

Appendix A: Los Osos Community Advisory Council – Vision for Los Osos

A.1. Vision Statement for Los Osos

Approved June 22, 1995 [and amended January 2020](#)

[If the Vision Statement is updated by LOCAC, it will be included in the Public Hearing draft Community Plan.]

• *All land use policies and plans should be based on sustainable development that meets the needs of current population and visitors without endangering the ability of future population to meet its needs or drawing upon the water of others to sustain community livelihood.*

A.2. Morro Bay Estuary

- *Morro Bay is clean and functioning, protected through local interest, with State and National Estuary status, harboring and nurturing wildlife.*
- *The watershed is managed to minimize siltation and pollution from pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers.*
 - *Chorro and Los Osos Creeks run to the Bay free of pollution and again nurture steelhead and other species of flora and fauna, and maintain fresh-water flow to support the estuary.*
 - *Fossil fuel transportation and delivery is minimized and managed to prevent potential spills in Morro Bay and Estero Bay.*
 - *Analysis has been completed and appropriate actions have been taken to restore the tidal current flow throughout the bay for the purposes of promoting self-cleansing, deepening the back bay areas, supporting wildlife and providing recreational opportunities. Possible actions to be considered include dredging, restoring the north entrance to the bay, and increased stream flow into the bay.*
 - *No hunting is permitted on the bay.*
- *There are no fossil fuel drilling platforms off our coast.*

A.3. Water

- *Our water is carefully managed on a holistic basis to provide a clean, sustainable resource for the community. Included in this management plan are:*
 - *Aquifer maintenance, management and recharge, preventing over-drafting of the aquifer and salt-water intrusion into the water supply.*
 - *A septic system maintenance district.*
 - *Management of water extraction and delivery systems.*

- *Waste water management, cleansing and restoration to the lower aquifer or upper aquifer with pumping from upper aquifer for domestic use.*
 - *Graywater reclamation, management and recycling.*
 - *Conservation of water is an integral part of the management plan.*
 - *Runoff and storm drainage (in excess of that required to sustain the Estuary fresh-water flows) are managed, where possible, through the use of **retention/percolation basins** which are an integral part of the landscape and used for recreation purposes.*
 - *Current **percolation "pits"** in the community have been redesigned to provide for landscaping or recreational uses, and are maintained.*
 - *Agricultural and landscape management practices to reduce water usage and pollution from fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.*
- *Our **waste water treatment facility(s)** is based on a natural biological process rather than mechanical system approach to the highest extent possible. These facilities have become a visual and recreational asset to the community, including development of water supply for agricultural or irrigation purposes, and habitat for wildlife.*

A.4. Air

- *Our **air** is kept clean by reducing or eliminating pollution from sources within and outside of our community.*
- *Since automotive emissions are a primary source of air pollution, planning decisions and land use practices **minimize automobile trip miles** generated.*

A.5. Soils

- *The productive **agricultural soils** of the watershed are maintained and protected for agricultural purposes. Those soils which are primarily supportive of grazing are managed to minimize siltation and pollution of the riparian habitats in the watershed.*

A.6. Planning and Zoning

- *A **small-town, rural atmosphere** has been maintained.*
- ***Self-governance** has been achieved.*
- *The community of Los Osos, within the Urban Reserve Line, has been designated as a "**town.**" The "town's" influence (through recommendations) extends to the boundaries of the Los Osos Creek watershed.*
- *A **planning commission** for the town is responsible for planning recommendations, decisions and project evaluation.*
- ***Development proposals** are **analyzed** by visual analysis, planning assessment, excellence of design, from the community's viewpoint and from within the community.*

- *Development standards are performance-based.*
- *Development provides **incentives for solar heating, solar hot water heating and gray water recycling for irrigation.***
- *Well-designed, energy-efficient structures are encouraged.*
- *Site planning guidelines are established for non-residential development in the community.*
- *We have in place a **General Plan** that contains a high level of **graphic and visual** content, supported by written content to clearly define intent and enforcement of the plan. This plan is easily understood and interpreted by a lay person.*
- *Planning documents are clarified to **strengthen directives** ("shall", rather than "should").*
- *Part of the charm of Los Osos is the **eclectic nature of the various neighborhoods**. With infill of existing neighborhoods, this is not a problem. In new development, multiple builders are encouraged, and newer neighborhoods provide variety and are not mass-produced, "cookie-cutter" designs.*
- *New subdivisions generally do not employ perimeter walls and fences unless justified, and are not "gated," implying exclusivity or isolation from adjacent neighborhoods and the community. They provide through auto, bicycle, equestrian and pedestrian traffic where desirable in accordance with the Traffic and Circulation Plan for the community.*
- *Neighborhoods have instituted "**neighborhoods-helping-neighbors**" programs, including exchange of labor, bartering, community vegetable gardens sharing excess garden produce, exchange child care and baby-sitting, health care help, helping the elderly with fix-up tasks, and neighborhood watch - looking out for each other.*
- *Incentives have been initiated to encourage **walking and bike riding**.*
- *The **focus of development** is on infill and mixed use.*
 - *Residential and businesses co-exist as mixed uses.*
 - *Multi-family and affordable housing exists and is encouraged.*
 - *Mixed-use incentives make development of affordable housing feasible for developers and acceptable to the community.*
 - *In-law units, bed and breakfast, and second small rental units are allowed in residential neighborhoods on lots of adequate size.*
- *Improvement of the "**jobs/housing balance**" has not changed the small-town and rural character.*
- *One or more **senior residential care facilities** offering independent living, assisted living and convalescent care have become an integral part of the community.*
- ***Land uses shall be performance-based and shall include:***
 - *Passive recreation/ground water recharge.*
 - *Commercial retail/residential.*
 - *Office and professional/residential.*
 - *A category emphasizing research and development.*

- *Industrial is redefined with performance standards.*
- *Wholesale.*
- *The current **Urban Reserve Line** remains in place.*
- *Current **zoning east of the Urban Reserve Line** to the boundaries of the watershed has been clearly defined, promotes agriculture and agriculturally-related land uses in the Los Osos Valley, and discourages speculative purchase and development for other uses.*
- *Agricultural owners have been provided with **incentives** to maintain land in productive **agricultural use**. These incentives include a transfer of development rights program, tax incentives, or other programs which permit property taxation assessed on an agricultural basis as "highest and best use."*
- *Incentives are offered to property owners willing to grant **easements for bike routes** to San Luis Obispo.*
- *There is **no commercial development east of South Bay Boulevard**.*
- *All **vertical accesses** to the Bay are designated recreation/open space for the public benefit and are developed as mini-parks.*
- ***Permit processing** in the urban area of Los Osos has been streamlined and provides incentives for excellence in design and planning through reduced processing time and fees. Plans which fall within the stated planning and design criteria are expedited for immediate processing and approval within 10 days.*
- ***Impact fees** are fairly assessed to new development.*
- *Infill of **existing subdivided lots** within the Urban Reserve Line has **priority** over any further subdivision of the lands, subject to review of excellence in planning and design and community benefit.*
- *There is **no increase of density** on land **outside the Urban Reserve Line**.*
- *There is no further development of land which is **30% slope** or steeper.*
- ~~***No development** has been permitted to the south of the proposed South Bay Boulevard Extension **above the elevation of 400 feet, with proper compensation to affected land owners.***~~
- ~~***If lands south and north of the South Bay Boulevard Extension** are deemed developable, consider development as a resort hotel/golf/shopping as a gateway to Montaña de Oro with high density and considerable open space.*~~
- *Any **development** must protect the watershed; control runoff; reduce water diversions and limit the number of trees and natural vegetation removed in order to be permitted. Serious penalties apply to unapproved vegetation removal.*
- *No buildings have been permitted within federally-designated **flood plains**; however, recreational uses have been permitted.*

A.7. Growth

- A **maximum rate of growth** based on the population of the community of Los Osos within the Urban Reserve Line has been established, consistent with the resources available, services and infrastructure provided, and with maintaining our sense of place.
 - Note: The **population at maximum buildout of currently zoned land within the Urban Reserve Line** of the Los Osos community has been established by County Planning to be approximately 28,000 people. This figure may be adjusted depending upon finally-determined land use designations.
- **Greenbelts** have been implemented, providing a clearly defined "green edge" to the urban area and providing and protecting a riparian wildlife corridor.
- The **Moros** have been incorporated into a permanent agriculture/open space/view shed protective district, eliminating speculative development of this scenic resource.

A.8. Infrastructure

- Our **street system** (on the grid) has been completed and paved, except where other uses have been designated in the Traffic and Circulation Plan.
 - **Logical street connections exist between neighborhoods** to encourage efficient circulation and reduce the distance of vehicular travel in the community.
 - Street **cross-sections are minimal** and sufficient to provide a reasonable flow of traffic and emergency vehicles.
 - Major and minor roadways have been planted with **street trees** (5-gallon can size) of species and characteristics consistent with the scale of the roadway (height limitations?)
 - Streets in **commercial areas** have landscaping, trees, social areas, curbs, gutters, street lighting and sidewalks, and utilities are underground. Streets in **residential areas** do not unless a majority of the residents of the neighborhoods request these improvements.
 - Where street improvements have been scheduled, opportunities have been **coordinated** to complete **other improvements** during the same construction process, i.e., undergrounding utilities.
 - **Circulation systems by means other than automobile** have been encouraged and are in place.
 - Newly developed and newly paved streets are **minimum width** with bike lanes included and parking on one side of street (where this is consistent with the Traffic Circulation Study recommendations). **Street tree planting** is a requirement.
 - Minimum street widths and good street design **maximize traffic safety** throughout the community.
 - **Los Osos Valley Road** from the bridge at Los Osos Creek to Foothill Boulevard remains at current level (1995) of improvement; from South Bay Boulevard to 9th Street has a landscaped median with street trees, and turning lanes. West of 9th Street to Pecho Road (or the intersection with the South Bay Boulevard Extension), it is a two-lane road with center turning lane; from that point south, it is two-lane.

- The pedestrian **crosswalk at Sunset Avenue** is provided with a flashing light for pedestrian activation.
- **No new traffic signals** have been installed and those at 9th and 10th Streets and South Bay Boulevard are sequenced to reduce traffic speeds to 25 mph.
- **Utilities** have been placed underground.
- A **communitywide wastewater and drainage system** is in place.
- The automobile (perhaps electric) will be around a long time. **Auto use must still be accommodated** in the plan.
- Parking in business districts is mitigated by **shared parking facilities and on-street availability** is included in calculated requirements.
- A **transit system** is established, permitting residents to access public transit within 1500 feet of their residences. A local transit loop connects with a regional transit terminal which provides frequent, fast and convenient connection to the major employment centers served by our residents.
- ~~South Bay Boulevard extension to the south and east with connection to Pecho Road has been completed, diverting through traffic to Montaña de Oro from downtown Los Osos and relieving this through traffic from Los Osos Valley Road west of South Bay Boulevard. This extension is completed only when needed by new development in the area and is fully funded as an improvement by the developers through impact fee assessment.~~
- **Entrances to the community** are well-defined, designed, and planted, with appropriate signage and/or elements of community identity.

A.9. Community Facilities and Services

- Another **elementary school** and a **high school** and related recreation areas and park facilities have been built in Los Osos. A partnership between schools and parks allows maximization of recreational benefits for schools and residents and shared development and maintenance costs.
- The **library** has doubled in size, with hours convenient to the residents.
- Residents have the ability to **subscribe and be charged for waste collection and recycling on an as-used basis**, rather than a flat rate basis. Reward self-sorting and waste reduction.
- A program has been developed to work with the suppliers of products to enable buying in bulk and reducing packaging costs and the waste material generated from packaging and wrapping articles multiple times. **Reduce waste material at the source.**
- A **recreation district** has been formed for the purchase of providing community recreation facilities and park land purchases and development (through CSA #9?).

- **Public/private/community partnerships** have been established to create and maintain parkways, mini-parks, street-end parks, and recreational and social opportunities for people of all ages.
- Our **recreation facilities** include:
 - **Neighborhood and community parks**, consistent with the population size and needs. Some of these parks are established in conjunction with the school district and on land already owned by the county. A minimum of 70 acres of community and neighborhood parks is required to bring the community up to established standards now on a population basis of 15,000.
 - **A cinema**
 - **Recreation facilities for teen-agers and younger residents.**
A community **swimming pool**.
 - A **community center**, central to the community, where anyone can drop in for ping-pong; to play cards or other games; have conversations, with soft chairs, plants, soft lights and reading material; a crafts shop; and inside and outside recreation for the children. Include a snack bar open long hours. Wings for senior citizens, family activities, teenagers, but with a common center shared by all.
 - A **small performing arts area** (amphitheater).
- A **green-waste recycling/composting center** has been established with the proceeds, if any going to fund youth and senior activities. Include a worm farm.
- A **community tree lot or tree bank** is established, run by volunteers, making trees inexpensive or free to residents. Species are indigenous and culturally adapted, according to the tree master plan of the community.
- Neighborhoods have developed **volunteer groups to water and maintain their public plant materials**.
- **Awards** are given to the neighborhood(s) making the most improvements.

A.10. Business/Commercial Facilities

- Our **business and commercial areas** encourage pedestrian activities and include:
 - An additional "full-service" **supermarket**.
 - A **farmers market** with local produce and products with both permanent and day stalls are held at times when local residents are in the community.
 - User-friendly businesses that are open during hours convenient to local residents.
 - Business areas exist in which **pedestrians, rather than cars, rule the streets**; walk-streets exist in the commercial and residential areas.
 - **Landscaped pedestrian spaces throughout**.
 - The present commercial center (**Von's complex**) has been expanded and redesigned to provide pedestrian spaces and additional shopping which encourage pedestrian rather than automobile movement within the complex and provide pedestrian scaled spaces and activities to encourage shopping and business. It is no longer a typical automobile-oriented strip-commercial center. Incentives were provided to the owner to accomplish this.
 - All **commercial, retail, office, service commercial, and multi-residential zoning** has been re-evaluated to permit flexibility, mixed use, and planned development with

emphasis on providing accelerated processing and other incentives for design which exceed minimum standards.

- *Shared, landscaped automobile parking* integral with the businesses with pedestrian-oriented and scaled spaces connecting the businesses and parking areas.
- *More outside dining*, reasonably screened from our prevailing winds.
- *Buildings that present a good facade* to roadways (instead of parking lots).
- *Zoning flexibility* that enables expansion of businesses (to retain them in the local economy) and that places incentive on good design.
- *We have actively pursued and attracted user- and environmentally-friendly businesses* that value the amenities of our community and provide jobs for our residents.
- *A multi-media center* which can be linked to the world through Internet and World Wide Web.
- *Media links* to Cal Poly, Cuesta and other networks to permit in-home occupation and business development without commuting.
- *Environmentally-oriented retreats/conference centers* for professionals and/or tourists have been developed in conjunction with Cuesta College/Cal Poly.
- *We have developed a small, user-friendly government center.*
- *We have developed a community-sized medical center* for the residents.

A.11. Tourist-Oriented Facilities

- *We have provided for tourist-oriented facilities, including:*
 - *One or more 18-hole golf courses* strategically located (as part of the greenbelt) to use land which is not primary agricultural land; which use treated waste water effluent for irrigation; and provide, through irrigation practices, return of the effluent to the water system.
 - *Tourist-oriented recreation* focused on the Bay (kayaking, canoeing, sailing) and our scenic environment (hiking, biking, equestrian paths; picnicking; arts and crafts).
 - *Trail systems* have been provided which link Montaña de Oro, the Estuary, the Moros and Los Padres National Forest adjacent to riparian corridors and scenic reserves.

A.12. Conclusions

During all of this activity, we have remained a community which upholds our community values and scale, who have taken control of our own destiny, who have shunned gated communities and encouraged neighborhood and community continuity and, best of all, made our Los Osos community uniquely ours, not a replica of some other vision or model.

We live in one of the most beautiful places in the world. We have our own values and sense of place. Let's enhance those and maximize our involvement with them, not try to copy someone else's lifestyle, environment, or reasons for protecting and preserving them.

The name of this beautiful place is Los Osos, not "South Bay".

Approved by the Los Osos Community Advisory Council June 22, 1995.

A.13. Vision Team

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