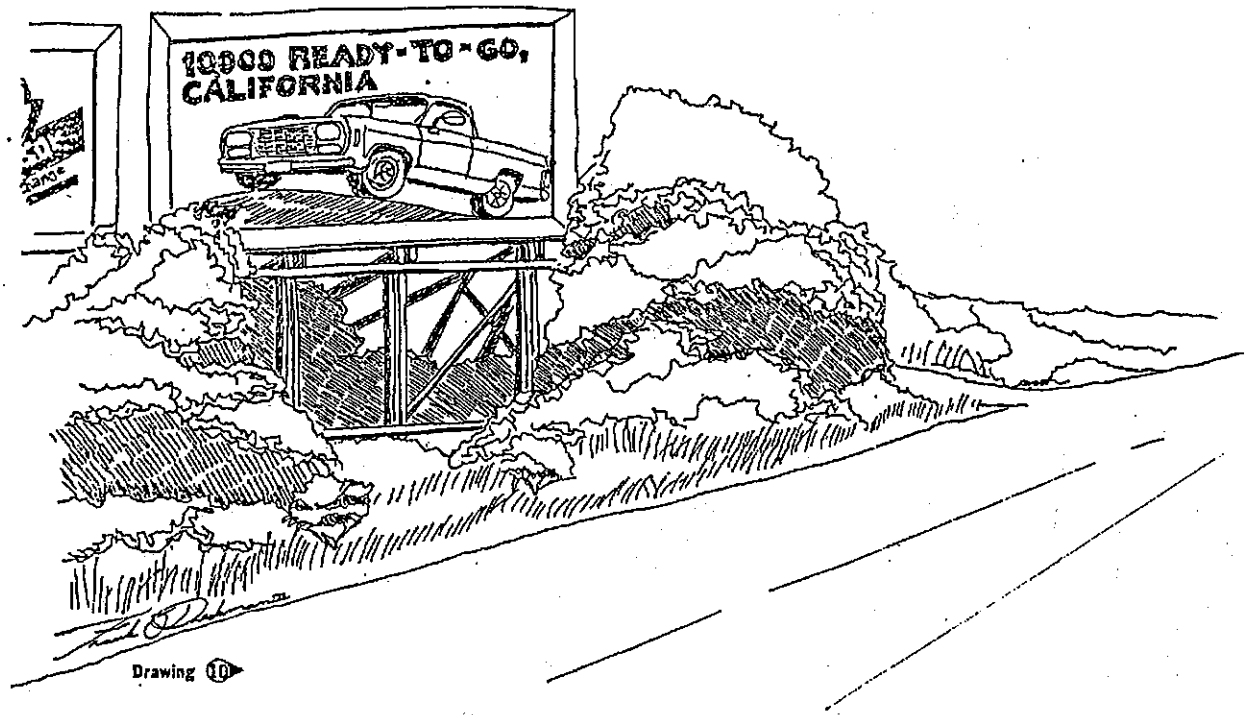
NORTH TWELFTH STREET: This street leads down the northern flank of a major topographic ridge to Meadow Creek and El Camino Road. This street is quite steep and offers views of the Oak Park Hills area north of Highway 101.

El Camino Real



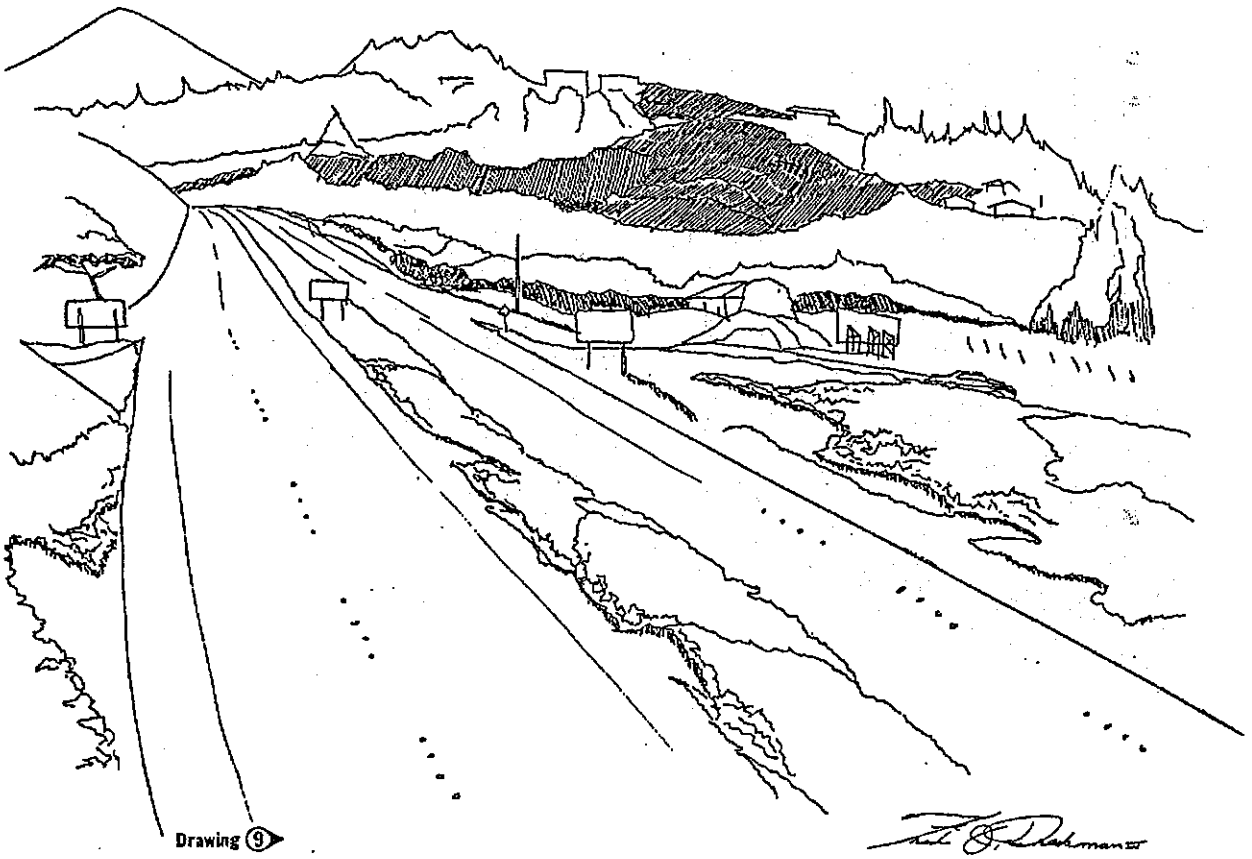
EL CAMINO ROAD: This road, characteristic of many frontage roads as it parallels the Highway 101 route, offers a close-up view of Meadow Creek and its environs. This route could provide a unique opportunity for a pedestrian/bikeway path adjacent to the roadway.

EL CAMINO ROAD: Poor road conditions not only could cause safety problems, but in this case, the "pot-holes" create a disruption of the scenic qualities in this area. This City must maintain roads within the City limits, and initiate the improvement of County roads. This immediate problem occurs on El Camino Road between 4th Street and Oak Park Boulevard.



EL CAMINO ROAD. Billboards pose a threat to the scenic qualities of an area. Not only do they physically block certain views, they cause unnecessary distraction for the motorists.

U.S. Highway 101



U. S. HIGHWAY 101: U.S. 101 is a major scenic corridor which defines the city boundary of Grover Beach. As this highway traverses the City's edge, views of the oak covered Grover Beach ridgeline can be seen, to the west, along with vistas of vegetation, offered by Meadow Creek. To the east of Highway 101, the traveler is treated with views of gently rolling hills which promote a pleasant rural atmosphere.

IV. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The problems associated with scenic routes and corridors fall within four major areas. First, architectural features of structures lack distinction. This is a function of the age of the structure, the distance from the road the structures are setback, and the lack of adequate landscaping. As new construction occurs, the architectural standards and review process will alleviate much of these problems. Second, the types and amount of signing along commercial strips create unpleasant distractions for the driver. The basic problem with signing is that it is used to advertise instead of identify. This results in an excess of visual stimulation for the driver, an amount that cannot be absorbed and comprehended. Third, the condition of roads affect the scenic views contiguous to the rights-of-way. Finally, overhead utility poles and lines often disrupt and obstruct scenic views.

DESIGN:

Development design relates to physical features which contribute to an overall impression of the city's street scape.

Basic features consist of architectural and construction designs which occur within the Central Business District. These designs should be in keeping with the city's scale and character, while reflecting the density, movement and activities of the Central Business District. However, problems such as non-contiguous building styles, inappropriate building and/street scale, and lack of a "close-knit" commercial and professional core contribute to a weak district image.

LIGHTING:

Lighting serves an essential function within the Central Business District by enabling the commercial core to be used at night. In addition, street lighting enhances the viewers appreciation of the night-time scenic corridor, while providing security and safe pedestrian/auto movement. Because the scenic corridor relates to both auto and pedestrian movement, two types of lighting systems should be employed--one related to human scale and the other related to safe vehicular travel. In addition, these systems also create visual rhythms which enhance the structure and image of the Central`Business District.

LANDSCAPING:

Landscaping is very important in the development of scenic character within Grover City. Although landscaping already exists along sections of Grand Avenue, new development should be encouraged to landscape with plant materials which compliment and maintain the consistency of existing street treatments.

Landscaping can also create increased public awareness and use of the Central Business District. For

example, by providing such amenities as landscaped center medians along Grand Avenue, the commuter as well as the pedestrian is presented with an attractive "green" environment which promotes greater district imaginability, identity, and use. The choice of landscaping to be used along a given corridor should be determined by the characteristics of the existing development and overall appearance of the area. Trees should be selected on the basis of the purpose for which they are intended such as ornamental trees, shade trees, seasonals, etc. Seasonal trees are especially important in that their leaf crowns provide shade during summer months while allowing the sun's rays to penetrate and heat structures during the winter "leaf drop" season. Also, seasonals provide a "sense of time" by changing color, shape, and density in accordance with the particular season.

SIGNAGE:

Signs and outdoor advertising within the Central Business District should be architecturally attractive and enhance the character of the community, while providing information to the public.

In order to inform, the attention of the motorist and pedestrian must be secured through the size, shape, color, and location of signage. However, unless these elements are controlled, signage will distract the viewer and dominate the visual setting of the commercial core. Thus, the need is to devise a system which will ensure the proper function of signage, while assuring merchants of equitable advertising practices.

STREET FURNITURE:

Although "street furniture" may apply to a variety of outdoor objects, excluding building and landscaping, the term most commonly applies to manmade objects such as outdoor seating, trash receptacles, telephone booths, kiosks, etc. The purpose of street furniture within the Central Business District is to promote a positive image of the commercial core while creating an enlivening or interesting street scape. Most street furniture serves both functional and aesthetic purposes. Thus, if designed and placed properly, these elements can become visual as well as functional assets to the Central Business District.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES

This section of the Scenic Route Element is concerned with establishing the general direction the City will proceed in order to implement this element. Listed in a concise manner are the goals or "ends", the objectives or "ways to meet ends", and policies or "the means". This section on implementation specifically enumerates the actions that must be taken in order to fulfill the policies and objectives, and ultimately meet the desired ends.

GOAL 1.0: To solicit the cooperation and coordination of the County of San Luis Obispo and the neighboring cities of Pismo Beach and Arroyo Grande for the purposes of establishing a continuous system of scenic routes throughout San Luis Obispo County.

OBJECTIVE 1.1 Provide the Linkage Necessary for a Continuous, Convenient System of Scenic Routes: A system of scenic routes should be complete enough to be convenient to all persons and to provide continuous pleasurable driving within the major scenic areas and between major scenic areas and recreational and cultural centers. The routes should afford aesthetically pleasing views to both the traveler and the outside observer throughout the entire system.

- POLICY 1.1.1 Coordinate Scenic Route Plans with other General Plan Elements, Especially the Land Use Element, Open Space and Conservation Element, and Circulation Element: The scenic routes plan is only one element out of nine mandated General Plan elements, and as such, it should incorporate and conform to goals and objectives within the other elements.

- POLICY 1.1.2 Design Efficient and Attractive Connecting Links: The scenic routes shall be designed to link recreation and cultural facilities, and to enhance these links by providing a variety of visual experiences, uninterrupted pleasurable driving, and an uninterrupted view from the road.

- POLICY 1.1.3 The Scenic Route System Shall be Designed to Afford a Varied Visual Experience: A variety of visual experiences such as changes in terrain, vegetation, land forms, and view should be provided within the scenic routes and scenic corridors. The route system should give the traveler alternatives to choose the routes with the outstanding scenic values within the city.

GOAL 2.0: **To conserve, enhance, and protect scenic views observable from scenic routes without unduly restricting the primary uses of the lands involved.**

OBJECTIVE 2.1 Provide for Normal Uses of Land and Protect Against Unsightly Features: In both urban and rural areas, normally permitted uses of land shall be allowed in scenic corridors, except in areas with exceptional panoramic views and vistas. These areas should be preserved and enhanced by supplementing normal zoning regulations with the following:

(1) Special height, area, and sideyard restrictions.

(2) Through providing architectural and site design review.

(3) Through prohibition and removal of billboards, signs not relevant to the main use of the property, obtrusive signs, automobile wrecking and junk yards, and similar unsightly development or use of land. Design and location of all signs should be regulated to prevent conglomerations of unsightly signs along roadsides.

♦ POLICY 2.1.1 Locate Transmission Towers and Lines Outside of Scenic Route Corridors When Feasible: Transmission towers and lines should not obstruct the view of the scenic corridor, and should be located elsewhere.

♦ POLICY 2.1.2 Underground Utility Distribution Lines When Feasible; Make Overhead Lines Inconspicuous: An active Capital Improvement Program should be initiated for the purpose of undergrounding utilities, not only in scenic corridors, but throughout the entire city.

♦ POLICY 2.1.3 Use Landscaping to Increase the Scenic Qualities of Route Corridors: Landscaping should be designed and maintained in scenic route corridors to provide added visual interest, to frame scenic views, and to screen unsightly views.

♦ POLICY 2.1.4 Provide and Ensure the Continuing Maintenance of Scenic Route Corridors: Lands held in public ownership should be maintained and protected from private encroachment. The City should strongly encourage the maintenance of privately owned lands.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 Provide for an Adequate View Corridor Boundary Including Lands Visible Outside of the Right-of-way: Where distant views and vistas extend beyond the roadway, a corridor boundary which extends further than the right-of-way should be chosen.

- POLICY 2.2.1 Acquire Areas Having Outstanding Scenic Values Through Dedication of Land, Development Rights, or Open Space Easements: Any lands within the scenic corridor with high open space scenic qualities, and that would be destroyed by any development, natural buffer areas, and open space dedications shall be made for as much of the undeveloped land as feasible. There should also be dedication of appropriate open space lands for roadside rests, observation points, and recreation trails in portions of scenic route corridors.

OBJECTIVE 2.3 Provide for the Protection of Natural Features and Enhancement of Man-Made Features Along the Scenic Route Right-Of-Way: Protect the natural terrain, vegetation, and land forms within the scenic route right-of-way and control the quality of improvements through design standards and review.

- POLICY 2.3.1 Design Scenic Routes to Minimize Grading in Right-Of-Ways: Road cut and fills should be kept to a minimum, and all slopes must be properly treated for erosion control.

- POLICY 2.3.2 Evaluate Road Improvements the Same as Private Development: New road construction and public construction of roadway structure appurtenances should be judged using the same criteria as any private development within the scenic route right-of-way.

- POLICY 2.3.3 Establish Roadway, Traffic, and Recreational Facilities in Right-Of-Way: Roadway facilities having a direct relationship with scenic right-of-way, such as scenic route identification signs, roadside rests, and observation points, should be permitted within the right-of-way.

- POLICY 2.3.4 Enhance the Scenic Route Right-Of-Way Through Design of Highway Structures: Scenic route rights-of-way should be made as attractive as possible through design of roadways and highway structures such as adjacent utilities, street furniture and, traffic and other official signs.

- POLICY 2.3.5 Landscape the Rights-Of-Way of Existing and Proposed Routes: All existing end proposed routes should be landscaped with native material for the improvement of scenic qualities and for the control of erosion. The landscaping should provide a framework for background corridor views, and should not screen or form a solid barrier to distant views and vistas.