

**Groveland/Big Oak Flat Community**  
**Economic Development**  
**MEETING**

Monday, February 5, 2024  
at 3 pm

**PUBLIC INPUT AND DISCUSSION**

Groveland Community Resiliency Center  
18986 Ferretti Road, Groveland CA



**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

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Tuolumne County  
Economic Development



# Action Plan for Economic Development

## Groveland/Big Oak Flat Community

### Characteristics and Values of the Community

The location of Groveland/Big Oak Flat area stands out as one of the 2% of communities in the country that house a national park within its borders. The region enjoys a rich history, including the development of Big Oak Flat due to gold mining and Groveland's growth linked to Hetch Hetchy. The area is distinctive for its scarcity of chain businesses, with the majority of businesses privately owned. The population is primarily a retirement community. Notably, it achieved the highest number of female entrepreneurs in 2019. Historically, there has been robust volunteerism in the community. However, this declined greatly during the pandemic, and now is gradually returning. Tourism is a significant part of the economy, with various outdoor recreation activities and a substantial transient use of residential properties, often geared towards visiting the nearby national park.

However, there are challenges, including a 55% poverty level. It has an aging population and a declining youth demographic. There is a perceived separation between the Pine Mountain Lake community and Groveland/Big Oak Flat. As well as divergence of opinions on growth, with a strong desire to preserve the peace and quiet that attracted many residents to the area. A universal concern exists about fire risk and emergency preparedness.

### Vision for the Future

The community's vision for the future includes making Groveland a more inviting destination for tourists, reducing its status as a mere pass-through location. This vision encompasses enhancing the variety of businesses, establishing a camping and RV facility near downtown, fostering community engagement, and communicating the region's history related to gold mining and the railroad. There is also a desire to improve the availability of family-friendly food options, address overcrowding during the summer months, and increase business opportunities in the winter.

The goal is to create a cultural shift towards becoming an "outdoor" community that values preservation and to promote community engagement through being a recreation center. This would also involve attracting a more diverse mix of individuals who visit and participate in the community.

### Needs of the Community

The Community needs encompass a wide range of areas, including affordable housing, more diverse events, historical education opportunities, improved signage, technology for visitor information (potentially through an app), winter attractions, and the establishment of a local recreation department. There is a specific call for affordable daycare and youth

activities, acknowledging the challenges of staffing and sustainability. The community also seeks more businesses that actively engage with and integrate into the community, a more active Chamber of Commerce, improved coordination between community groups, and a stronger emphasis on social services to address issues of poverty, drug use, and mental health.

### Ongoing Projects

There are a number of ongoing efforts within the community, such as "Movies in the Park," initiatives by the Groveland Community Service District (GCSD) focusing on fuel reduction, recreation, and improvements in public facilities. These efforts include projects like "Clean California," new restrooms, bus stops, picnic areas, and the development of the Hetch Hetchy Railroad Trail. The Tioga Baseball team, established since 2016, has also contributed to the community's vibrancy. Emergency services are actively working on securing funding for expansion, while water projects for Big Oak Flat are in progress. Recreation businesses are flourishing. There is a focus on accommodating visitors to Yosemite, especially those without reservations. CalTrans is also involved in sidewalk projects.

### Action Items to Bring Progress

#### 1. Create a More Inviting Destination for Visitors

Comprehensive planning and active engagement with visitors is an essential component. This initiative involves enhancing visitor experiences through improved signage and efficient parking facilities while being cautious not to exacerbate overcrowding issues. Additionally, leveraging historical education opportunities can enrich the visitor's understanding of the area. This may also involve the establishment of a local recreation department and the integration of technology, such as a dedicated app, for streamlined visitor information.

In a bid to diversify the local business landscape, the community may introduce an array of offerings. This includes expanding family-friendly dining options, increasing the variety of lodging facilities, such as the addition of an RV park, and enhancing the appeal of the destination during the winter season by introducing more attractions.

#### 2. Fostering Community Engagement

Furthermore, fostering community engagement is a vital aspect of this endeavor. Establishing a dedicated community hub will serve as a catalyst for collaboration among local organizations and improve communication within this network. A key figure, the community representative, will play a pivotal role in ensuring that the community's voice is not only heard but also effectively addressed. Collaborative support from both the community and county government is crucial, along with the appointment of a representative to bridge the gap between community interests and the decision-making processes that will shape the future of this inviting tourist destination.