Economic Development Opportunities Plan Highway 46 Corridor

May 2006

the city of Wasco

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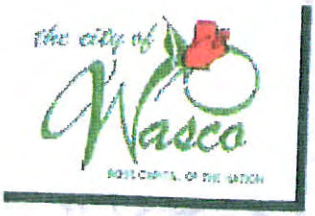

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Executive Summary

Project Background & Purpose

The City of Wasco received an Economic Development Planning & Technical Assistance Community Development Block Grant from the California Housing & Community Development Department to fund a project, which would result in an Economic Development Road Map to enhance the City of Wasco's competitiveness for

- New businesses investment and jobs,
- Expand the tax base and
- Improve the image of the City of Wasco.

The purpose of an Economic Development Road Map is to outline strategic initiatives and action tactics to address economic challenges and opportunities.

Project kick-off involved an interactive work session with the Economic Development Committee to review Wasco's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Appendix A). Given the growth that was occurring and is projected to continue Wasco is truly at a **"Tipping Point"** – *a point of new demand which is the opportune time to evaluate and plan on how the city can leverage the growth to enhance the city for the highest future economic value.*

The Economic Development Committee identified three priorities from SWOT process:

Economic Development Committee Priorities
1. Image – Small Town, Family Oriented, Roses
2. Development – Highway 46 & Downtown
3. Incomes - Increase per capita income and quality of life

Given the Committee's priorities, the next steps were designed to address the priorities and focused on the near-term opportunities:

- Creating a Hwy 46 Corridor Plan
- Enhancing the Industrial Development plan with strategic action tasks and tools.

This Project's Role for Local Economic Development Efforts

In a world that is becoming ever more competitive, local economic development efforts should use a multi-faceted approach, rather depend primarily on a single focus, such as industrial development. Wasco has an excellent opportunity to use three integrated economic development strategies to accomplish identified goals, while increasing the local quality of life. This approach should include:

Economic Development Plan
◆ Small Business Development along the Hwy. 46 corridor and in Downtown
◆ Industrial Development
◆ Tourism & Visitor Attraction

Wasco has assets and opportunities within each of these strategies and will benefit from using a multi-faceted approach to achieve a higher level of economic success. Each of these strategies is interdependent, as to how a community looks to the health of its small businesses - all may be a deciding factor when an industry, looking to locate, compares one community to another. Attractiveness and visitor amenities, which include retail and service businesses, within a community will also have an enormous impact on the community's ability to capture a larger share of visitor spending.

Project Goals

In order to provide a sound basis for implementation, the multi-disciplinary project team used the following goals as a framework for their analysis and redevelopment recommendations:

- Attract more spending on shopping, dining, lodging and entertainment from residents and visitors
- Take advantage of CalTrans' highway widening project to improve the look and functionality of Wasco's highway commercial district
- Create a less hostile environment for pedestrians
- Develop nodes & a stronger identity to help concentrate commercial activity
- Develop an implementable, multi-faceted plan for the Hwy. 46 corridor that is based on the community's vision, local assets, and best opportunities for success
- Review and develop strategic action to focus and enhance the Industrial Development activities to attract more primary job employers to the City.

Hwy. 46 Visioning Project

The Hwy. 46 Visioning Project is focused on improving the look, functionality and business health along the Hwy. 46 commercial corridor.

For outsiders, which include travelers and industrial prospects, a highway commercial district can be likened to driving by a house that's for sale - where 'curb appeal' is often a deciding factor on whether to keep driving or stop and take a closer look. This is especially true for communities like Wasco where the downtown district is not on the main thoroughfare and the highway corridor may be the only impression of a business district that outsiders get.

The focus of this project is to improve Wasco's 'curb appeal', from both appearance and business development aspects. CalTrans' plans to widen the highway through Wasco provide the perfect opportunity to re-envision this business district and work towards a much more attractive, pedestrian friendly and healthy commercial corridor. The planning and timing of the CalTrans' project had much

to do with this project moving forward in comparison to focusing on Wasco's downtown commercial district.

That said, the next phase of planning work should concentrate on assisting Wasco's traditional downtown business district become healthier and more vibrant. The Downtown is a priority of the Economic Development Committee and the Community, however, was beyond the scope of this project. The Downtown plan should build from, and complement, the recommendations for the highway corridor.

Wasco's Hwy. 46 corridor offers many opportunities for creating a more attractive, pedestrian friendly, & economically vital commercial district.

The photo, below, illustrates some businesses are already moving in this direction. The recommendations in this plan offer a range of ideas on how to help Wasco achieve its vision for this highway corridor.

The Hwy. 46 Visioning Process

In order to help articulate a new vision for the Hwy. 46 corridor, a team of redevelopment specialists from the Downtown Solutions Team was contracted to deliver technical services. The specialized assistance included an on-site, two-day focused planning/design effort and follow-up report based on that work. Chabin Concepts and The City of Wasco provided background information and photos of existing conditions to serve a basis for the on-site work. The City also conducted a survey to gather stakeholder feedback on issues and preferences relating to redevelopment along the highway.

Team members from Downtown Solutions included Richard Zita, of Bramare Landscape Architecture to address the physical environment; Mary Bosch, Marketek, Inc. to address business development opportunities; and Vicki Dugger, Executive Director of Downtown Solutions, to facilitate the process, address planning and next step issues, and create a report based on the team's recommendations. Audrey Taylor, CEO of Chabin Concepts, also participated in delivering on-site services, with a focus on industrial development.

The on-site portion of the Hwy. 46 project occurred on March 14-15, 2006. It included a public meetings, in-store and on-site interviews, and focus groups. The team presented examples of how other communities had redeveloped their highway commercial corridors

and gauged the public's interest in redeveloping Hwy. 46 based on a new paradigm. Based on feedback, the team presented findings and recommendations for the Hwy. 46 corridor at a public presentation on the evening of March 15th, concluding the on-site portion of the work.

This report serves as the follow-up and action plan to the on-site work. It is based on the public presentation on March 15th (Appendix B).

Industrial Attraction

The Industrial Attraction review focused on an assessment of the existing product, process and tools. The City is well served by an experienced Economic Development Professional, Ron Mittag.

The City has a good current inventory of industrial land, however, they need to be looking to the future and prepare other properties in order to continue to attract manufacturers and processors.

The Economic Development Professional understands development and the site selection process used by most site consultant and corporate decision makers. That needs to be supported by a responsive city team to the specific needs of business – business needs to be a priority of every city employee.

In addition to having "shovel-ready site", a responsive city team, the City should invest in a marketing approach that includes quality marketing materials and an enhanced business section on their website.

Executing the Plan

Bringing all the pieces together is an **Implementation Matrix** (Chapter 6) providing strategic action recommendations including project lead, partners, funding and priority for:

- Roles & Responsibilities for Redevelopment
- Strategic Internal Decisions

- Code Updates & Next Step Planning
- Business & Image Development, Commercial/Retail
- Streetscape Improvement Projects
- Redevelopment Projects
- Industrial Attraction (Chapter 5)

Note: For immediate action, the City should apply for Economic Development Planning & Technical Assistance grant for FY 2006-07 to develop a Downtown Revitalization Plan that leverages this study. HCD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) should be released at the end of May 2006. Grants applications are typically due within 30-60 days of releases of NOFA

Market Dynamics, Business Mix & Clustering

Introduction

This section of the Wasco Hwy. 46 Redevelopment Plan focuses on market factors and business mix to provide direction to community leaders, business owners, volunteers and the City as they seek to achieve a more economically vibrant commercial corridor.

Among the key questions to address in creating a strong business district are:

- Who are Wasco's customers?
- What are their shopping needs and interests?
- What are the market voids or niches that Wasco can fill?
- How can Wasco compete for the shopping dollars available in the trade area?
- What are the most profitable locations for businesses?
- How can this information be 'packaged' to strengthen existing businesses and to recruit new businesses?
- How do small towns organize for successful commercial development?

The findings and conclusions of the market assessment and business analysis are based upon the following: community input during the consultant visit March 14 and 15, 2006; an analysis of demographic and economic data; small group and one-on-one meetings during the team visit; and in-store interviews with selected business owners. The findings are divided into the following sections:

Section II: Wasco's Competitive Position

Section III: Trade Area and Market Segments

Section IV: Market Potential/Business Mix

Section V: Next Steps

II. Wasco's Competitive Position

Successful commercial districts of any size have a healthy business climate and a pro-active marketing program. The Hwy. 46 commercial corridor was evaluated based upon business climate and marketing factors that affect business decision-makers seeking a profitable location.

Key for Rating
S = Strength
W= Weakness
N = Neutral

Wasco Analysis – Strengths & Weaknesses		
Critical Success Factors	**Rating**	**What Wasco Offers**
Marketplace		
◆ Growing population base	S	Rapid population growth is anticipated—a 60% increase in 5+ years if all planned housing units are constructed.
◆ Average or above average incomes	W	Median household income of $32,572 for Wasco's market area is significantly lower than California's at $56,029 for 2005.
◆ Diverse, growing employment base	N	The Wasco area's major employers are the Wasco State Prison, Jackson Perkins, SunnyGem almond processors, local government and other agriculture producers. Through its economic development department, the City is actively seeking industry.
◆ Strong visitor market	N	The Wasco area has many, diverse visitor assets attracting eco-tourists, hunters, race car drivers and more. With over $1 billion in annual visitor spending in Kern County, there is much potential. However, with very limited lodging facilities, Wasco is only able to capture a modest amount of visitor traffic.
◆ New commercial development is planned or occurring	N	Until recently, commercial investment was extremely modest. Property rehab is underway or has occurred downtown and on the highway (Shell Station) with a Dollar Store soon to locate near K-Mart.
◆ Available shopping - a selection of quality shopping for a range of incomes available	W	As a whole, Wasco has a good base of 'convenience' shopping for a community its size including grocery, drugstore, hardware, video and gasoline choices. Shopper's goods are in very short supply and without increased supply will contribute to the significant out shopping that is occurring to Bakersfield (Winco, Costco) and beyond.
◆ Business anchors/attractors bringing repeat shoppers to town.	W	Wasco's supply of Hispanic-oriented businesses makes it a hub for this market. K-Mart, Savemart and Floyd's general store are the only other significant business anchors.

Wasco Analysis – Strengths & Weaknesses		
Critical Success Factors	**Rating**	**What Wasco Offers**
Real Estate		
◆ High occupancy rate	S	Of the existing buildings on Hwy. 46, the majority are occupied.
◆ Quality commercial space with good signage, parking, accessibility and small flexible space options.	N	At least two prominent and relatively new commercial buildings are available on Hwy. 46. A couple of buildings appear to be occupied with non-active uses (i.e., part time businesses, storage)
◆ Overall commercial space supply	S	Wasco has an ample supply of commercial land on Hwy. 46. Much of it is bare ground.
◆ Business incubator (reduces cost through shared expenses, and access to expertise)	W	No business incubator or entrepreneurial support services at present.
◆ An up-to-date inventory of available commercial buildings and sites for sale and for lease.	W	There is no current, centralized inventory of available properties for lease or sale with price and basic property data. Some sites w/ development potential have no signage, making their marketability unclear.
Attractive Shopping Environment		
◆ Inviting, landscaped, well-signed and appealing shopping environment that entices auto travelers to stop and shop.	W	With the a few exceptions, the poor appearance of Hwy. 46 is a significant detriment for business attraction.
◆ Quality built environment creating interest and appeal	W	Mostly older structures, many rundown. No uniform building/design standards. Older residential structures on the commercial corridor send a mixed message to shoppers.
◆ Attractive city entrances with good signage to shopping	W	Signage to shopping/downtown is minimal and hard to find among the general visual clutter. Shoppers need clear, consistent directional signage to the shopping district.
◆ Storefronts reflect pride and ownership	N	A few businesses are working hard to create fresh inviting storefronts. The City has a sign ordinance, but reportedly, it is not enforced.
◆ Concentrated nodes or linkages of development creating a critical mass or dense shopping environment, attracting more shoppers.	W	As a whole, the retail energy of Hwy. 46 is spread out along this two-mile corridor. The Savemart and K-Mart offer the only concentrated shopping areas. With significant in-fill space, residential and mostly free-standing businesses, there is little focus.
Accessibility		
◆ Parking to support stores and services.	S	Parking lots are ample in front or adjacent to businesses along the highway. Loss of parking from road widening should not be an issue.

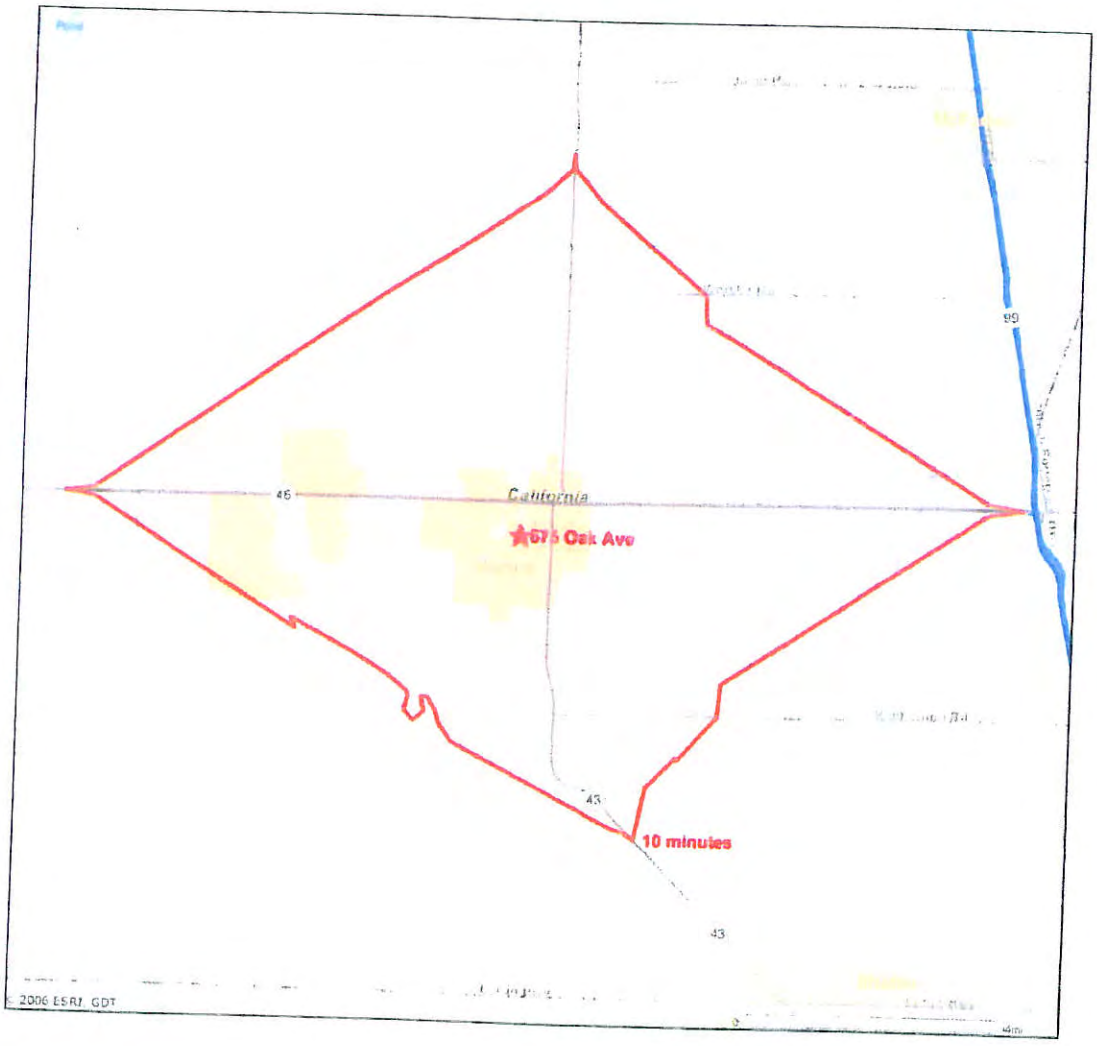
Wasco Analysis – Strengths & Weaknesses		
Critical Success Factors	**Rating**	**What Wasco Offers**
◆ Walkable shopping center to encourage browsing and impulse shopping.	W	Hwy. 46 is a hostile environment for pedestrians. Within strip shopping areas, cars and trucks 'rule' as is often the norm. Since few businesses are located adjacent to each other, there is limited browsing.
Incentives		
◆ Financial assistance	W	The City of Wasco has no /low interest revolving loan fund or business assistance fund.
◆ Façade improvement program and/or sign assistance	W	There is no known façade improvement or signage program.
◆ Landscape design/assistance	W	No known incentive.
Business Environment		
◆ Local entrepreneurship	S	Wasco has a concentration of locally owned businesses – most in the downtown, but also represented on Hwy. 46. These will complement any chain or franchise retailer that enters the market.
◆ A streamlined, one-stop regulatory process that is clearly articulated in planning documents and that is consistently administered.	N	The City is often the 'first stop' for businesses. A coordinated one stop information center would help those *'Looking to Start a Business?'* or make property improvements. This will become increasingly important with Wasco's anticipated growth.
◆ Business Ombudsman to shepherd new and expanding commercial businesses.	S	The City's Economic Development Director fills this role well.
◆ A coordinated network of organizations or resource providers that provide a comprehensive array of technical assistance and financing for business.	N	At present, there is not a coordinated Business Retention/Expansion/Recruitment Team or local network of resources for commercial business. The newly formed Economic Development Committee can fill this role. Many organizations in the Bakersfield area do offer assistance to small businesses.
◆ Networking	S	The Wasco Chamber of Commerce and Rotary offer opportunities to engage business owners in meaningful activities and exchange. The Chamber is involved with many events that encourage community networking.
◆ Ongoing Business Recognition Program	W	Not occurring at present.
Marketing		
◆ Special Events: *frequency, mix*	N	Wasco's signature event is the Rose Festival, with attendance approaching 10,000. In addition, there is the Chile Verde Cook-off and the July 4th fireworks.

Wasco Analysis – Strengths & Weaknesses		
Critical Success Factors	**Rating**	**What Wasco Offers**
◆ Business Promotions	W	Joint business marketing and promotions do not occur.
◆ Public Relations	W	No formal program focusing on the community or businesses.
◆ Positive Community Outlook & Salesmanship	S	There's a good 'vibe' in Wasco today among business owners and residents alike. Community leaders are eager for positive changes on Hwy. 46 and most are excited by the new housing development. A dozen people who responded to the community survey said they are interested in helping with revitalization efforts.
◆ Web site	N	The City's website has an economic development section. It would benefit if it had a 'special resource section' for existing or prospective businesses.
◆ Community Newsletter/ Newspaper	N	A web news source, Wascotimes.com exists though it is not comprehensive.
◆ Design, logo, slogans	S	Wasco has a distinct identity and message – *Rose Capital*. The rose emblem at city hall and on some marketing materials is a great asset.
Business Attraction/Lead Generation Activities		
◆ Specific types of businesses &/or merchandise identified to target	N	Some obvious targets (such as a hotel) are being pursued and more will be guided by the Hwy. 46 Redevelopment Plan.
◆ Commercial recruitment campaign/business lead-generating activities	S	Spearheaded by the Wasco Economic Development Director.

III: Trade Area and Market Segments

Trade Area Definition

The trade area is the geographic area from which the majority of regular customers originate. A key factor in Wasco's market pull is its limited retail base and its close proximity to Bakersfield retail centers. Both of these issues work against the community in terms of keeping shopping dollars in town. However, Wasco is the commercial center for a highly diverse agriculture industry and the hundreds of people it employs. As such, Wasco should be able to capture significant convenience shopping dollars for residents and employees as well as visitors. For this reason, a ten-minute drive time 'convenience shopping' trade area for this analysis was utilized to define the local target market. The map appears below.



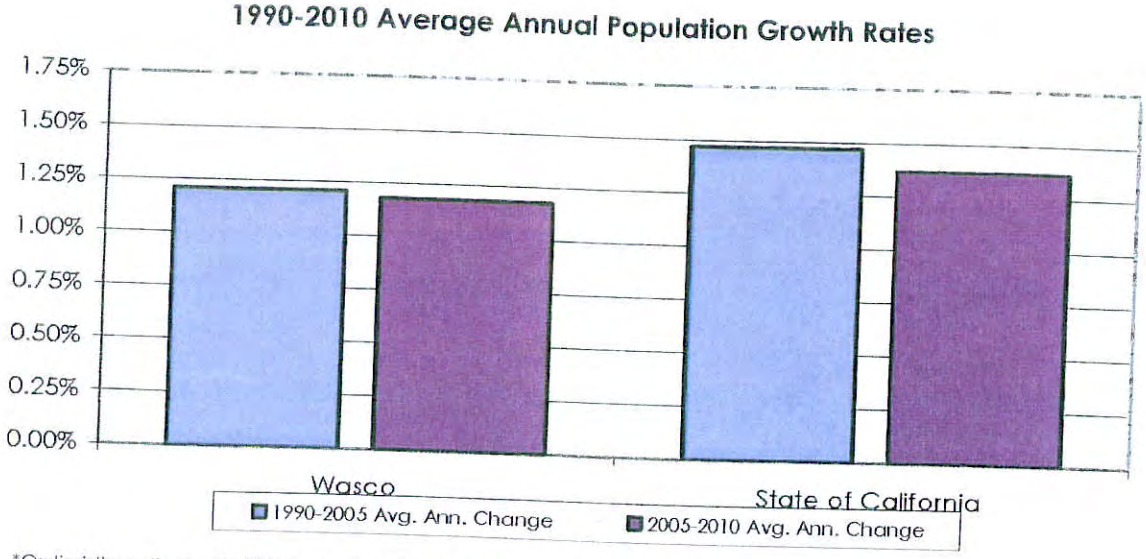
Local Target Market

Target markets represent the consumers who currently, or could potentially, shop in Wasco. Understanding who these consumers are, and knowing each segment's shopping habits and needs can help drive promotional campaigns, business recruitment and retention activities.

Wasco's *primary* customers are year-round trade area residents that shop in the community because of its convenience, location, and selection. Below are current demographics for the Wasco trade area market.

Exhibit S-1
Population Growth
Wasco, California Market Area
1990-2010

Geographic Area	1990	Avg. Ann. Change 1990-2005			Avg. Ann. Change 2005-2010		
		2005 (Estimate)	Number	Percent	2010 (Forecast)*	Number	Percent
Wasco Market Area							
Population	12,959	24,950	857	6.61%	40492	3108	12.46%
Households	3.647	6801	225	6.18%	10600	760	11.17%
Avg. Household Size	3.76	3.80			3.82	0.004	
State of California							
Population	29,760,021	35,874,307	436,735	1.47%	38,325,663	490,271	1.37%
Households	10,381,206	12,094,865	122,404	1.18%	12,828,958	146,819	1.21%
Avg. Household Size	2.79	2.9	0.008		2.92	0.004	

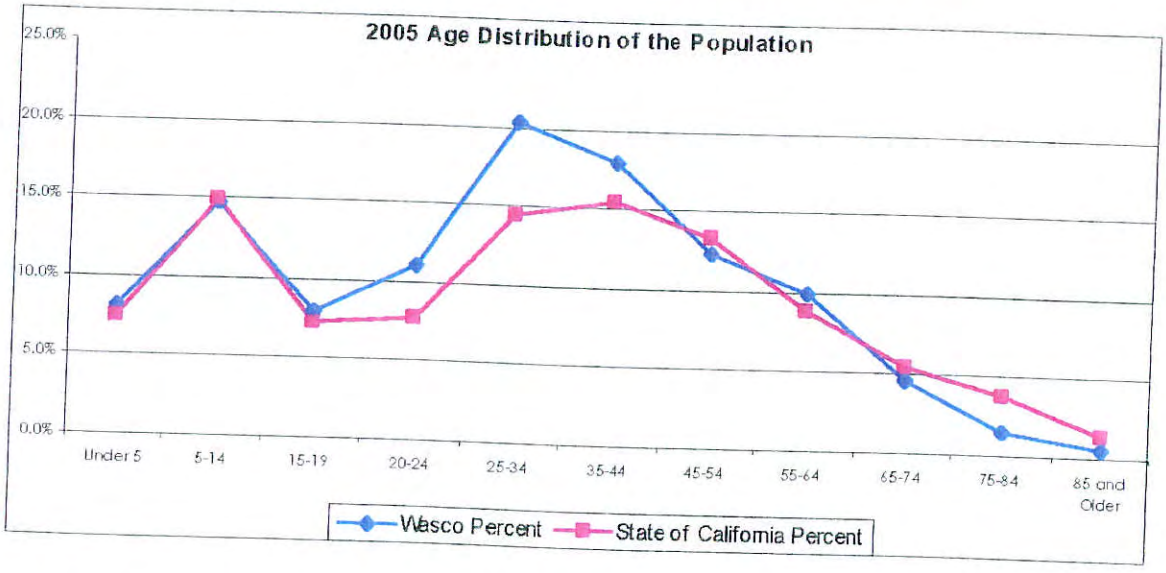


*Optimistic outlook with 3,867 new housing units constructed as anticipated by City of Wasco
Source: ESRI BIS, City of Wasco, Marketek

Wasco anticipates extremely rapid growth over the next five plus years based upon the number of housing units proposed for development at this time. While a 60% population increase is viewed as highly optimistic, even if half the projected housing is constructed and absorbed, the growth will be significant.

Exhibit S-2
Population by Age
Wasco, Caliornia Market Area, 2005

Age Category	Wasco	State of California
Under 5	8.1%	11.8%
5-14%	14.7%	10.0%
15-19	8.0%	10.2%
20-24	11.1%	14.2%
25-34	20.4%	18.3%
35-44	18.0%	12.1%
45-54	12.4%	13.7%
55-64	10.0%	4.3%
65-74	4.6%	
75-84	1.6%	
85 and Older	0.5%	5.4%
Total	24,950	35,529,730
Median Age	28.9	34.0



- Particularly significant among the variables noted above (Exhibit S-2) is the relatively large portion of Wasco residents under the age of 19 (31%). The large number of youth and the very small senior population (6.7%) are reflected in the low median age of 28.9 years, which is considerably lower than for the state as a whole (34 years).

- Wasco's youthfulness is tied in part to the large Hispanic population, which in California is generally young and family-oriented. Today, reports indicate that over 72% of the market area population is Hispanic. (See Exhibit S-4 on the following page).
- Median household income is well below average at $32,572, particularly compared to the median of $56,029 for the State of California overall. The 2005 U.S. median is $49,747. See Exhibit S-3 below.

Exhibit S-3
Household Income
Wasco, California Market Area, 2005

Income	Wasco	State of California
Less than $15,000	19.6%	11.8%
$15,000 to $24,999	17.3%	10.0%
$25,000 to $34,999	16.5%	10.2%
$35,000 to $49,999	17.7%	14.2%
$50,000 to $74,999	15.8%	18.3%
$75,000 to $99,999	7.2%	12.1%
$100,000 to $149,000	3.7%	13.7%
$150,000 to $199,999	0.9%	4.3%
$200,000 and more	1.3%	5.4%
Median Household Income	$ 32,572	$ 56,029

2005 Household Income Distribution

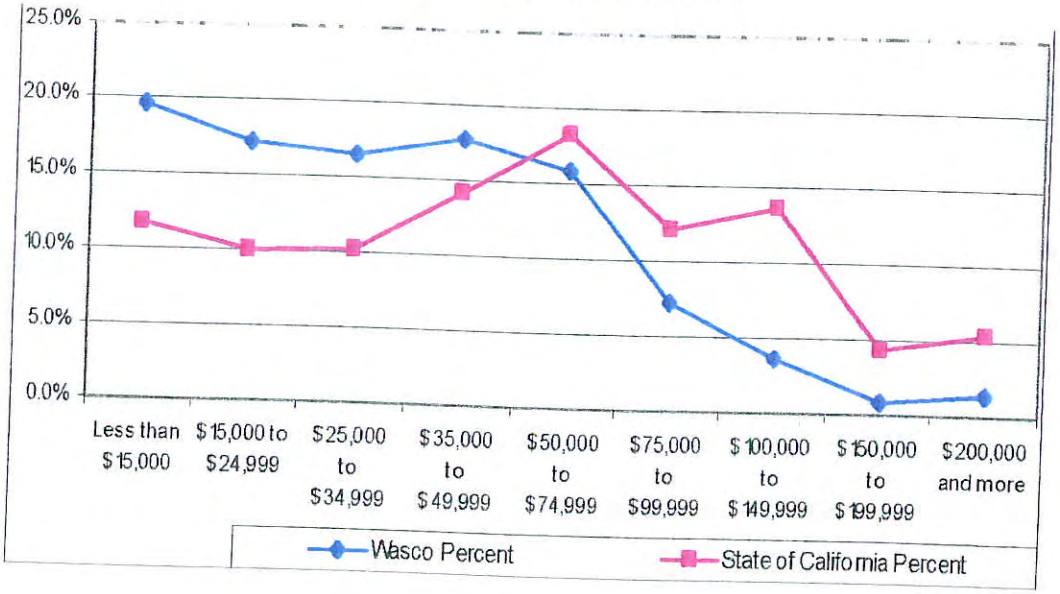


Exhibit S-4
Racial Composition
Wasco, California Market Area, 2005

Race	Wasco	State of California
White Alone	30.8%	56.6%
Black Alone	9.3%	6.4%
American Indian Alone	0.9%	1.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.6%	11.5%
Some Other Race Alone	0.1%	19.0%
Two or More Races	2.9%	5.5%
Total	24,950	358,743
Hispanic Origin (any race)	72.3%	36.1%

Lifestyle Characteristics

Lifestyle, or psychographic, data for Wasco were analyzed to add dimension to the above demographic characteristics. Lifestyle data are derived from households within the trade area that are grouped into clusters, the names of which are meant to convey a type of neighborhood or lifestyle. Psychographic data (from the ACORN Lifestyle Reports provided by ESRI Business Information Solutions) for Wasco characterize area households. They are identified below with a comparison to the representation of these households for the State of California as a whole.

Exhibit S-5

HOUSEHOLDS BY PRIMARY MARKET SEGMENT (TOP 10 LISTED)
Wasco, California, 2005

	Wasco		State of California	
	Market Segment	Percent of Households	Market Segment	Percent of Households
1	**Industrious Urban Fringe**	**42.7%**	International Marketplace	5.3%
2	**Las Casas**	**34.7%**	**Las Casas**	**5.2%**
3	Southwestern Families	15.0%	Urban Chic	4.9%
4	Cozy and Comfortable	6.4%	Urban Villages	4.9%
5	Prairie Living	1.4%	Trendsetters	4.2%
6			**Industrious Urban Fringe**	**3.7%**
7			NeWest Residents	3.7%
8			Pacific Heights	3.4%
9			Pleasant-Ville	3.3%
10			Wealthy Seaboard Suburbs	3.0%
Total		100.2%		41.6%

A synopsis of the categories representing the majority of households follows:

Industrious Urban Fringe, 42.7% households

Settled on the fringe of metro areas, residents in this market use both their proximity to cities and location to earn a living. These diverse families rely on the manufacturing, construction, retail and agriculture sectors for their livelihood. Their median household income is $39,000. Family is very important to *Industrious Urban Fringe* residents' as many live in multigenerational households with children present in more than half. Two-thirds of these residents own their own homes, which are mostly older, single-family houses. They balance their budget carefully; mortgage payments and necessities for baby and children take priority. Integral to family life is pet ownership, particularly dogs. Big movie fans, *Industrious Urban Fringe* residents visit the cinema several times each month and watch movies at home. They frequently listen to Hispanic and contemporary hit radio programming.

Las Casas, 34.7% households

Residents of *Las Casas* neighborhoods are the latest wave of western pioneers. Settled primarily in California, almost half were born outside of the United States. Residents are young, Hispanic and family oriented - - 62 percent have children. Most households within this group rent, although 42 percent own their homes, with a median value of $201,000. Housing is a real mix of single-family homes and older apartment buildings. The median age is 25 years. The median household income is $35,000. Modest incomes and providing for large families limit the purchase options of *Las Casas* residents. The presence of children influences their purchases; this is a strong market for baby and children's products. Cars are essential to them; they drive older models. But as families grow, they upgrade to larger vehicles. TV is watched primarily for children's programming. However, adults watch the news or sports, particularly soccer and baseball.

Southwestern Families, 15.0%

These families are the bedrock of the Hispanic culture in the Southwest. More have children than don't. Owners, mainly in single-family dwellings, occupy two-thirds of households. The majority of employed residents work in blue-collar or service occupations. *Southwestern Families* is an ethnically diverse market, with a median age of 28.2 years and a median household income of $26,600. Purchases include baby and children's products. Households generally own or lease a 2-door sedan. The grocery store of choice is H.E. Butt. When eating fast food, Whataburger is a favorite stop. Residents enjoy fishing, water skiing, playing soccer, and going to the movies. They read gardening and parenthood magazines, and listen to Hispanic and urban radio formats. Typical TV viewing includes comedies, as well as wrestling and boxing.

Cozy and Comfortable, 6.4%

Cozy and Comfortable residents are settled, married, and still working. Many couples are still living in the pre-1970s, single-family homes in which they raised their children. Households are located primarily in suburban areas of the Midwest, Northeast, and South. The median age is 41.0 years. Home improvement and remodeling are important to *Cozy and Comfortable* residents. While some work is contracted out, homeowners take an active part in many projects, especially painting and lawn care. They play softball and golf, watch science fiction films on video tapes/DVDs, and gamble at casinos. Television is significant, as many households have four or more sets. Preferred cable stations include QVC, Home & Garden Television, and The History Channel.

Appendix A provides more insight to the Hispanic marketplace with information on purchasing trends and entrepreneurship characteristics.

Other Target Markets

Other potential and significant markets for the Wasco Hwy. 46 corridor are highway travelers, area workers and visitors to south central California and the Wasco Valley. Below are data that illustrate the size of some of these market segments.

- **Highway Travelers.** Traffic volumes are very high on Hwy. 46 through Wasco, with estimates of average daily traffic counts at 11,400. About one-third of that number is local traffic, leaving the traveler count at just over 7,500 cars per day. Highway traffic provides the chance to lure customers to businesses, if drivers slow down and are enticed to stop. Shopping behavior and spending potential are dependent on trips generated by local residents and by pass through traffic, by commuter patterns, nearby visitor attractions and other factors such as ease of access, attractiveness of the commercial area and business mix.

  However, it should be a goal of any highway community to draw at least 10% of the pass through travelers out of their cars and into businesses. As a broad illustration, if two-thirds of Wasco's daily highway traffic is 'pass through' (7,500 est'd) and just 10% are enticed to stop for food and convenience goods and services and spend conservatively $15 per vehicle, the daily economic spending could be $11,300 or $4.2 million over a year's time. The most common expenditures of highway travelers are gas, coffee/food to go and quick sit-down eateries, groceries, drugstore items and other convenience-oriented goods.

- As noted, visitors are an important target market for Wasco. Below are some estimates of visitor counts at key area attractions.
  - Retriever Trials attract up to 12,000/weekend, 4X a year at the nearby 6,000-acre wetland off Highway 46 at Gun Club Road.
  - The Famosa Race Track just outside of town has several main events annually. The March Meet: hosts 55,000 visitors from all across the U.S. The Fuel & Gas Finals (Nov3-5) attracts 30,000. Most look for hotel rooms in Bakersfield and would gladly stay in Wasco if a quality facility existed, according to the events' promoters.
  - Wasco Valley Rose Golf Course hosts 37,635 rounds of golf a year, with about 80% played by out-of-towners.

Visitors spend over $1 billion annually in Kern County, a figure that has steadily increased in the last ten years. The distribution of visitor spending by commodities purchased in the State of California as a whole is estimated as follows:

24%	Eating out
22%	Retail spending
17.3%	Arts, entertainment, recreation

Wasco will be better able to attract the attention of visitors and encourage visitor spending if they present an attractive and inviting image, easy access and parking and offer goods and services that visitors most often desire. Wasco must ask itself, *"What is the unique experience that we can offer the visitor market?"* It may be history, special events, small town ambiance or other important draws. Being clear on the local attractors, providing directional and way finding signage to guide the visitor to destinations, and offering a positive, customer-friendly experience are keys. While it may not always be promoted as one of the leading visitor attractions of a community, the diversity of shopping and dining experiences is a key ingredient for most destinations.

Shopping is integral to the travel and leisure experience. What visitors want includes:

- Unique, one of a kind goods such as arts, crafts, gifts, galleries
- Antiques/reproductions/gifts
- Convenience goods—gas, grocery, etc
- Recreational/sporting goods and services
- Apparel & accessories - unique
- Restaurants and unique eating places
- *Variety* of cuisine and prices

- **Workers** employed by Wasco area businesses are estimated to total over 4,000. Among Wasco's largest employers are:
  - Wasco State Prison - 1,500 employees
  - Jackson & Perkins- 1,200 (peak)
  - Wasco School District (K-8) - 350

  This is steady market of potential shoppers before and after work and at lunch regardless of whether they live in Wasco or not.

Local residents, employees and area visitors offer significant untapped market potential for Wasco businesses. More information on customer behavior is provided in Appendix B, "Buyers vs. Browsers."

IV. Business Mix and Development Patterns

Current Situation

Wasco's Commercial development along Hwy. 46 is anchored on the west by the K-mart. A new 10,000 square foot Dollar Store will soon be constructed next door. Close by is the Savemart Supermart shopping center, the other large retail anchor along the highway. Locally owned Perkos Restaurant, a big draw for locals and travelers, is located by the highway in this center, as is Rite Aid drugstore. The Tigermart Shell Station is another significant anchor along the highway as is the National Market on the east end, a small grocery.

Most the commercial development along the highway is a series of freestanding, unrelated businesses that are mainly destination-oriented. These range from automobile service/supply and ice cream/burger joints to convenience stores and fast food and Mexican restaurants. Hwy. 46 also has a number of empty lots and older single-family residences on the south side of the road.

As a whole, chain stores and franchises are mixed within the Hwy. 46 corridor though they are few in number.

Determining the right locations for business to develop is as important as understanding the types of businesses to serve Wasco's target market. Wasco is faced with the need to overcome the negative effects of sprawl, yet accommodate the rapid increase in population growth expected over the next several years. Infill development along Hwy. 46 will be an important development strategy. However, planning for and concentrating commercial development at the key intersections/nodes is important for creating a critical mass of retail and developing the appropriate mix of compatible and complementary uses.

Wasco's commercial areas – both highway and downtown – should aim to serve local full-time residents, area workers and visitors with a range of goods and services. The keys will be:

- Providing excellent service
- Offering unique, quality merchandise
- Targeting high dollar volumes per square foot for a business to succeed- -in other words, smaller spaces with in-depth, high turnover inventory.
- Working with Wasco's existing business community to provide complementary product lines.

The appropriate retail business mix for Wasco depends on the following factors:

- Market potential – the target markets and the amount of money they have to spend.
- Existing business base – the current assets of the Hwy. 46 corridor
- Business location to make it easy for customers

- Continuous marketing
- Retail trends

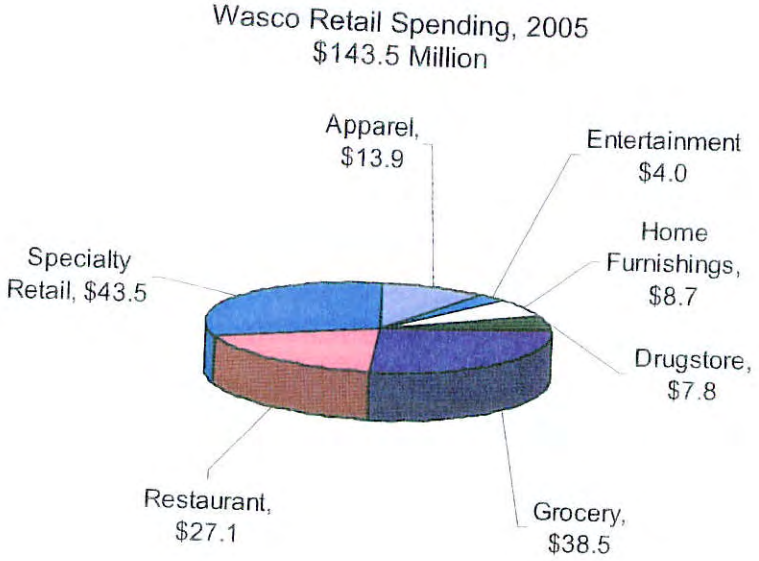
Recommended Businesses Mix

The two primary goals for Wasco related to Hwy. 46 commercial business development should be to:

1) Retain, strengthen and expand the business base that exists—particularly the attractor/ anchor businesses; and

2) Recruit businesses that will complement and improve the existing commercial mix, enhance the highway's attractiveness to its target markets and keep more shopping dollars—particularly convenience spending—at home in Wasco.

Residents and employees are the principal target markets as they are year round customers for Wasco. Potential retail spending based solely on Wasco's resident population and household incomes totals $14 million annually (source: US Census and ESRI Business Information Services). This figure does not include transportation-related retail. Nor does it include spending by visitors to the area. The $14 million of retail spending is distributed as follows:



$143.5 million in retail spending at an average of $250/square foot equates to approximately 574,000 square feet of commercial space supportable in 2005. With anticipated *above average* population growth, by 2010, (as indicated in Exhibit S-1), an additional $109 million in potential sales can be supported, the equivalent of approximately 436,000 square feet of space.

Based upon Wasco's very small retail base, it can be assumed that at least 70% of that spending is occurring outside the community. This fact should be promoted as an opportunity to potential business owners and developers.

- The business mix of the Highway 46 commercial corridor will flow from its market position as Wasco's "Convenience-oriented shopping area with a mix of locally-owned businesses and chains and franchises serving locals and passers-through." This is in contrast to downtown Wasco that is the community's Hometown Shopping District, principally made up of unique locally-owned specialty shops and service-based businesses. Though many enjoy seeing chains come to town because of the perceived quality, value and dependability, keep in mind that locally owned businesses circulate 3-4 times the dollars back into the community as chain retailers.

Building upon existing business anchors and responding to the needs identified by local residents and by the project team, examples of the merchandise and business types with the greatest chance for success along Hwy. 46 are listed below:

Potential Businesses for Wasco

- The #1 greatest need in Wasco at this time is lodging. A quality motel chain, bed and breakfast(s) and RV Park should all be on Wasco's hit list. Motel chains have looked around and one apparently has an option on some property. The Economic Development Committee should put together an aggressive campaign to promote this opportunity.
- More food of all kinds. A greater variety of restaurants including Italian, deli, more family choices, more quick pick-me-up options
- Farm stand: 'Made in Wasco' foods with sit down, locally grown and cooked meals
- Banking services
- Coffee drive through or sit down
- Professional services: CPA, attorney, veterinary clinic
- Large chain grocery
- Liquor store (can be adjoining the hardware business)
- RV supplies and service
- UPS/Mail boxes store
- Garden center with a specialty in Roses: *Everything You Wanted to Know*
- Lumber yard
- Home furnishings
- Recreational activities and services, such as a multi-faceted sports complex with basketball courts, exercise rooms, weight rooms, etc

Keys to success in creating a cohesive business base in Wasco are businesses that:

- Serve both visitors and area residents
- Aggressively market to these target customer groups
- Offer multiple, complementary product lines of good quality
- Start small and grow to fill niches
- Have focus, imagination and strive to meet the needs of the customer
- Seek to generate a high dollar volume/square foot
- Find a space that suits their needs--small, boutique spaces are sufficient for many
- Have a clear market/product identity
- Emphasize quality and value
- Are in the RIGHT location

Features of Successful Businesses

Retail and business standards are just as important as the types of businesses attracted to Wasco. The focus should be on superior retail standards when qualifying and recruiting a prospective business. They include:

Strong Business Values

- *Planning*
- *Commitment*
- *Passion*
- *Tenacity*
- *Understanding*

Strong Merchandising Elements

- *Up-to-date point-of-sale practices*
- *Appropriate turnover of goods*
- *Interesting visual displays*
- *Emphasis on value over price*

Superior Customer Service

- *Developing human relationships*
- *Servicing customer needs*
- *After-sale contact*

VI. Next Steps

Image & Business Development

This section of the report responds to image, market and related issues raised by community and business leaders during the Wasco site team visit and provides specific recommendations for short and long term steps related to economic development, such as *How do we expand our business base?*

Keep in mind that economic development is a long-term process and the most successful communities take bite-size pieces and celebrate their success as they go. Improving the Highway 46 business base is directly linked to design and appearance enhancements. It will take time, patience and great salesmanship. The four ways to grow your business base include:

- Expand existing businesses – Tiger Mart is a great example of a business that made significant image, property and merchandise enhancements.
- Attract established businesses from within trade area
- Attract established businesses in other cities
- Attract entrepreneurs for start-up

Working with established businesses or investors to come to Wasco will require vision, focus and persistence!

1. Package your Assets.

a. Promote the economic, physical and market vision for Highway 46 to existing business and property owners as well as community leaders. Put together an executive summary of the plan and get it on the street.

b. Target key properties and businesses for redevelopment. Work with a small team interested in the business location process. Wasco has both professionals and volunteers eager to help with this.

- Package Wasco's diverse agricultural assets. Consider the development of a "The Pride of Wasco Shop" *everything made in Wasco…sponsored by local rose growers, nut growers, dairies, wineries, etc.* It may be a non-profit cooperative or a for profit business venture. Encourage agri-tourism activities as so many other California towns have had success with. Farm tours, farm stays, interpretative centers, festivals – the skies the limit. Call a meeting of farm operators to discuss the potential for value-added products and services. Bring in a guest speaker from another town that has succeeded with this approach.

2. Always Put your Best Foot (or Face) Forward!

Do the simple things that develop community pride and a positive image. Remember that elbow grease is free! Don't wait for the BIG radical Highway 46 improvements, start now to get

community groups to 'adopt a section of Highway 46' for clean up and beautification. Encourage all highway businesses to get in the habit of:

- Daily- pick up trash, clean front door, check store lights
- Weekly- wash windows, throw out temporary signs, vacuum/dust display area & clean up flies, take care of planters
- Monthly-change window displays, scrub sidewalk, rinse awnings, hose down façade to make properties Squeaky Clean!
- Seasonally-add colorful plantings or flower baskets.

Recognize and reward Wasco businesses that set a great example. How about a Business of the Month Recognition Program to get the clean up juices flowing?

3. Aggressively market to area workers.

Build from what you have – a number of restaurants eager for more business. Owners should distribute lunchtime menus, offer free delivery to Wasco locations provide weekly specials and monthly discounts to get MORE business from the local employment base. Survey them about their needs. Ideally, Wasco volunteers together with local high school youth will conduct a customer survey of local workers (and residents) to find out their shopping habits and how Wasco businesses can better serve them. Other ideas include:

- Prepare business rack card of what's available in Wasco
- Have all businesses develop lunchtime promotions
- Create *employee passport* – for shopping in Wasco

4. Aggressively market to new residents.

As new subdivisions are constructed, key groups should throw out the welcome mat. The Chamber of Commerce should prepare welcome packets with business coupons. Businesses can create introductory offers. The City and Chamber should host neighborhood ice cream socials (or similar event), too engage these newcomers and learn more about their needs and interests as residents and consumers.

5. Focus on creating commercial development nodes or activity centers.

That is, encourage new development to cluster near existing development and anchors and in the nodes identified so that the Highway 46 commercial base becomes concentrated and not sprawled out over time. Keep in mind the adage of commercial development that is: *"A larger concentration of retail will most always outperform (in $ales volume) a smaller concentration of retail."*

6. Take an objective look at Wasco's development process.

Developers (commercial and industrial) are looking for a hassle-free process. Work to create a City of Wasco image that is a *Business Friendly* city. This relates to speedy service, reasonable

fees and a general welcoming impression by all. Whenever a business prospect comes to the city they should be directed to the Economic Development Director who will not only help sell Wasco but will also help guide them through the development process.

7. Expose Wasco to new ideas!

Go on field trips to other nearby communities dealing with similar issues as Wasco. Get inspired and learn from the hard work of many other towns seeking to improve theirs. Identify 5 towns with a 'highway running through it' that have done a good job of slowing traffic and making the commercial corridor attractive.

8. Get Wasco on the Map as the Nation's Rose Capital.

It doesn't show up on the web though the Chamber of Commerce literature does a nice job of promoting this image. With visitor marketing, the ultimate power is in being *different.* Wasco is very fortunate to already have a hook with the rose theme. At present, the rose message is very subtle driving through town – if noticeable at all. Some businesses have planted roses; a faded rose emblem appears in the intersection of some downtown streets; and city hall uses the rose image in various places. Other ideas on how to play up the rose theme include:

- Create a tagline and use on signage, letterhead, etc. Examples are:
  - Welcome to Wasco--Stop and Smell the Roses!
  - Welcome to Wasco--Experience the World of Roses
  - Welcome to Wasco--Home of the world-famous Jackson-Perkins rose growers (paid for by Jackson-Perkins)
- Encourage the development of a Rose Specialty Gift Shop & Products – Offering 101 Ways to Enjoy Roses!
- Expand the Rose Festival. Here are some ideas.
  - Name that Rose contest!
  - Cultivate a Rose of Wasco
  - Meet the Roses! (An invitation to everyone named Rose to meet, greet & tell their story!)
  - Rose Festival Art Poster (contest) for re-sale
- Create multiple Rose Gardens sponsored by local growers that can be jointly promoted throughout the state and beyond as a destination.

  "Visit our 7 Specialty Rose Gardens sponsored by our local growers!"

  1. *Miniature Rose Garden*
  2. *Shrub Rose Garden*
  3. *Celebrity Rose Garden*
  4. *Hybrid Tea Rose Garden*
  5. *Heirloom Rose Garden*
  6. *Test Rose Garden*
  7. *Climbing Rose Garden*

- Create *The Rose Trail (similar to Fresno's Blossom Trail!)* that take visitors on a tour of rose growing locations and attractions
- Host Regional Meetings/Exhibitions/Conventions-World Federation of Roses, American Rose Society
- Encourage the Chamber as part of its business/visitor marketing to have a Monthly Award – Best Rose Presentations
- Monthly Educational Demonstrations – pruning, cultivating, arranging
- Develop *More* Murals throughout town – create 1 each year during Festival time; hire a professional, but engage the community in the design and even the painting

9. Encourage and promote a positive, progressive Wasco attitude, summarized in the following comments from local resident surveys:

- "Stop Talking and Start Acting"
- "We can no longer settle for 'good enough!"
- "Change is not only inevitable, it is necessary. We must be willing to change."

Remember that Successful Commercial Development Depends on…

- Diverse economic base (you're working on it!)
- Growing markets – *opportunity!*
- Quality product ready to be sold!
- Local risk takers/business incubation
- Active, aggressive, cooperative local business community
- Vision and Guts *to stay focused*
- Awareness of issues and opportunities
- Willingness to learn and change
- Positivism & **salesmanship**

A New Vision for the Highway 46 Corridor

The proposed design framework for redeveloping the Hwy. 46 corridor has been broken into five sections, including:

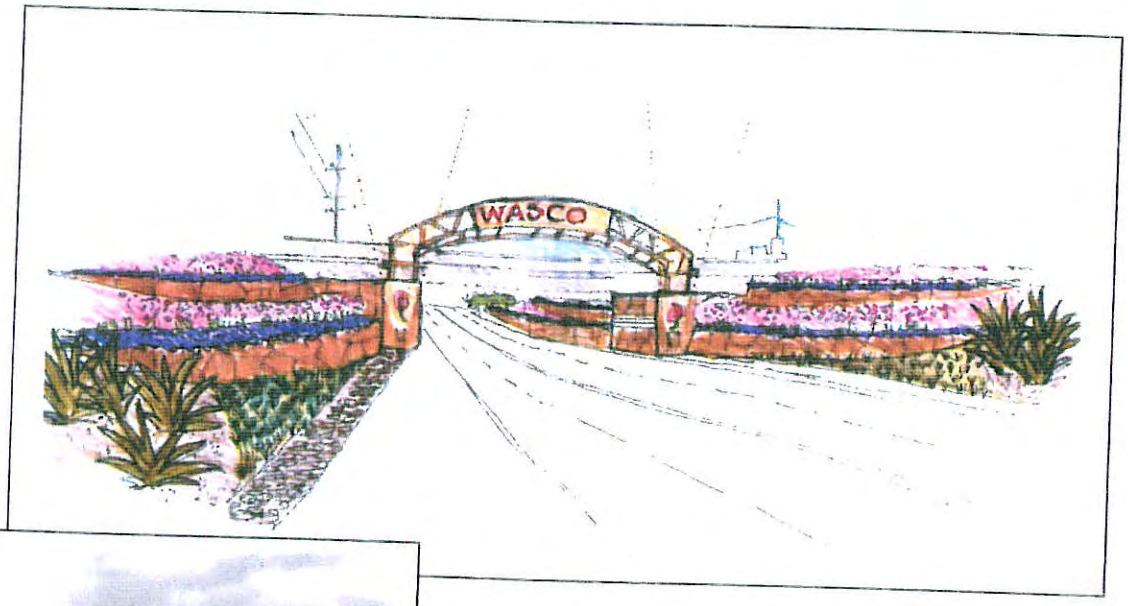
1. Create a landscape signature that draws from the agricultural tradition
   a. Formal arrangements of plant materials in mass plantings
2. Improve the gateway image at entry points
   a. Railroad trestle from the east
   b. Monument gateways from the west
   c. Into downtown
3. Improve 'front yards' of existing businesses
   a. Create a landscaped edge made up of formal arrangements of plant materials
4. Better connect emerging neighborhoods to downtown and schools
   a. Intersection design for pedestrians
   b. Concrete crossings and 'safe harbors'
   c. Pedestrian scaled lighting
   d. Signage
5. Redevelop nodes at key intersections to concentrate activity and reinforce corners
   a. Intersections to focus on include:
      i. Rt. 43 intersection
      ii. Griffith intersection
      iii. Palm intersection (already moving in the right direction)
      iv. Magnolia intersection (as growth dictates)
   b. Built to the edge
   c. Easy to find & access parking 'pockets' at sides and rear of development
6. Redevelop opportunity sites to meet a variety of revitalization objectives
   a. Retail
   b. Lodging
   c. Services

Create a Landscape Signature that Draws from the Agricultural Tradition

As a community with a strong connection to agriculture, and roses in particular, Wasco should focus on this asset by using it as a design theme, or signature, in streetscape improvements.

Improve the Gateway Image at Entry Points

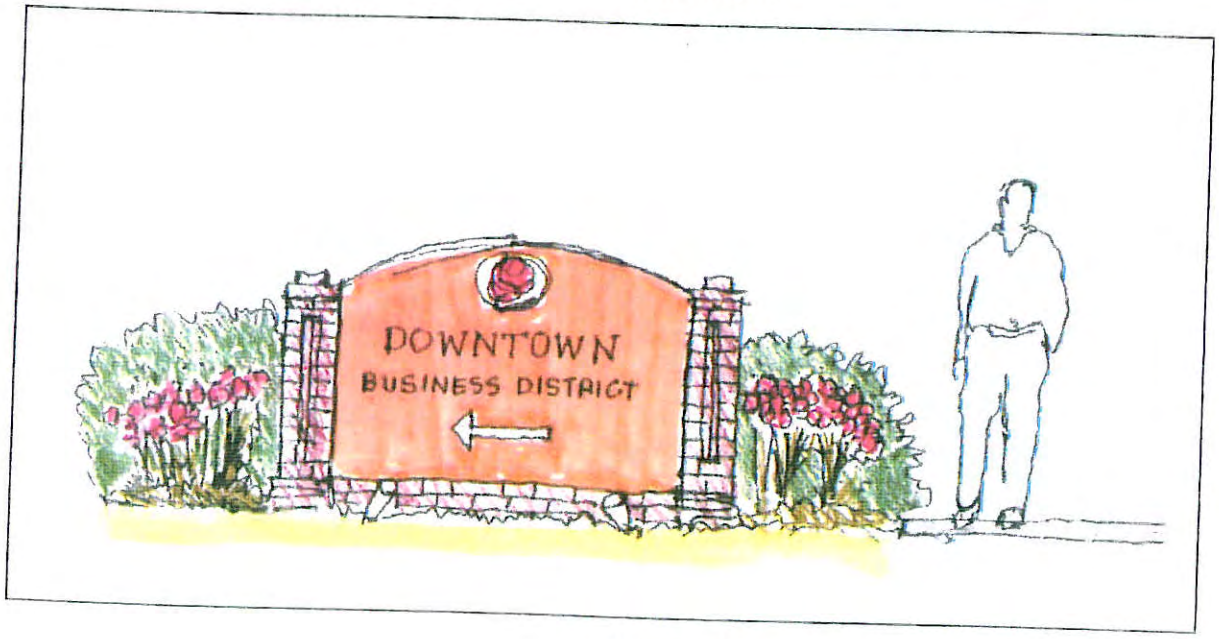
As a visitor travels through a community, initial impressions are formed at key entry points. For Wasco, there is an opportunity to improve and strengthen these gateways into the community.



Wasco has an outstanding opportunity to highlight its title as 'Rose Capital of the Nation' at a location that acts as a natural gateway into the community, the railroad trestle just east of town. With the CalTrans highway widening project, this underpass is expected to be expanded, offering a good opportunity to improve the visual appeal of this key entry point.

Recommendations for this entry point include:

- Building off the trestle framework, create attractive entry signage over the highway that could include rose insignias and uplighting for night-time.
- Lay back the roadway cut slope to create terraced (& irrigated) plant beds for mass plantings of roses and other complementary plant materials. This is an excellent opportunity to create a uniquely beautiful and memorable entry into town. The key will be to use locally grown roses, in mass plantings, as the entry theme. It is an opportunity to work with local rose growers on a community improvement project that will have an enormous visual impact.

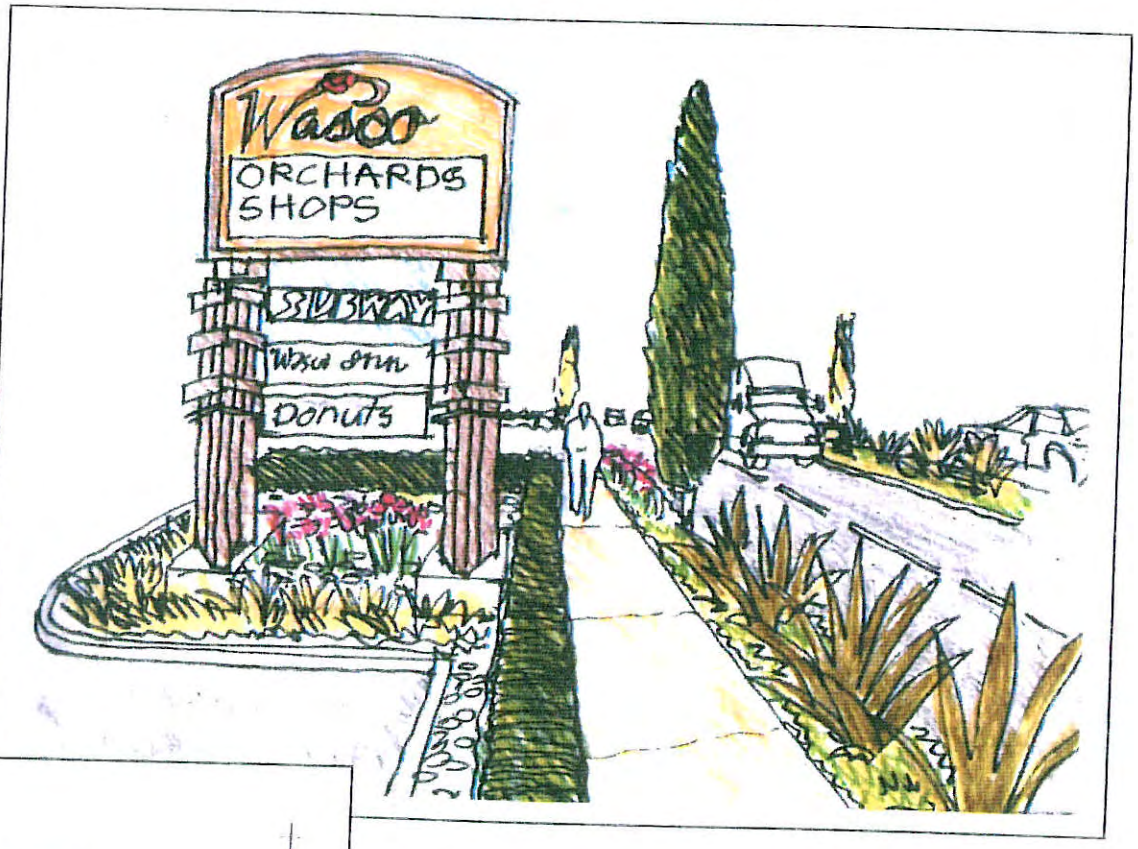


There is also an opportunity to create a monument gateway feature into town from the west, using masses of rose plantings to complement the signage. A complementary monument sign indicating Wasco's Downtown Business District from Hwy. 46 should also be built. This is needed for better way finding into Wasco's traditional downtown commercial district. In all circumstances, entry and way finding signage

should be of highest quality materials and include beautiful complementary plantings - helping make Wasco more attractive and memorable.

Improve 'Font Yards' of Existing Businesses

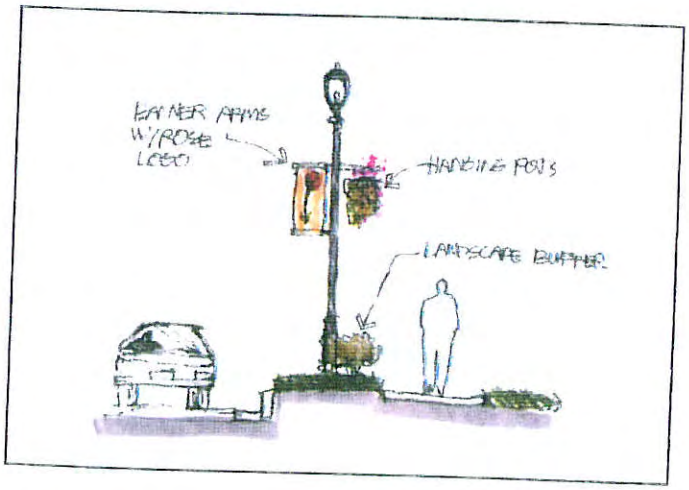
Continuing Wasco's design signature of using formal arrangements of mass plantings, the 'front yards' of businesses along Hwy. 46 should be redeveloped into an attractive landscaped edge.



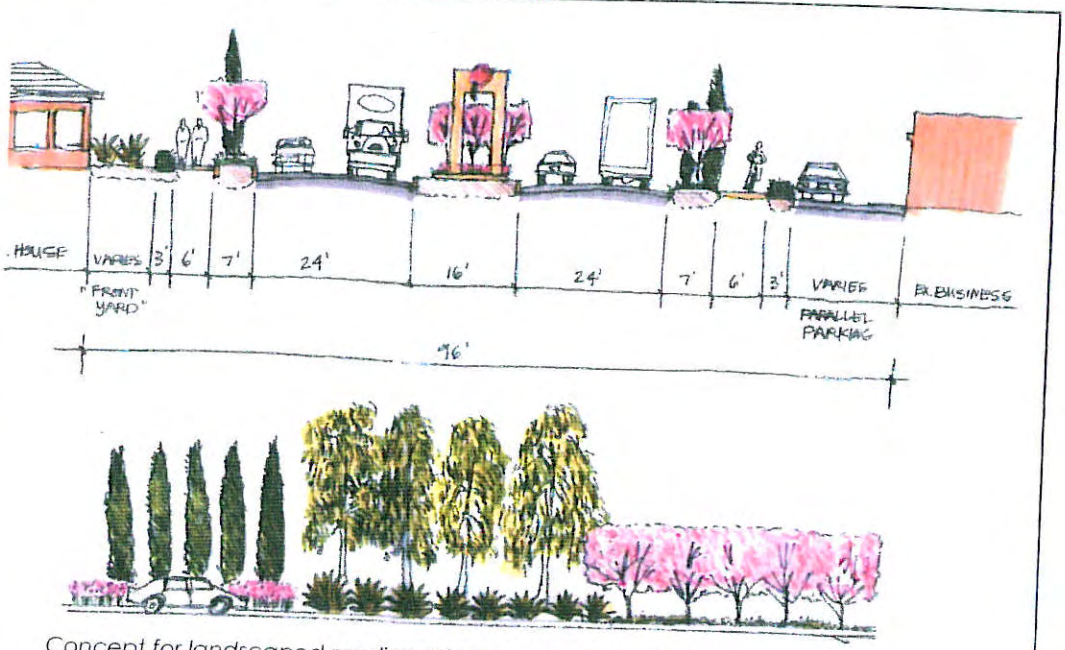
As it exists now, most of the area along Hwy. 46 is a harsh and forbidding environment for pedestrians. 'Greening up' the highway corridor is an excellent way to continue the design signature initiated at the gateways, making this important throughway much more attractive and pedestrian friendly. In addition, plantings will help mitigate the heat-sink microclimate created by excessive amounts of paving and the lack of trees and vegetation.

The difference between the 'before' (left) and 'after' (right) is dramatic and highlights the impacts that a planting theme, upgraded business signage and underground utility lines can have on a highway corridor.

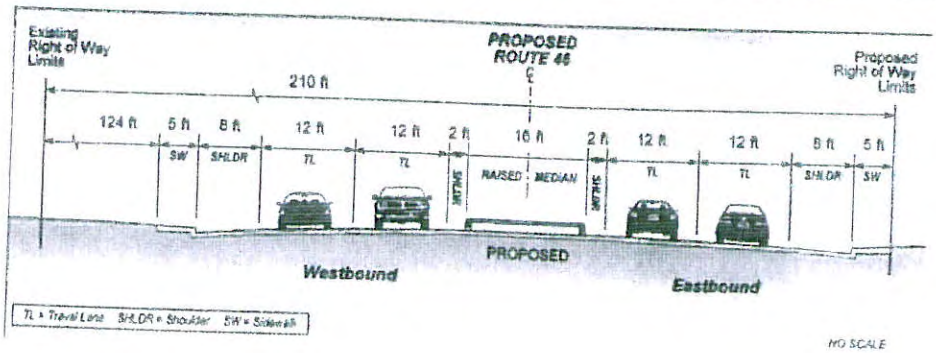
Where would you rather walk? Directly adjacent to moving traffic (above) or buffered from traffic in a friendly and more attractive pedestrian environment (below)? Most people would choose the later.



In developing a streetscape that is more pedestrian friendly, it will be critical to separate the sidewalk from moving traffic using a landscape edge as a buffer. When it exists, on-street parking acts as a buffer between pedestrians and moving traffic, but along Hwy. 46 on-street parking is prohibited in most areas making it necessary to separate the sidewalk from the highway.



Concept for landscaped median using masses of plantings and sidewalks separated by planted buffers.



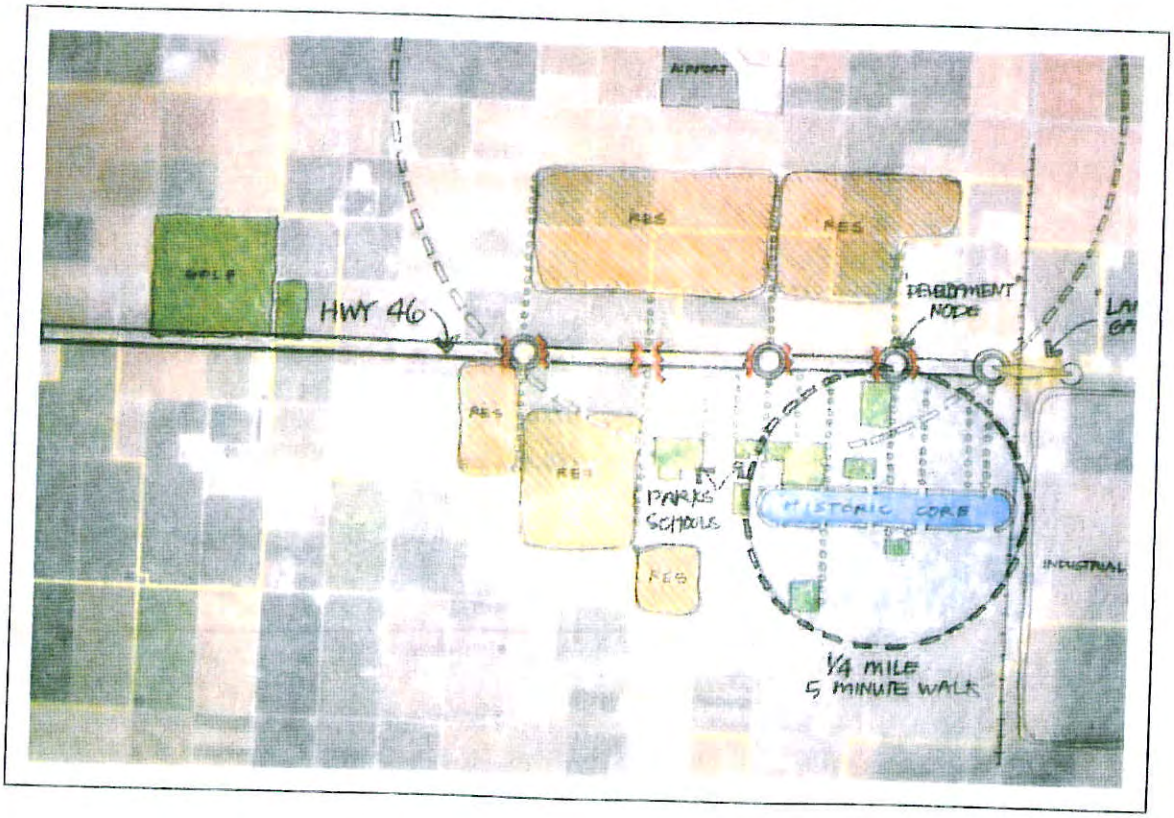
One of the cross-section options outlined in the CalTrans plan for Hwy. 46 improvements.

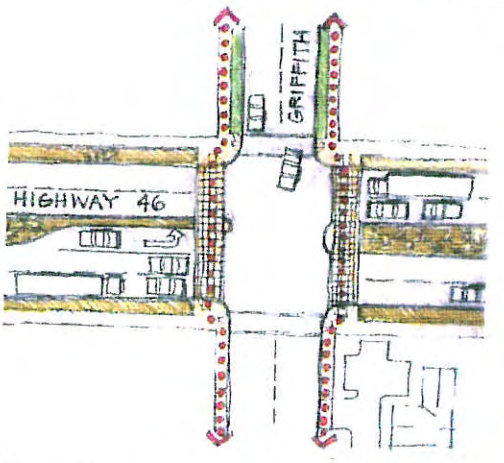
There may also be an opportunity to develop a landscaped median as part of the CalTrans project. Currently, the black & white cross-section, above, is listed as an alternative in the CalTrans plan. As an alternative, the color design, on top, was developed to show how the same amount of space could be redesigned to create a more pedestrian friendly and attractive environment.

Better Connect Emerging Neighborhoods to Downtown and Schools

A cursory examination of Wasco's relationship to, *and across*, the highway provided a good understanding of how it fits into the community's overall context. The plan view sketch, below, illustrates the locations of Wasco's residential neighborhoods, schools, downtown, and airport.

The airport's location is important because according to California Department of Education's website, "Safety is the first consideration in the selection of school sites. Certain health and safety requirements are governed by state regulations and the policies of the Department...As a part of the site selection prescreening process, the school district should determine the proximity of the site to runways. If the site is within two nautical miles of an existing airport runway, a set of special procedures must be followed before the site can be approved."





Upgrading crosswalks and providing 'safe haven' median treatments are important components of making the highway safer for pedestrians.

The issue of school siting is relevant to Wasco because of the airport's location north of Hwy. 46 and the amount of residential development nearby. Due to the two nautical mile restriction, many students must cross Hwy. 46 in order to get to school. Because the highway is a harsh and dangerous pedestrian environment, most students go to school by car even though many live within a nearby walk.

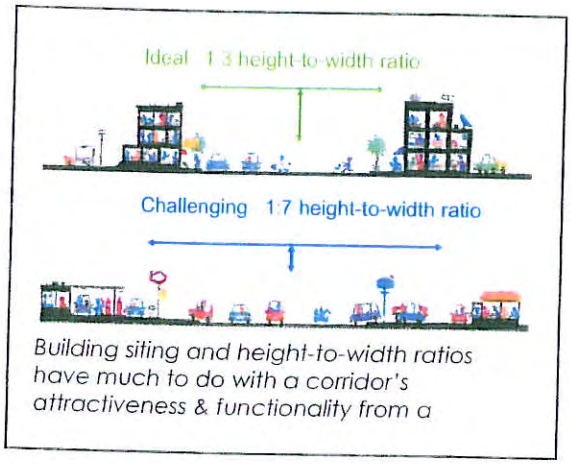
Redeveloping the highway corridor so that it provides a safe and pedestrian friendly connection between the north and south areas of town is critical. Key intersections (where nodal development is recommended) should be upgraded with concrete crosswalks and 'safe harbor' median treatments. Pedestrian scaled lighting and signage would also help strengthen linkages between these two parts of town separated by the highway.

Redevelop Nodes at Key Intersections to Concentrate Activity and Reinforce Corners

In order to have the best chance of success with redeveloping the commercial area long Hwy. 46, a focused approach is necessary. Otherwise, the commercial strip through Wasco is so long that a plan for redeveloping its two mile length would likely fail due to the overwhelming nature of the task.

In Appendix C, *Principles for Reinventing Highway Corridor Development*, the fifth principle calls for establishing nodes of concentrated development. This strategy is recommended for redeveloping Wasco's highway corridor as it provides a good framework and manageable project area to help ensure maximum results. The principles for nodal development include:

a. Using key intersections to create concentrations of development that are unique points of reference; nodes of more intense activity; and places that are friendly, attractive and walkable.

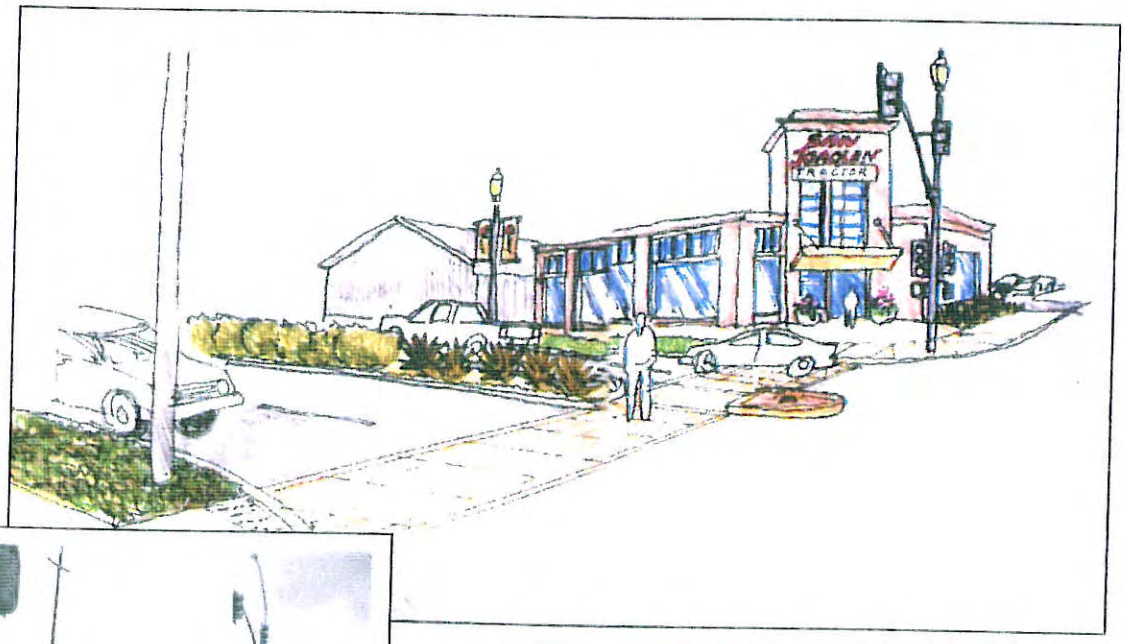


Building siting and height-to-width ratios have much to do with a corridor's attractiveness & functionality from a

b. Planning and zoning higher densities in these nodes to facilitate a more vertical use of space -- helping achieve a more lively, safe, attractive and entertaining streetscape.

c. Using a range of public development tools such as transfer of development rights, business improvement districts, tax abatement policies, urban design guidelines, vertical zoning, and streamlined approval process to help achieve nodal development at identified locations.

Creating more verticality to the highway cross-section by the use of plantings and buildings set closer to the sidewalk will further enhance the attractiveness and pedestrian friendliness of the corridor.



The sketch, above, illustrates how nodal development could strengthen and improve the highway corridor. This type of focus is recommended along Hwy. 46 at:

- Hwy. 43 (shown above)
- Griffith
- Palm (already moving in the right direction)
- Magnolia (as growth dictates)

THIS?

OR THIS? Here are examples of two different development models for Toys R Us stores. The top example shows an 'unfriendly' storefront using the old shopping center development model.

The bottom photo shows how the newer format store reinforces the corner, concentrates development, is part of the larger shopping district and is much more pedestrian friendly and attractive.

Here's an example of limited driveway access, internal circulation, shared parking and attractive, cohesive signage for several businesses.

An important ingredient of nodal development is the creation of a more dense and inviting environment. This can easily be accomplished through building siting and orientation, height, and architectural components such as windows, façade articulation, corner entrances, etc. However, updated Zoning Ordinances are needed to help ensure that right kind of development patterns occur at nodes.

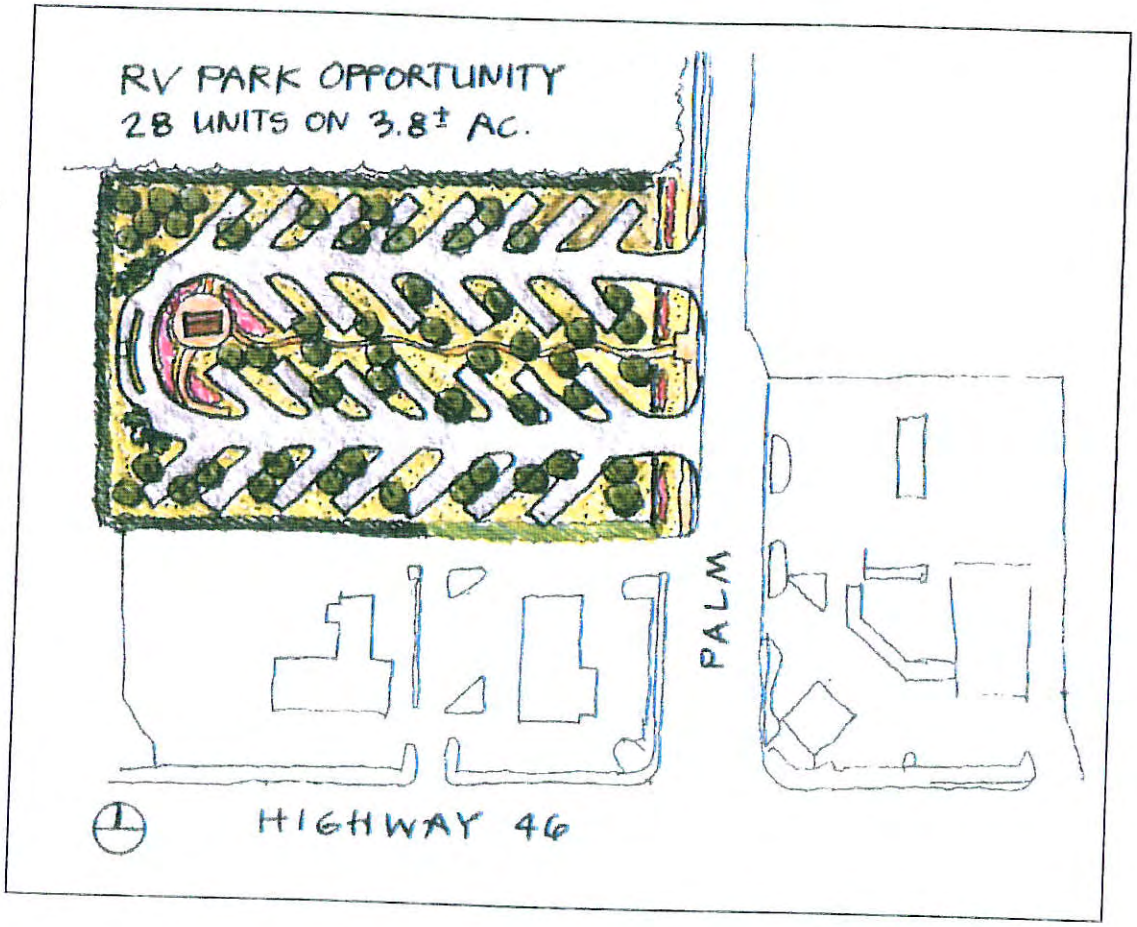
Another important component to help achieve the new vision along the highway corridor is to create a more cohesive and pedestrian friendly environment by limiting driveway access points, creating internal circulation and sharing parking facilities among adjacent businesses. Parking should still be easy to find and access. It should be tucked to the sides and behind development - especially at nodes.

Redevelop Opportunity Sites to Meet a Variety of Revitalization Objectives

Along and adjacent to Wasco's Hwy. 46 corridor are many opportunities for infill and redevelopment to help strengthen and enhance this important commercial area. It will be important to set priorities for redevelopment, yet have flexibility to take advantage of strategic opportunities.

Targeting and implementing 'tipping point' projects will help give Wasco quick 'wins' and help leverage additional investment. The creation of an RV park could be one such project. The Business Development section of this report discusses the need for an RV park to help capture more visitors and their associated spending.

An opportunity exists to develop a RV park within ½ block of Hwy. 46 and adjacent to valuable nearby goods and services. The potential location would be on 3.8+/- acres directly behind McDonald's, off Palm. A conceptual plan for the park follows on the next page.



The concept is to develop a high quality, attractive RV park the supports Wasco's image as the Rose Capital of the Nation, rather than squeeze as many spaces as possible into a harsh asphalt environment. Using this scheme, about 28 spaces could be created within a park-like atmosphere that includes attractive screening, trees, flower beds, shower house/ restrooms, and a dog-walk area. The goal would be for this park institute a short-stay policy in order to create a lodging option for visitors rather than a housing opportunity for residents.

A project of this type would be an excellent way to help capture more visitor spending and support high quality redevelopment.

Other types of complementary redevelopment projects may be initiated by the private sector, yet the public sector should guide and assist development through zoning and design guidelines, incentives and tools. This is discussed more in *Chapter 3: Strategic Internal Decisions and Code/Policy Updates.*

Strategic Internal Decisions & Code/Policy Updates

Before moving forward with the implementation of this plan, it will be important for the City and its Redevelopment Agency to make internal decisions on their willingness to focus efforts along the Hwy. 46 corridor to help achieve the redevelopment envisioned. In addition, there are codes and policies that are in need of updating so that the vision for the corridor can be realized.

Redevelopment Agency Decisions

The City of Wasco is in a unique position to take advantage, and build from, the highway widening work that CalTrans has planned. Working with CalTrans, Wasco has the rare opportunity to affect wholesale change in the transition of this area into a more cohesive, attractive, and pedestrian friendly highway commercial district.

For Wasco, the Hwy. 46 corridor is extremely important, not only for its offerings and value from sales and tax revenue, but as the primary impression a visitor may have of the community - heavily shaping the decision of whether or not to stop and spend time (& money).

The Wasco Redevelopment Agency's boundaries comprise a portion of the Hwy. 46 corridor, including the south side frontage from Palm to Griffith and along both sides of the highway from Griffith east. Until now, the Redevelopment Agency has focused the majority of its efforts on improvements to the City's industrial parks and in local housing initiatives - - with very successful results.

According to the California Redevelopment Association's website (calredevelopment.org), redevelopment enables communities to grow inward, not just outward. Redevelopment enhances and expands local businesses, renovates declining housing stock and improves public infrastructure systems and facilities. It helps encourage new housing and businesses to locate within already developed areas.

Redevelopment also helps reduce crime and long commutes, promotes affordable housing, and preserves the environment.

Through redevelopment, a project area receives focused attention and financial investment to reverse deteriorating trends, create jobs, revitalize the business climate, rehabilitate and add to the housing stock, as well as gain active participation and investment by residents and local business which would not otherwise occur. These revitalization efforts have positive effects that spill over the project area boundaries and improve the entire community.

Examples of activities/benefits generated through redevelopment:

- Commercial mixed-use projects
- New/Rehabilitated affordable and market-rate housing
- New and revitalized schools
- Increased investment in the area
- Living wage job creation
- Transportation facilities
- Sales, hotel and utility tax revenue
- Youth recreation and service centers
- Community beautification
- Renewed civic pride

Redevelopment can only be used in areas that suffer from adverse physical and economic conditions, defined in the law as "blight."

The following types of adverse physical and economic conditions have been observed in redevelopment areas to be examples of blight.

Adverse Physical Conditions

- Unsafe building conditions;
- Aging, deteriorating, and poorly-maintained buildings, sometimes interspersed with well-maintained buildings;
- Incompatible adjacent or nearby uses of land parcels that hinder economic activity;
- Adverse physical factors, such as susceptibility to flooding and earthquakes, that demand significant improvements to buildings in order that they be safe for occupancy;
- Small and irregularly shaped lots under multiple ownership that are vacant or underutilized;
- Outdated and inefficient building configuration and design that does not meet current business needs;
- Unsafe access into buildings or parking lots; and
- Inadequate and obsolete infrastructure, (i.e. utilities, storm drainage, sewers, street lighting, and confusing and inefficient street systems).

Adverse Economic Conditions

- High business vacancies, low commercial leases and high turnover rates;
- Vacant and underutilized land or buildings;
- Depreciated or stagnant property values and other evidence of disinvestment;
- Hazardous waste and other negative environmental conditions;
- High incidences of criminal activity, sometimes equated with an over-concentration of bars, liquor stores or adult stores;
- Lack of neighborhood businesses to serve residents, such as banks, pharmacies or grocery stores; and
- Residential overcrowding.

Several of the existing economic and physical conditions along the Hwy. 46 corridor meet the criteria for blight under California law.

The CalTrans highway widening project now affords the Redevelopment Agency the opportunity to leverage slated improvements to help achieve a more inviting, vibrant and pedestrian friendly area. The Agency Board should consider whether, and how to actively participate in the revitalization of Hwy. 46. If the decision is made to focus strategic efforts (and dollars) along the highway corridor, then criteria should be developed to 'sift' potential projects through.

These criteria could include:

Redevelopment Agency Projects along the Highway 46 Corridor will:

- Be in the public interest
- For 2006-10, the Redevelopment Agency will focus strategic efforts along the Hwy. 46 corridor
- Target a ROI (Return on Investment) ratio of 1:7 - - so that for every Agency dollar spent, it will leverage an average of $7 worth of reinvestment into the corridor.
- Support quality economic growth
- Increase the value of adjacent properties
- Encourage greater marketability of the corridor
- Encourage better urban design
- Provide a greater density of uses
- Provide a gain in ground-floor retail

The Redevelopment Agency could participate in the revitalization of the Hwy. 46 corridor in three ways:

1. By investing dollars in streetscape improvements - leveraging and building off of the CalTrans' project
2. By offering tools and incentives to help property owners, who are within the district's boundaries,

redevelop their storefronts to help achieve the vision for the corridor

3. By assembling property (through wiling sellers) to RFP out for redevelopment at identified nodes - taking advantage of strategic opportunities

The Redevelopment Agency should explore focusing a portion of resources on portions of the Hwy. 46 corridor. If the decision is made to do so, then decisions will then need to be made on how to best invest resources by developing an allocation plan that identifies the types of projects to implement and suggested timeframes for completion.

Updating City Codes/Policies

As part of this project, a cursory review of Wasco's Zoning Ordinance revealed a very difficult document to navigate (although it is now easier than it used to be), coupled with extremely complicated codes that sometimes work against the new vision for redevelopment. These circumstances make the need to update the Zoning Ordinance document a high priority.

In order to help facilitate good development, the City's Zoning Ordinance should be simplified to make it easier to do the right thing, rather than vice-versa.

As part of the Zoning Ordinance update, an overlay district should be considered for the Hwy. 46 corridor to create more intense development patterns at identified nodes; 'push' buildings closer to the sidewalk; support shared parking that is tucked between and behind businesses; and produce attractive buildings that help support a pedestrian environment.

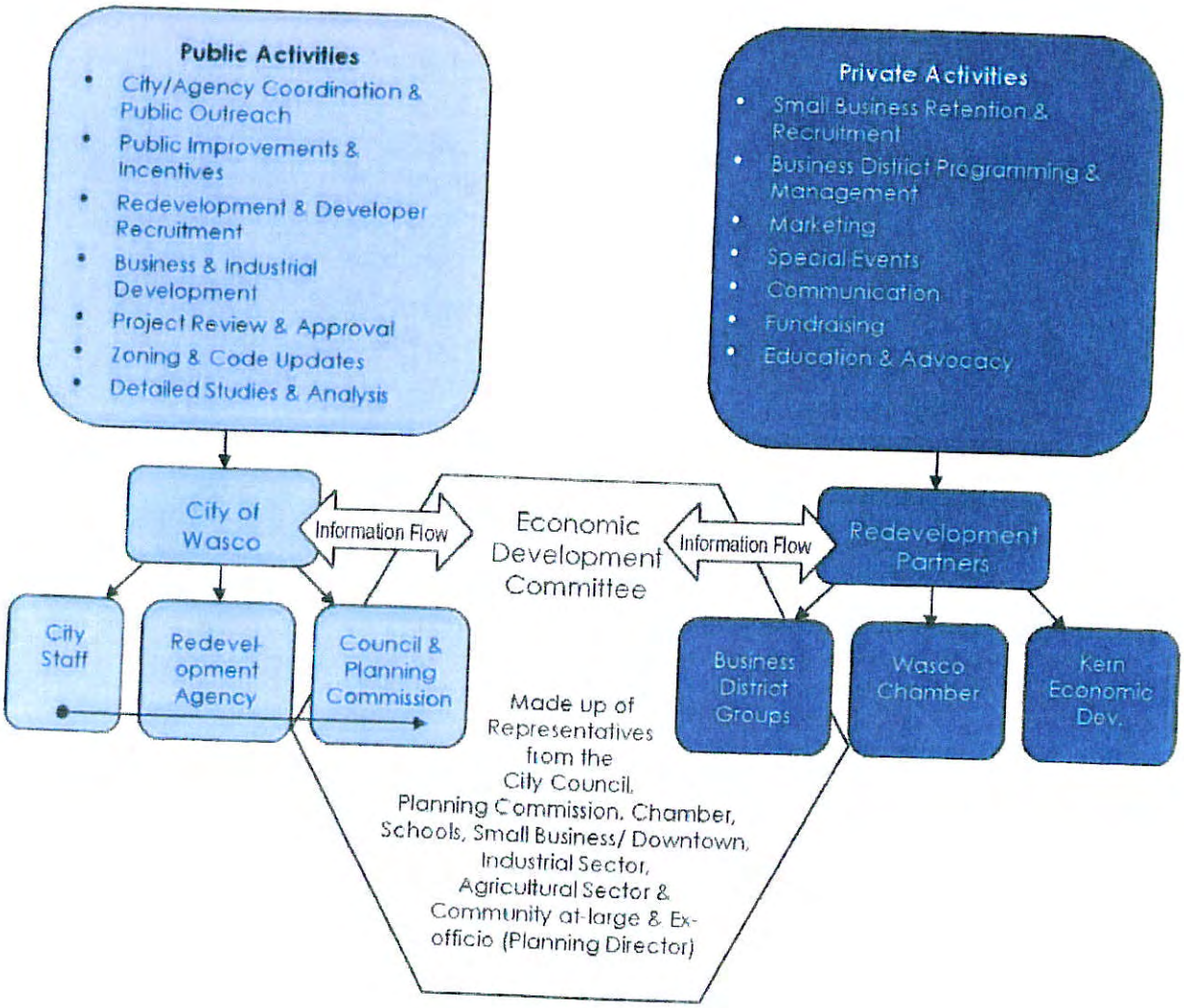
Roles & Responsibilities for Implementation

Successful implementation of a redevelopment strategy is a complex task. This is especially true for highway commercial redevelopment because there are many different types of projects and a diversity of public and private players. The flowchart that follows has been developed to outline the two categories of redevelopment activities that will be undertaken along the Hwy. 46 corridor and the roles and responsibilities within each.

The flowchart also highlights the importance of the Economic Development Committee. This working alliance will be critical to the success of local redevelopment efforts, as it will facilitate public/private project coordination and information sharing. In conversations with Ron Mittag following the on-site visit, the decision evolved to expand the role and makeup of the existing Economic Development Committee for this role.

The expanded Economic Development Committee would be made up of representatives from:

- City Council
- Planning Commission
- Chamber of Commerce
- Schools
- Small Business/Downtown
- Industrial Sector
- Agriculture Sector
- At-large Community Representative
- Ex-officio (Planning Director)


Public Activities
City/Agency Coordination & Public Outreach
Public Improvements & Incentives
Redevelopment & Developer Recruitment
Business & Industrial Development
Project Review & Approval
Zoning & Code Updates
Detailed Studies & Analysis
Private Activities
Small Business Retention & Recruitment
Business District Programming & Management
Marketing
Special Events
Communication
Fundraising
Education & Advocacy
City of Wasco
Information Flow
Economic Development Committee
Information Flow
Redevelopment Partners
City Staff
Redevelopment Agency
Council & Planning Commission
Business District Groups
Wasco Chamber
Kern Economic Dev.
Made up of Representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, Chamber, Schools, Small Business/ Downtown, Industrial Sector, Agricultural Sector & Community at-large & Ex-officio (Planning Director)

Industrial Attraction

For a city the size of Wasco, they should be congratulated for having the foresight to have an full time Economic Development Position working on enhancing the city's economic opportunities, providing leadership to decision-makers as it relates to strategic actions and marketing the city to target industries and businesses to generate new business investment and jobs for the local residents.

The city is also quite fortunate to have retained a very professional and experienced economic developer, Ron Mittag. With his experience and given the right tools, he is able to "hit the road running" in implementing and managing an economic development program. The city has already taken some excellent first steps in setting the stage for achieving their economic development goals.

Why is Industrial Attraction a Priority?

Although the city is experiencing huge residential and some commercial growth, sustainable and higher income jobs will come from the "primary base" - those industries that export "value-added" products and import dollars - typically manufacturing and processing operations.

To create a jobs/housing balance in the community and raise per capita income, a goal of the Economic Development Committee, the city needs to have an active and aggressive Industrial Attraction Program. Attracting industry is a priority of most of the communities in the Central Valley, so competition is fierce. Wasco will need to be very strategic and overly responsive to attract and convert leads into deals.

Recommendations for Enhancing Economic Development Plan

The following, based on our assessment of Wasco's product, process and tools, are recommendations to enhance the industrial attraction efforts to help

increase Wasco's competitiveness to convert leads to projects:

1. Readiness & Responsiveness

Shovel-ready product:

- City has a current inventory of ready-to-go sites, however, the sites are small and could be absorbed with one or two users.
- City should be identifying, planning and developing new "shovel-ready" sites to market to industrial users. These sites need to be competitive in the marketplace, 1) price, 2) infrastructure at the site and 3) if possible, spec buildings or "pre-approved" buildings in various sizes from 10,000-50,000 sq ft. For the latter, the city may need to be talking and partnering with developers to prepare these future sites. *Note: communities with existing spec buildings or pre-approved, ready to break-ground site have a 50% higher chance at converting a lead to a project.*
- Infrastructure should be complete and at the site. As the city identifies new sites to bring on-line, utilize the CDBG program for planning and engineering development of the sites and begin applying for EDA, CDBG or USDA grants. These can also be matched with State of California Infrastructure Bank loans.
    - Infrastructure should include all utilities, communications and transportation (if possible) include sufficient water and waste water systems.
    - Information on the city's capacity to deliver required infrastructure and services should be readily available to package in a proposal to the prospect.

Responsiveness:

- A city will be quickly **eliminated** from consideration by Site Selectors and businesses for lack of timely and incomplete information, particularly information regarding ***infrastructure***

and fees. This is the critical information that is requested by decision-makers when they are evaluating the City and the competition.

- The City should set a policy that inquiries for operating and infrastructure fees and permit timelines from industrial businesses and development representative should be responded to within 48 hours. There will be some cases that will take the city's internal business development team - planning, public works, economic development, city manager - longer to respond because of the complexity of a facility operation, however, in those cases the policy should be set to have the information to the prospect within one week from time of request.
- Noted below are recommendations for materials and tools to help facilitate with high-quality proposals to prospects.

Site Selection Location Factors

1. Highway accessibility
2. Labor costs
3. Availability of skilled labor
4. State & local incentives
5. Availability of high-speed internet access
6. Corporate tax rate
7. Occupancy or construction costs
8. Tax exemptions
9. Proximity to major markets
10. Energy availability & costs
11. Availability of telecommunications services
12. Cost of land
13. Low union profile
14. Availability of land
15. Environmental regulations
16. Proximity to suppliers
17. Raw materials availability
18. Training programs
19. Availability of long-term financing
20. Availability of unskilled labor
21. Accessibility of major airport
22. Proximity to technical university
23. Railroad service
24. Waterway or ocean port accessibility

2. Industry Targets

Site Location Factors

- The adjoining table outlines the 25 factors in priority order of a location decision. Each project is different in how they might "weigh" the importance of any one of these factors but Wasco needs to be prepared by having information available and on the website to address any of these location factors requested by the prospect. Typically the business will have already made the decision that the city is within a geographical area to access their prime market.

Quality of Life Factors

- These factors are secondary to Site Location Factors

1. Low crime rate
2. Health facilities
3. Housing costs
4. Ratings of public schools
5. Cultural opportunities
6. Climate
7. Colleges & Universities in area
8. Recreational opportunities

Business Decision Characteristics

- The decision-maker for industrial facilities typically possess five characteristics which should be recognized when recruiting and negotiation with the business:
  1. Profit driven
  2. Market driven
  3. Deadline driven
  4. Competitive, and
  5. Risk adverse
- Everything presented should take these characteristics into consideration:
  - Will our proposal meet their profit goal, or have the ability to increase their profit?
  - Is our location the most cost-minimal for their operations?
  - Can we meet or beat their deadline?
  - Have we been able to remove as much of the risk as possible with our location?

Industry Sector Targets

- Kern County recently completed a study analyzing industry clusters which Kern County communities had a level of specialization and which would consider Kern County as a potential location for expanding and relocation business in these clusters.
- The most dominant cluster, which is also true for Wasco, is the Value-Added Ag Cluster. It is also very competitive to other Central Valley and Central Coast locations.
- Industries that support the Ag industry - suppliers are also a good target for Wasco.
- Wasco's ability to provide the needed infrastructure, particularly water, waste water, power and transportation, will drive the size of facility that can locate in Wasco.

Kern County Target Clusters

- Value-Added Agriculture
- Transportation, Logistics & Warehousing
- Energy & Chemicals
- Aerospace & Defense
- Health Services & Medical Technologies
- Business & Professional Services
- Tourism, Recreation & Entertainment

- The following table is a list by NAICS code industries within the value-added Ag cluster that maybe excellent targets for Wasco.

		Growth 2002-2012		Capacity
NAICS	Description	Employ	Output	Utilization
311	**Food and Kindred Products**			
311111	Dog and cat food manufacturing	0.10%	2.20%	81%
311119	Other animal food manufacturing	0.10%	2.20%	63%
311225	Fats and oils refining and blending	-0.10%	2.00%	80%
311330	Confectionery mfg. from purchased chocolate	-0.30%	1.60%	64%
311340	Non-chocolate confectionery mfg	-0.30%	1.60%	66%
311411	Frozen fruit and vegetable mfg	-0.10%	1.70%	85%
311412	Frozen specialty food manufacturing	-0.10%	1.70%	72%
311423	Dried and dehydrated food mfg	-0.10%	1.70%	67%
311612	Meat processed from carcasses	1.40%	2.00%	75%
311811	Retail bakeries	0.30%	2.00%	58%
311812	Commercial bakeries	0.30%	2.00%	78%
311821	Cookie and cracker manufacturing	0.30%	2.00%	62%
311822	Mixes and dough made from purchased flour	0.30%	2.00%	60%
311823	Dry pasta manufacturing	0.30%	2.00%	63%
311830	Tortilla manufacturing	0.30%	2.00%	81%
311919	Other snack food manufacturing	0.20%	1.50%	89%
311930	Flavoring syrup/ concentrate mfg	0.20%	1.50%	72%
311941	Mayonnaise, dressing, sauce mfg	0.20%	1.50%	74%
311942	Spice and extract manufacturing	0.20%	1.50%	61%
311991	Perishable prepared food mfg	0.20%	1.50%	68%
311999	All other miscellaneous food mfg	0.20%	1.50%	70%
326	**Plastics**			
326111	Plastics bag manufacturing	1.80%	4.10%	73%
326113	Non-packaging plastics film mfg.	1.80%	4.10%	73%
326160	Plastics bottle manufacturing	1.80%	4.10%	77%
333	**Industrial Equipment**			
333111	Farm machinery and equipment mfg	0.50%	3.50%	55%
333112	Lawn and garden equipment mfg	0.50%	3.50%	63%
333132	Oil and gas field machinery/equip	0.50%	3.50%	57%
333294	Food product machinery mfg	-0.50%	4.40%	55%
333311	Automatic vending machine mfg	0.60%	3.60%	44%
333993	Packaging machinery mfg	1.60%	5.20%	60%

- Owner/operator businesses with less than 150 employees may be good targets to initiate attrition campaigns.

3. Marketing Approach

A successful industrial attraction-marketing program should have the following key elements:

- **Focus** - focus efforts on ensuring that the city and community has a quality business-friendly climate including "ready-to-go" sites, responsive and aggressive team and focus on recruitment of targets.
- **Consistency** - all of the cities communications materials - letterhead, business cards, website, and newsletters, anything with the city name - should have a consistent look, same logo and colors. Consistency builds recognition with business.

Note: the consulting team noticed various versions of the city logo, colors, placement being used by different departments, all should be the same.

  - The black, silver and red used on the City's folders is the most striking and professional look and color scheme.

- **Key Messages** - key messages should be consistent and repeated to target audiences. For the Industrial Target the four key messages should include:
  1. Small town that welcomes industry
  2. Hwy 46 transportation corridor
  3. Labor draw - available, dependable and productive
  4. Cost advantages

Exercise: the Economic Development Committee should prepare proof points (facts that prove the key message is for real, i.e., number of trucks on Hwy 46 per day) for each of the key messages. Proof points help in developing marketing materials and sales pitches.

- **Materials - Quality** marketing and response materials are key to attract the interest of business.

The following materials should be readily available for packaging

- Templates - recommend using templates vs. printed sheets. Templates can be prepared in various sizes (8 ½ x 11, 11 x 17) so pieces or proposals can be customized according to the need. Quality templates can be prepared in word for easy preparation by staff.
- Business Case - a formal business case - why should a business locate in Wasco - should be prepared as a standard handout and post on the web. This piece may be several pages. The business case would typically address the city's strengths as it relates to site location factors. Maps, aerials and graphics would support data and statements.
- Support Material - for the business case and proposals, the following information should be available and current:
  - Labor details on availability, skills and costs
  - Aerials, city and industrial sites, location of existing business
  - Site maps, with infrastructure denoted
  - Transportation maps
  - Infrastructure capacity, delivery, cost and any constraints
  - Typical permitting process and timeline for industrial facility; how the city can fast-track a permit
- Website - the city is currently adding to their website the EDsuite module which will provide:
  - Community Profile
  - Site & Building Database
  - News Module
  - On-line Proposal System
  - Proposal Tracking System

In addition to the tools provided with the EDsuite module, the module is fully editable by staff.

Because of the city's current website design and hosting process, the EDsuite module is hosted separately with a separate URL for marketing and directly linking business with data. The site is seamlessly accessed from the city current website.

Recommendation: Highly recommend the city consider upgrading their current website to one more dynamic which promotes their image, goals and resources.

4. Marketing Tactics

Because the city has limited resources and staff time, recommend the following tactics be used to market and generate leads:

- **Direct Mail** to targeted lists, letters and short one-page newsletter (keep simple and short, focus on key messages and announcements)
- **Tradeshows,** city can leverage their attendance at targeted tradeshows by participating with TeamCalifornia (planned six shows a year, membership $1,000 plus shared cost of tradeshow).
    - Should investigate opportunity to attend food and related products niche tradeshows with Upstate California region, contact greg@edoncall.com or www.upstatecalifornia.com.
- **Sales Calls,** personal meetings with developers and businesses presenting Wasco's location business case, *Why Your Business Should be Located in Wasco, CA.*

5. Tools

Electronic tools that Wasco should consider adding to their toolbox for managing the marketing and recruitment process and for preparing proposals are:

- *Fee Calculator* - excel base, input city fee bases for permits, infrastructure, water, waste water, et al, quickly calculate fees for proposed projects to provide estimates based on client's input.
- *Client Tracking System* – customize off-the-shelf software such as ACT!
- *GotoMeeting* – an on-line web-cast service by which the ED Director can make a to a prospect via the web while in his office – he could present PPT, proposal, sites, aerials, or walk-thru how to find information and site on the City website.
- *First Research& Executive ID* – access detailed industry and business information through Chabin's First Research subscription.
- *Retail Trac* – industry source for identify potential retail and commercial targets for recruitment. Access via Chabin's subscription.
- *Metro Comp* – a customize program that compares Wasco with competitor cities, creating a Annual Operating Cost Performa which can be provided to prospect to understand the total operating picture as compared to competitor areas. This is extremely useful for those businesses not using a site consultant to prepare an evaluation of different communities.

Implementation Matrix

For Wasco, the redevelopment 'stars' seem to be aligned and now is an opportune time to move multiple economic development strategies forward. The City has hired an Economic Development Director and a local Economic Development Committee has been created. This group is expected to expand its member makeup and role in order to help implement this plan and take on other development initiatives. City staff, local stakeholders and volunteers are interested in moving Wasco to next steps and raising both expectations and quality. There seems to be willingness to work together to move the community forward.

The community is also growing rapidly, with the expectation of continued high growth over the next several years. More residents will mean a stronger market for goods and services.

In addition, Wasco is on a heavily traveled route to the coast, with an average of 7500 non-resident vehicles traveling through town each day. The visitor market in and around Wasco is growing and the community is poised to take advantage of this.

The CalTrans' highway widening project offers a superb opportunity for the City to participate in the project and bring a higher level of quality to the finished product.

The City also seems willing to explore code updates and internal decisions to help guide and facilitate redevelopment efforts. In addition, much of the study area lies within the Wasco Redevelopment Agency's boundary, making it possible for additional resources to be focused on the corridor.

Industrial development is moving forward and with the recommendations, appropriate tools and resources, these efforts will only continue to yield successful results.

This redevelopment plan for the Hwy. 46 corridor has outlined a variety of strategies to improve the physical and business environment of this highway commercial district. The actions and projects that have been outlined were based on Wasco's local assets, opportunities, the community's vision and what could realistically be accomplished.

The following section is an implementation matrix. It pulls together the recommendations from each section of the plan into one location.

With so much going for it and so many opportunities, the future of Wasco can be nothing but bright if the community continues to work together to achieve its vision.

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Strategy 1 | Embrace a Multi-faceted Redevelopment Effort

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
1.1 Expanded Economic Development Committee	Expand the role and composition of the existing Economic Development Committee	Economic Development Director	Economic Development Committee: City Council, Planning Commission, Chamber, Schools, Small Business/Downtown, Industrial Sector, Ag Sector & Community-at-large	NA	H
1.2 Enhanced Decisionmaking, Project Coordination & Communication	Through monthly meetings, this group will better coordinate redevelopment efforts and information sharing - - leading to better decisionmaking and more efficiency and a higher level of success.	Economic Development Director	Economic Development Committee, RDA, Staff & Planning	NA	H

Comments:

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STRATEGIC INTERNAL DECISIONS

Strategy 1: Expanded Redevelopment Efforts

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
1.1 Explore Potential for Including Hwy. 46 Corridor Projects in Redevelopment Agency Plan	The Wasco Redevelopment Agency should discuss where Hwy. 46 corridor development fits within its mission and plan, including how the agency should participate. The following redevelopment tools/options can be used alone or in combination: 1) streetscape-capital improvements; 2) redevelopment tools & incentives for property owners; and 3) assemblying property (through willing sellers) for redevelopment.	Redevelopment Agency	Economic Development Committee City Staff	N/A	H

Strategy 2: Better Decision Making on Redevelopment Projects

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
2.1 Adopt Criteria for Decisionmaking Regarding Redevelopment Projects	Consider and adopt, as appropriate, the criteria outlined in the plan to help in selecting and prioritizing redevelopment projects.	Redevelopment Agency	Economic Development Committee City Staff	N/A	H

Strategy 3: Taking Advantage of New Opportunities

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
3.1 Outline New Redevelopment Projects & Adjust Allocation Plan Accordingly	If the Redevelopment Agency agrees to focus strategic efforts and dollars on Hwy. 46, projects will be selected and an adjustment made to the existing allocation plan.	Redevelopment Agency	Economic Development Committee City Staff	N/A	H

Comments:

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

CODE UPDATES & NEXT STEP PLANNING

Strategy 1 — Zoning Ordinance Matches Community Vision

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
1.1 Update and Simplify Zoning Code	The existing Zoning Code contains complicated ordinances that sometimes work against the new vision for redevelopment. This Code needs to be updated and simplified.	City	Planning Commission City Council Community Stakeholders	City Grant?	H

Strategy 2 — Design & Development Framework is Created for Hwy. 46 Corridor

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
2.1 Create an Overlay Zone for Hwy. 46 Corridor	Develop an Overlay Zone that includes new design and development standards that support the vision for the Hwy. 46 corridor. The overlay district should encourage the concentration of development at nodes and address: a higher intensity of uses, buildings built to the sidewalk, building features that are 'people friendly' and parking that is located in-between and behind businesses. This strategy and associated actions would integrate with the Code updates discussed above.	City	Planning Commission City Council Community Stakeholders	City Grant?	H

Strategy 3 — Hwy. 46 Design Concepts Move Forward

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
3.1 Further Develop Design Palette & Concepts for Hwy. 46 Corridor	Move design concepts for Hwy. 46 streetscape and planting palette to next phase, in collaboration with Caltrans.	City	Caltrans Economic Development Committee Business and Property Owners	Redevelopment Agency? City Grant?	H

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

CODE UPDATES & NEXT STEP PLANNING (cont.)

Strategy 4 | Downtown Revitalization Moves Forward Through Planning

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
4.1 Create an Integrated Plan for Wasco's Traditional Downtown	Now that the visioning for the Hwy. 46 corridor is complete, the next step is to concentrate on the traditional downtown core. An integrated plan is needed to serve as a redevelopment roadmap for this struggling commercial district.	City	Economic Development Committee Downtown Business and Property Owners Chamber	City CDBG Grant?	H

Comments:

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

BUSINESS & IMAGE DEVELOPMENT - COMMERCIAL & RETAIL

Strategy 1 | Local Vision & Opportunities are Promoted

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
1.1 Promote Opportunities & Vision Along Hwy. 46 Corridor	Promote the findings of the Retail Market Analysis through the media in business networking meetings.	Economic Development Committee	City Chamber of Commerce	NA	H
1.2 Target Key Properties & Businesses for Redevelopment	The Economic Development Committee should focus on key properties and locations to target redevelopment and business development efforts, such as better lodging options.	Economic Development Committee	City Chamber	NA	H
1.3 Package & Promote Wasco's Agricultural Assets	Call a forum of farm operators and community stakeholders to discuss how to package Wasco's ag-related assets. Projects could include: developing a 'Pride of Wasco' retail cooperative, farm tours, interpretative centers, festivals, etc.	Economic Development Committee	Local Growers Chamber	NA	M

Strategy 2 | Wasco Puts Its Best Face Forward

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
2.1 Show Wasco's Community Pride & Positive Image Along Hwy. 46	Start now to get community groups to adopt a section of the highway for clean-up and beautification. Encourage all highway businesses to pick up trash, wash windows, clean & change displays, get rid of temporary signage & beautify with flowers.	Chamber	Business and Property Owners	NA	H

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

BUSINESS & IMAGE DEVELOPMENT - COMMERCIAL & RETAIL (cont'd)

Strategy		Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
Strategy 3	Area Workers & Residents Spend More in Wasco					
3.1 Agressively Market to Area Workers		Restaurant owners should distribute lunchtime menus, offer free delivery to Wasco locations & offer specials to get more business from the local employment base.	Chamber	Local Restaunteurs	NA	M
3.2 Aggressively Market to New Residents		Welcome packets should be developed for, and delivered to, new residents. Businesses can include introductory offers. Social events should be held to engage new residents.	Chamber	Local Businesses City		H
Strategy 4	Nodes Concentrate Commercial Energy					
4.1 Create Commercial Nodes or Activity Centers		Encourage new development to cluster near existing development and identified intersections so the commercial base becomes more concentrated. A larger concentration of retail will almost always outperform less dense retail development.	City	Economic Development Committee Local Business & Property Owners Chamber	Private Redevelopment Agency Incentives (?)	H
Strategy 5	Wasco is Known as a Business Friendly & Positive City					
5.1 Local Processes are Evaluated & Updated to Make Wasco More Business Friendly		The City should review commercial and industrial development processes and update as appropriate in order to respond with streamlined, timely service, reasonable fees and a general attitude of being friendly to business.	City	Planning Commission City Council Economic Development Committee	NA	M

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

BUSINESS & IMAGE DEVELOPMENT - COMMERCIAL & RETAIL (cont'd)

Strategy 5	Wasco is Known as a Business Friendly & Positive City				
5.2	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
Efforts are Focused on Raising the Bar for Quality Development and Creating a More Positivie, Progressive Attitude	Survey results indicated the community no longer wants to settle on 'good enough' and agree the bar for quality needs to be raised in Wasco. The community is also interested in a more progressive and positive attitude; accepting that change is inevitable and that it needs to be managed.	Economic Development Committee	City Chamber Local Stakeholders	NA	H
Strategy 6	**Wasco Benefits from New Ideas & Best Practices**				
6.1	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
Get New Ideas and Strategies for Redevelopment	Go on field trips to other communities dealing with similar issues. Learn from the hard work and innovate ideas that other communities are using to be more successful in their redevelopment efforts. Identify 5 towns with a 'highway running through it' that have done a good job of slowing traffic and creating a more attractive and vital highway commercial corridor.	Economic Development Committee	City Chamber	City Chamber	H

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

BUSINESS & IMAGE DEVELOPMENT - COMMERCIAL & RETAIL (cont'd)

Strategy 7 | Wasco Benefits More from Its 'Rose Capital of the Nation' Image

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
7.1 Increase & Improve the 'Rose Capital' Marketing and Associated Events/Activities/Plantings	Create a tagline to support the logo. Use on signage, letterhead, etc. Examples include: Welcome to Wasco - Stop & Smell the Roses; Welcome to Wasco - Experience the World of Roses; Welcome to Wasco - Home of the World Famous Jackson-Perkins Roses (paid for by Jackson-Perkins)	Chamber	Economic Development Committee City	City Chamber Local Growers	H
7.2 Encourage Development of a Rose Specialty Gift Shop & Products	Work with existing and/or potential business owners to develop rose-oriented retail & associated specialty products.	Economic Development Committee	Chamber Local Business Owners	Private Redevelopment Agency Incentives (?)	H
7.3 Expand Rose Festival Offerings	Increase volunteer base and expand Rose Festival (& marketing) to reach a larger audience. A few ideas for new activities/events include: Name that rose contest; Meet the Roses (an invitation to everyon ename Rose to meet, greet & tell their story); Rose Festival Art Poster (contest) for resale.	Chamber	Local Organizations & Volunteers	NA	M

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

BUSINESS & IMAGE DEVELOPMENT - COMMERCIAL & RETAIL (cont'd)

Strategy 7 | Wasco Benefits More from Its 'Rose Capital of the Nation' Image

7.4 Create Multiple Destination Rose Gardens	**Action** Create specialty rose gardens (sponsored by local growers) that can be marketed jointly as a destination. Speciality garden Ideas include: mimiature rose garden, shrub rose garden, celebrity rose garden, hybrid tea rose garden, heirloom rose garden, test rose garden, climbing rose garden.	**Project Lead** Local Volunteers	**Partners** Local Growers Chamber	**Funding** NA	**Priority** H
7.5 Develop a 'Rose Trail' for Visitors	**Action** Develop and market a Rose Trail (similar to Fresno's Blossom Trail) that guide visitors on a tour of rose growing locations and attractions.	**Project Lead** Chamber	**Partners** Local Growers Rose-oriented Businesses	**Funding** Local Growers Tourism Grant?	**Priority** H
7.6 Host Rose-oriented Meetings and Conventions	**Action** When Wasco is more able to handle meetings and conventions (lodging/meeting rooms), efforts should be made to bring as many rose meetings and seminars to the community as possible.	**Project Lead** Chamber	**Partners** Local Growers Local Rose Society Clubs	**Funding** NA	**Priority** H
7.7 Create More Rose Murals Throughout Town	**Action** Using the great mural on the side of the public works building as an example, create more rose-themed murals throughout Wasco...they can be added as points of interest on the Rose Trail map.	**Project Lead** Chamber	**Partners** School Art Deparments Local Property Owners Local Growers	**Funding** Grants Donations	**Priority** H

Comments:

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Strategy 1 | Wasco Has a Defined Landscape Signature Tied to Local Agriculture

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
1.1 Adopt a Landscape Signature for Wasco	Further articulate and adopt a landscape 'signature' for Wasco's streetscape and public spaces. It should be tied to the long-standing agricultural tradition of the community. It should also include a design framework that supports formal arrangements in mass plantings along streetscape and in highway median.	City	Planning Commission Property Owners Community Stakeholders	City Redevelopment Agency?	H

Strategy 2 | Wasco Has Attractive & Inviting Gateways

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
2.1 Redevelop Gateway at Trestle	In concert with the Caltrans road widening project, create a strong and memorable gateway statement at this important entry point.	City	Caltrans Railroad Redevelopment Agency? Local Growers Economic Development Committee	Caltrans Local Growers Redevelopment Agency?	H
2.2 Create Monument-type Entry Signage	Create entry signage at gateways that complements other design and landscape components.	City	Redevelopment Agency Caltrans Economic Development Committee Local Growers	Redevelopment Agency? City Local Growners	H

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (cont.)

Strategy 2	Wasco Has Attractive & Inviting Gateways				
2.3 Create Monument-type Signage for Downtown	**Action** Create complementary signage for Downtown Wasco that is located on Hwy. 46.	**Project Lead** City	**Partners** Redevelopment Agency Caltrans Economic Development Committee Local Growers	**Funding** City Local Growers Downtown Business Owners	**Priority** H
Strategy 3	Wasco Achieves the Vision for the Hwy. 46 Corridor Through Physical Improvements				
3.1 New Sidewalks are Buffered from Traffic	**Action** As part of Caltrans project, new sidewalks will be set back from the road and buffered by a planting strip.	**Project Lead** City	**Partners** Caltrans Business & Property Owners Economic Development Committee	**Funding** Caltrans Redevelopment Agency?	**Priority** H
3.2 New Streetscape Amenities Help Create a More Pedestrian Friendly Environment	**Action** Implement streetscape improvements that include: pedestrian-scaled lighting & sidewalk furnishings to create a more attractive and pedestrian friendly atmosphere along Hwy. 46.	**Project Lead** City	**Partners** Caltrans Business & Property Owners Economic Development Committee	**Funding** Caltrans Redevelopment Agency?	**Priority** H
3.3 Well Designed Plantings Add Color and Organization to Wasco's Streetscape	**Action** Implement high quality streetscape and median plantings usings Wasco's new landscape signature.	**Project Lead** City	**Partners** Caltrans Business & Property Owners Economic Development Committee	**Funding** Caltrans Redevelopment Agency?	**Priority** H

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS (cont.)

Strategy 3 | Wasco Achieves the Vision for the Hwy. 46 Corridor Through Physical Improvements

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
3.4 Front yards of Businesses are 'Greened Up'	Take advantage of the highway project to 'green up' front yards of businesses. Use Palm intersection businesses as an example.	City	Caltrans Business & Property Owners Economic Development Committee	Caltrans Redevelopment Agency?	H
3.5 Improve Crosswalks for Safety and to Better Connect North & South Neighborhoods	As part of Caltrans project, upgrade crosswalks to cue drivers they are entering an area of a higher intensity of retail uses, provide increased safety for pedestrians and better link the north and south sides of the community separated by the highway.	City	Caltrans	Caltrans	H

Comments:

WASCO'S HIGHWAY 46 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Strategy 1 | Multi-faceted Redevelopment Achieves a Variety of Goals Along Hwy. 46.

	Action	Project Lead	Partners	Funding	Priority
1.1 Concentrate Redevelopment Activities at Identified Intersections.	Concentrate redevelopment efforts at specific intersections - creating nodes of development. The development patterns at these nodes should support a higher intensity of uses, buildings built to the sidewalk, building features that encouage browsing, and parking in-between and behind businesses.	City	Economic Development Committee Caltrans Redevelopment Agency Business & Property Owners	Redevelopment Agency?	H
1.2 Redevelop Opportunity Sites to Meet a Variety of Objectives	Take advantage of opportunities to parcipate in 'tipping point' projects that leverage additional redevelopment to help address needs and meet goals - - this could include developing an RV Park adjacent to Hwy. 46 in addition to redevelopment projects directly on the highway.	City	Economic Development Committee Caltrans Redevelopment Agency Business & Property Owners	City Redevelopment Agency?	H

Comments:

Chabin

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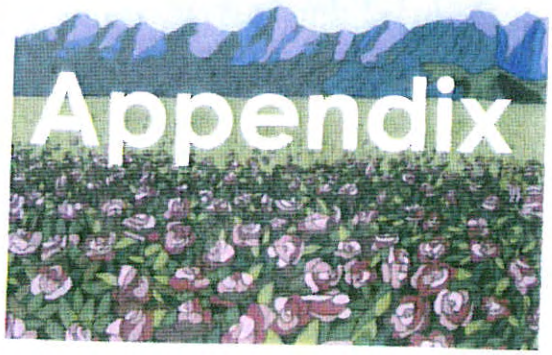
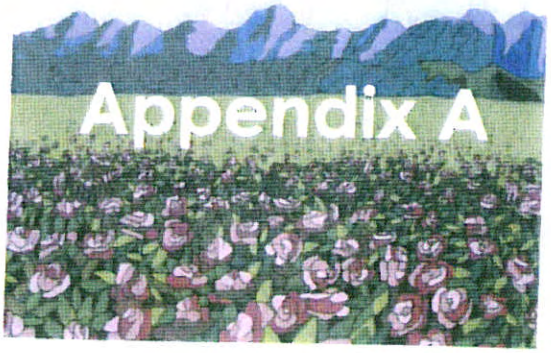


A. SWOT Analysis

B. Making Change Work for Wasco

C. Principles for Reinventing Highway Commercial Corridors



SWOT Analysis

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROAD MAP

The goal of this CDBG funded project is to create an Economic Development Road Map to enhance the City of Wasco competitiveness for new businesses which will create jobs, expand the tax base and improve the image of the City of Wasco. A Road Map outlines strategic initiatives and action tactics to address economic challenges and opportunities.

The Road Mapping process involves five strategic steps:

Where are we now?

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Who should we target?

What is our competitive advantages?

How will we get there?

In November 2005, the Chabin Concepts team, Audrey Taylor and Fawn McLaughlin met with City of Wasco's Economic Development Director, Ron Mittag, to begin the Economic Development Roadmap process. The objective of the first phase of the project is to gather information and tour the community to determine "Where are we now?" and "What are our challenges and opportunities?"

In addition to the tour and meeting with Ron Mittag, an afternoon work session was held with the City's Economic Development Committee.

This report summarizes the first two steps of the road mapping process and provides **recommendation for strategic next steps** to address the challenges and opportunities identified in this on-site assessment.

Priorities from Economic Committee Work Session:

- ***Image – Small Town, Family Oriented, Roses***
- ***Development - Highway 46 and Downtown***
- ***Incomes – increase per capita income and quality of life***

I. Where are we now?

The City of Wasco is at what is called the "**Tipping Point**" – the city is experiencing unprecedented growth which is putting pressure on all public services as well as the community as a whole. It is anticipated this growth will continue as it has with other small community in the Central Valley where lower costs of living draw new residents as well as development pressures.

The **Tipping Point** – at that point of new demand - is an opportune time to evaluate and plan on how the city can leverage the growth to enhance the city for the highest future economic value.

Current Situation

The City is getting a lot of interest from developers, homeowners and industry. Given this continued pressure for growth, developers are applying pressure to take advantage of low standards (currently in place) and the city does not have new design and development standards in place, but it is being worked on. There is a definite need to increase the assessed value in order to support growth and its impact on the public service delivery, i.e., schools.

All want to upgrade the city's image, types of housing, diversity of people but without increasing development standards and quality – they will continue to get what they have always gotten.

This is a sea change for the city and will require risk on their part, i.e., to enact new standards that demand higher quality. This risk on the city's part is that they will increase development standards and developers won't come.

II. What are our challenges and opportunities?

The following matrix outlines the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats (SWOT) as identified by the Economic Development Committee work session.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Known as a small ag community • Clean (lack of graffiti) • Safety • Location-proximity to Hwy 99 & I-5, access Hwy 46 thru town • Labor (a + and a -) • Housing affordability • Fire Protection • New priority on economic development • City-owned industrial park	• Labor (+ & -), lack of and loss of skilled labor • Lack of aggressive recruitment of business (this has not been a priority, changing new ED Director hired July 2005) • No brand hotel/motel • Restaurants (limited) • Infrastructure constraints (sewer, water) • Open space/walkway, parks • Housing availability • Low self-image • Hospital
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
• Hwy 46 expansion to 4 lands • Rose capital of the nation – opportunity to capital and brand the City; use Roses in new development landscaping requirements • City-owned industrial park, recent industrial land annexations to expand capacity • New transit-transfer station • City's willingness to change status quo • Community's interest and desire to change image	• High rate of population growth, development pressure to low value/quality. • Fire protection (potential future loss of current high level of service) • Revenue to support demand on school • Resistance to change • Schools – overcrowded, 30% moving up

III. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the on-site assessment, we would recommend the following actions to complete the Economic Development Roadmap:

- Hwy 46 & Downtown Charrette
- Image & Marketing Campaign Review
- Best Practice Community Visits

Hwy 46 & Downtown Charrette

Because the City's biggest challenges and opportunities have to do with Hwy 46 and it's links to both the downtown and industrial development growth, we recommend bringing in Downtown Solutions Team to conduct a 3-day Charrette which would provide the City with direction and tools to assist with revitalization of the Hwy 46 business district.

This would be considered a Phase I of a downtown strategy. We recommend conducting this Phase I focusing on Hwy 46 and it's link to downtown and for Phase II more in-depth on downtown be a part of another CDBG Technical Assistance Grant as a follow-on to this process.

Phase I includes collecting and analyzing information through public open house and business and property-owners appointments and making final recommendations in a public presentation that best fits the needs of the community. A written report, containing the Team's recommendations in the form of text and drawings will be sent to the City one month following the completion of on-site work. The components of the Resource Team will include: market analysis and business development opportunities, recommendations for redevelopment, and analysis and recommendations of other factors to help revitalize downtown, as appropriate.

The deliverables of this project will be articulated within parameters that are appropriate to Wasco and express its unique character by integrating local values, history, and vision.

The Charrette process involves:

Day 1: Meetings with City Staff, public open house in the evening, photographic survey and analysis, in-store interviews with business owners.

Day 2: Begin traffic circulation and design options, continue input sessions.

Day 3: Finalize design suggestions, market strategies and next steps analysis. Conduct public presentation in the evening.

Image & Marketing Campaign Review

This process would focus on the industrial attraction and would involve working with Ron Mittag to review existing marketing materials, Wasco's business case, website data and campaigns to specific target audiences to attract these businesses to the city's industrial land sites.

Recommended image campaign, materials, tactics, tools and execution will be developed and delivered.

Best Practice Community Visits

This recommendation is an action for the City implementation.

Given the development pressures being experienced and the many changes occurring to upgrade development and to help the Economic Development Committee, Commissioners and even Council members understand the dynamics of such change as well as potential solutions, impacts and actions needed to guide quality growth patterns, initiate "Best Practice Community Visits".

Visiting other cities who have also experienced this type growth, who have a Hwy running through it, or even other communities who are doing an exceptional job with building their image and quality of community is one of the best ways to understand how to manage positive change and strategic actions that need to be enacted as regulations or public policy.

Most other cities, such as Selma, welcome "Community Visits" and are very willing to spend 1-2 hours discussing their vision, challenges, approach and pit-falls. It is an opportunity to meet peer-to-peer with both public and private sector.

The City could initiate this action but if needed, the Chabin Team would be glad to assist.

IV. Next Steps

After review of this report, if the City agrees with the recommendations, we will immediately schedule the Hwy 46 Charrette with the Downtown Solutions Team and begin work on Image and Marketing.

These two tasks will provide the City with an Economic Development Roadmap as well as provide an avenue for applying for additional CDBG grant funds for a specific study on the Wasco's downtown.

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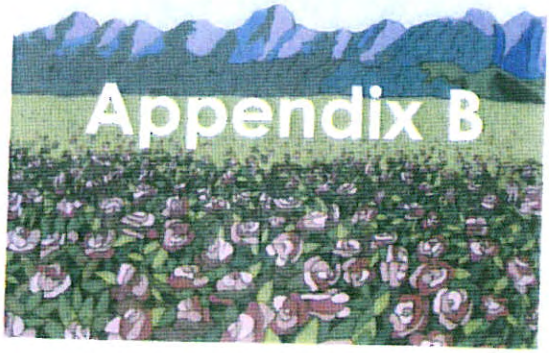


Making Change Work for Wasco, Visioning Process March 15, 2006

Making Change Work For Wasco

The Highway 46 Corridor Visioning Process for Wasco, California

March 15, 2006

Downtown Solutions Team

Process

- Focused 2 days of interviews, meetings, information collection from a variety of community stakeholders
- Fold ideas & opportunities into Design, Business Development & Next Steps recommendations
- After tonight's presentation, the Vision Plan will be developed & delivered in 6 weeks

Project Goals

- More spending on shopping / dining / lodging / entertainment from visitors & residents
- Take advantage of Caltrans project to improve the look and feel of the highway commercial district
- Create a less hostile environment for pedestrians
- Develop nodes & identity to help concentrate commercial energy

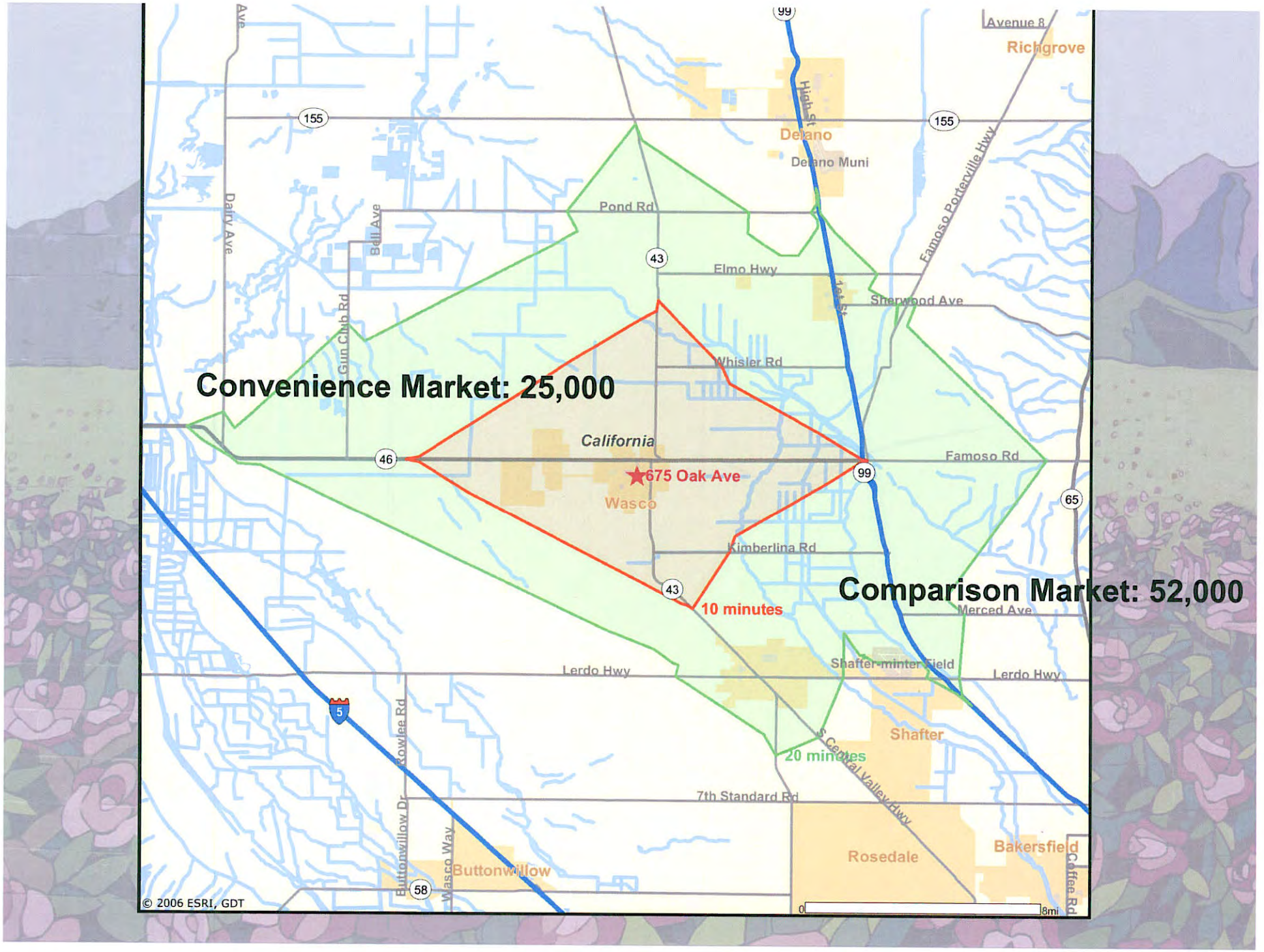
Getting Down to Business

Key Economic Development Questions

- How do we attract more retail?
- What are our best opportunities?
- How do we enhance our image?
- What's next?

1. How do we attract more retail?

- *Package Your Assets!*


Convenience Market: 25,000
Comparison Market: 52,000
675 Oak Ave
10 minutes
20 minutes
Delano
Delano Muni
Richgrove
Avenue 8
Pond Rd
Elmo Hwy
Sherwood Ave
Whisler Rd
California
Famoso Rd
Wasco
Kimberlina Rd
Merced Ave
Shafter-minter Field
Lerdo Hwy
Shafter
7th Standard Rd
Rosedale
Bakersfield
Buttonwillow
Famoso Porterville Hwy
High St
1st St
Dairy Ave
Bell Ave
Gun Club Rd
Buttonwillow Dr
Rowlee Rd
Wasco Way
S Central Valley Hwy
Coffee Rd
155
43
46
99
65
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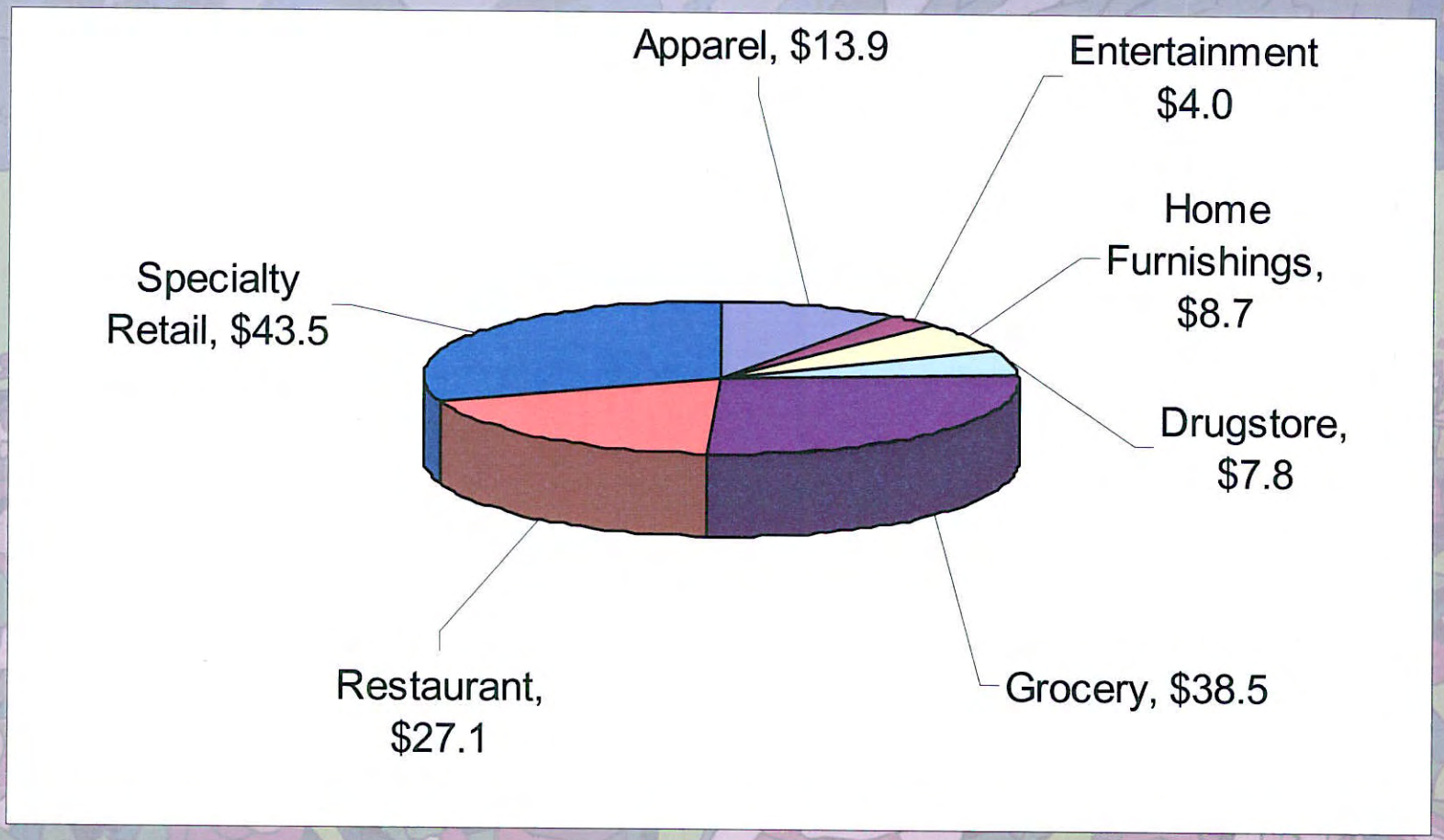
Wasco Area Retail Potential
$143.5 million



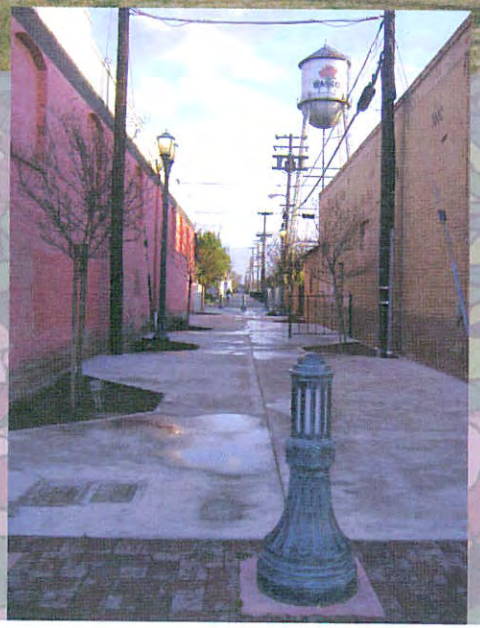
- 574,000 Square Feet of Commercial Space
- *NOT including Visitor Spending!*

Poised for Growth!

3,867 units expected 3-5 yr
14,656 population increase

Assets: A *QUALITY* Community

Community Investment sends *Positive* Message



Assets: Employment Base

<u>Major Employers</u>

Prison – 1,500 employees

Jackson & Perkins- 1,200 (peak)

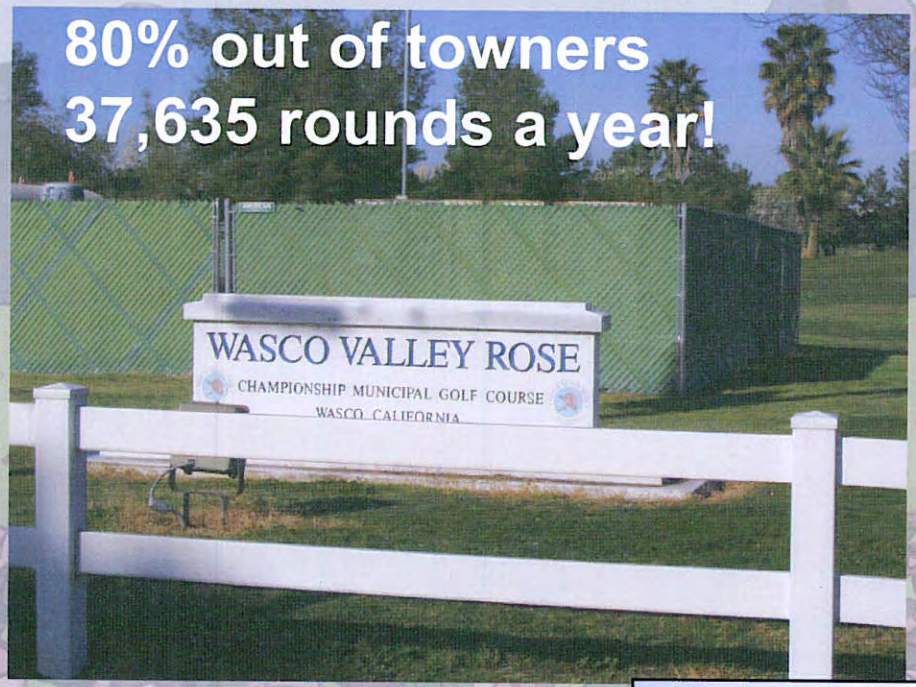
School District (K-8) - 350

Small Business Base

30 employees!

Assets: Investors & Risktakers ($$)

Visitor Assets



80% out of towners
37,635 rounds a year!

12 stops a day!

Who are these people? What do they do?

Ecotourism

- 6,000 acre wetland off Hwy 46--Gun Club Road
- Retriever Trials attract up to 12,000/weekend, 4X a year
- Pacific Flyway
- National Wildlife Refuge
- 'Birding' on the rise w/ aging boomers!

Visitor Assets

- Famosa Race Track
- March Meet: 55,000 visitors from everywhere!
- No room at the inn (Bakersfield)
- Fuel & Gas Finals (Nov3-5), 30,000

Significant Visitor Spending

- Kern County--Over $1 billion in annual spending
- 60% on retail and restaurants!
- Come to Wasco!

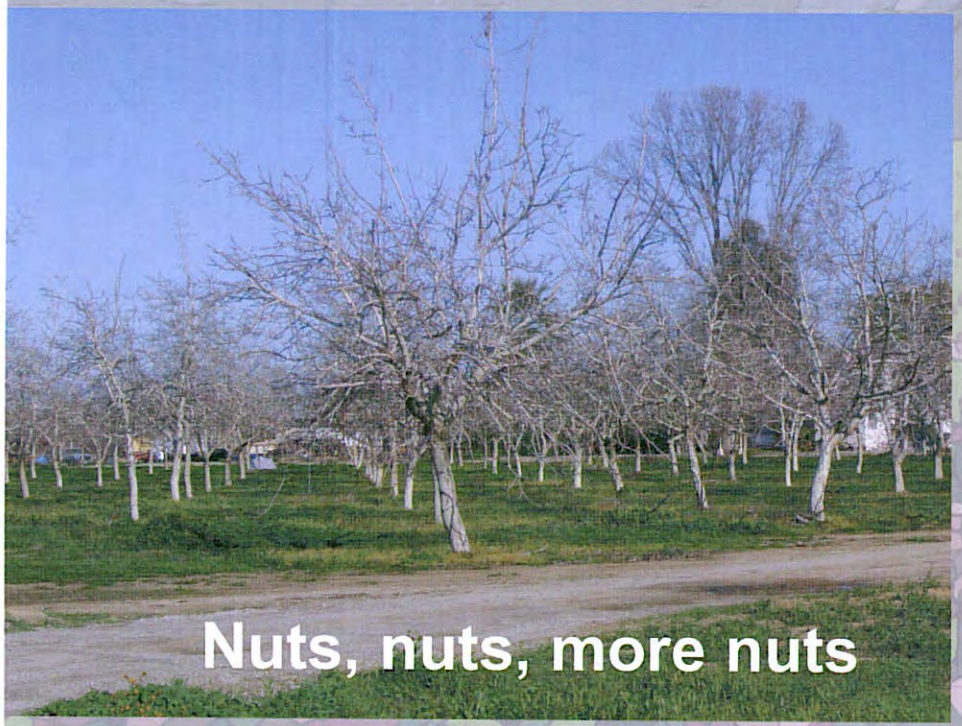
Tell visitors where to find....

- Historic downtown!
- The golf course!
- Historic high school auditorium
- The Rose Garden!
- Your beautiful parks!

Highway 46 Traffic

11,500 ADT growing to over 20,000 (10 years)
Goal: get 10% to stop & spend $10 day!

Assets: Agriculture Base



Nuts, nuts, more nuts

55% of Nation's Rose Stock

Dairies, grapes & MORE!!!

Assets: *Ready to Occupy* Property

2. What are our Best Bets for Business Development?

- Hotel/motel—*It's time to get aggressive!*

(overnight visitors spend >3x day visitors)

- Restaurant(s)—variety, steakhouse,family, Dennys
- Coffee & bagel shop!
- RV Park
- Multi-purpose recreation—YMCA, Bowling, Movies…

Retail Best Bets

- More convenience goods: *choice, variety*
- Targets *over time:*

-Grocery

-Hardware/lumber

-Sporting goods/RV supplies, sales

-Home furnishings & accessories

-Housewares

-General merchandise

Recommendations

1. Package & aggressively promote your market opportunities:

- Website
- Ongoing Direct Marketing & PR
- Send a positive message….

You Said It…

- *"We're at the Top of our Game & ready for economic development opportunities!"*
- *"Quiet, small town, close knit community"*
- *"Dynamic & full of potential!"*
- *"Centrally located b/w mountains & coast"*
- *"We are a friendly & helpful community of great people!"*

2. Market Position

Hwy 46--Convenience-oriented goods & services, chains & franchises serving locals and passers-through

Downtown: *Your Hometown Shopping District, Brought to you by Your Locally Owned Shop Owners!*

3. Cluster your businesses near anchors

4. Think LOCAL!!

- **Locally owned** business enterprises circulate 3-4X the dollars back into the community vs. chains retailers…
- Build on local assets—AGRI-BUSINESS

"The Pride of Wasco Shop" *everything made in Wasco…sponsored by local rose growers, nut growers, dairies, wineries*

5. Image Development

The Power is in
Being Different

Welcome to Wasco

- *Stop and Smell the Roses!*

- *Experience the World of Roses*

(home of the world-famous Jackson-Perkins)

X 10!!

Annual Rose Festival-
10,000 attendees

Wasco's Hook: ROSES, roses everywhere!

"Visit our 7 Specialty Rose Gardens sponsored by our local growers!"

1. *Miniature Rose Garden*
2. *Shrub Rose Garden*
3. *Celebrity Rose Garden*
4. *Hybrid Tea Rose Garden*
5. *Landscape Rose Garden*
6. *Tree Rose Garden*
7. *Climbing Rose Garden*

More Ideas!!

The Rose Trail (Fresno's Blossom Trail!)

Host Regional Convention-World Federation of Roses, American Rose Society

Tour Local Rose Gardens

Monthly Awards—Best Rose Presentations

Monthly Demonstrations—pruning, cultivating, arranging

More Murals—create 1 each year during Festival time

- *Name that Rose contest!*
- *Cultivate a Rose of Wasco*
- *Meet the Roses! (an invitation to everyone named Rose to meet, greet & tell their story!)*
- *Rose Festival Art Poster (contest) for re-sale*
- *Rose Specialty Gift Shop & Products—101 Ways to Enjoy Roses*

Successful Commercial Development Depends on…

1. Diverse economic base (you're working on it!)
2. Growing markets—*opportunity!*
3. Quality <u>product</u> ready to be sold!
4. Local risk takers/business incubation
5. Active, aggressive, cooperative local business community
6. Vision and Guts *to stay focused*
7. Awareness of issues and opportunities
8. Willingness to learn and change
9. Positivism & **<u>salesmanship</u>**-

Next Steps?

- *"Stop Talking and Start Acting"*
- *"We can no longer settle for 'good enough!"*
- *"Change is not only inevitable, it is necessary. We must be willing to change."*

Survey shows: Over a dozen people ready to go to work!

Supporting the Vision with Policy

- Update zoning codes to reflect vision
  - Simplify, simplify, simplify!!
  - Make it easier to do the right thing, rather than vice versa
  - Explore performance based approach… i.e. choose 3 elements from the list…much more user friendly for those having to comply

Design Review Process

Redmond's Downtown Architectural Design Standards will be administered through a Design Review Process, through which certain types of building and development applications will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the standards.

When Architectural Design Standards Apply: All new construction within the Architectural Design Standards Boundary will be required to go through Design Review. (See map on previous page.) Projects exempt from Design Review are those that fall outside of the Architectural Design Standards Boundary, or are comprised of any of the following project types:

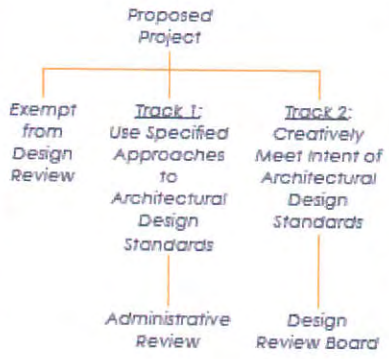
- Interior remodels;
- Renovations of existing structures;
- Buildings entirely in residential use;
- Repair and maintenance of buildings, ancillary structures, parking lots, and pedestrian areas that present an immediate or potential risk to public safety;
- Normal or routine maintenance and repair of existing structures;
- Any type of construction that does not require a building permit;
- Temporary structures allowed per the zoning code and emergency structures.

Regardless of whether or not their project needs to
all applicants must submit their projects for compli
Redmond's Development Standards (those land u
sites and buildings can be developed).

Architectural Design Standards:
A palette of objective, design-oriented elements that help ensure that proposed development conserves and enhances the recognized value of a site, building, and surrounding area.

Development Standards:
Required land use regulations that guide how sites and buildings can be developed

Design Review Process



The Design Review Process: Assuming that the proposed project requires Design Review, applicants can follow one of two tracks:

Track One requires that applicants meet the objective Architectural Design Standards. In return for complying with the standards as written, the applicant's project is reviewed administratively, reducing the time and the cost of the land use review.

Track Two recognizes that the applicant might have a better solution to meeting the intent of the objective design standard. Such creativity is welcome in the design of buildings and sites within the Downtown core area. In this case, rather than responding to a list of objective elements or approaches, the applicant is required to explain how the project meets the intent of each design standard. The Intent Statements (described in more detail below) become the criteria for determining whether or not the aim of the design standard is being met.

Note: *Applicants who opt for the Track Two approach are required to respond to all of the Intent Statements. Ultimately, a Design Review board consisting of interested citizens will review the application and determine whether or not to approve the project based on the ability of the applicant to explain how the project as proposed meets the intent of each standard.*

Goals & Objectives

In reviewing the Redmond 2020 Comprehensive Plan and meeting with the Downtown Urban Renewal Advisory Committee, the following three items emerged as key elements to implementing their Mission Statement ("*Create a vibrant Redmond Downtown core where people shop, work, and play*"):

- the creation of a high-quality pedestrian environment;
- the preservation of Downtown's unique and historic character;
- commercial viability and vitality, including night-life.

These elements informed the creation of the following goals and objectives for the Redmond Downtown Architectural Design Standards. These goals offer general guidance for improving the quality and character of Downtown Redmond as the area grows and redevelops.

- *Quality Economic Growth* – Assure opportunities for a stable, vital, diverse, and competitive economy at the heart of the city.
- *Vibrant Downtown* – Strengthen Downtown as a vibrant, mixed-use district that draws a wide spectrum of residents and visitors.
- *Downtown* of the built especially arterials.
- *Historic Cha* resources
- *Pedestrian* environme connectio

Building Elements

Standard: *Cohesive Architectural Elements*

Intent: Enhance the experience of passing motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists by incorporating cohesive and repetitive architectural elements into the ground-floor design of street-facing façades (and alley-facing façades where feasible).

Approaches (2):

Approach One: Divide the ground floor of commercial storefronts into distinct architectural bays that are no more than 30 feet on center. For the purpose of this standard, an architectural bay is defined as the zone between the outside edges of an engaged column, pilaster, post, or vertical wall area.

Distinct architectural bays can help break up a building

Standard: *Cohesive Architectural Elements*

Building lighting and transom windows

Building lighting, medallions, and transom windows

Approach Two: For each architectural bay, incorporate a minimum of three of the following elements:

- Building lighting (minimum of a pair)
- Suspended signs / blade signs
- Canopies or overhangs (5'-0" minimum, measured from either the face of the column or the street-facing elevation)
- Transom window
- Storefront frieze, horizontal sign band, or a belt course above the transom window or mezzanine level
- Window plant box (minimum of one per window)
- Projected window sill (12" to 24" above grade)
- Medallion (minimum of a pair)

Note: *Well-designed repetitive building elements tend to leave a lasting memory. These elements become the vehicle for people to describe what they cherish most about a specific place.*

Note: ***Where feasible, building elevations that face an alley should be enhanced with a minimum of a doorway (with glass) and lighting.***

Storefront frieze

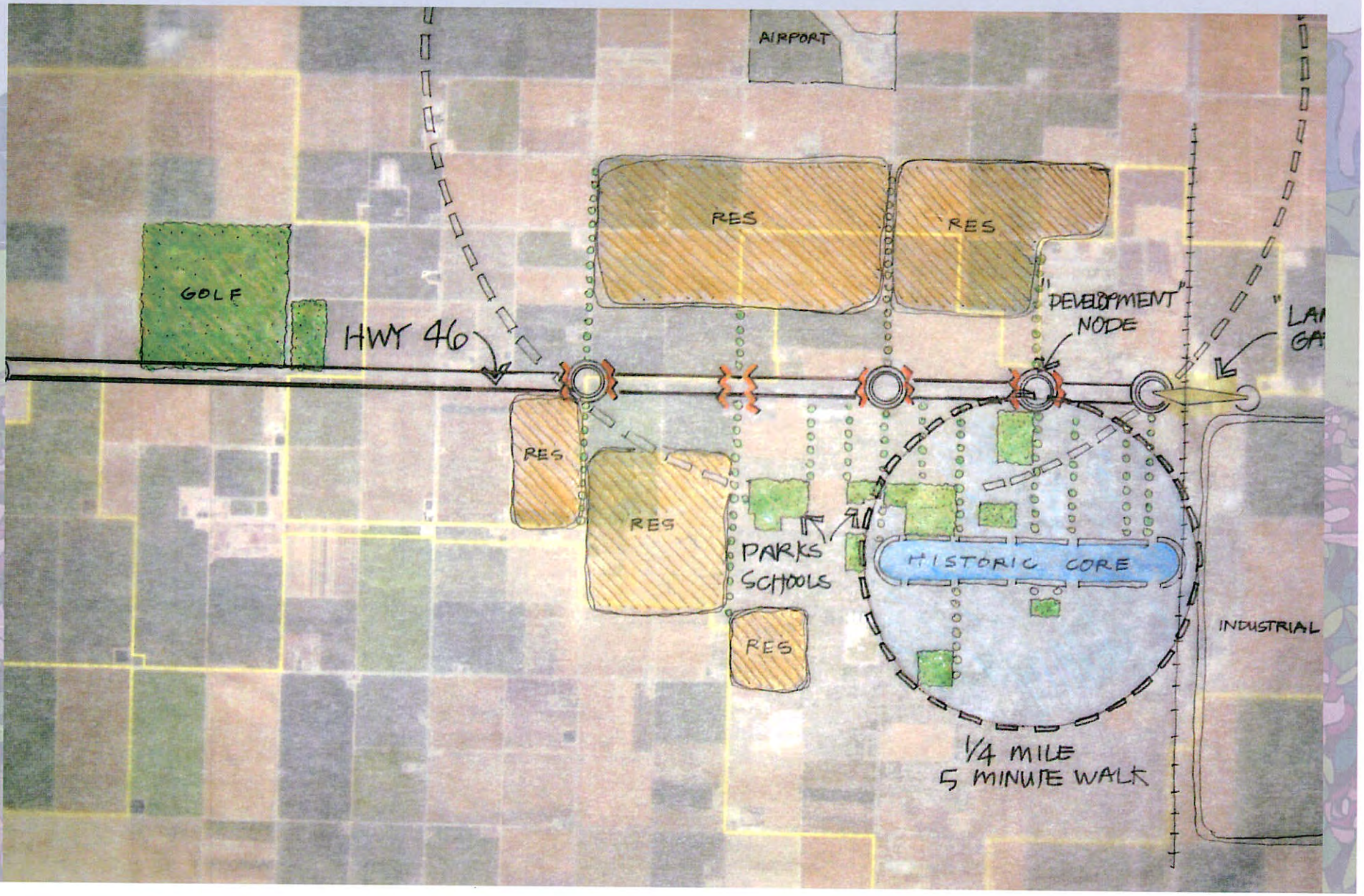
Blade signs

Planter box

Canopies

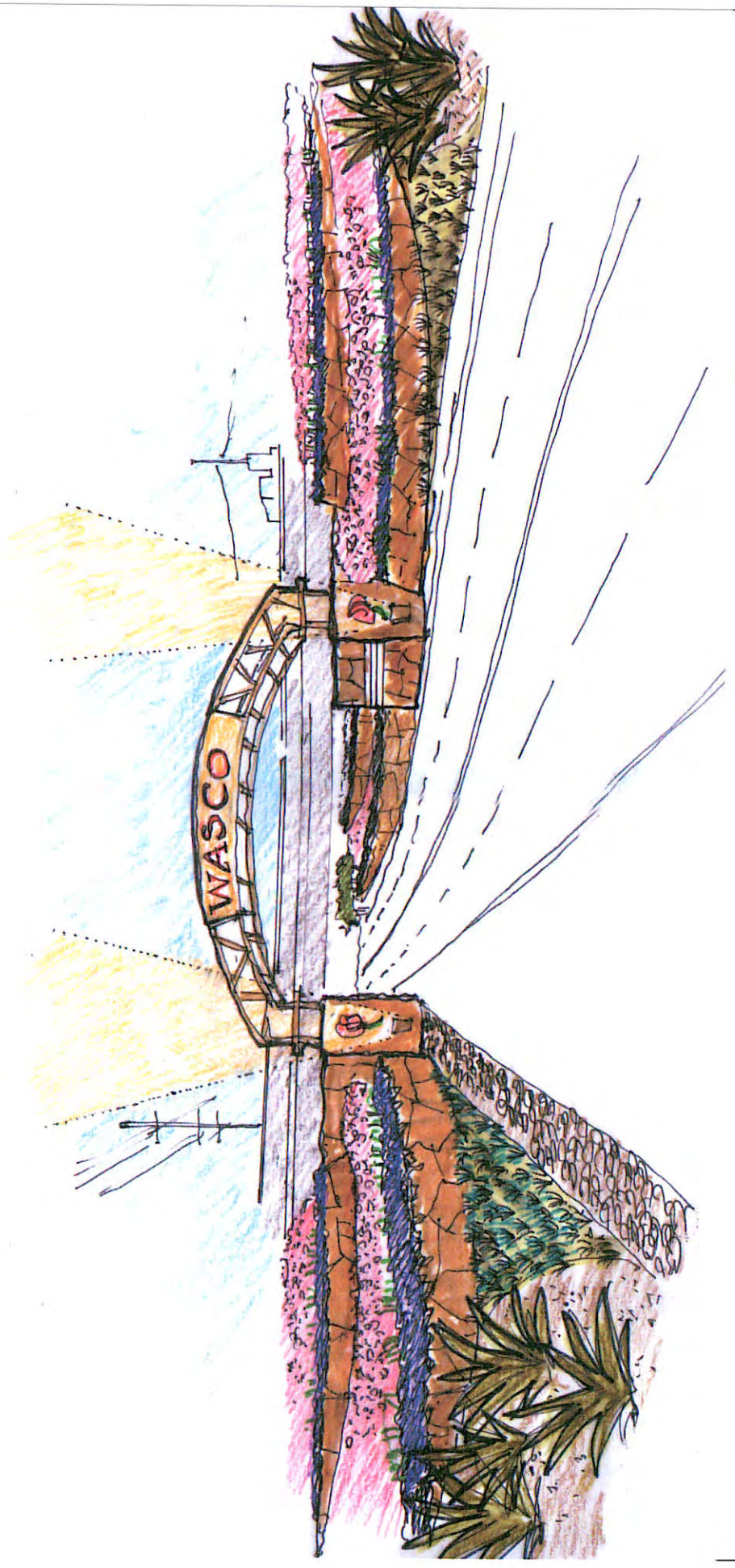
Projected window sill

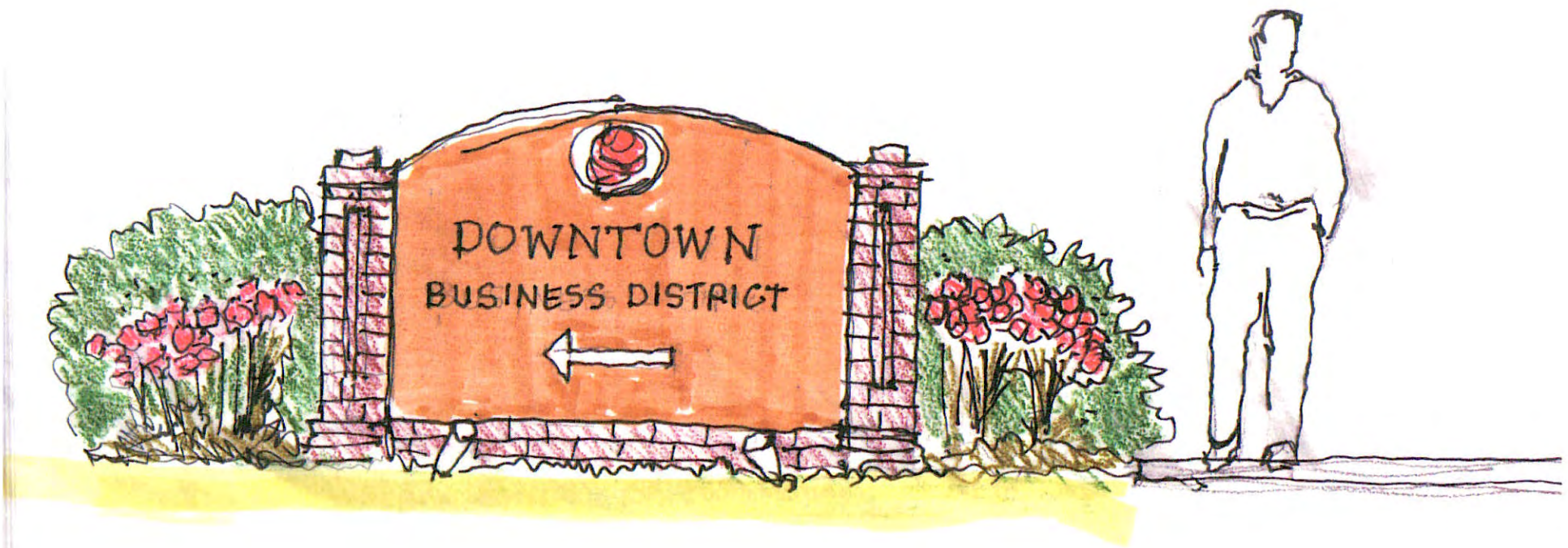
Re-imagining the Corridor



Landscape Recommendations for Hwy 46 Corridor

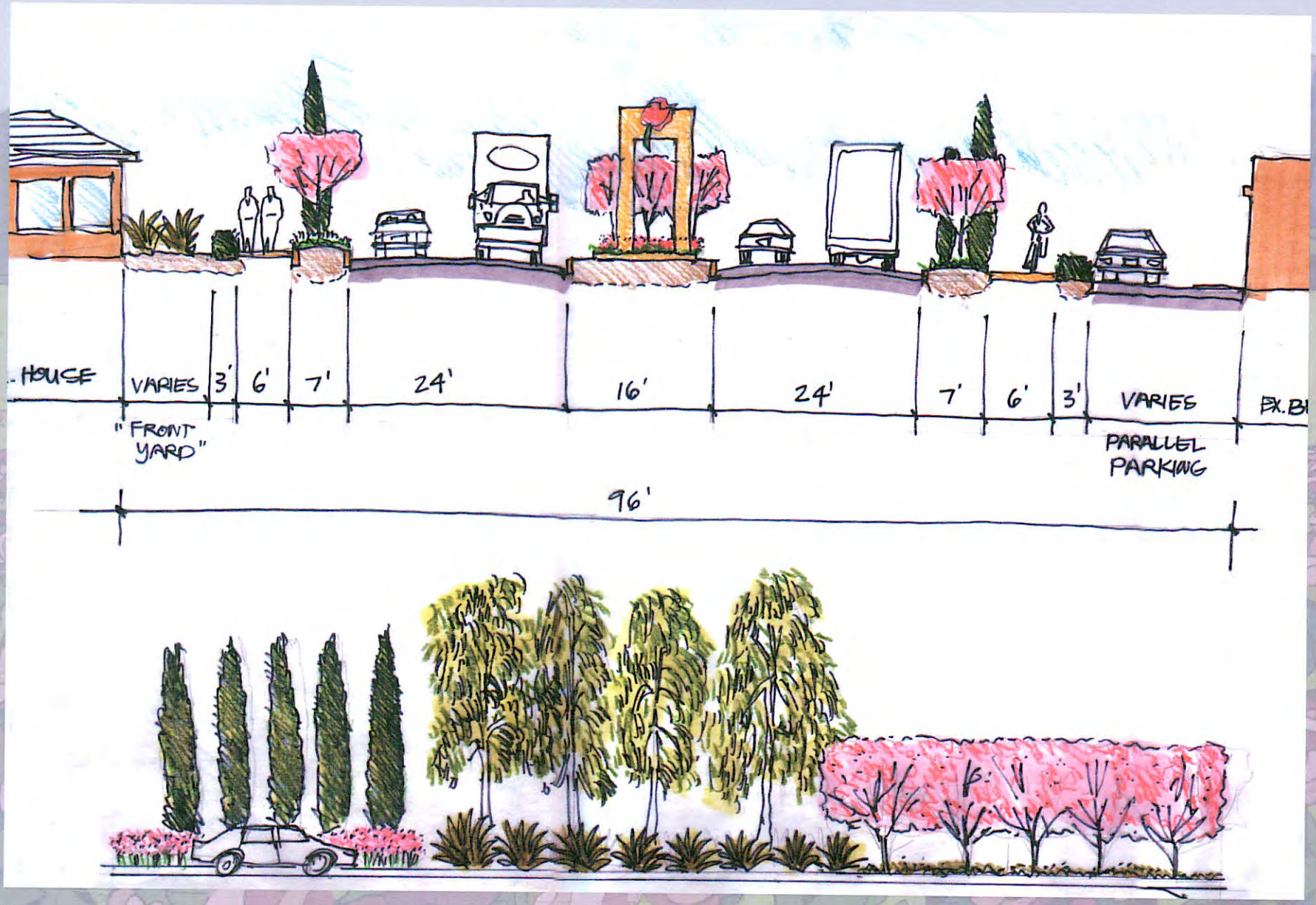
1. Improve gateway image at entry points
   - Railroad trestle from the east
   - Monument gateways from the west
   - Into Downtown


WASCO


DOWNTOWN
BUSINESS DISTRICT

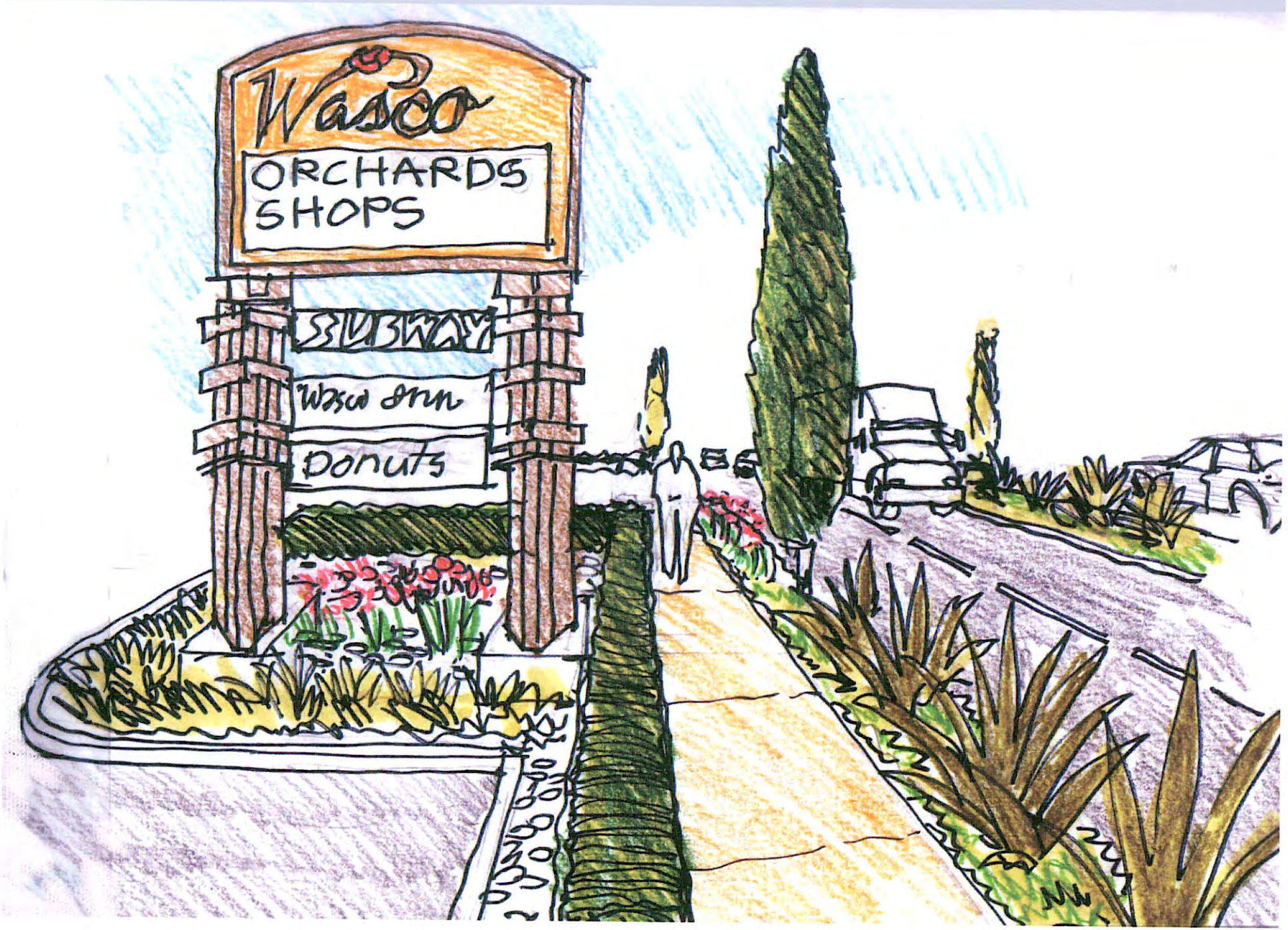
Landscape Recommendations for Hwy 46 Corridor

2. Create a landscape signature that draws from the agricultural tradition
   - Formal arrangements of plant materials in mass plantings


HOUSE
VARIES
3'
6'
7'
24'
16'
24'
7'
6'
3'
VARIES
EX. BI
"FRONT YARD"
PARALLEL PARKING
96'

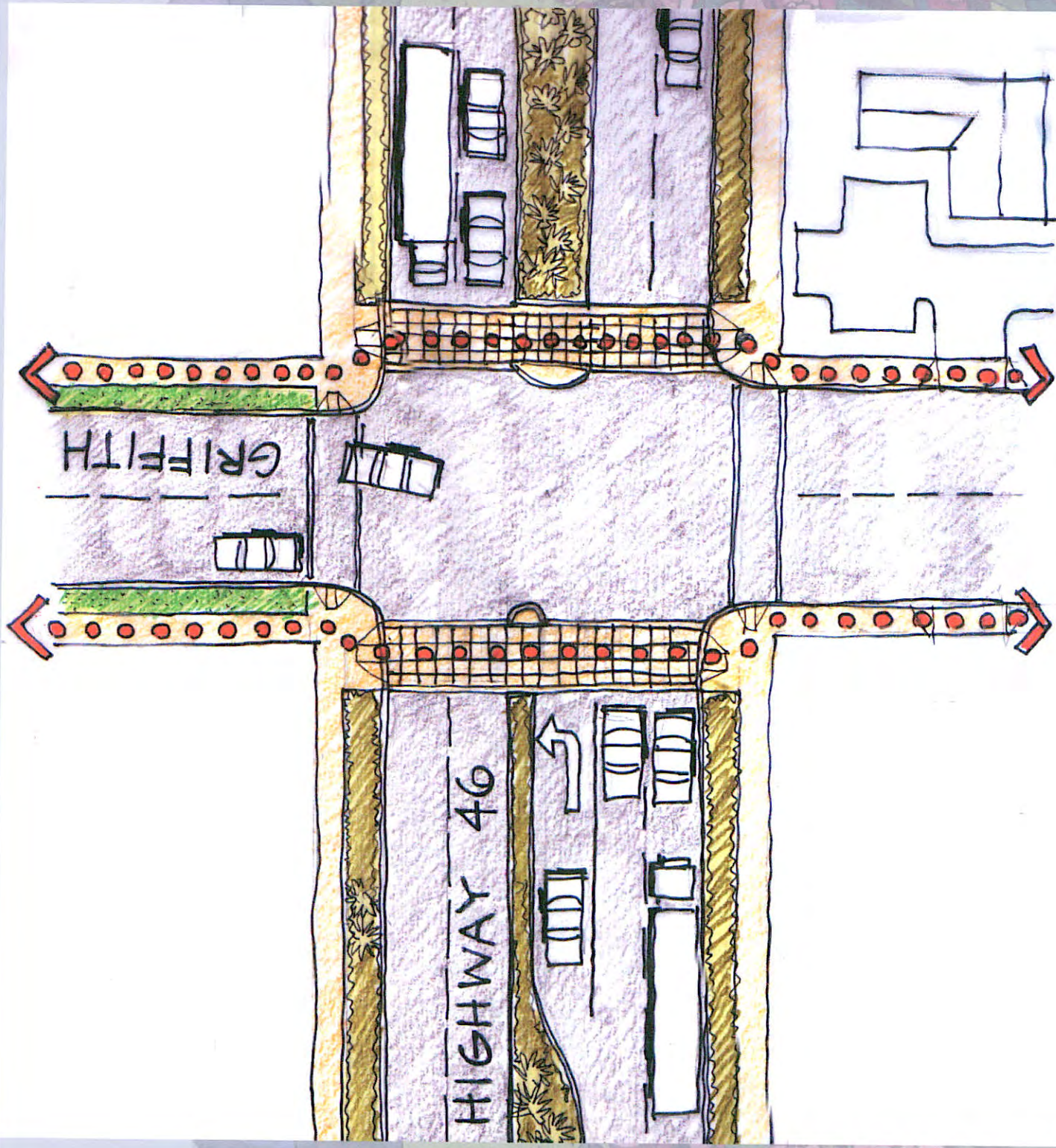
Landscape Recommendations for Hwy 46 Corridor

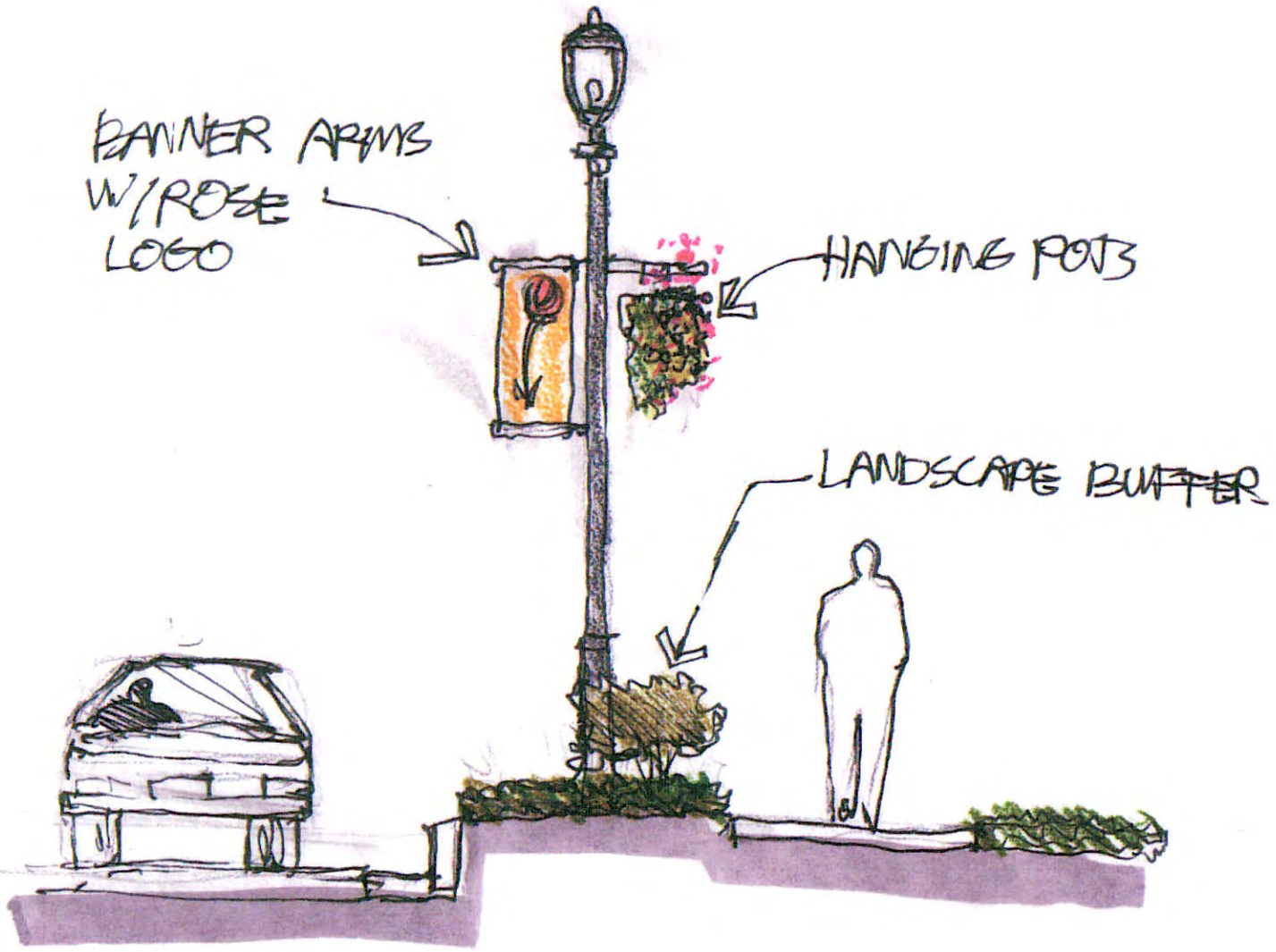
3. Improve 'front yards' of existing businesses
   - Create a landscaped edge


Wasco
ORCHARDS
SHOPS
SUBWAY
Wasco Inn
Donuts

Landscape Recommendations for Hwy 46 Corridor

4. Better connect emerging neighborhoods to downtown
   - Intersection design for pedestrians
     * Concrete crossings & safe harbors
     * Pedestrian scaled lighting
     * Signage

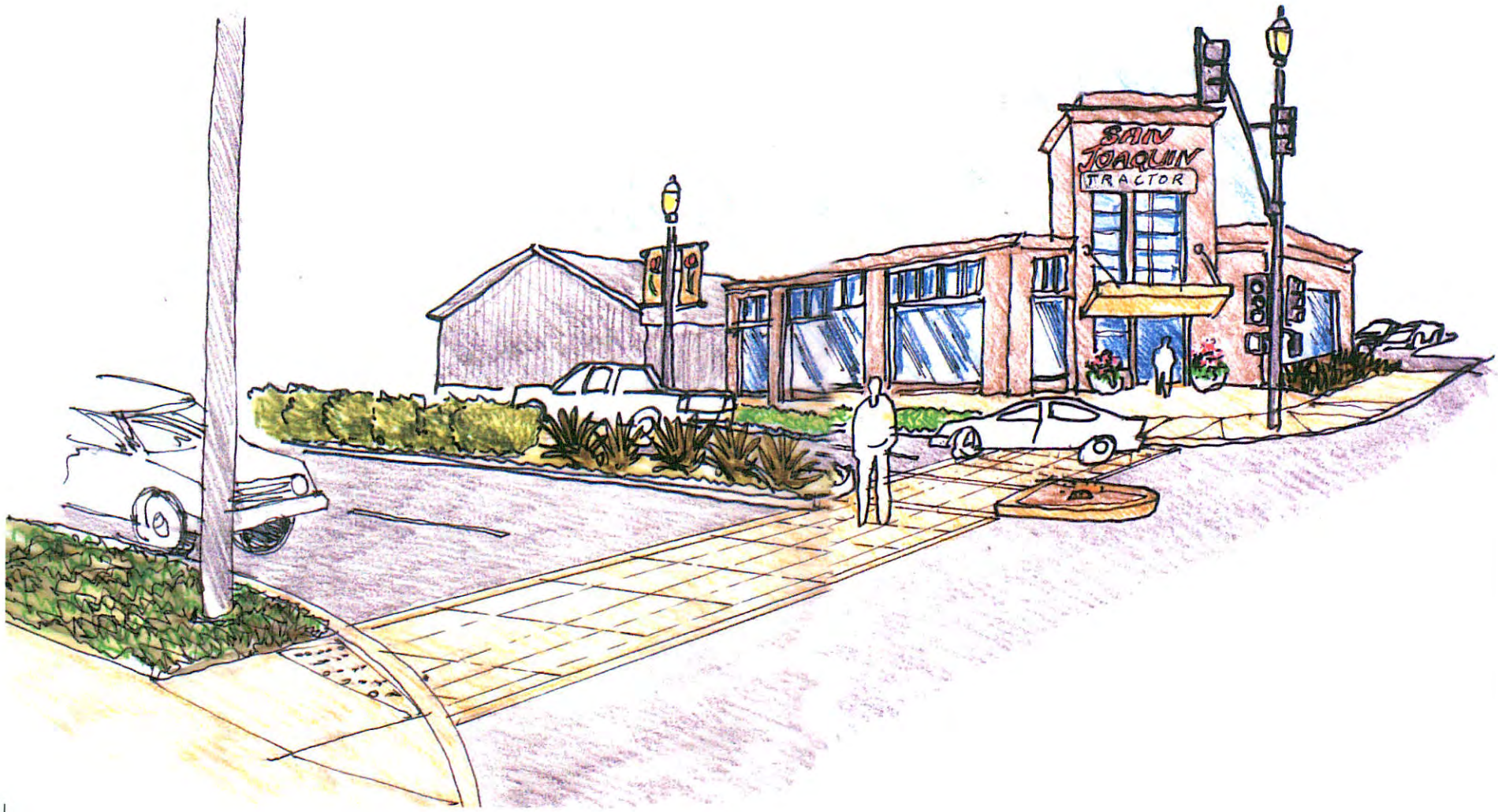

GRIFFITH
HIGHWAY 46


BANNER ARMS
W/ROSE
LOGO
HANGING POTS
LANDSCAPE BUFFER

Landscape Recommendations for Hwy 46 Corridor

5. Redevelop nodes at key intersections to 'hold' corners
   - Build to the edge
   - Easy to find & access parking 'pockets' at sides & rear of development

     * Rt. 43 Intersection
     * Griffith Intersection
     * Palm Intersection - - already moving in that direction
     * Magnolia - - as growth dictates


SAN
JOAQUIN
TRACTOR

Next Steps: US

- Create the plan based on tonight's presentation
- ETA: the first of May
- We would love to come back and help you with a focused effort for downtown
- We are always available for support through phone, fax & e-mail…don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions, etc.

Next Steps: YOU

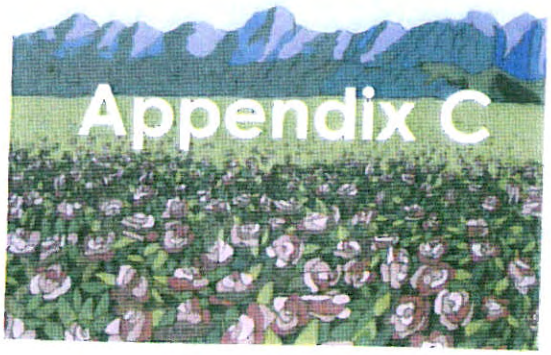
- Continue the conversation to keep project moving forward - - with each other & with Caltrans
- Begin the grant writing process to get technical assistance for downtown
- Begin process to update codes
- Assemble a Citizens' Advisory Committee to participate in the Hwy. 47 reconstruction process - - ED Committee?
- Target & assemble 'tipping point' projects tot give you a quick 'win' to help leverage additional funding & investment - - RV Park??

RV PARK OPPORTUNITY
28 UNITS ON 3.8± AC.

Questions?
Comments?

Wasco…the City with the Rosy Future!

Thanks for sharing your community with us!



Principles for Reinventing Highway Commercial Corridors

Appendix C

PRINCIPLES FOR REINVENTING HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

"Current patterns of growth and development along America's highway corridors/suburban strips are unsustainable. The aggregate effects of commercial developments that geographically close, but not physically integrated, are becoming untenable. As problems increase along highway corridors, and as consumer spending patterns change, the future of strip development is becoming less certain."

- - Urban Land Institute

The typical highway commercial corridor consists of block after block, and often mile after mile, of repetitive, indistinguishable retail landscape. As a rule, the architecture is nondescript, with little concern for design features or cohesiveness, and it is at a scale to be appreciated at automobile speeds. The strip reflects little, if anything, about the history or culture of the place where it is located. There is little hierarchy of space, land use, or form; and rarely is there a sense of place or community to which people are drawn as more than consumers. The strip typically became an elongated one-dimensional environment, often looking much the same, no matter where it is located.

This is not the new face of retailing. The new face of retailing is beginning to change the *how*, *when*, *where* and *why* of shopping. And these changes are having profound implications on commercial development along highway corridors. A common thread running through the wide variety of today's shopping options reflects an increasing connectivity to other aspects of daily life, including: a mix of activities; a stronger sense of community; and more attention to the environment, the experience and the enjoyment of shopping. These characteristics are in tune with what today's consumers are looking for, but often not finding along most highway commercial strips.

While these strip shopping areas often represent a high degree of economic vitality, they are often low on the list of priorities for revitalization, as in the past there has been little understanding as to how they are evolving, the forces that are affecting them, the shapes they are taking, and the roles they will play in the future – leaving their fates to the marketplace with few models of how future growth should be channeled and coordinated to make communities more livable.

In an often overbuilt market that is made up of sophisticated shoppers, the competitive position of highway commercial corridors are in danger unless a new model is employed that redevelops these 'islands' into more cohesive shopping districts - - reflecting the more mature nature of the communities that surround them.

According to the Urban Land Institute, there are ten principles for reinventing highway commercial shopping strips. They include:

1. Ignite Leadership & Nurture Partnership

a. Reach consensus, with the active participation of the public and private stakeholders on the community's vision of what the strip should become.

b. Participate in the development and redevelopment of the strip consistent with the community's vision.

c. Acquire, assemble, and parcel out land to permit new forms of infill development.

d. Coordinate and participate in real estate development and infrastructure financing.

e. Coordinate actions of public agencies responsible for services.

f. Stay on top of traffic issues and manage parking efficiently so that its presence does not dominate the landscape.

g. Keep a steady hand on security matters. Monitor and correct security issues as they arise.

h. Coordinate the dissemination of market, economic, social, and demographic and traffic data and information (included in this report) to prospective investors, developers, retailers, consumers and public agencies.

i. Handle marketing and promotion.

It's time to rethink and redesign the traditional commercial development along highway corridors. The goal is to move from an auto-oriented environment to a more inviting multi-modal one.

2. Anticipate Evolution

a. Be ready to respond to changing consumer preferences. For example, there is a growing interest in street-front retail in more pedestrian friendly environments.

b. Adapt the strip to emerging lifestyles. Today, mixing residential and retail uses in well-designed environments is another way traditional highway commercial strips are changing.

c. Provide a sense of community by developing public gathering places, a more livable environment, and more convenience in daily life.

d. Make new amenities available along the strip such as parks, recreational opportunities, etc.

e. As new community trends emerge, adopt measures to prevent strip development from becoming obsolete with out-of-date retail concepts and products.

3. Know the Market

a. Identify the strip's trade area (included in this report).

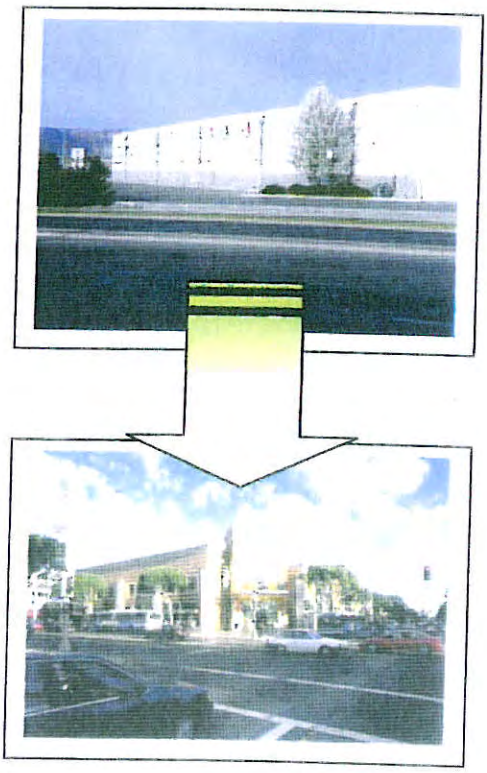
b. Determine the specific market forces at work where the strip is located.

c. Determine a realistic assessment of where the strip fits into the overall retail continuum, i.e., its level of maturity in the marketplace relative to other retails destinations, and the amount and nature of the competition.

d. Determine the shopping patterns of the market and set reasonable expectation about how they are likely to evolve.

e. Build on the position that the strip holds in the regional hierarchy of retail locations, and be reasonable about what is economically feasible, which will change over time.

f. Understand the complex interplay between land values, densities, market demographics, access, demand for different types of retail offerings, and the level of competition in the strip's market area. In other words: know the market!



4. Prune Back Retail-Zoned Land

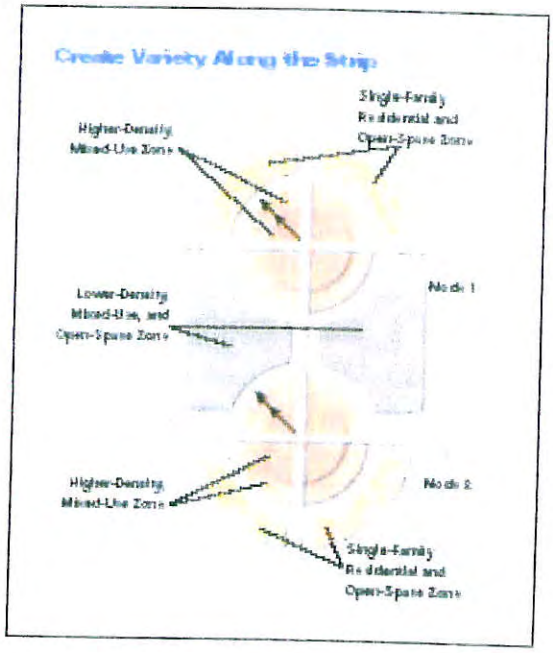
a. Limit the quantity of commercially zone land along highway corridors to give landowners and retailers the incentive and economic strength to maintain a high-quality environment.

b. Rezone excess commercial land in older strips to encourage reinvestment and improve the quality of existing retail properties.

c. Scale retail-zoned land to reflect a realistic assessment of the size, strength, and character of the market.

d. Stimulate infill, new forms of mixed-used and pedestrian-oriented development on remaining retail-zoned land.

e. Limit the extension of infrastructure to prevent sprawl and congestion, as long as the



infrastructure is underutilized.

f. Structure zoning in mature strips to encourage denser forms of development that can be reached by multiple modes.

g. Reserve some of the previously zoned retail land for housing, office, recreational facilities and open space.

h. Reduce opportunities for and resist predatory behavior on the part of competing big-box retailers and centers.

5. Establish Nodes of Development

a. Use key intersections to create concentrations of development that are unique points of reference; nodes of more intense activity; and places that are friendly, attractive and walkable.

b. Plan and zone higher densities in these nodes to facilitate a more vertical use of space to help achieve a more lively, safe and attractive streetscape.

c. Use a range of public development tools such as transfer of development rights, business improvement districts, tax abatement policies, urban design guidelines, vertical zoning, and streamlined approval process to help achieve nodal development at identified locations.

6. Tame the Traffic

a. Consolidate driveways and interconnect parcels so that automobile and pedestrian access can co-exist. Halving the number of access points will result in about a 30% drop in the accident rate.

b. Use supporting road systems and frontage roads to provide opportunities for parallel movement along the corridor.

c. Design intersections and access points to simplify and coordinate signal sequences and to help minimize congestion.

d. Install innovative turning solutions to accommodate left turns and u-turns to alleviate clogged intersections.

e. Design and manage the commercial strip to limit vehicular and pedestrian conflicts.

f. Size prime parking lots and structures for reasonable demand; provide for peak parking needs in overflow areas.

g. Encourage and plan for shared parking among adjacent uses.

When there is no on street parking, pedestrians should be buffered from moving traffic. Landscaping the area between the sidewalk and roadway creates a safer and more attractive environment for both the pedestrian and driver.

h. Consider the creation of a parking district to bring multiple facilities under common management and create greater efficiencies.
i. Look for alternative parking and building configurations that provide convenience and avoid visual blight.
j. Create parking in a carefully designed landscape.

7. Create the Place

a. Create attractive walkways and continuous street-front experiences to maximize the quality of the pedestrian environment and afford opportunities to increase retail spending.
b. Configure sidewalks so people feel safe and comfortable; make sidewalks wide, appealing, buffered, and shady.
c. Provide a hierarchy of attractive lighting for both pedestrians and automobiles (no sodium vapor lights, please!).
d. Install high quality street furnishing to reinforce the st5rong image and comfort of the place.
e. Carefully place strong landscape elements, including mature trees, to enhance the place, but not detract from the retail sight lines.
f. Vary roof forms and façade designs; retailers depend on diverse, appropriately scaled and customized storefronts.
g. Design attractive corners and gateways at intersection nodes.
h. Ensure that getting to and from the location is enjoyable and efficient; entry routes are as important as the place itself.
i. Surround big boxes with 'sleeves' of retail and services uses to help minimize blank walls and dead spaces.
j. Incorporate a variety of urban residential uses in the form of live/work spaces, apartments above stores, and hotels to ensure round-the-clock activity.

8. Diversify the Character

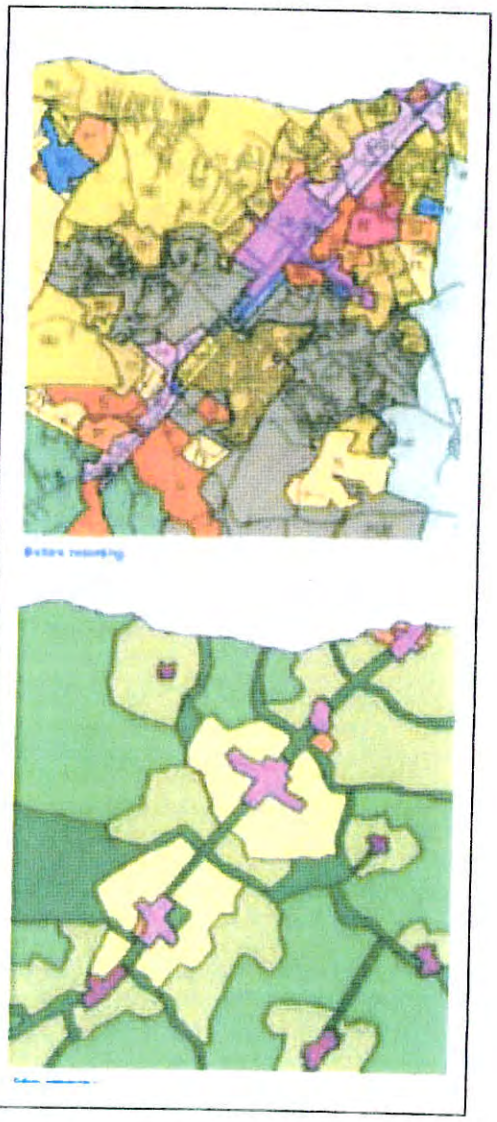
a. Arrange diverse land uses in ways that encourage walking and discourage driving for short trips and errands.
b. Plan for different types of development along the strip ranging from traditional, low-density uses to denser and more urban uses at designated nodes.

9. Eradicate the Ugliness

a. Strive for design excellence, in higher quality streetscape and building design that includes retail friendly storefronts.
b. Develop enforceable design standards designating streetscape elements and furnishings.
c. Landscape the corridor with mature trees, plants in the median, and lush greet areas along its edges.

This is a great example of a community that developed, and implemented, a higher standard for its highway commercial development.

d. Work with the local utility and cable companies to underground power lines or move them to the back of the development.
e. Be creative with parking by placing it in courtyards, behind buildings and in shared arrangements to help alleviate the blight of endless parking lots.
f. Design and landscape parking areas so that cars are in a park rather than trees are in a parking lot.
g. Plan for a pedestrian-friendly environment with appropriate signalization and crosswalks that support pedestrian movement.
h. Encourage building development that enclose and frame the corners of major intersections in order to define and identify the area.

10. Put Your Money & Regulations Where Your Policy Is

a. Integrate public improvements into the corridor's redevelopment strategy.
b. Design zoning regulations that facilitate private developers in implementing the public's strategy. Zoning must clearly be linked to the public's implementation plan, including effective development standards, as well as transfer of development rights in mature commercial strips.
c. Create comprehensive development standards to accompany new zoning regulations. They should deal with landscaping, signage, architectural quality, building setback, pedestrian linkages, shared parking and other details so crucial to the overall health of the corridor.
d. Provide regulatory options that facilitate parceling and land assembly to accommodate recommended changes in land use configurations. This may involve changes that eliminate or reduce setbacks to provide street front development at nodes, or combining separately owned parcels to create new development options.
e. Create an aggressive nuisance abatement program to help eliminate problems in achieving the kind of environment the community envisions for the corridor. Dilapidated or abandoned buildings, social problems, and incompatible land uses and activities are some of the more common problems affecting suburban strip development.
f. Adopt zoning regulations that set a minimum parcel size so help constrain curb cuts and encourage more coordinated development and fewer stand-alone stores.
g. Prevent 'dead' uses such as mini-storage facilities along the corridor.