

OCEANO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Community Outreach Study Design
November 22, 2021

OEDC Council members look forward to interacting with the students during this next phase of the project as they proceed with work on their study design.

After more than three years of OBCA/OEDC preliminaries to this outreach effort, many ideas have been developed for the community by planners and others with expertise, as well as by a limited number of stakeholders. These ideas are based on historical records, planning studies, including the 2018-2019 CRP studio’s draft update (unadopted) of the County’s Oceano Community Plan, follow-on specific plans and economic modeling; most of it accessible on the OEDC website.

As CRP’s client for this studio, the OEDC sees as the outreach effort’s main goals to comprehensively understand the community’s needs and to determine the community’s preferences (land-use preferences) about how and where these needs should be met.

Chief among OEDC concerns is the extent to which the community’s preferences for land-use compare to the way in which public lands are now being used. These concerns were raised but not widely explored in the 2018-19 Community Plan Update <https://planforoceano.wixsite.com/oceano/8th-project>. We would like to see them explored as widely and specifically as possible in the upcoming community study.



Residential:	58.5%	Industrial:	4.6%	Right of Way:	1.6%
Open Space:	13.8%	Commercial:	3.8%	Other:	1.1%
Public:	12.7%	Vacant:	3.4%	Mixed Use:	0.5%

ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Chief among OEDC’s concerns is the way County and State lands are used and whether these land uses are representative of the wishes of community residents and other community stakeholders. In designating Oceano as a “disadvantaged community,” the State itself has effectively recognized Oceano as having experienced adverse impacts as the result of social and environmental injustices.

How do Environmental Justice and Social Justice relate to Disadvantaged Communities?

Environmental and social justice seeks to come to terms with, and remedy, a history of unfair treatment of communities, predominantly communities of people of color and/or low-income residents. These communities have been subjected to disproportionate impacts from one or more environmental hazards, socio-economic burdens, or both. ***Residents have been excluded in policy setting or decision-making processes and have lacked protections and benefits afforded to other communities*** by the implementation of environmental and other regulations, such as those enacted to control polluting activities. See <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/discom/>.

Because disadvantaged communities have been underrepresented in the planning and decision-making process, OEDC hopes to maximize the community's participation in this planning process to garner an understanding both of community needs and of ideas for meeting those needs.

Understanding the land-use preferences of the community, particularly land-use preferences related to State and County controlled lands, is key to this outreach effort in pointing to possible actions the State and County can take "to come to terms with, and remedy, a history of unfair treatment," especially in connection with the Latino community.

MATCHING OCEANO'S CRITICAL NEEDS WITH ITS LAND-USE PRIORITIES

In past studies, including CRP's 2018-19 Community Plan Update, economic growth, jobs, affordable housing, safety (including safe and accessible outdoor recreational spaces), community facilities, and infrastructure improvements have all been identified as critical issues by planners and others with expertise on these subjects, and by a limited number of stakeholders. However, these issues have not been widely explored with the community. Thus, it is important to determine the community's take on these issues as well as actions to address the issues, particularly as they relate to land uses in Oceano.

With only 3% of its land being vacant, Oceano has little room for growth, whether for commercial and residential development, cultural and recreational activities, or open space. As a built-out community, with relatively limited vacant private land, the public lands governed by the State and County offer the potential to address the needs of the community once the community's needs are fully identified.

The most notable examples of public land in Oceano are...

- the town's "beachfront," controlled jointly by the State (California Coastal Act) and County of San Luis Obispo (Local Coastal Program),
- the 60-acre Oceano Airport, controlled by the County of San Luis Obispo, and
- the coastal acreage, occupied by the Sanitation District, which services neighboring communities as well as Oceano.

LAND-USE PREFERENCES

Previous studies of Oceano, coupled with what we understand to be the needs of other similarly "disadvantaged communities," prompt the need in this community-wide study to ask area residents the following questions:

1. To what extent does the community regard economic development and job creation as critical needs?
2. To what extent does the community regard housing as a critical need, particularly affordable housing?
3. To what extent would the community support multiple levels of residential housing, including affordable and market-rate housing as well as other innovative solutions, to meet housing needs?

4. To what extent does the community consider safety an issue, particularly in connection with safe outdoor recreational space for kids and sporting events (e.g., soccer) as well as for family outings?
5. To what extent does the community consider improvements to community facilities and infrastructure, such as sidewalks, a priority?
6. To what extent do residents feel the need to preserve the community's essential character and advance its cultural/historic heritage?
7. To what extent would the community like to meet the above identified needs by having a town center?
8. More specifically, if residents would like a town center with residential, commercial, educational, cultural/historical and recreational land uses, what specific amenities would the community choose for this center?
 - a. Public amenities (farmers market, public plaza, open space with walking and biking trails)
 - b. Entertainment amenities (theaters, music venues)
 - c. Sports amenities (soccer fields, other sports fields)
 - d. Educational amenities (a trade school, community college, or university satellite campus)
 - e. Tourist and cultural amenities (lodging facilities, retail outlets, artists' showrooms and lofts)

The limited amount of vacant private land available for development in Oceano, coupled with the more sizable amount of public land that could be re-purposed to meet the needs of the community, prompts the following questions about the community's preferred uses of public land in Oceano.

9. To what extent does the community favor/oppose vehicular recreation on its "beachfront"?
10. Whether favoring or opposing vehicular recreation use, what other recreational opportunities does the community want for its beachfront?

"Beachfront" is defined to mean the stretch of beach extending from the SVRA's northern boundary (Mile Marker 2 south of Pier Avenue) to a point half a mile north of Pier Avenue. This question is separate and distinct from opinions about off-roading elsewhere on the beach and in the Dunes.

11. To what extent does the community favor/oppose using the existing Airport to meet needs identified in the study?

The OEDC sees itself as a facilitator of the community's efforts to publicly advocate for its own needs and preferences. In this regard, it deems the following to be the study's overarching questions:

- What do area residents believe are the community's most important needs and preferences?
- To what extent are Oceano's public lands being put to their highest and best use in service first and foremost to community residents?

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