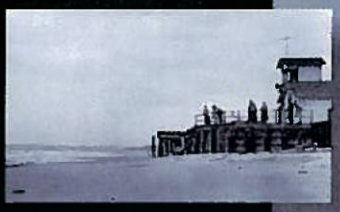
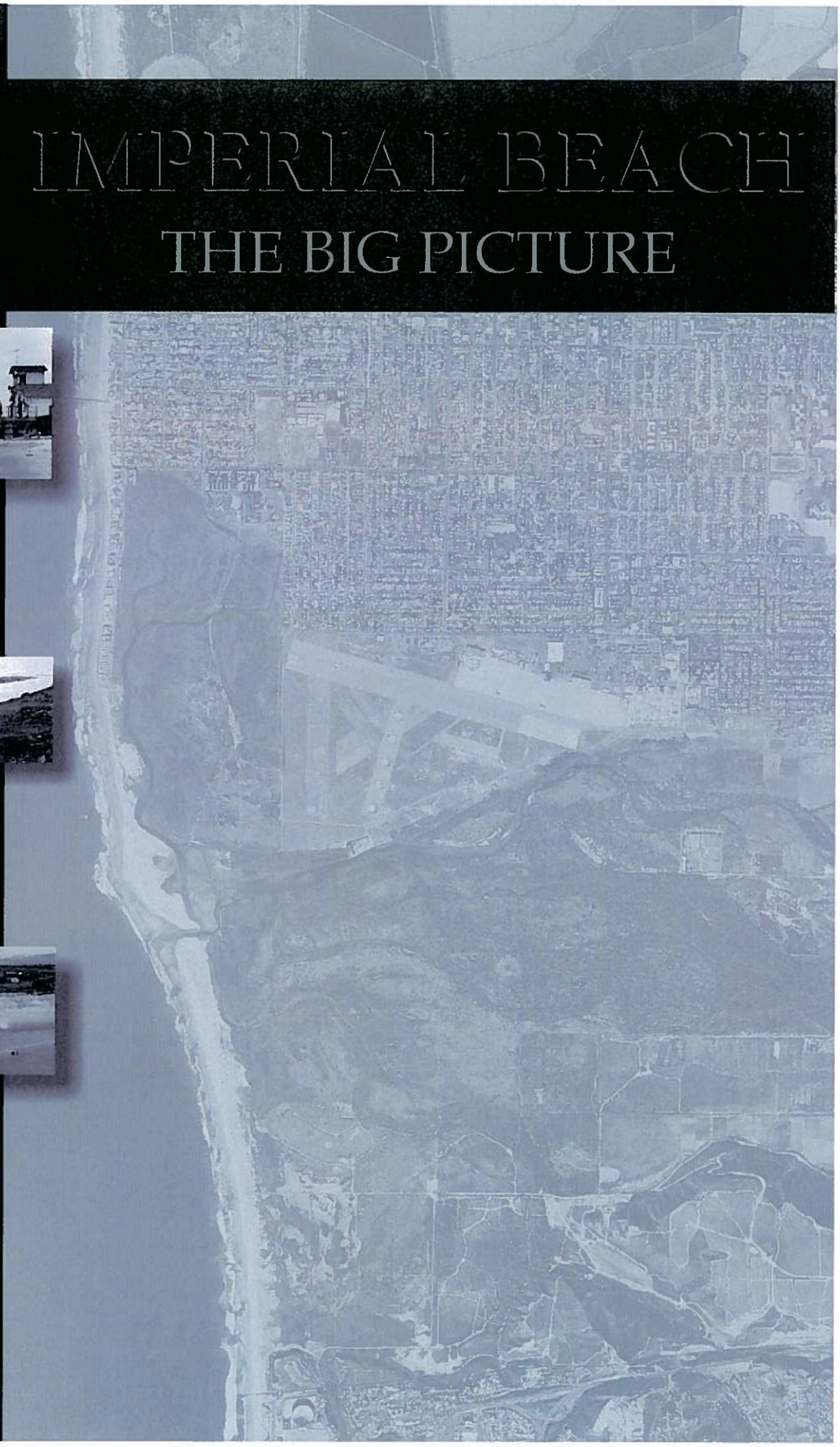
IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE





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Prepared For:

The City of Imperial Beach

October 4, 2000

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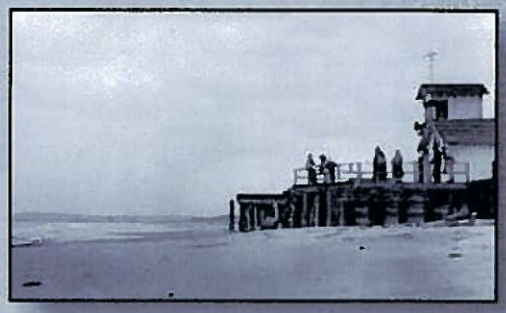
1 Introduction

In May of this year, the City Council of the City of Imperial Beach authorized the retention of a consultant to solicit input from citizens and community members of the City of Imperial Beach regarding their "visions" for the future of Imperial Beach. This effort, "Imperial Beach - The Big Picture", culminated in the drafting of this document (the Plan) and the creation of two illustrative graphics that outline the Plan.



After distributing and tabulating a questionnaire designed to get the community thinking about the future improvement of their city, a series of four workshops was conducted over the summer to gather the necessary input to identify "The Big Picture." Generally speaking, participants of the workshops were intent on maintaining the "small-town, casual atmosphere" that the City currently exhibits and as identified in the General Plan. However, the participants were outspoken, and in general agreement, on several specific areas of Imperial Beach that were in need of improvement. While participants were able to clearly identify the areas and issues that they felt needed attention, as well as ideas they felt should be implemented, they stopped short of identifying or proposing specific projects that should occupy specific sites. This was evidenced by the fact that the workshops, designed to encourage the participants to engage in physical planning exercises and to make recommendations on specific project ideas, generally became open dialogues on problem areas and issues facing the City. When asked to "put pen to paper" there seemed to be a reluctance to actually make project-specific recommendations for the areas that were identified as needing attention.

Nonetheless, enough information was gathered - and enough consensuses reached - to identify several "Target Areas" and Issues that the workshop participants felt were most important to establishing the "Big Picture" of Imperial Beach.

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2 Methodology

"Imperial Beach-The Big Picture" began with the gathering and research of several documents and materials pertaining to the City of Imperial Beach. This research included the review of the following documents:

- City of Imperial Beach General Plan & Coastal Plan - October 19, 1994
- Imperial Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy - January 1999
- City of Imperial Beach 1998 Resident Survey
- City of Imperial Beach Survey of Homebuyers - January 1998
- Portions of the City of Imperial Beach Zoning Code
- Union Tribune Community Dialogue Notes - March 15, 2000

Three workshops were held in the City Hall Community Room.

Once this information was reviewed, a questionnaire was developed and distributed by mail to households and businesses throughout the City of Imperial Beach. The results were then presented to the community at a series of workshops held during the summer. Additional questionnaires were also distributed at the first two workshops and their results added for review at each subsequent workshop.

The workshops were held on Tuesday evenings to allow those who work during the day to attend. Fliers were mailed to residents and businesses throughout the City and a copy of the flier printed in the Eagle & Times for each workshop in order to maximize attendance. Each workshop was generally organized in the same format. The first two workshops, in fact, were exactly the same as they targeted two distinct "groups"within the community. The first workshop - the "Community Partners" Workshop - focused on gathering input from community organizations and interest group representatives that have been actively involved in issues and projects within the City. The second workshop - the "Community/Citizens" Workshop - targeted the general community and included residents and business owners. The third and fourth workshops - the "Consensus - Building" Workshop and the "Final Plan" Workshop - attempted to come to agreement on an overall vision or "Big Picture" for the City of Imperial Beach.

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At each workshop, the information gathered from the questionnaires, as well as from the preceding workshop, was presented. This information was presented along with a "photographic trip" through Imperial Beach designed to get the workshop participants thinking about, and to illicit, both positive images of the City as well as areas in need of improvement. Participants were encouraged to respond to the information as well as to the visual images to provide additional input as the information was presented.

Workshop participants were given a "photographic trip" through the City.

It should be noted that these ideas and this Plan represent the input and efforts of a relatively small segment of the total population of the City of Imperial Beach. However, it also represents the ideas and concerns of a segment of the community that is extremely passionate about and very interested in the future of their City. While one might argue, therefore, that this plan may not necessarily reflect the feelings and desires of the entire community, it is equally important to understand that, due to the overwhelming consensus reached on most of the identified "Target Areas" that were discussed, as well as the ways in which they may be improved, this document at the very least presents one widely-supported vision for the future improvement and "Big Picture" of the City of Imperial Beach.

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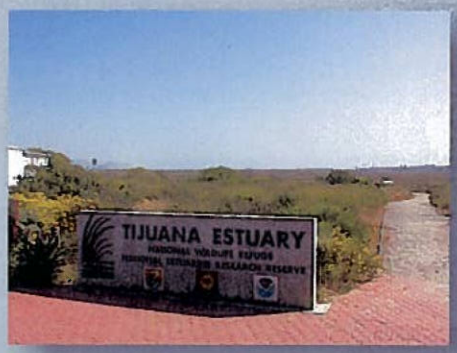
3 Questionnaire Results

The Questionnaire was sent to households and businesses throughout the City. Additional questionnaires were distributed at each workshop and the results were tabulated. The most common answers to each question were as follows:

What would you say are the best attributes and/or areas of Imperial Beach?

1. The Tijuana Estuary/Wildlife Refuges
2. Seacoast Drive/Pier Plaza area
3. The beach and the bay
4. The "small town" casual atmosphere



What areas of Imperial Beach, if any, would you say need improvement?

1. Palm Avenue/9th Street and Palm
2. Seacoast, Seacoast Drive and South Seacoast
3. Inland neighborhoods
4. Tourism, beach area hotels

What parts or land areas of the City do you perceive as having or potentially having their own identity, theme or label?

1. The waterfront, Seacoast Drive and beach area
2. The Estuary
3. The Bayview area
4. Palm Avenue Business District (SR-75), "Old Palm" Avenue

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3 Questionnaire Results

Please identify land areas of the City that you think represent future opportunities for change?

1. Corner of 9th and Palm/Palm Avenue/SR-75
2. Bayfront property, northside/Bayside and Bayview areas
3. Beach area and Seacoast Boulevard
4. Ream Field and Pond 20

How do you see these land areas changing in the future?

1. New commercial and retail development/redevelopment along Palm Avenue/SR-75 and other areas
2. More people and more tourism
3. New single-family home construction and better tenants
4. More active Code Enforcement and more infrastructure improvements (i.e., streets, sidewalks, etc.)

Are there any areas of Imperial Beach that are now or should be a focus for community activities?

1. Pier Plaza
2. Veteran's Park
3. The Estuary/Visitors Center (eco-tourism activities)
4. Sports Park Complex

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3 Questionnaire Results

If you could change <u>one</u> building, land area, or location in the City, what would it be? How might you change it?

1. Seacoast area and Seacoast Drive
2. 9th and Palm and Palm Avenue/SR-75
3 .Seacoast Inn (renovate it or tear it down a build a new hotel)
4. Wally's IGA and business center (redevelop this area)

Do you have any ideas regarding shaping or planning the future, no matter how wild, that you would like to see implemented?

1. Redevelop Ream Field and create a type of research and development industrial park
2. Build an identity sign at "Old Palm" like Gaslamp Quarter overhead sign, more public art, build a lifeguard museum
3. Build a new high school
4. Build a large shopping mall for everyone to use
5. Tear down Seacoast Inn and build a new hotel

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4 Major Objectives

In moving forward from the Questionnaire and through each workshop, it was important to establish a set of objectives under which the Plan would be developed. During the process, it became clear that one major objective stood out above the rest - maintaining the small-town, quiet, casual atmosphere of Imperial Beach. This objective, which is the theme of the Revised General Plan, was clearly identified as paramount throughout this planning process. However, as the workshops progressed, and the needs and desires of the community were expressed, it also became clear that, in order to realize those needs and desires, additional development would have to occur. The question then became: can a small-town atmosphere be maintained while simultaneously pursuing and experiencing economic development within the City? Generally, it was felt that, indeed, this could be achieved. However, it was also realized that to achieve some of the other identified objectives, some concessions would have to be made.

The objectives considered most important were:

- Maintain the small-town, quiet, casual atmosphere
- Create economic stability - "Sustainability"
- Increase tourism while avoiding over-crowding
- Pursue appropriate development opportunities
- Pursue all available funding mechanisms to support the City
- Resolve conflict between the overall objective of maintaining a "small town, quiet atmosphere" and the need/desire for new development: "Small Town" vs. Economic Stability/Economic Development

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5 Primary Target Areas

After identifying the major objectives around which the "Big Picture" of Imperial Beach should be developed, a consensus was also reached on a list of "Target Areas" and "Issues" that were most important to the participants of the workshops. These "Target Areas" were:

- Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor
- Seacoast Drive/Waterfront
- Eco-Tourism & Recreation
- Pond 20
- Ream Field
- Inland Neighborhoods
- "Old Palm" Avenue
- Border Field State Park
- 13th Street & Imperial Beach Boulevard
- Navy Antenna Site
- "Quality of Life" Issues

"The Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor was identified as a "Target Area" in need of improvement.

Seacoast Drive was also identified as an important "Target Area."

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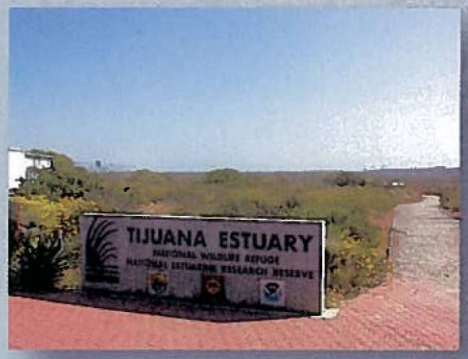
THE BIG PICTURE

5 Primary Target Areas

It should be noted that, while other areas of interest were identified, these particular areas and issues reflect the general consensus of the workshop participants and the questionnaire respondents. The first three Target Areas are listed and discussed based upon the attention given to them during this process, both in the Questionnaire and during the workshops. These areas clearly were identified as the areas most important to, and requiring most improvement for the future vision for Imperial Beach. While the Bayview area was identified often in the Questionnaire, it was generally discussed and categorized under other "Target Areas" such as Eco-Tourism and Inland Neighborhoods.



"Eco-Tourism" - including the Tijuana Estuary - was considered an important "Target Area" for the City.

As stated earlier in this Plan, discussions during the workshops often centered around concerns and issues rather than on specific projects and geographic areas of the City. For this reason, a list of commonly cited "Quality of Life Issues" was identified and incorporated into this Plan. It was felt that addressing these issues was equally, if not more, important to the future of Imperial Beach than improvement of the other Target Areas identified within this Plan.

Inland Neighborhoods were also widely discussed as a "Target Area."

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THE BIG PICTURE

6 Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor

The Vision: Palm Avenue as a neighborhood-friendly, active, beautifully landscaped, well-designed, and vibrant commercial corridor, supporting community residents and visitors alike while generating necessary property tax, sales tax and Business Improvement District revenues to support future City improvements.

Thrift business ...

During both the questionnaire and the workshop portions of this process, one area clearly stood out as that most in need of improvement - The Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor. Currently, this area contains out-dated strip malls, under-utilized and vacant buildings, and a number of thrift and bargain retail stores, one adult-oriented business and a few automotive uses. Generally it was felt that the area could benefit from redevelopment at key locations, particularly the corner of 9th Street and Palm Avenue, and the location of one or more national chain retail or grocery establishments. Its commercial zoning and character make this area perhaps Imperial Beach's best immediate opportunity to increase the City's property and sales tax base. Along with this, there was a desire to eliminate the bargain retail and thrift stores to establish this area as a destination shopping district adequate to serve Imperial Beach as well as other areas of the South Bay region. There was also a feeling that traffic along this State Route should be decreased so that first-time travelers along this major commercial corridor would have better opportunity to identify the tenants who choose to locate there.

... strip malls ...

... and a lack of major tenants characterize Palm Avenue.

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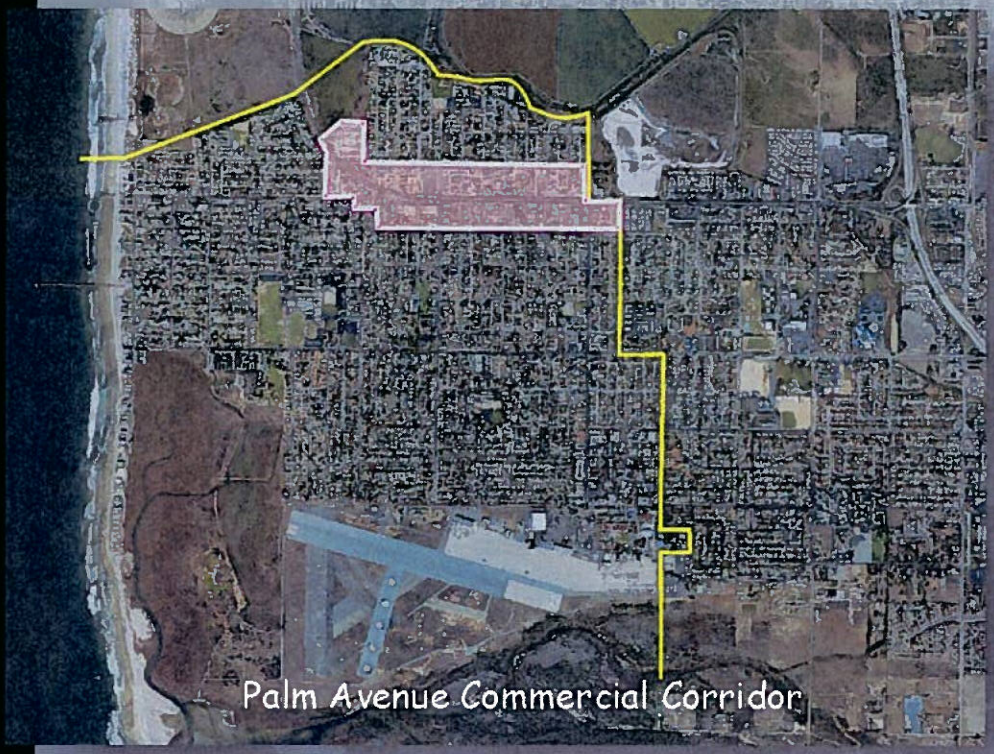
6 Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor



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6 Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor

The following represents the major goals identified for the Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor:

- Attract National chain or specialty Retailers and/or grocery store; eliminate thrift stores, adult-oriented businesses and tattoo parlors

National chain retailers and a grocery store ...

- Redevelop or renovate dilapidated and vacant structures/buildings (i.e., Wally's IGA)
- Initiate Commercial Façade Improvement Program
  Enhance public rights-of-way with improved sidewalks, landscaping, etc.
- Develop a type of entertainment/activity center (i.e., movie theaters, shopping plaza) to attract more visitors/shoppers
- Channel Business Improvement District (BID) funds to better serve the area
- Implement traffic-calming measures to decrease traffic speeds
- Consider zoning out fast food restaurants

... would greatly enhance Palm Avenue.

During the workshops, many questions were raised as to what, if anything was being done to address the areas of concern and issues that were being discussed. The participants were interested in what "The Reality" of the situation was. As part of the final workshop, therefore, a list of action items being undertaken for each geographic "Target Area" was presented.

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6 Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor

The "Reality" for the Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor is:

- Current exclusive negotiating right agreement with Sterling Development for project at 9th & Palm Ave.
- Cal Trans has expressed interest in "relinquishing" control of State Route 75 to the City of Imperial Beach and paying into a maintenance fund for the City to administer providing the City with significant and needed revenue and eliminating bureaucratic obstacles to its future improvement
- Paul Hobson Blue Wave Wall Public Art Piece to be installed in newly installed medians
- There is currently a temporary moratorium on any additional thrift stores and tattoo parlors
- Tentative Agreement on Pacific Bell Building for entry way mural

Negotiation Agreement with Sterling Development could result in redevelopment and more desirable tenants.

7 Seacoast Drive/ Waterfront

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The Vision: A quaint, casual pedestrian-oriented Waterfront District along an enhanced streetscape with widened sidewalks providing residents, visitors and tourists with recreation, shopping, and dining opportunities as well as hotel accommodations within well-designed, low-scale structures that illicit a common, ocean-front theme.

The Seacoast Inn was targeted for renovation or redevelopment.

While also identified as one of the best attributes of Imperial Beach, Seacoast Drive and the Waterfront area were widely described as one of the areas of Imperial Beach most needing improvement. Often cited as parts of the Seacoast Drive/Waterfront area needing such improvement were the Seacoast Inn, the vacant and dilapidated structures on the east side of Seacoast Drive and the lack of commercial and retail activity along this important stretch of Imperial Beach.

The east side of Seacoast Drive was also identified as needing improvement.

7 Seacoast Drive/ Waterfront

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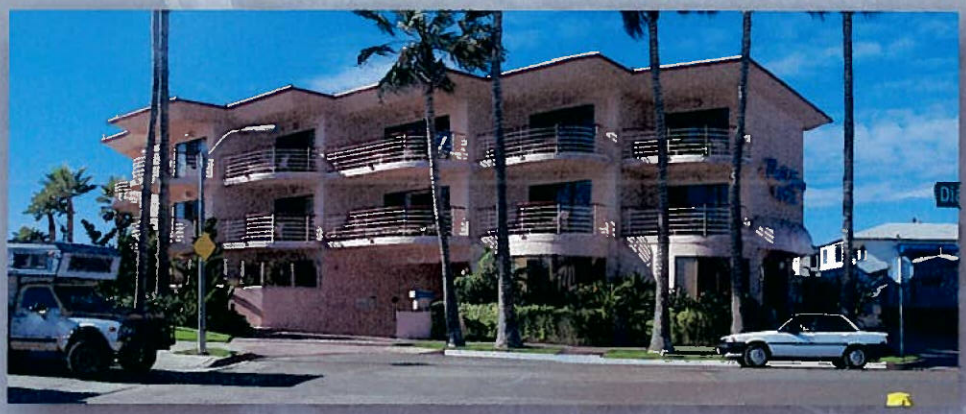
The Reality is:

- Seacoast LandscapeDesign Guidelines completed
- Palm Ave. Street End with 'Spirit of IB' art to be considered for permits in October
- Carnation street end project to be considered for permits by the end of the year
- Palm and Seacoast parking lot contract awarded with construction to begin in October
- The owner of the Seacoast Inn is interested in either refurbishing the existing hotel or redeveloping the site as a new hotel. However, the renovation proposals have been table
- Inclusion of area (without eminent domain) in Redevelopment Project Area has been tabled
- SANDAG sand replenishment scheduled for Spring 2001-120,000 180,000 cubic yards of sand
- City has received preliminary project criteria approval for Army Corps Sand Replenishment which would bring 2.3 million cubic yards of sand to the beaches (timeline/final approval indefinite)
- Continuing lobbying effort for Secondary Sewer treatment and comprehensive Border/Sewer Master Plan



The owner of the Seacoast Inn has expressed an interest in redeveloping his property.

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The Vision: Imperial Beach as a premier destination for eco-tourism - and tourism in general - providing recreation, amenities and activities for tourists and visitors as well as the City's residents.

Perhaps the most commonly noted attribute of the City of Imperial Beach was its outstanding natural resources in the Tijuana River National Estuarine Reserve (Tijuana Estuary), the South San Diego Bay Reserve and the recreation opportunities that exist in and around those resources. The community takes great pride in the existing and potential "eco-tourism" that has and can be developed within and around the City of Imperial Beach. The Bayshore Bikeway which now skirts South San Diego Bay and is currently planned for expansion, is an important feature of the City of Imperial Beach that should be expanded throughout the City. Also identified as areas both in need of further improvement and as desirable amenities were the parks and recreational facilities. It was felt that the City's youth could benefit by exploring the possibility of utilizing existing schools' recreational facilities and other park space as joint-use public parks and recreational areas on a year-round basis. Many people believed that a park, or a tourist-related use, along the Bayshore Bikeway would be a great asset to the Bayview area. The Public Works Yard, if relocated, could provide such an opportunity.

"Eco-Tourism" opportunities should be expanded upon.

Schools and parks could provide joint-use recreational opportunities.

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THE BIG PICTURE

8 Eco-Tourism and Recreation

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THE BIG PICTURE

8 Eco-Tourism and Recreation

The goals for developing additional Eco-Tourism and Recreational opportunities within Imperial Beach are:

- Promote Imperial Beach as the premier destination for eco-tourism in San Diego County
- Develop a comprehensive program to utilize school facilities and other park space as joint-use recreational facilities year-round
- Promote and expand the Bayshore Bikeway throughout the City to connect all open space and recreation areas
- Encourage tourist-related uses in the Bayview area (i.e., new hotels, bed and breakfast, bike paths, etc.)
- Relocate the City's Public Works Yard to Ream Field and develop the site for tourist/recreational use such as a new park and a more defined "green belt" along bayfront
- Develop a shuttle/transportation system for better access to beach and refuge areas, the Estuary and to Border Field State Park
- Pursue sand replenishment/beachfront erosion prevention efforts

Relocation of the Public Works Yard could result in development of an open space "green belt" along the bay.

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8 Eco-Tourism and Recreation

The Reality is:

- Rainbow bikeway spur to strand, funded, under environmental review
- Bayshore bikeway planned for future expansion including its extension through the salt ponds, over levee
- South Bay Refuge undergoing public review/participation process to formulate management plan
- Carnation 1½-acre open space/park area developing ground lease with YMCA, for undetermined use
- Assessing Oneonta school site as possible joint/school park site - Received state grant of $90,000 for Sports Park improvements including t-ball, bathroom and gym improvements
- Working on music "jam" room in gym facility
- SANDAG is working on a County-wide sand replenishment project that will assist Imperial Beach with its sand replenishment efforts
- City has received preliminary project criteria approval for Army Corps Sand Replenishment which would bring 2.3 million cubic yards of sand to the beaches (timeline/final approval indefinite)

The Bayshore Bikeway is planned for future expansion.

9 Pond 20

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THE BIG PICTURE

The Vision: Along with preserved and enhanced open space and extension of the Bayshore Bikeway, the development of a well-designed, community-serving commercial, recreation and entertainment facility to support the City's service and economic needs.

While not located within the City limits of the City of Imperial Beach, Pond 20 represents perhaps the best development opportunity for the City of Imperial Beach at the present time. Compiling approximately 95 acres (approximately 30 of which is believed to be developable), this salt pond is the subject of an existing Memorandum of Understanding between the San Diego Unified Port District and the Cities of Imperial Beach and San Diego.

9 Pond 20

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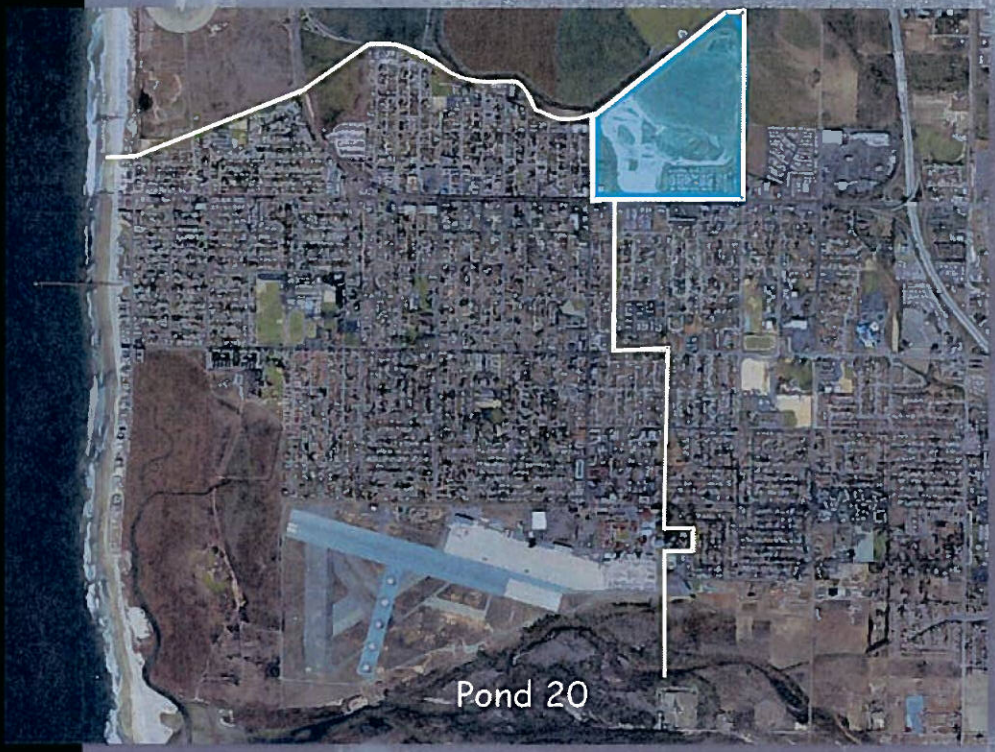

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The goals for the development of Pond 20 within Imperial Beach are:

- Develop Pond 20 as a regional mixed-use facility including a multi-plex theater and recreational uses
- Build an aquatic center to provide additional recreational and child development opportunities in Imperial Beach
- Build a shopping plaza as part of the development of Pond 20
- Ensure that any development of Pond 20 is ecologically sound

Development of Pond 20 could include a mixed-use retail center...

The Reality is:

- Memorandum of Understanding with the Port, the City of San Diego and the City of Imperial Beach signed to initiate development potential of Pond 20
- Undergoing technical studies to assess development potential of the site
- Pond 20 will be added to the Imperial Beach Redevelopment Area

... and, perhaps, an aquatic center.

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THE BIG PICTURE

The Vision: Develop a Master Plan for Ream Field that will accommodate the City's Pubic Works Yard and will work towards closure of the Navy Base and future redevelopment of the site that will best serve the City of Imperial Beach.

Ream Field has long been the subject of controversy and debate in the City of Imperial Beach. Controversy over the Navy's use of the field as a training area for its helicopters and debate over whether or not the Navy will or should close this base and make it available for future development. Should the latter occur, Ream Field would represent a significant resource to the City of Imperial Beach.

A plan for the future closure and re-use of Ream Field should be explored.

During this process, the community made it clear that they have little faith that the closure of Ream Field will occur any time in the near future. Notwithstanding that widely held belief, some creative ideas were discussed for the potential future development of Ream Field. In the near term, there is certainly a desire to maximize Ream Field's benefit to Imperial Beach in any way possible. One such way would be to relocate the City's Public Works Yard to this area in order to make its former site available for development. Regardless, the community felt that a plan for the closure and re-use of Ream Field should be explored.

10 Ream Field

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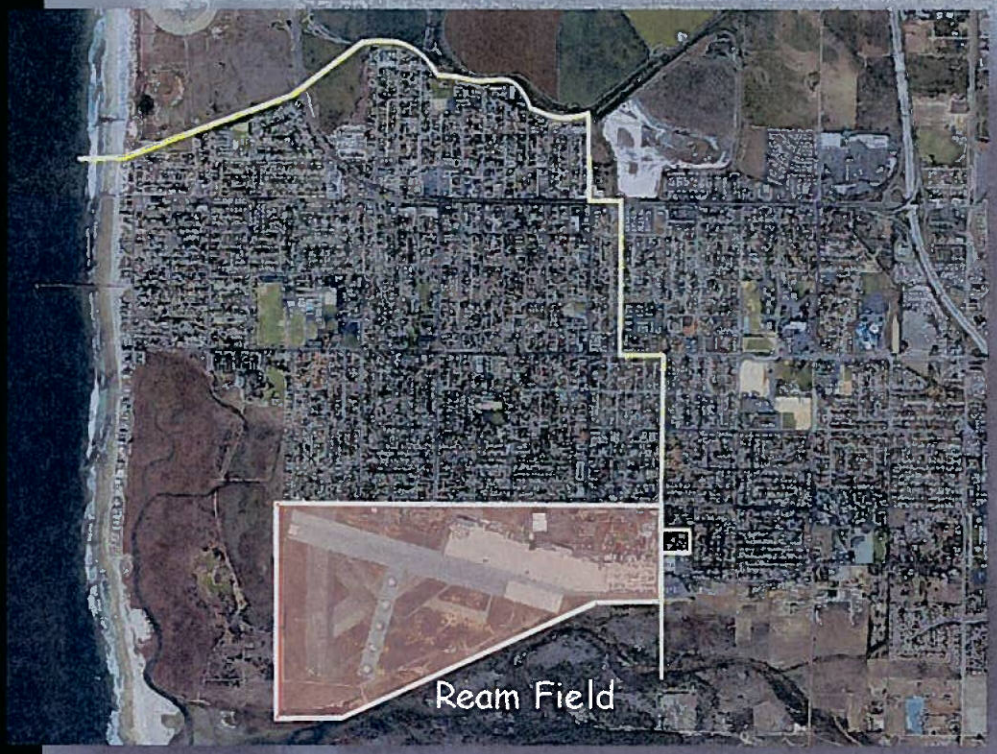

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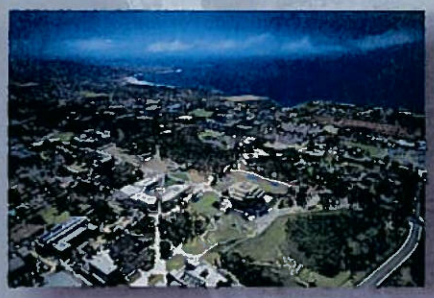
The goals for Ream Field are:

- Provide 5 acres for the City's relocated Public Works Yard
- Develop a long-term Master Plan for the closure and redevelopment of Ream Field
- Possible uses for the future development of Ream Field could include:

    - Develop a new college campus
    - Develop an industrial park
    - Develop the site as a research and development facility
    - Develop a resort and golf course on the site
    - Develop housing on the site
    - Additional eco-tourism opportunities

The Reality is:

- Verbal interest has been expressed from the Navy, which would allow a 5-acre lease for the relocation of the City's Public Works Yard.
- The Base Exchange and Commissary are "tax free" shopping facilities that may drain the City's economic/revenue base



Potential future uses of Ream Field might include a new college campus...

... or a research & development or industrial park.

11 Inland Neighborhoods

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The Vision: Neighborhoods that are clean, quiet and safe; free from gang and drug activity; and characterized by well-maintained residences and structures, newly-paved and landscaped streets, alleys and sidewalks and inhabited by friendly neighbors.

Poorly maintained property...

Perhaps the most discussed areas of Imperial Beach during the workshops were the Inland Neighborhoods and the issues affecting and impacting them. There was overall agreement that the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy was an important document that should continue to be implemented while increasing the efforts to do just that. Issues relating to property maintenance, particularly by absentee landlords, code enforcement, alley and sidewalk enhancement and police protection were all widely discussed and identified. Also identified as an area of the Inland Neighborhoods in need of attention was that area in the middle of the City just east of Mar Vista High School. This area is characterized by under-sized lots, poorly maintained residences, and a lack of sidewalks. This area could benefit greatly from even small public improvements such as new sidewalks and alleys.

... and alleys should be improved.

11 Inland Neighborhoods

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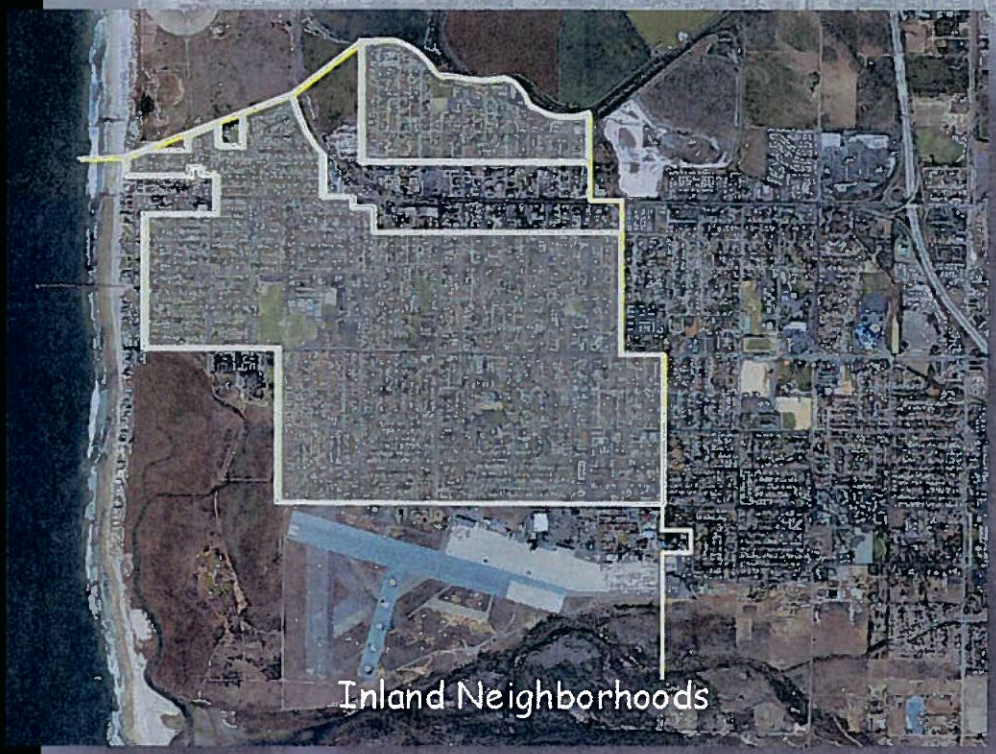
THE BIG PICTURE



11 Inland Neighborhoods

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THE BIG PICTURE

The major goals for the Inland Neighborhoods are:

- Continue aggressive implementation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy in the following areas:
  - Gangs and Drugs
  - Absentee Landlords
  - Property Maintenance
  - Access to Bayside Elementary School Playgrounds
  - Open Space Maintenance
  - Code Enforcement
- Address issues and implement programs not covered by the Strategy including:
  - Seek additional funding to support code enforcement efforts
  - Develop, fund and implement alley and sidewalk improvement projects
  - Develop and implement a Residential Façade Improvement program or Incentives to promote rehabilitation of private property such as "IB Beautiful"

The Reality is:

Initial implementation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy is resulting in increased code enforcement activity as well as sidewalk reconstruction.

12 "Old Palm" Avenue

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THE BIG PICTURE

The Vision: Re-establish "Old Palm" as the historic, small-scale commercial center of Imperial Beach complete with an enhanced, landscaped streetscape, pedestrian-oriented shops, restaurants and boutiques supported by an active and effective Business Improvement District.

Generally identified as the area along Palm Avenue between Seacoast Drive and 3rd Street, "Old Palm Avenue" is characterized by several small retail establishments, and a few eating and drinking establishments. It is also home to the Sweetwater Union High School Adult Education Center. Its low-scale character and relatively low traffic volume make it an ideal location to support a unique, pedestrian-oriented shopping and dining area reminiscent of historic, small-town communities. For these reasons, this area was identified as an important element of the city worthy of support as an original commercial area of Imperial Beach.

"Old Palm" Avenue's pedestrian character should be capitalized upon.

12 "Old Palm" Avenue

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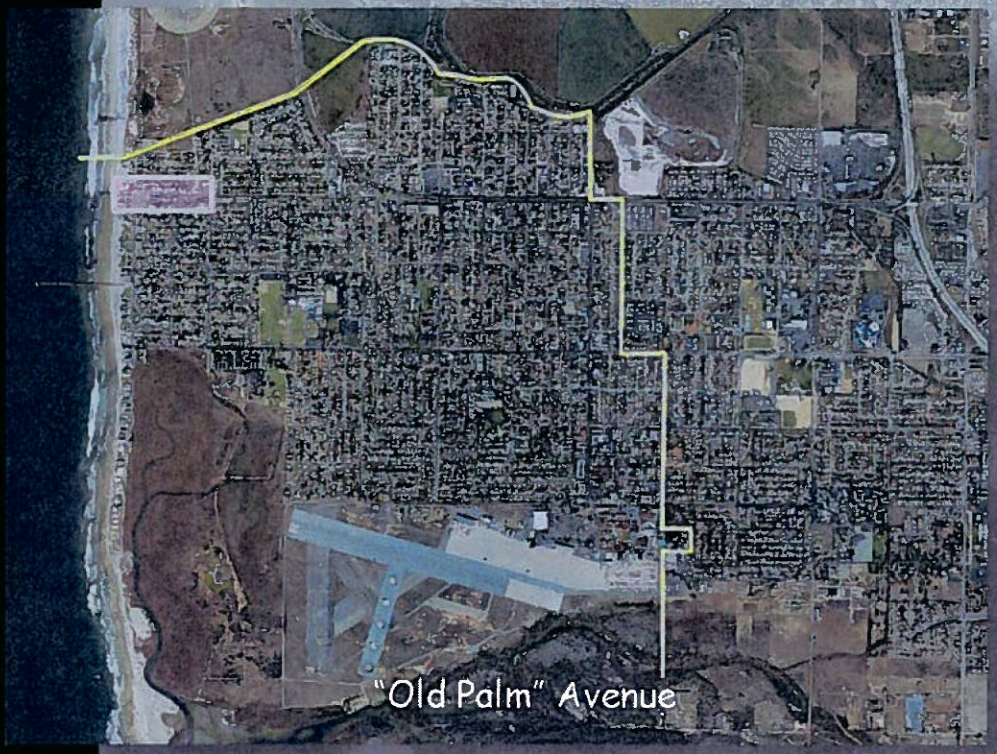
THE BIG PICTURE



12 "Old Palm" Avenue

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

The goals for Old Palm Avenue are:

- Encourage commercial and retail uses
- Widen sidewalks to promote pedestrian activity
- Provide diagonal parking and other measures to slow traffic
- Develop and implement historic identity theme - build an identification sign across Palm Avenue
- Rename Palm Avenue west of the Palm Avenue/SR-75 split to "Old
- Palm Avenue"
- Provide additional off-street parking to serve the area

The Reality is:

- Landscaped medians and colorful banners currently adorn this stretch of Palm Avenue
- Sound Wall constructed and landscaping to be done this year
- Palm Avenue Street End with "Spirit of IB" art to be considered for permits in September

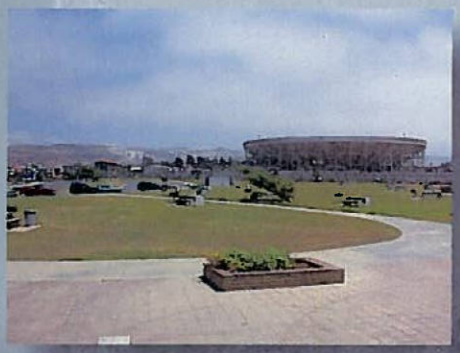
An identity sign and additional parking could enhance "Old Palm" Avenue

13 Border Field State Park

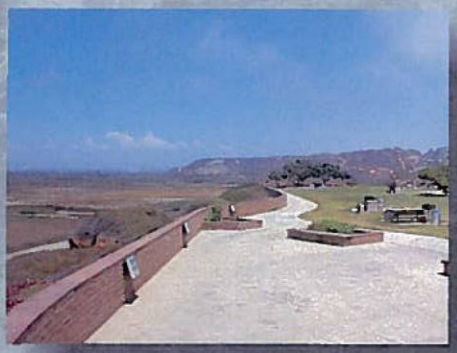
IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

The Vision: Border Field State Park as a destination for residents, visitors, and tourists seeking unique recreation and entertainment opportunities with an opportunity for similar cross-cultural and tourist activities.



Situated at the south-westernmost corner of the continental United States, Border Field State Park is a hidden secret among the recreational treasures of San Diego County.



13 Border Field State Park

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

13 Border Field State Park

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

The goals identified for Border Field State Park are:

- Capitalize on this area as a tourist destination
- Possible cross-cultural activity area
- Explore the potential for possible tourist-oriented development
- Cooperate with Mexico to foster beach improvements and pollution control in this area
- Develop transportation/shuttle system to increase the use of, and to allow for, better access to and from this area

The Reality is:

This area is subject to alteration by a proposed border fence project that could have potential long-term impacts and limit the future improvement and use of this State Park.

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

14 13th Street and Imperial Beach Boulevard

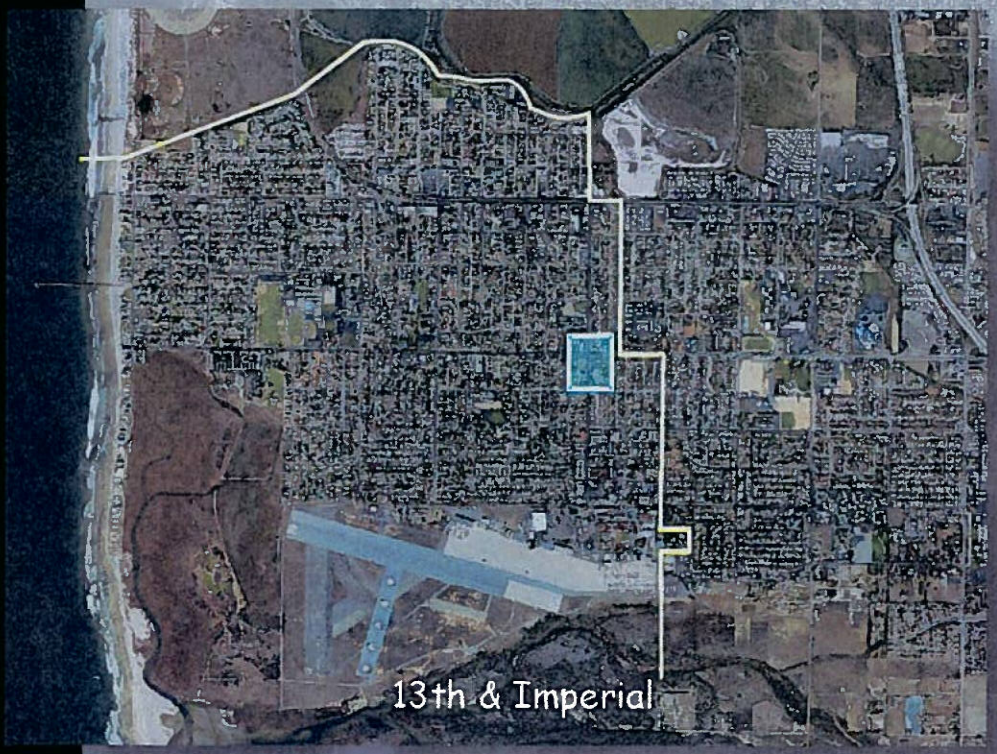
The Vision: A more vibrant, well-maintained commercial activity center to serve this neighborhood and become a more noteworthy "gateway" into the City of Imperial Beach.

This intersection, one of the few commercially-zone areas in the City of Imperial Beach, was identified as an area in need of improvement in order to realize its potential as one of the prominent visual and physical entrances into the City. Currently, it is occupied by small commercial and retail businesses with a few bars along 13th Street. As you travel south on 13th, there are narrow sidewalks interrupted by many driveways.

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

14 13th Street and Imperial Beach Boulevard



IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

14 13th Street and Imperial Beach Boulevard

The goals identified for this area are:

- Capitalize on existing commercial zoning
- Renovate existing commercial uses
- Attract other commercial/retail uses to serve this neighborhood
- Monitor bars in the area for illegal activity
- Implement banner program in this area

The Reality is:

This area is currently included in the Redevelopment Project Area however no immediate plans exist for its improvement.

Renovated commercial structures could create a-more prominent "gateway" into the City.

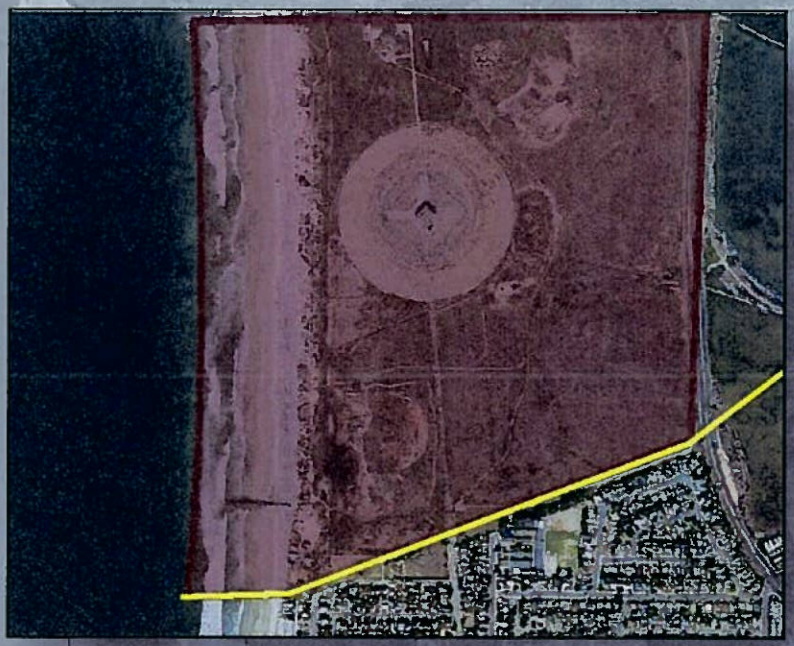
15 Navy Antenna Site

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

The Vision: The preservation of the site as designated open space or the development of a well-designed and well-utilized recreational, residential and/or tourist-related use that is compatible with and beneficial to the City of Imperial Beach.

While this area was initially discussed at the first workshop, most of the participants felt that, due to its location within the City of Coronado, there was little that could be done to influence its future development. However, as it is a very important and desirable piece of property both for its proximity to, and potential impact on, Imperial Beach, it has been included as a Target Area worthy of inclusion in this Plan.



IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

15 Navy
Antenna Site

15 Navy Antenna Site

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

Because there was little discussion on potential uses for this site, the following represents the limited ideas and objectives that were discussed:

- Reserve site for designated open space.
- Develop a destination resort and/or golf course on the site
- Develop Navy housing on the site as part of a mixed-use development
- Develop senior housing on the site as part of a mixed-use project

The Reality is:

Future plans for this important piece of property, which is located in the City of Coronado and under Navy jurisdiction, have included a golf course and Navy housing. While no immediate plans exist for its development, Navy activities here have decreased over the years and the eventual development plans for the site should be closely monitored by the City of Imperial Beach to ensure that its development will have a beneficial and lasting impact on the City.

It was suggested that a possible use for this site could be Senior Housing.

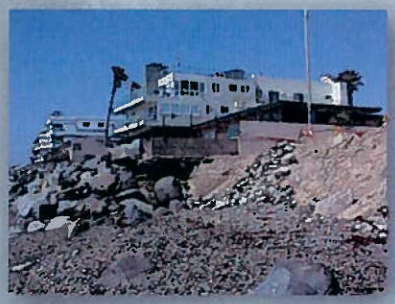
IMPERIAL BEACH

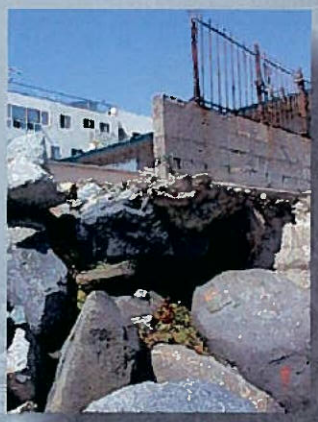
THE BIG PICTURE

The Vision: A economically self-sustaining, pollution-free City where residents can enjoy a clean ocean, sandy beaches and all of the City's amenities in a quiet, productive environment boasting top-notch schools, public services, and plenty of parking.

During the workshops, many issues were discussed that impact the City of Imperial Beach. Rather than discuss specific projects or geographic areas requiring improvement, many of the participants were more interested in identifying issues that affect the quality of life for residents of the City. As such, a separate "Target Area" was created to identify the most important of these "Quality of Life" Issues. Pollution (noise, ocean and river), drug and alcohol abuse, inefficient parking enforcement, insufficient parking, and beach erosion were some of the issues widely discussed. Perhaps the single most important issue to the workshop participants was the potential impact of the Proposed Brown Field Expansion Plan. Many felt that this vision plan effort would be all for naught should the proposed expansion proceed. Also of paramount concern was the City's fiscal health. It was this concern that prompted many of the workshop participants to accept the fact that, in order for the City of Imperial Beach to survive, some significant development would have to be tolerated. Indeed one participant noted that this document should not be called a "Vision Plan" but rather a "Survival Plan."

Beach erosion is a concern of the Community.





IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

16 "Quality of Life"

The following "Quality of Life" Issues were felt to be most important:

- Fiscal Health - Sustainability (20% of budget is Port-related; lowest sales and property tax base in County)
- Proposed Brown Field Expansion
- Ream Field Noise Pollution and future development
- Tijuana River, Ocean and Beach Pollution
- Sand Replenishment/Beach erosion
- Drug & Alcohol Abuse - must find ways to address this problem
- Increase Service Levels for needed services (i.e., police, fire, schools, etc.)
- Parking Problems/Concerns
- Improve and provide more lighting throughout the City
- Implement City-Wide Signage and Banner program especially at select entry points to the City
- Continue to encourage and implement public artworks at key areas within the City
- Develop more educational and youth programs within the City
- Redevelopment of Mar Vista High School

The expansion of Brown Field would impact Imperial Beach's Quality of Life.

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

During the workshop process, participants were encouraged to "think big." No idea was considered too big or too small. As should be anticipated during a community workshop process such as this, however, ideas were often discussed yet dismissed for lack of support or consensus. This process was no exception. Many ideas were raised during the four workshops that lacked support. However, as some of those ideas were raised often enough, it was decided that they should be included in the report as a matter of interest or debate.

Here are some of those "Big Ideas":

- Use Coronado as a model build an attraction and events to attract dollars
- Develop northside residential area from 7th (along bay) to 9th as new single-family (1600 to 2000 square feet) residences with some custom homes along the bay and a large park at the northeast end of 8th or Delaware
- Add an I-5 Highway sign "Estuary Visitor Center"; each business should develop a bird watching type theme to add into a City-wide theme and promote the town
- Build a lifeguard museum
- Attract higher income households and rezone to allow only single-family dwellings
- Build a Binational Park/Resort at Border Field State Park

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

- Build a new Post Office, super library, and a new high school
- Build a large shopping mall for everyone to use
- Tear down Seacoast Inn and build a new hotel that has towers and turrets and is based on a sand castle format to bring some personality to our beach. Add a bridge over Date Street to parcels to the south so the new hotel could have enough rooms.
- One of the large, empty lots at the beach should be converted into a year-round, solar heated ocean pool in the shape of a large soup dish shallow at the edge and deeper for swimmers in the central area
- Develop a marina somewhere in Imperial Beach
- Possible annexation of the City of San Diego (east of IB) into the City of Imperial Beach
- Unincorporate the City and incorporate into the City of San Diego to increase revenue sources

- Develop an aquarium somewhere in the coastal area
- Re-introduce sports fishing from the end of the pier
- Examine the possibility of re-opening the border crossing at Border Field State Park

IMPERIAL BEACH

THE BIG PICTURE

The intent of this Plan has been to build on previous efforts – such as the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy and General Plan Update – to identify the community's vision for the future of Imperial Beach. This Plan then, attempts to capture "The Vision" for specific areas that should be the focus for improvement. While recognizing the importance of those documents it is not meant to replace them. Rather, it should be used as a tool to implement them.

At the first workshop held in May, several participants voiced a common concern regarding this Vision Plan, its direction and its purpose. With previous efforts such as the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy and General Plan Update, and those documents in hand, was this simply another planning exercise that would duplicate those efforts? Assured the answer was "no", it is now vital that this Plan, and the ideas and visions captured within it, become a "living, breathing" document that can be used to guide the near- and long-term development of the City of Imperial Beach. As such a document, it is important to understand that, depending upon the interests of the community, this Plan may be modified to address those interests. Equally important is that any implementation of this Plan be monitored so that its successes – and, perhaps, its failures – can be learned from and replicated or corrected. In this way, the "Big Picture" of Imperial Beach can be "sketched" so that its image is one of which the entire community – its leaders and its citizens – can be proud.

IMPERIAL BEACH - THE BIG PICTURE

SEACOAST DRIVE/WATERFRONT

The Vision:
A quaint, casual pedestrian-oriented Waterfront District along an enhanced streetscape with widened sidewalks providing residents, visitors and tourists with recreation, shopping, and dining opportunities as well as hotel accommodations within well-designed, low-scale structures that illicit a common, ocean-front theme

To Achieve this Vision:
- Renovate or redevelop the Seacoast Inn
- Provide more commercial development to increase tourism (i.e., restaurants, shops, hotels, etc.)
- Provide wider sidewalks and better cross-walks to support and encourage pedestrian activity
- Explore and implement traffic-calming measures
- Provide additional off-street parking to support the area
- Develop and implement a common design theme for the area
- Pursue sand replenishment/beachfront erosion prevention efforts
- Explore the possibility of adding parking meters to increase city revenues

"OLD PALM" AVENUE

The Vision:
Re-establish "Old Palm" as the historic, small-scale commercial center of Imperial Beach complete with an enhanced, landscaped streetscape, pedestrian-oriented shops, restaurants and boutiques supported by an active and effective Business Improvement District.

To Achieve this Vision:
- Encourage commercial and retail uses
- Widen sidewalks to promote pedestrian activity
- Provide diagonal parking and other measures to slow traffic
- Develop and implement historic identity theme - build on identification sign across Palm Avenue
- Rename Palm Avenue west of the Palm Avenue/SR-75 split to "Old Palm Avenue"
- Provide additional off-street parking to serve the area

NAVY ANTENNA SITE

The Vision:
The development of a well-designed and well-utilized recreational, residential and/or tourist-related use that is compatible with and beneficial to the City of Imperial Beach.

To Achieve this Vision:
- Develop a destination resort and/or golf course on the site
- Develop Navy housing on the site as part of a mixed-use development
- Develop senior housing on the site as part of a mixed-use project

ECO-TOURISM AND RECREATION

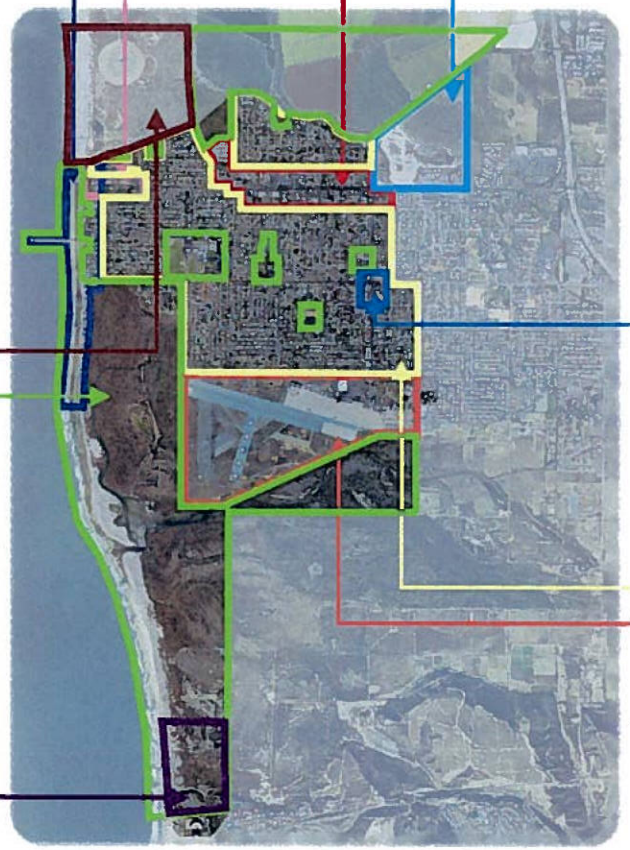
The Vision:
Imperial Beach as a premier destination for eco-tourism - and tourism in general - providing recreation, amenities and activities for tourists and visitors as well as the City's residents

To Achieve this Vision:
- Promote Imperial Beach as the premier destination for eco-tourism in San Diego County
- Develop a comprehensive program to utilize school facilities and other park space as joint-use recreational facilities year-round
- Promote and expand the Bayshore Bikeway throughout the City to connect all open space and recreation areas
- Encourage tourist-related uses in the Bayview area (i.e., new hotels, bed and breakfast, bike paths, etc.)
- Relocate the City's Public Works Yard to Ream Field and develop the site for tourist/recreational use - a new park and more defined "green belt" along beyfront
- Develop a shuttle/transportation system for better access to beach and refuge areas, the Estuary and to Border Field State Park
- Pursue sand replenishment/beachfront erosion prevention efforts

BORDER FIELD STATE PARK

The Vision:
Border Field State Park as a destination for residents, visitors, and tourists seeking unique recreation and entertainment opportunities with an opportunity for similar cross-cultural and tourist activities.

To Achieve this Vision:
- Capitalize on this area as a tourist destination
- Possible, cross-cultural activity area
- Potential for possible tourist-oriented development
- Cooperate with Mexico to foster beach improvements and pollution control in this area
- Develop transportation/shuttle system to increase the use of, and to allow for, better access to and from this area



POND 20

The Vision:
Along with preserved and enhanced open space and extension of the Bayshore Bikeway, the development of a well-designed, community-serving commercial, recreation and entertainment facility to support the City's service and economic needs.

To Achieve this Vision:
- Develop Pond 20 as a regional mixed-use facility including a multi-plex theater and recreational uses
- Build an aquatic center to provide additional recreational and child development opportunities in Imperial Beach
- Build a shopping plaza as part of the development of Pond 20
- Ensure that any development of Pond 20 is ecologically sound

PALM AVE. COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

The Vision:
Palm Avenue as a neighborhood-friendly, active, beautifully landscaped, well-designed, and vibrant commercial corridor, supporting community residents and visitors alike while generating necessary property tax, sales tax and Business Improvement District revenues to support future City improvements

To Achieve this Vision:
- Attract National chain or specialty retailers and/or grocery store, eliminate thrift stores, adult oriented businesses and tattoo parlors
- Redevelop or renovate dilapidated and vacant structures/buildings (i.e., Wally's IGA)
- Initiate Commercial Façade Improvement Program
- Enhance public rights-of-way with improved sidewalks, landscaping, etc.
- Develop a type of entertainment/activity center (i.e., movie theaters, shopping plaza) to attract more visitors/shoppers
- Channel Business Improvement District (BID) funds to better serve the area
- Implement traffic-calming measures to decrease traffic speeds
- Consider zoning out fast food restaurants

13TH AND IMPERIAL BEACH BLVD.

The Vision:
A more vibrant, well-maintained commercial activity center to serve the neighborhood and become a more noteworthy "gateway" into the City of Imperial Beach.

To Achieve this Vision:
- Capitalize on existing commercial zoning
- Renovate existing commercial uses
- Attract other commercial/retail uses to serve this neighborhood
- Monitor bars in the area for illegal activity
- Implement banner program in this area

INLAND NEIGHBORHOODS

The Vision:
Neighborhoods that are clean, quiet and safe, free from gang and drug activity, and characterized by well-maintained residences and structures, newly-paved and landscaped streets, alleys and sidewalks and inhabited by friendly neighbors.

To Achieve this Vision:
- Continue aggressive implementation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy including
  - Gangs and Drugs
  - Absentee Landlords
  - Property Maintenance
  - Access to Bayside Elementary School Playgrounds
  - Open Space Maintenance
  - Code Enforcement
- Address issues and implement programs not covered by the Strategy including
  - Seek additional funding to support code enforcement efforts
  - Develop, fund and implement alley and sidewalk improvement projects
  - Develop and implement a Residential Façade Improvement program or incentives to promote rehabilitation of private property
  - Focus on the neighborhood between the High School and the Library

REAM FIELD

The Vision:
Develop a Master Plan for Ream Field that will accommodate the City's Public Works Yard, will work towards closure of the Navy Base and future redevelopment of the site that will best serve the City of Imperial Beach.

To Achieve this Vision:
- Provide 5 acres for the City's relocated Public Works Yard
- Develop a long-term Master Plan for the closure and redevelopment of Ream Field
- Possible uses for the future development of Ream Field could include:
  - Develop a new college campus
  - Develop an industrial park
  - Develop the site as a research and development facility
  - Develop a resort and golf course on the site
  - Develop housing on the site
  - Additional eco-tourism opportunities

"THE VISION"

IMPERIAL BEACH - THE BIG PICTURE

1 The intersection of 9th and Palm was identified as one of the areas of Imperial Beach most in needed of improvement as its current uses are out-dated and under-utilized

2 While cited as one of the best attributes of the City, Seacoast Drive and the Seacoast Inn were also commonly noted as requiring improvement

3 Currently, this intersection is characterized by low scale commercial buildings, several bars, and narrow sidewalks on 13th Street south of Imperial Beach Boulevard.

4 This area has excellent potential for the enhancement of the Bayfront and further development of the Bayshore Bikeway

5 This area of the City currently has a unique, pedestrian-oriented scale yet lacks the pedestrian activity that could transform it into a vibrant district.

6 While no current plans exist for the closure of Naval Field, the City of Imperial Beach should continue to explore and plan for its future development.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1 Redevelopment of 9th and Palm, as well as the rest of the Palm Avenue Commercial Corridor, with the location of national chain anchor tenants and enhanced landscaping would greatly benefit this area of Imperial Beach

2 Renovation of the Seacoast Inn - or construction of a new hotel - would create a more appealing destination spot for tourists and visitors and would increase the City's tax base and revenue stream.

3 Renovation or redevelopment of this commercially zoned area would create a more noteworthy "gateway" at this important entrance to the City of Imperial Beach

4 Relocation of the Public Works Yard could make this area available for a recreation, eco-tourism or tourist-related use such as a park and extensive "green belt" along this portion of San Diego Bay, greatly enhancing the Bayview area.

5 Improvements to "Old Palm" Avenue could include additional parking such as a parking structure at the corner of Palm and Seacoast Drive, widening and enhanced sidewalks and, perhaps, an overhead sign identifying the district.

6 Possible future development of Naval Field could include a college campus, an research and development facility or an industrial park.