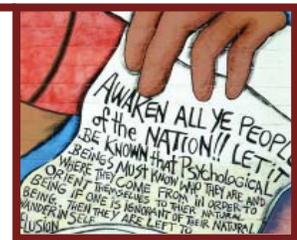


# *Westside and North Avenue*



## *Draft Background Report* *December 2006*



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Prepared by

Community Planning Laboratory, Academic Year 2006-2007

City and Regional Planning Department

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California

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## *Preface*

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This report has been prepared as a class project by the students in the fourth year Community Planning Lab of the City and Regional Planning Department at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. The report contains the background information needed for the preparation of a Community Plan and Development Code for Westside and North Avenue in the City of Ventura, California. The purpose of the Community Plan and Development Code is to guide development within Westside and North Avenue with a special emphasis on design and urban form.

This class project is conducted in a five month long studio designed to help the students obtain an understanding of the purpose, process, and scope of planning at the community scale. Students gathered information on the existing conditions of the Community during the first phase of the project in the fall quarter of the academic year. The second phase will be conducted during the winter quarter when students will use this report to draft a Community Plan and a Development Code that is consistent with the Ventura General Plan and all elements mandated by State Law.

The course is structured to simulate the professional planning work environment; however it is not a perfect simulation, as the class does not have access to a broad range of information sources nor does it have the well defined management levels of a professional planning office. The end products are the result of student work and must be viewed in that context. This process has been, and continues to be, one of learning for the students.

The students would like to thank all those who helped in this endeavor, especially: Lisa Wise, Lisa Porras, and the City of Ventura. A special thanks goes to project advisor Zeljka Howard.

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# Acknowledgements

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# *Executive Summary*

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## **HISTORY**

The City of Ventura was originally settled by native Chumash tribes. In 1782, the Spanish established the San Buenaventura Mission. Because Ventura was not easily accessible, the City experienced little economic or population growth until a railway connection and port were established in the 1880s. In the early 1900s, oil was discovered in the City of Ventura's Westside. The subsequent oil boom resulted in a period of intense growth, which greatly influenced the historical development and lent to the industrial character of the Westside and North Avenue.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND HAZARDS**

The Study Area (Westside and North Avenue) is nestled between steep hillsides to the east and the Ventura River to the west. While the natural setting is one of its most notable assets, a number of geologic constraints limit development within portions of the Study Area.

The soils in the Study Area have varying degrees of expansion and highly expansive soils are located in the hillside areas. The majority of the Study Area contains soils of low or moderate expansion. Fault lines to the north and south of the Study Area are a concern and areas within the Alquist-Priolo zones must be identified for mitigation purposes, such as setback requirements administered by the Alquist-Priolo Act. Landslides and liquefaction are a pressing issue on the hillsides to the east of Cedar Avenue. The hillsides also present fire hazards.

The Ventura River its northern dams and connecting creeks pose high risk of flooding. The FEMA 100-year flood zone applies to a portion of the Study Area. Air quality in the Ventura area has increased in recent years as a result of the California Clean Air Act and their Air Quality Management Plan.

Because of the previous prominence of the oil industry, there are a large number of potentially contaminated Brownfield sites within the Study Area. These sites are mostly located in the North Avenue region.

### **POPULATION AND HOUSING**

The Study Area represents 13% of the total population of the City of Ventura and have a combined population of 14,111 people; approximately 13,000 people reside in Westside and an additional 1,000 people live in North Avenue. The Study Area constitutes a younger than average populace; the median age in the City of Ventura is 36, and the population of the Study Area is between 28 and 31. Fifty-eight percent of the population in the Study Area is Hispanic.

Household income in the Study Area is much lower than that of the City as a whole. The largest percentage (32%) of households earn between \$10,000 and \$29,000 a year, whereas a larger percentage (36%) of Ventura residents earn between \$50,000 and \$99,000 per year.

There are 4,184 housing units in the Westside and North Avenue. The Study Area provides the most affordable housing in the City of Ventura; however, most residents of the Westside do not earn enough to qualify for home ownership.

### **LAND USE AND URBAN FORM**

The Study Area is comprised of approximately 2,000 acres; 1200 acres in Westside and 800 acres in North Avenue. The predominant land use is residential, which comprises 456 acres or 30% of the developed parcels. There are 60 acres of commercial development, which is only 4% of developed acreage in the Study Area. However, 24% of the Study Area is developed with industrial uses, indicating an industrial economic base. The commercial corridor of the Study Area demonstrates the dominant industrial presence in the Study Area, and land uses and development appear very haphazard.

There are 232 vacant acres in the Study Area; there are 41 vacant acres in Westside and 191 vacant acres in North Avenue. Buildout projections indicate there is potential to develop 326 additional dwelling units, 102,031 commercial square feet and approximately 3 million industrial square feet.

### **CIRCULATION AND NOISE**

Due to the nature of the hills surrounding the Study Area, connectivity to the rest of the City is limited. There are three main roadways (Ventura Avenue, Stanley Avenue, Olive Street) that serve as primary routes within the Westside area.

Roadway levels of service are adequate for existing traffic count numbers throughout the Study Area, however there are significant deficiencies in adequate pedestrian and path bikes. Pedestrian paths throughout the Study Area are discontinuous, inadequately lit and in poor condition. Bike paths are also insufficient, poorly designated and discontinuous, resulting in many bicyclists using sidewalks to avoid riding in traffic. There is little maintained streetscaping in the Westside and none in North Avenue.

The main sources of noise in the Study Area are Highway 101, Highway 33, the rail line and the Ventura Shooting Range; however, none of these noise sources are so significant as to require mitigation.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES**

The public facilities and services serving the Study Area are concentrated in the Westside community. Due to the highly industrial nature of the North Avenue, existing land uses are unsuitable for public facilities, but future revitalization and conversion of the North Avenue industrial areas would present the need for additional public facilities and services to be distributed more evenly in the Study Area.

This analysis found deficiencies in the current levels-of-service for police and fire services. The sewer collection system serving the Westside and North Avenue planning area is also inadequate and needs to be updated to meet future growth. Park facilities are highly concentrated in the Westside portion of the Study Area, and lack over 50 acres necessary to meet the City of Ventura standards. Elementary school facilities are nearing capacity in the Westside Attendance Area without a school available for residents in the North Avenue. The SAGE charter school opened in Fall 2006 to students in Kindergarten through seventh grade, and has helped alleviate some of the overcrowding in the schools. This analysis found the two community centers, Westpark and the Ventura Avenue Adult/Senior Center, to be unequally distributed and concentrated in the southern portion of the Study Area. There are currently no major health facilities or services provided for the residents in the study area.

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## *Introduction*

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Community plans are used by cities to guide development in areas of a city which have different characteristics and needs than the city as a whole. Such is the case in the Westside and North Avenue communities of Ventura. The City of Ventura recognizes this, and when a new General Plan was adopted in August 2005, the following action was included:

Action 3.18: Complete community or specific plans, subject to funding, for area such as Westside, Midtown, Downtown, Wells, Saticoy, Pierpont, Harbor, Loma Vista/Medical District, Victoria Corridor, and others as appropriate. These plans will set clear development standards for public and private investments, foster neighborhood partnerships, and be updated as needed.

A number of planning efforts have been conducted in the last decade. New efforts are underway to conduct comprehensive analysis of development for both Westside and North Avenue. These efforts were initiated in May 2006 and are conducted in the Westside. With the adoption of the new General Plan, the City is now ready to prepare and adopt a Community Plan for the Westside and North Avenue communities. In anticipation of this community plan, the City of Ventura and its consultants have been developing background and supporting information. Background information includes economic studies, revitalization plans, and community surveys.

The City of Ventura is collaborating with the City and Regional Planning Department at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo to develop a community plan and development code that will guide and direct how the Westside and North Avenue develop in the future.

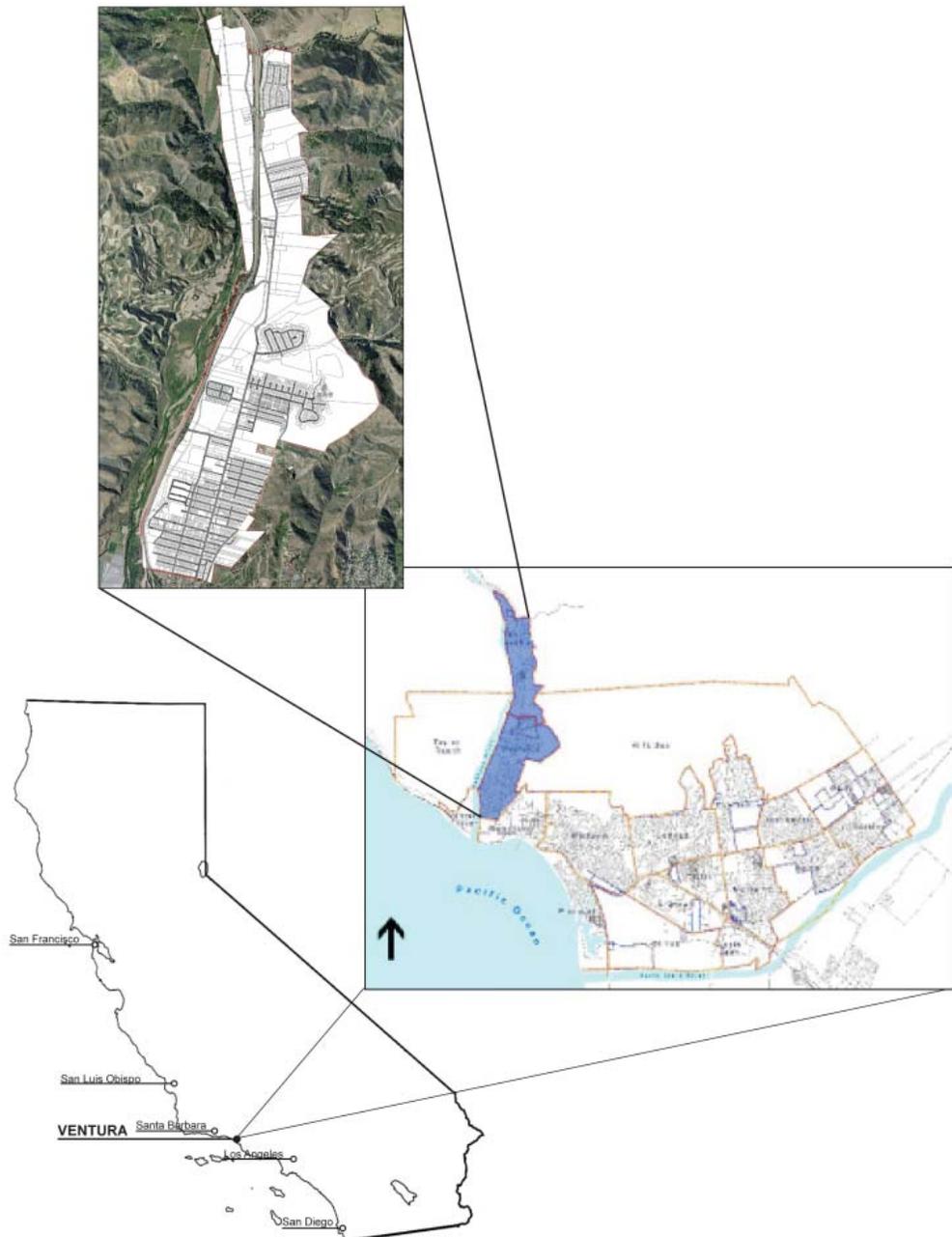
In order to create a plan for the future of the area, there must be an understanding of historical development, as well as current conditions, restrictions, and needs. This background analysis of the Study Area contains a comprehensive synthesis of the information that has been collected by both the City of Ventura and its consultants.

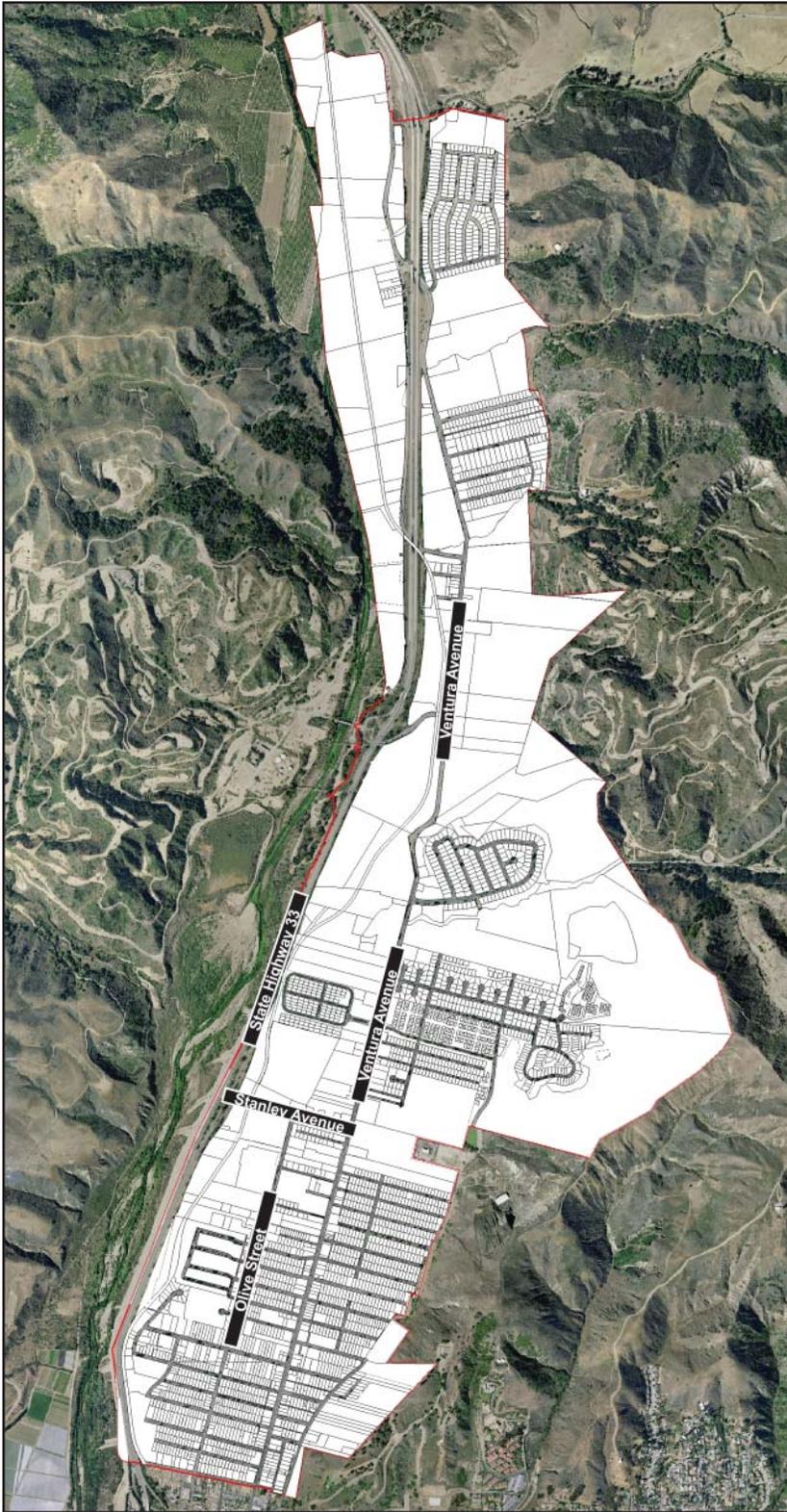
### **SETTING**

The City of Ventura is located on the southern edge of the California Central Coast. It is approximately 70 miles north of Los Angeles on Highway 101 and almost 400 miles south of San Francisco. The Study Area is roughly 30 miles south of Santa Barbara. (See Figure 1)

The Study Area encompasses the Westside and North Avenue Communities of Ventura. (See Figure 2) The Westside area is located within the City limits while North Avenue is located in Ventura County, but within the City's sphere of influence. The study area is located on the north western end of Ventura within the Ventura River Basin. The Ventura River Basin is a north-south valley that runs from Ojai in the north to the Pacific Ocean in the south. The Study Area is bordered by Park Row West to the south, Highway 33 to the west, and hills to the east. The northern end of the site is the point at which Highway 33 intersects with Ventura Avenue. The total size of the Study Area is approximately 1,500 acres.

**Figure 1:** Location of Study Area





**Figure 2:** Study Area Boundary

## METHODOLOGY

Information for this report was obtained through primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include site visits, surveys, and informal interviews conducted by City and Regional Planning students. In addition, some information was obtained through a community workshop. Secondary sources were obtained through review of relevant City documents, previous planning efforts, and other related documents. Table 1 contains a summary of secondary sources used.

## SOURCES

### 2005 City of Ventura General Plan

“State law requires each California City to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan for the physical development of the community that guides local decision-making by expressing community goals about the future distribution and character of land uses and activities. The plan should be comprehensive by both covering the City’s entire planning area and addressing the broad range of issues facing the community, including physical, social, aesthetic and economic concerns. The plan must be internally consistent and serve as a long-term guide, establishing policies for day-to-day land use decisions over an approximately 20-year period.” (Page 4, Ventura General Plan)

**Table I:** Major Sources of Information

<b>City of Ventura Documents</b>	Ventura General Plan Ventura General Plan Environmental Impact Report Comprehensive Background Report Ventura Vision (2000) City of Ventura Housing Element The Ventura Brownfield Project: A Look at the Environmental History of Ventura’s Westside 2005 Annual Traffic Report General Bikeway Plan Capital Improvement Project Plan 2005-2010 1989 Circulation Plan Map
<b>Previous Planning Efforts</b>	Westside Revitalization Plan Westside Urban Design Plan Westside Economic Development Strategy, Oct. 2006 Feasibility Study for ECO Industrial Park Survey Questionnaire: Westside Community Workshop
<b>Other Related Documents</b>	Ventura Unified School District’s School Accountability Report Card for 2004-2005 Ventura County Regional Trails and Pathways Master Plan 1995 County of Ventura Assessor’s Parcel Information U.S. Census Bureau

Several documents were created to supplement the General Plan. The Ventura Vision established goals affirmed by the community to draft the General Plan. Using the Ventura Vision, the City of Ventura General Plan was prepared and adopted in 2005.

The General Plan was also supplemented with a Form-Based Development Code. “This code represents a new approach to zoning that prioritizes the appearance of development, while still ensuring that neighboring land uses are compatible and appropriate.” (Page 5, Ventura General Plan) This code will eventually replace the existing Zoning Ordinance that regulates all land uses within City Limits. Currently, the 2005 General Plan is implemented by the existing Zoning Ordinance.

The General Plan lists several Goals, Policies, and Actions that are intended to be executed through the Zoning Ordinance. Below are two examples of many policy and action statements.

General Plan Policy 3C states: Maximize use of land within the City before considering expansion.

To implement Policy 3C, Action 3.18 states: Complete community or specific plans, subject to funding, for areas such as Westside, Midtown, Downtown, Wells, Saticoy, Pierpont, Harbor, Loma Vista/Medical District, Victoria Corridor, and others as appropriate. These plans will set clear development standards for public and private investments, foster neighborhood partnerships, and be updated as needed.

General Plan Policy 1D states: Expand the use of green practices.

To implement Policy 1D, Action 1.29 states: Require all City funded projects that enter design and construction after January 1, 2006 to meet a design construction standard equivalent to the minimum U.S. Green Building Council LEED™ Certified rating in accordance with the City’s Green Building Standards for Private and Municipal Construction Projects.

### **City of Ventura Zoning Ordinance**

The Zoning Ordinance can be found in Chapter 24 of the City of Ventura’s Municipal Code. The zoning ordinance is the implementation tool the City of Ventura uses to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan. All development, both discretionary and ministerial, is subject to meet the requirements set forth in the zoning ordinance.

Sec. 24.105.030 states: The purposes of this zoning ordinance are to promote and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare. The promotion and protection of the public health, safety, or general welfare may include, without limitation, the advancement of any, or any combination of, the following objectives: To implement the comprehensive plan, including the intent and rationale statements, policies, goals, and objectives; To facilitate and encourage appropriate uses of land and to provide for compatibility of land uses as identified in the comprehensive plan...

Section 24.115.110 states: Chapter 24.115 classifies uses within a limited number of “use types” on the basis of common functional, product, impact, compatibility, or other relevant characteristics, thereby providing a basis for orderly regulation of uses in accordance with the public health, safety, and general welfare. Use types may be, in a similar manner, grouped into various “use type categories.” For example, the use type category of “Family Residential” includes, among others, the use types of “Family Residential: Caretaker” and “Family Residential: Large Multi-Family.”

Each parcel within the study area is within a zoning category, such as C-1 or R-2. Each of these zones has several listed uses that can be built on the zoned parcel. A land owner can only develop his/her property if the use they are proposing is allowed in the zone that is assigned to their parcel. A land owner can request a zone change at the discretion of the City Council. Based on the zone and designated use, the accompanying requirements for development apply. The following zones are located in our study area (Table 2).

The City of Ventura’s zoning code includes several overlay zones. These zones are intended to protect certain assets of the City or designated a special use within another general zone. Overlay zones are often used in conjunction with another zone. For example, the Simpson Tract Historical District is in the Study Area, and falls under a Historical District Overlay Zone. The purpose of the overlay zone is to: Protect against destruction or encroachment upon such areas and structures; Encourage uses which promote the preservation, maintenance or improvement of landmarks and points of interest; Assure that new structures and uses within such areas will be in keeping with the character to be preserved or enhanced; Promote the educational and economic interests of the entire city; and prevent creation of environmental influences adverse to such purposes.

The General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance are the two superseding regulatory documents that guide land use decisions. In addition, the following documents help shape land use decisions based on the purpose and findings of the document.

**Table II: Zoning Designations**

Source: City of Ventura Zoning Ordinance

Zone	Title	Municipal Code
R-1	Single Family Zone	Chapter 24.210
R-2	Two Family Zone	Chapter 24.214
R-3	Multiple Family Zone	Chapter 24.218
R-P-D	Residential Planned Development Zone	Chapter 24.222
C-1	Limited Commercial Zone	Chapter 24.232
C-2	General Commercial Zone	Chapter 24.236
C-P-D	Commercial Planned Development Zone	Chapter 24.242
M-X-D	Mixed Use Zone	Chapter 24.244
M-1	Limited Industrial Zone	Chapter 24.260
M-2	General Industrial Zone	Chapter 24.262
M-P-D	Manufacturing Planned Development Zone	Chapter 24.264
A	Agricultural Zone	Chapter 24.270
H	Hospital Zone	Chapter 24.280

### **Westside Urban Design Guidelines**

“The primary goal of this effort is to reinforce and enhance the unique historic, cultural, and geographic qualities – sense of place – that already exists, and gives the Westside Community a distinct neighborhood character within the City of Ventura.” In addition, the document intends “...not to destroy the historic and very human scale...the plan does not so much introduce new planning concepts, but rather seeks to reinforce the best of what already exists – and to call for more of it where appropriate.”

This document is specific to Westside, and does not include North Avenue. The document was compiled after input from the community to better guide development that occurs within the Westside boundaries. The document was endorsed by the City Council, but was never approved and implemented. Therefore, the document has no regulatory power. However, it is important to consider the large effort residents of the Westside community contributed to this document. The document comprehensively discusses history and patterns that occur within Westside, providing valuable knowledge to potential developers.

Finally, the document recognizes pedestrian node locations, and even proposes a Westside Community Town Center located near the De Anza building. Design guidelines are provided for the core pedestrian nodes and the transition spaces between. The report concludes with a cost analysis of the proposals, estimated at eight million dollars.

### **Westside Economic Initiative**

“The City of San Buenaventura (“City”) along with the Westside Community Council (“WCC”) commissioned Rosenow Spevacek Group (“RSG”) to analyze the economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (or SWOT analysis) of the Westside Community (“Westside”). The SWOT analysis is intended to aid both the City and the WCC in understanding the Westside’s economic issues and opportunities, and delineates a strategy for capturing additional investment.”

The Westside Economic Initiative progresses from describing existing economic conditions to developing implementation strategies based on potential successful industries. The existing conditions were relied on most heavily for the data concerning building rehabilitation.

### **SOAR Initiative (Save our Agricultural Resources)**

“The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that the Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan are inviolable by transitory short-term political decisions and that agricultural, watershed and open space lands are not prematurely or unnecessarily converted to other non-agricultural or non-open space uses without public debate and a vote of the people.”

This initiative requires that the public vote on any attempt to change the land use designation of any land protected by SOAR. It is the intent of the initiative to limit the conversion of agricultural resources into land for development.

### **Hillside Management Program Adopted 1989**

“The overall objective is to relate the number and distribution of dwelling units in future hillside development to the topographical, geological, and hydrological conditions of the hillsides, so that the terrain will retain its natural and scenic character, and the danger to life and property by the hazards of fire, flood, water pollution, soil erosion, and the land slippage will be minimized.”

Hillside Voter Participation Act: “The overall purpose of this measure is to allow City voters to participate in the review process relating to non-exempt development projects that may be proposed in a certain portion of the “Hillside Area” of the City as defined in the City’s Comprehensive Plan Update to the Year 2010.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

“It focuses upon immediate and long-term initiatives to assure Ventura’s economic vitality. The focus areas and many initiatives come from various policies and planning directives; notable examples include the Ventura Vision and the soon to be completed General Plan update.” The Ventura Economic Development Strategy is a summary of the six major focal areas the city believes will enhance the economic strength of the area if investment were to be increased. By outlining goals and designating the roles of key entities the Economic Development Strategy hope to provide a starting point for investment and implementation.

### **Eco Industrial Park Feasibility**

“The main intent of this study is to establish the area-wide viability of the EIP concept, rather than to provide an in-depth analysis of development potentials for particular sites. Indeed, one of the key premises of this study is that it may ultimately be advantageous for EIP-type uses to be developed at multiple locations throughout the community, with this development serving as the catalyst for an overall revitalization of the Westside’s industrial areas.”

The Eco Industrial Park Feasibility study weighs the opportunities that might arise by introducing an eco industrial park and juxtaposes the opportunities at suitable sites with pre-existing constraints within the Ventura planning boundary.

## **REPORT ORGANIZATION**

The information in this report is organized in the following chapters:

- Chapter 1: History
- Chapter 2: Environmental Resources and Hazards
- Chapter 3: Population and Housing
- Chapter 4: Land Use and Urban Form
- Chapter 5: Circulation and Noise
- Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services
- Chapter 7: Community Involvement

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*History*

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**Chapter**

**1**

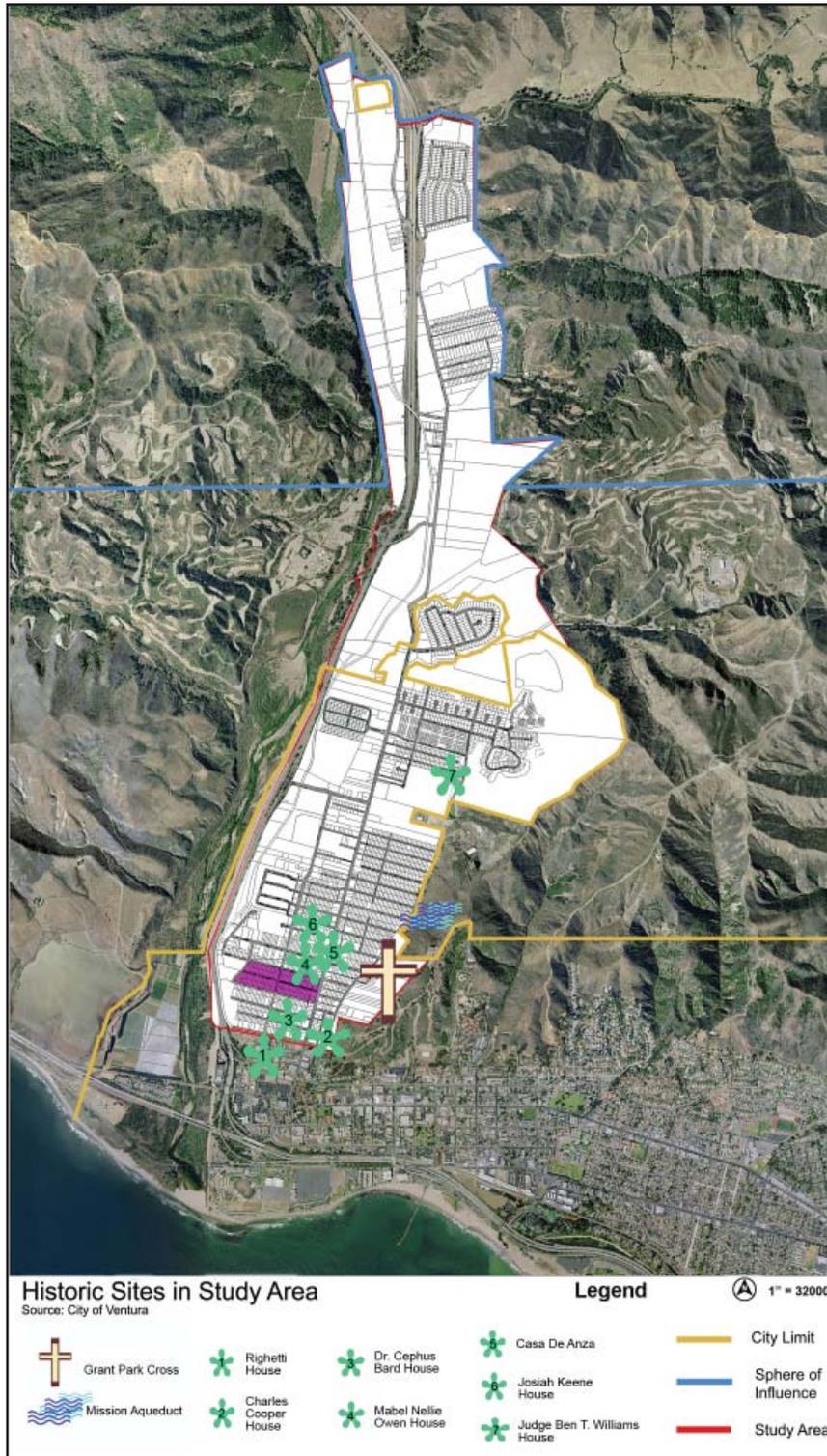
### OVERVIEW

The Westside was originally settled by the Chumash Native Americans. These tribes lived undisturbed in the fertile valley for many years. In the late 1700's, the Spanish missionaries traveling along the coast led by Junipero Serra settled and established the Buenaventura Mission. These Spanish missionaries converted the Chumash to Christianity and then used them as laborers for construction of the mission and the aqueduct running from the North end of our study area into what is now modern day downtown Ventura. Remnants of the aqueduct still exist in the Westside.

Economic development in Ventura was hindered by the inaccessibility of the valley. Traveling to Ventura required that travelers either came inland over the mountains or cross the beach during low tide. The addition of a port and rail station by 1870 began to catalyze Ventura's development.

In 1885, the first oil was discovered. Soon after, in the early 1900's, the first oil field on the Westside, known as the Ventura Avenue Oil Field, was created. This oil field began the oil boom which had the greatest impact on the economics and development of this area. Circa 1920, there were 113 oil wells, which produced roughly 57,000 barrels and 213 cubic feet of natural gas per day. In 1930, the population on the Westside had risen to approximately 10,000. The southern portion of Westside Ventura was densely developed with workforce housing during this period. These homes still represent a majority of housing in the Study Area. The oil boom resulted in the establishment of other support industries, such as wire yards and machine shops. The industrial development of the Westside during this period was extremely influential in shaping the community's character.

In the 1970s, oil production rates began to decline, taking much of the employment base out of the area. A large refinery located near Stanley Street was demolished, and one of the larger companies in the area, VETCO, sold their headquarters to KINKO's. All other remaining heavy industries were taken over by lighter industrial uses. The community has not yet recovered from the resulting economic slump. Many homes and building in the area have remained unchanged for 25 to 50 years. Much of the commercial corridor continues to provide support services for the oil industry, even though the oil industry is not a major economic feature of Ventura any longer. The Westside suffers from its dependency on the oil industry, which has left the community landlocked by brownfields, which are contaminated or potentially contaminated areas. This problem has also contributed to the areas inability to tap into the tourist industry which is the economic base for the City of Ventura.



**Figure 1-1:** Historic site location map

## HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### HISTORIC DISTRICT

Simpson Tract Historic District was developed beginning in 1927 and was one of the first neighborhoods within the Westside community to be built (see Figure 1-1). The area was developed in response to the demand for work force housing for individuals and families who worked in the oil industry, and therefore the units and lot sizes in the Simpson Tract Historic District are smaller than those in surrounding neighborhoods (Westside Community Revitalization Plan, 2002).

### HISTORIC SITES

The following descriptions are of historic sites and landmarks located within the Study Area (See Figure 1-1) (2005 City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report)

#### The Mabel Nellie Owen House

This home (Figure 1-2), located in the Simpson Tract, was designated historic January 22, 1990. This Mediterranean style house at 93 W Simpson was the home of Mabel Nellie Owen who was an activist and voice for the Avenue Community for over fifty years. She was involved with the relocation of the Taylor Ranch feed lots, opposition to a proposal to construct a sewer treatment plant next to Sheridan Way School, building Westpark and Avenue Adult Centers, initiation of a senior mini bus, and construction of the Church of God in Christ.

**Figure 1-2:** Mabel Nellie Owen House

93 W. Simpson Street



**Figure 1-3:** Casa de Anza Library

606-612 N Ventura Avenue



#### The Casa de Anza Building

The Casa de Anza Building (Figure 1-3) is also located in the Simpson Tract. It was designated historic on March 23, 1998. The Casa de Anza apartment building was originally constructed in 1929 by Richard Langdon and the building is an example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of the 1920's. The apartment building was erected as a direct result of the oil boom occurring on the Avenue and the resulting need for housing oil workers. The building was restored in 1998 and includes a library on the ground floor.

### The Righetti House

The Righetti House (Figure 1-4) was designated historic January 1, 1980. This late Queen Anne period house with elements of Classical Revival was constructed in 1918 for Daniel J. Righetti, who owned a shop on Main Street offering billiards, cigars, tobacco and confections. The Righetti's were a pioneer Italian family in Ventura and lived in the house until 1922. In 1923 Dr. Julius Bianchi, a prominent local physician who served as U.S. envoy to Guatemala from 1920 to 1922, purchased the home and had his practice there for three years. He became president of the Ventura County Medical Society in 1926. On January 24, 1947, Mr. Sidney Houghton had the house moved from its original Main Street location along Valdez Alley near the Mission to its current location on Park Row Avenue. Architecturally, the house is important as one of the relatively few unaltered examples of the late Queen Anne period remaining in Ventura. Queen Anne elements include a tower, gables and bay. Classical Revival can be seen in the large, sweeping, curved porch with its classical columns.



**Figure 1-4:** The Righetti House

125 W. Park Row Avenue

**Figure 1-5:** Grant Park Cross

Ferro Drive

### The Grant Park Cross

The Grant Park Cross (Figure 1-5) was designated historic on February 11, 1974. The wooden cross, made of pine from Santa Paula Canyon, was placed on this site to commemorate the original cross erected by Father Junipero Serra when he founded Mission San Buenaventura in 1782. Two earlier crosses had blown down by 1875 and were not replaced again until the ladies of the ECO Club, a service club, erected the present cross on Admission Day, September 9, 1912.

### The Mission Aqueduct

The Mission Aqueduct (Figure 1-6) was designated historic August 2, 1982. Chumash Indians labored to construct the approximately eight-foot high stone wall that forms the main channel of the Mission Aqueduct. Constructed between 1702 and 1850, the aqueduct system included a dam, reservoir, filtration building, lavandaria, and fountains. Starting at the convergence of San Antonio Creek and the Ventura River, the aqueduct extended approximately seven miles, winding its way along the base of the foothills toward the mission and mission gardens, watering farms along the way.

The aqueduct was heavily damaged in the great flood of 1862, but with repairs, it continued to be used into the 1870's. Segments of the aqueduct are still visible today, and a part of the wall exists in the basement of a house built in 1989. Located at the eastern end of Vince and Lewis Streets, it is the largest and most intact stretch of surface aqueduct known to exist. Unique features include a slight elevation of one section to slow the flow of water and prevention of overflow by building up one side of the aqueduct.

**Figure 1-6:**  
Mission Aqueduct  
Vince Street



**Figure 1-7:** Judge  
Ben T. Williams  
386 Franklin Lane



### The Judge Ben T. Williams House

The Judge Ben T Williams House (Figure 1-7) was designated historic January 26, 1987. This home was built on the Avenue around 1890. Around 1950 it was moved to Franklin Lane. It is an example of a Queen Anne ranch house, with Stick-Eastlake influence. Benjamin Tully Williams was Judge of the Superior Court of Ventura for many years during the 1890's and early 1900's. He was also one of the most powerful political figures in the County during that time.

### **The Charles Cooper House**

The Charles Cooper House (Figure 1-8) was designated historic October 14, 1986. Charles L. Cooper, a carpenter, purchased this property in 1886 and built the house in the same year. One of the more noted owners was Mr. Frank White, owner from 1929-49. Mr. White was a horticulturist and developed new strains of many common flowers. The house represents a particular period of local history when Ventura was only a small community; just prior to the tremendous economic boom created by the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1887.



**Figure 1-8:**  
The Charles  
Cooper House  
163 Cedar Street

**Figure 1-9:** Josiah  
Keene House  
41 Bell Way

### **The Josiah Keene House**

The Josiah Keene House (Figure 1-9) was designated historic September 28, 1987. It was built near Ventura Avenue around 1872, making it one of the first grand homes built in San Buenaventura after incorporation. Josiah Keene was a veteran of the Civil War; a former U.S. Treasury employee; and a San Buenaventura area rancher. The home, which was moved to 41 Bell Way in 1928, is perhaps the City's only example of Second Empire/Victorian Residential style.

### **The Dr. Cephus Bard House**

The Dr. Cephus Bard House (Figure 1-10) was designated historic April 1, 1991. Dr. Cephus L. Bard, brother of Senator Thomas Bard, was a prominent physician in Ventura during the late 1800's. This house, built in 1886 for Dr. Bard, was originally located on Oak Street. It is one of the few remaining Italianate structures in Ventura and has maintained its integrity over the years.

**Figure 1-10:** Dr. Cephus Bard House

52 W. Mission Street



### **North Avenue Chumash Villages**

Two parts of a major Chumash village have been excavated in one area of North Avenue. In another location, excavation revealed “dark mound soil” which contrasted to the light claylike surrounding soils. This location has been developed with a home, roads, gardens, and orchards. The owner of the property collected mortars, pestles, milling stones, and projectile points, plus branding irons, spurs, and knives. A segment of the Mission aqueduct runs along the base of a hill east and south of the site. The construction of State Route 33 may have affected part of the site. The owner has since died; the whereabouts of his collection are unknown. (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report, 2005)

### **Potential Historic Sites**

The Self Serve Carwash located along Ventura Ave and the Foster House/Avenue School Site are being considered endangered historic sites. (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report, 2005)

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*Environmental  
Resources and Hazards*

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**Chapter**

**2**

### INTRODUCTION

The natural setting of Westside and North Avenue in Ventura is one of the Study Area's utmost resources. It is comprised of hillsides, the Ventura River, the Pacific Ocean, and agricultural land. The Ventura hillsides surround the Study Area on the east and west sides. They create the valley in which the site is located. The Ventura River is located along the western border of the site. Drainage channels empty into the river which eventually leads out to the Pacific Ocean. The agricultural land is found on the east and west sides of the site and along North Avenue. Agriculture is a precious resource for Ventura; therefore there are many restrictions on development of agricultural land.

Human impact on the natural environment of Ventura is becoming an increasing concern. The City of Ventura's 2005 General Plan outlines many aspects of its environment to be aware of, as well as goals that citizenry of Ventura would like to uphold in protecting the environment. The City's General Plan, as well as the Comprehensive Plan for Ventura and the General Plan EIR, were the main sources of information for this section. There were also a number of documents that were provided by the City of Ventura.

This study encompasses the natural environment of the Westside and North Avenue Ventura. The following topics are discussed within this section: Geology, Soils, Erosion, Hydrology and Drainage, Biology, Air Quality, Agricultural Lands and Brownfields. Many of the topics come along with their own hazards and challenges that have a great effect on the Study Area.

### METHODOLOGY

The information in this section was obtained through site analysis and document review. During the initial site visit, general observations about visual characteristics were made.

From here, the focus became document review. All related documents were obtained and grouped into general categories. Each member of the team concentrated on one or two categories and thoroughly reviewed the available information on their category. During this process, a visit was made to Ventura at which team members spoke with staff from the Community Development Department in order to fill gaps and get clarity in the information. The major documents that were reviewed were the City of Ventura General Plan, the City of Ventura General Plan EIR, and the Comprehensive Background Report. Some information was also obtained through browsing of the City of Ventura and the County of Ventura websites.

To determine the areas of greatest hazard, City and County hazard maps were overlaid. This produced one map that could be used to determine the areas subject to the greatest hazard risk.

## **GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND EROSION**

### **TOPOGRAPHY**

The Study Area is located in a valley that runs north to south. The topography map of the area (Figure 2-1) shows the flat land of the Study Area bordered to the east and west by steep slopes and hillsides. The hills to the west of the Study Area have more of an aesthetic asset on the site than a physical hazard, since they are located on the opposite side of the Ventura River than most development. The hills to the east, however, are immediately adjacent to development in the area. There are multiple drainage channels coming off of these hills and draining into the Ventura River. While some of these channels are lined with concrete to reduce flooding potential, the City of Ventura wants to restore the channels to their natural state. This could increase erosion of the hillsides, making restoration infeasible.

### **SOILS**

Expansive soils will swell when wet and shrink when dry, creating problems for foundations and erosion if they are not properly taken into account. Soil wetting occurs naturally through absorption from the air, rainfall, groundwater, and manmade sources such as lawn watering and water or sewer lines. Soil expansion is more dangerous in hillside areas, where shrinking and swelling can cause the ground to creep downhill, eventually causing landslides.

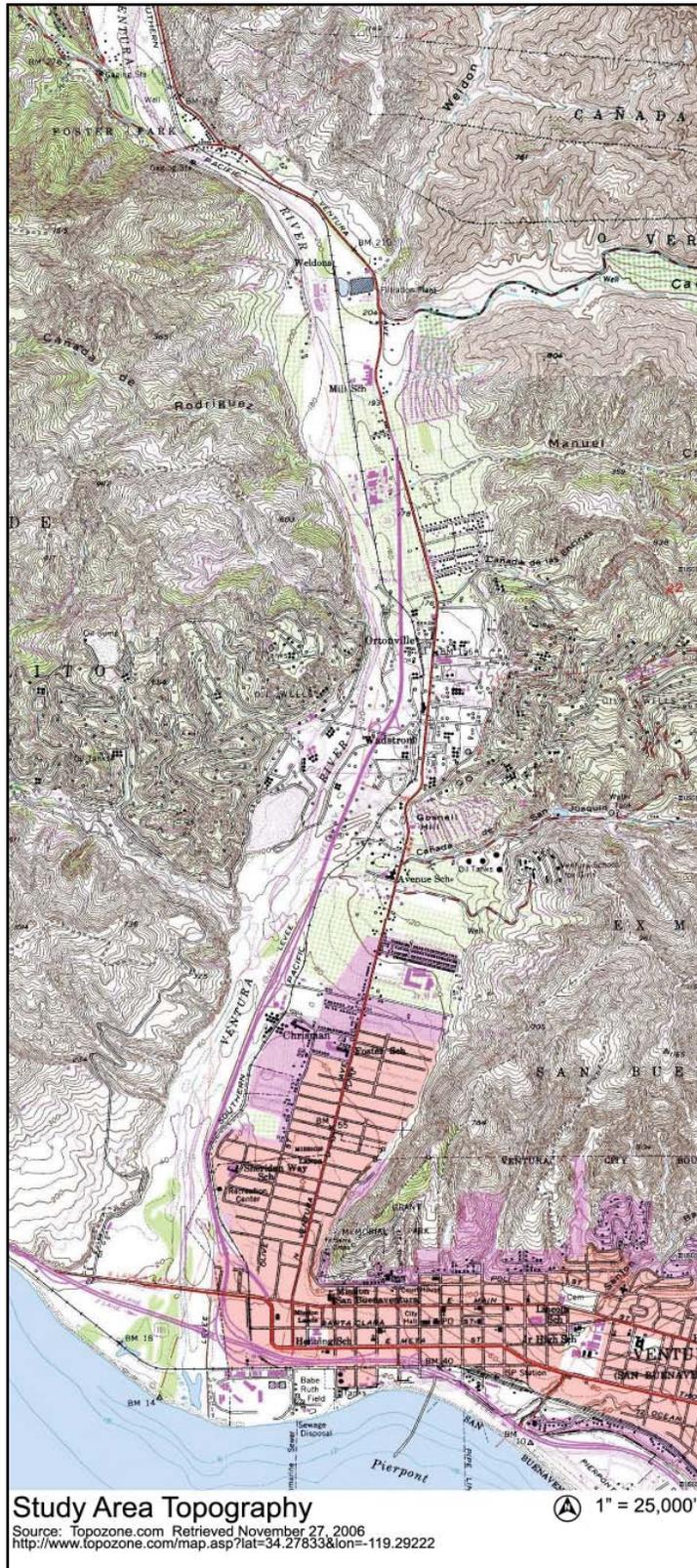
The Study Area contains soils with low, medium, and high expansive properties. The low expansive soils generally occur along the Ventura River though some are found in the hillsides. Medium expansive soils occur further away from the river and in the hillsides. Highly expansive soils occur in pockets throughout the hillside areas. Figure 2-2 shows the location of these soils throughout the Study Area.

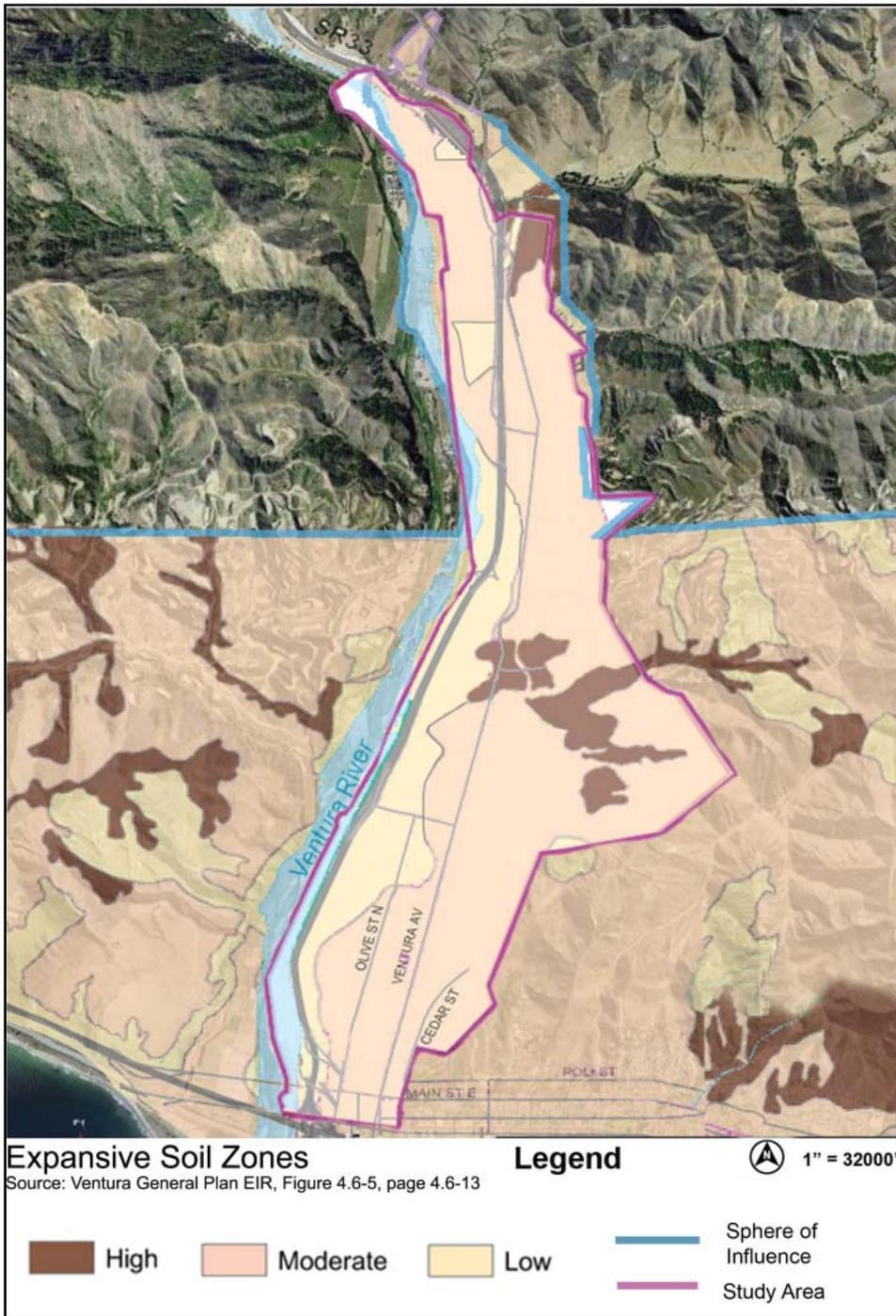
The Ventura General Plan and accompanying EIR provide different strategies to address expansive soils. Action 7.7 of the General Plan requires that all development in areas with moderate to high risk of expansive soils perform a geotechnical evaluation and implement mitigation measures prior to development. The California Building Code also has specific regulations pertaining to building on expansive soils. The General Plan EIR states that by following the CBC requirements and the General Plan Policies, impacts on expansive soils will be reduced to less than significant levels for any development scenario.

### **MINERAL RESOURCES**

The entire Study Area falls under the MRZ-3a mineral resources category. This category identifies areas in which there is a higher than normal potential of finding mineral resources. The Ventura General Plan, the General Plan EIR, and the Hillside Voter Participation Act all state that identification and preservation of mineral resources is a goal of the City.

**Figure 2-1:**  
Westside and North  
Avenue Topography



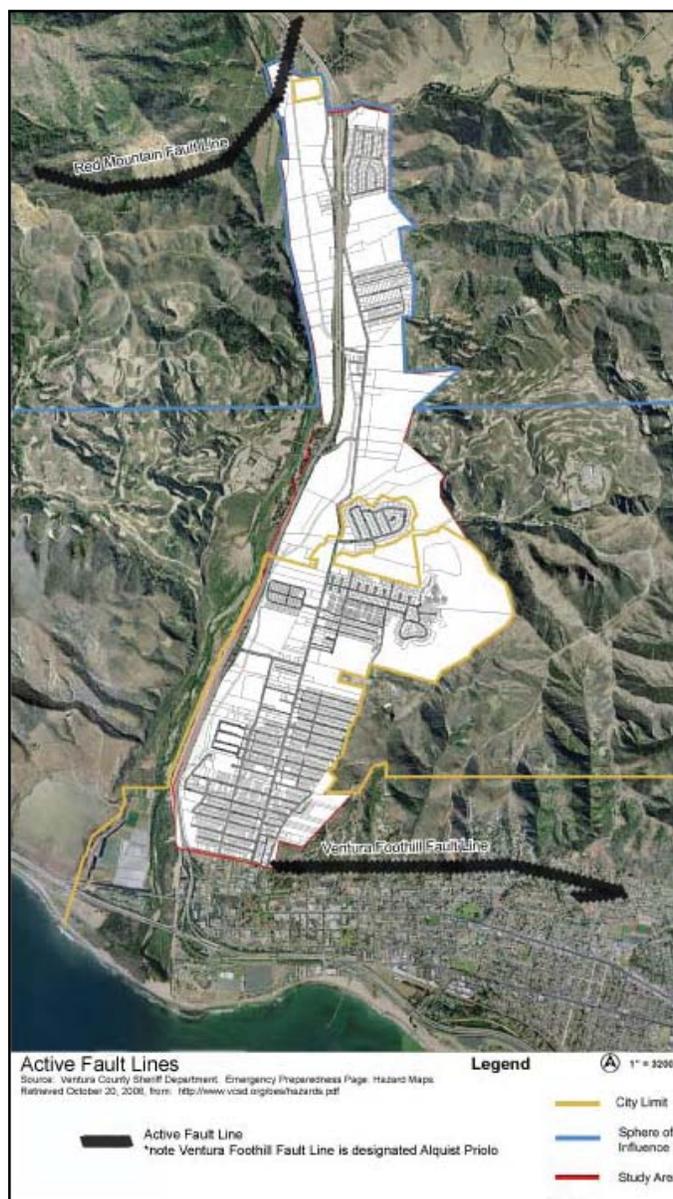


**Figure 2-2:**  
Expansive Soils in  
the Westside and  
North Avenue

### SEISMIC ACTIVITY

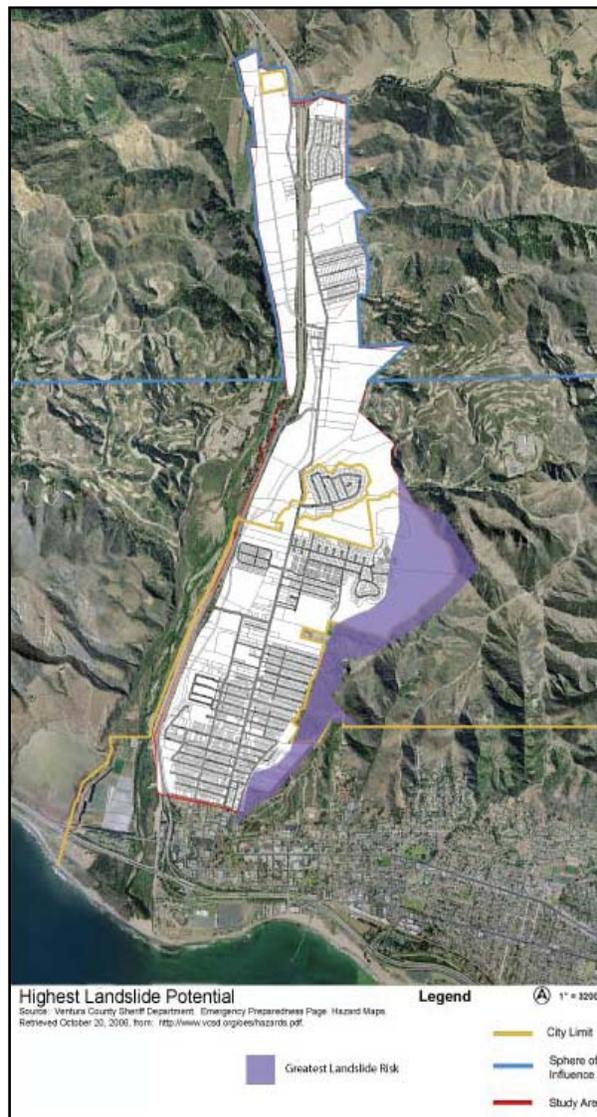
Two major fault-lines affect the Study Area (Figure 2-3). The Ventura-Foothill Fault is designated active by the State of California and falls under Alquist-Priolo legislation (2005 Ventura General Plan EIR, 4.6-2). The Red-Mountain Fault Zone is located outside the Study Area but its adjacency to the water filtration and waste-water treatment make it a concern. (City of Ventura Comprehensive Plan Background Report, 2002, XI-1). Earthquakes can cause ground rupture and initiate other hazards such as landslides, liquefaction, and dam failure.

**Figure 2-3:**  
Combined Map  
of all Fault Lines  
and Alquist-Priolo  
Designated Fault  
Zones



## LANDSLIDES

The only area of landslide concern to residents is along the south-eastern portion of the site which borders Grant Park. “The hillsides...east of Ventura Avenue and Cedar Street contain a number of existing landslides and are likely to experience future landslide activity”. Figure 2-4 shows landslides which have occurred in years past. All the hillsides to the east of the Study Area are covered by the City Hillside Management Program. The City Hillside Management Program “ties the amount, distribution, and quality of future development to topographical, geological and hydrological constraints in an effort to retain natural and scenic character and to minimize the danger to life and property from landsliding, erosion, fire, flooding, and water pollution”(2005 Ventura General Plan EIR, 4.6-5). The City Hillside Management Program will serve as a template for the type of development that should occur along the Ventura Foothills above Cedar Avenue.

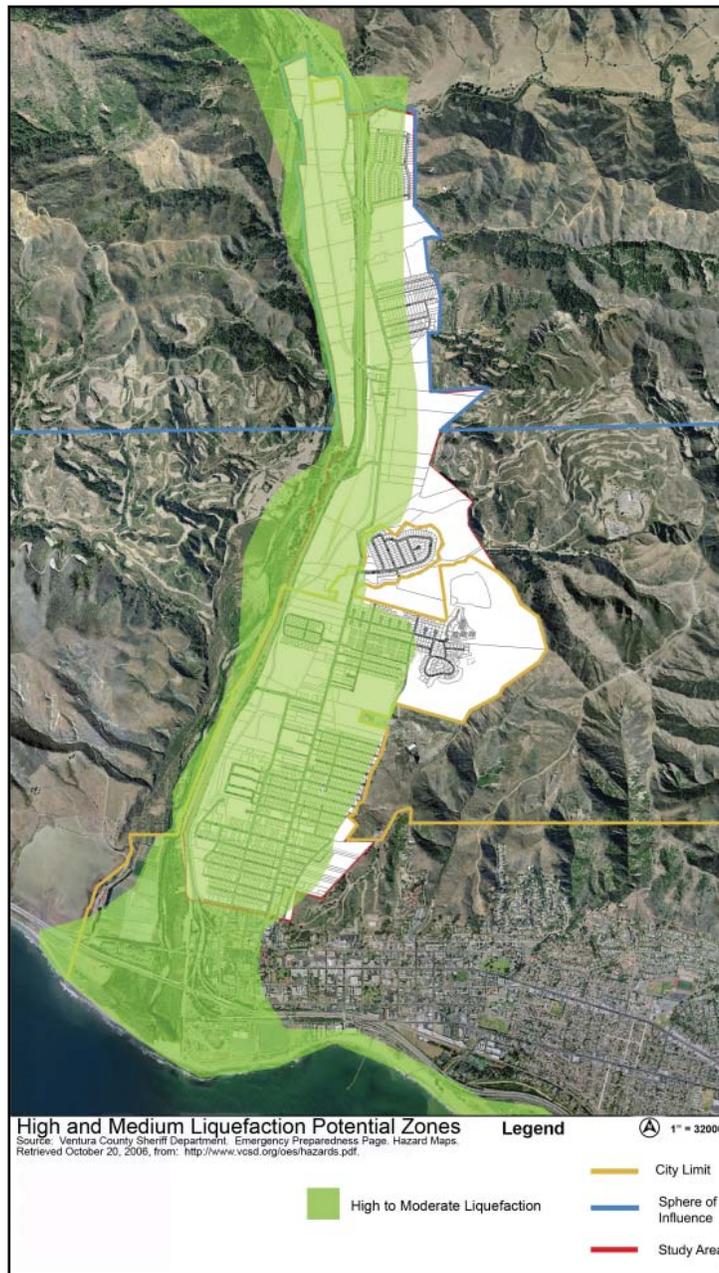


**Figure 2-4:**  
Landslides that have affected the Study Area

### LIQUEFACTION

Because the city is so close to the Pacific Ocean and the Study Area is so close to both the Pacific Ocean and the Ventura River, the potential for liquefaction is very high. Liquefaction can result in shifting of soils and tilting or sinking of structures. Figure 2-5 shows a combination of liquefaction and landslide potential in the Study Area. Liquefaction is a very important consideration as it affects the entire Study Area.

**Figure 2-5:**  
Liquefaction zones



## HYDROLOGY AND DRAINAGE

### VENTURA RIVER

The Ventura River runs north to south on the western edge of the Study Area. Historically, there was a rail line that ran along the river; however, this rail line no longer exists. A bike trail now runs along river following the old rail line. Currently, there are few access points to this trail from the Study Area.

The Ventura River is fed by barrancas and drainage channels and pipes coming from the surrounding hillsides. The Canada Larga Creek is one of these drainage channels. Figure 2-6 shows the Canada Larga Creek, as it appears east of Ventura Avenue. Like many of the other channels, this Creek has been channelized through the residential areas in order to minimize flooding in the area. Figure 2-7 shows Canada Larga Creek west of Ventura Avenue, where it has been left in a relatively natural state. The City would like to restore creeks such as Canada Larga to their natural state where feasible.



**Figure 2-6:** Canada Larga Creek East of Ventura Avenue

**Figure 2-7:** Canada Larga Creek West of Ventura Avenue

Source: Ventura General Plan EIR, Figure 4.4-3, page 4.4-19

The effects of the River extend beyond the river itself. The watershed provides the area with undisturbed open space, vegetation, wildlife habitat, park space, and aesthetic beauty. In order to preserve these extra benefits, the City initiated the Ventura River Estuary Program. This program addresses the need to preserve the river and associated marshlands.

There are some water quality concerns associated with the Ventura River, all of which are of low or medium concern. Algae and eutrophy are concerns, as they will use up the available oxygen in the water making it difficult for fish and other water dwelling animals to survive. There is also some concern that people are using the River as a dumping ground, with trash showing up in the river. Fecal coliform and total coliform has also been identified as an issue. However, this is thought to be a direct result of stables and horse properties upstream from the Study Area.

### DAMS

The Study Area is affected by two nearby dams. These two dams are the Casitas Dam and Matilija Dam. Figure 2-8 shows a regional map of where these dams are in relation to the Study Area.

Casitas Dam - The Casitas Dam was completed in 1959. It is on Coyote Creek, which forms Lake Casitas. It is located two miles above the junction of Coyote Creek and the Ventura River. The Casitas dam is an earthfill dam. It has a height of 334 feet and a crest length of 2000 feet. It contains a total of 250,000 acre feet of material. It stores water for those within the Casitas Municipal Water District, such as the City of Ventura. Unlike the other dams located within Ventura County, the Casitas dam is regulated by the Bureau of Reclamation. It is up to safety standards according to the Bureau of Reclamation and they conduct ongoing evaluations. The Casitas Dam is a major element of the Ventura River Project. The Ventura Water Project is a federal water project created by the Bureau of Reclamation in 1956. Its main function is to “capture the seasonal floodwaters that would otherwise ‘waste to the sea.’” (Bureau of Reclamation) This water supply is used for irrigation of land and is the source of municipal and industrial water to urban and suburban areas within the Casitas Municipal Water District. The main water source for this project is the Ventura River and its tributaries.

Matilija Dam - The second dam affecting the Westside is the Matilija Dam. It is located within the Los Padres National Forest on the west fork of Matilija Creek above the Matilija Hot Springs. It is about a half mile downstream of the beginning of the Ventura River. The dam is a concrete structure. It contains 1,800 acre feet of material. It is owned by the Ventura County Flood Control District and is regulated by the Division of Dam Safety. They inspect the dam twice a year. The Matilija Dam is in the process of being decommissioned. Through the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (2004) it was found that the dam has a major impact on the sand levels at the local beaches. The study also found that the Matilija dam no longer provides flood control for the lower Ventura River, its water capacity is decreasing and it restricts the migratory flow of Steelhead trout and other fish.



**Figure 2-8:**  
Regional Dams  
Affecting North  
Avenue and  
Westside Ventura  
  
Source: Google  
Earth

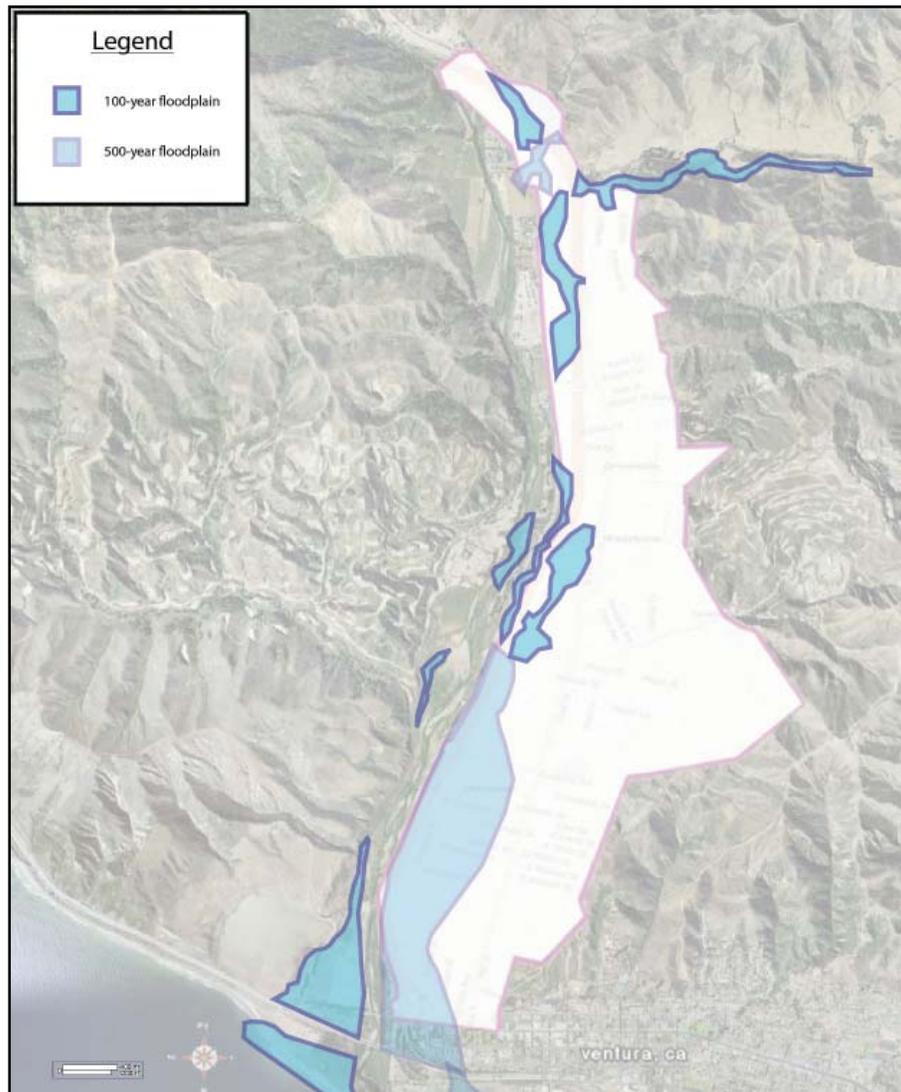
## FLOODS

The Ventura River and the two dams upstream make the Ventura Avenue corridor very prone to flooding. The largest flood occurred in 1969 when 13 people died. The wastewater treatment facility was also severely damaged, which caused about \$60 million in damages and spilled raw sewage onto local beaches. Since the 1969 flood, the Army-Corps of Engineers has reinforced the levee along Ventura River. Despite this major floods occurred in 1992, 1995, 1998, 2004 and 2005 twice resulting in the closure of SR 33 (2005 Ventura General Plan EIR, 4.8-8).

Much of the Study Area along Ventura River, and even farther inland at the northern portion of the Study Area, fall within the 100-year floodplain. More than half of the Study Area is within the 500-year floodplain (Figure 2-9). Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) only legislates areas within the 100-year floodplain. In the event of a tsunami the Ventura River would also flood.

**Figure 2-9:** FEMA 100 and 500 Year Flood Zones

Source: 2005 Ventura General Plan EIR, Section 4.8, Figure 4.8-4

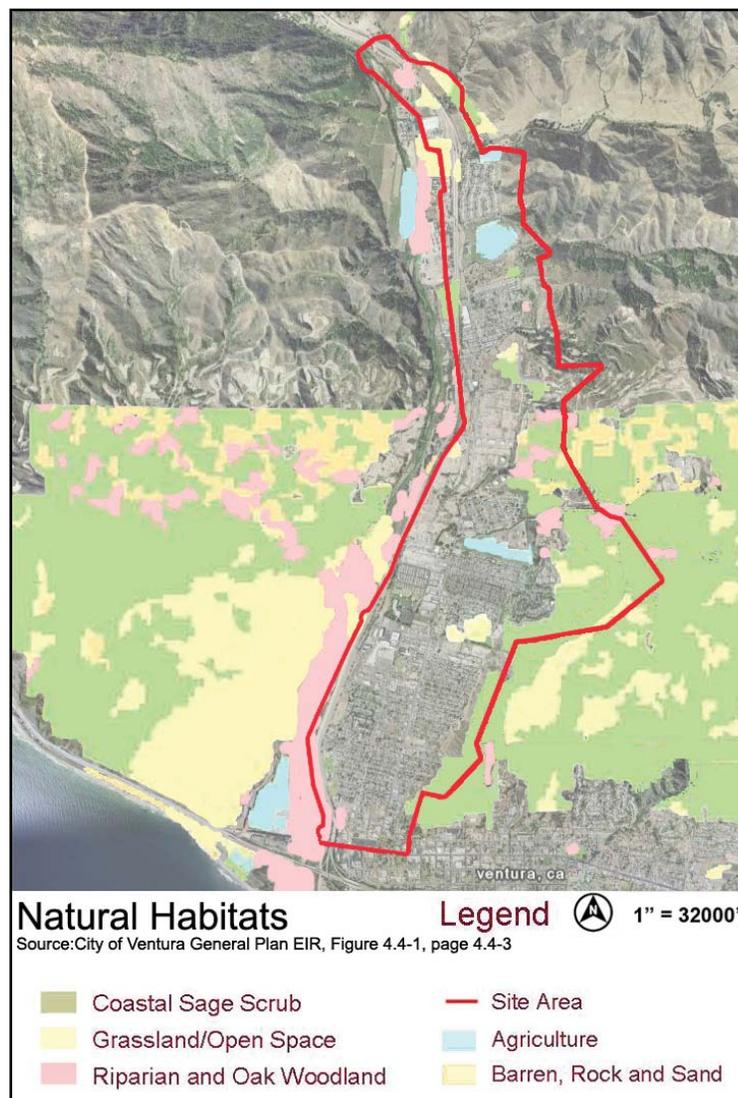


## BIOLOGY

### HABITATS

There are two main habitat zones in the Study Area. The first is focused on the Ventura River and is primarily a riparian habitat. This area includes Arroyo willow, western sycamore, cottonwood, and white elder.

The other habitat zone is in the hillsides that surround the site. The hillsides are predominantly chaparral with scattered riparian forests, grasslands, and oak woodlands. Figure 2-10 shows the location of these different types of habitat around the Study Area.



**Figure 2-10:**  
Natural Habitats

**SENSITIVE SPECIES**

There are a number of sensitive species of plants and animals in the Study Area. Table 2-1 contains a partial list of those that are found in the Study Area. The Steelhead and Rainbow trout use the Ventura River as a seasonal home. The Steelhead are listed on the federal government’s endangered species list. Due to the occurrence of sensitive species, the Department of Fish and Game has some authority over any future development that may impact the habitats of these species.

**Table 2-1:**  
Sensitive Plants  
and Animals Found  
in the Study Area

<b>Plants</b>	Ventura marsh milk-vetch, southern tarplant, Coulter’s goldfields
<b>Animals</b>	Anthropods: Monarch Butterfly
	Fish: Tidewater goby, Southern California Steelhead trout (seasonal), Rainbow trout (seasonal)
	Reptiles: Southwestern pond turtle
	Birds: Least Bell’s vireo, willow flycatcher, yellow warbler, and yellow-breasted chat

**MOUTH OF THE VENTURA RIVER**

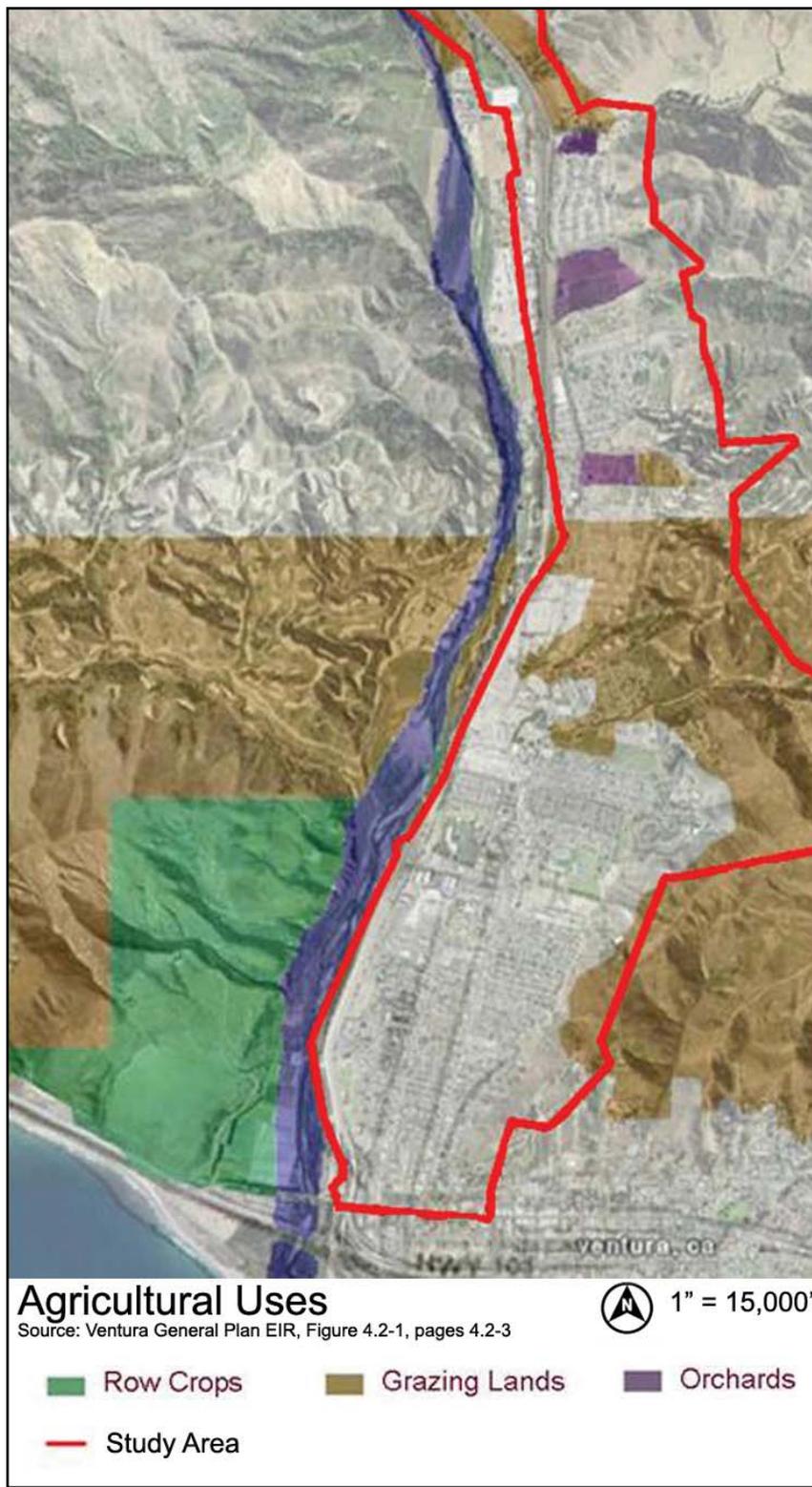
Though not in the specific Study Area, the mouth of the Ventura River at the Pacific Ocean is also a key element to take into consideration. This area is a breeding and feeding ground for a variety of species, including shorebirds, waterfowl, terrestrial animals, fish, and free swimming invertebrates. Any development or action in or around the River in the Study Area has the potential to impact the activity at the mouth of the River.

**AGRICULTURE**

**AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

The combination of nutrient rich soils, the proximity of water resources from the Ventura River, as well as runoff from the neighboring hillsides and the climate on the west side of Ventura, makes it prime land for agricultural uses. Therefore agriculture, and more specifically fruit and vegetable production, are vital parts of the regional economy in Ventura. Agriculture not only brings in vital tax dollars for the city and the county of Ventura, but it provides jobs for many of the residents of the Westside and North Avenue planning community.

There is a 55-acre lemon orchard located on Ventura Avenue bordered by residential uses on the north and south, industrial uses across Ventura Avenue to the west, and open hillsides to the east. Lemons are included on the list of the top five crops in the county. The other primary agricultural area in the sphere of influence of our project site is Taylor Ranch. It is listed as one of the planning communities in Ventura’s General plan, and it borders the Westside and North Avenue planning communities to the west. These agricultural land uses are shown in Figure 2-11. Currently the site is used to farm lima beans and other row crops. Because of the proximity of the ranch to the more urban uses of the Westside and North Avenue, there is competition for resources and land.



**Figure 2-11:**  
Agricultural Uses  
within North Avenue  
and Westside  
Ventura

### **SAVE OUR AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES (SOAR)**

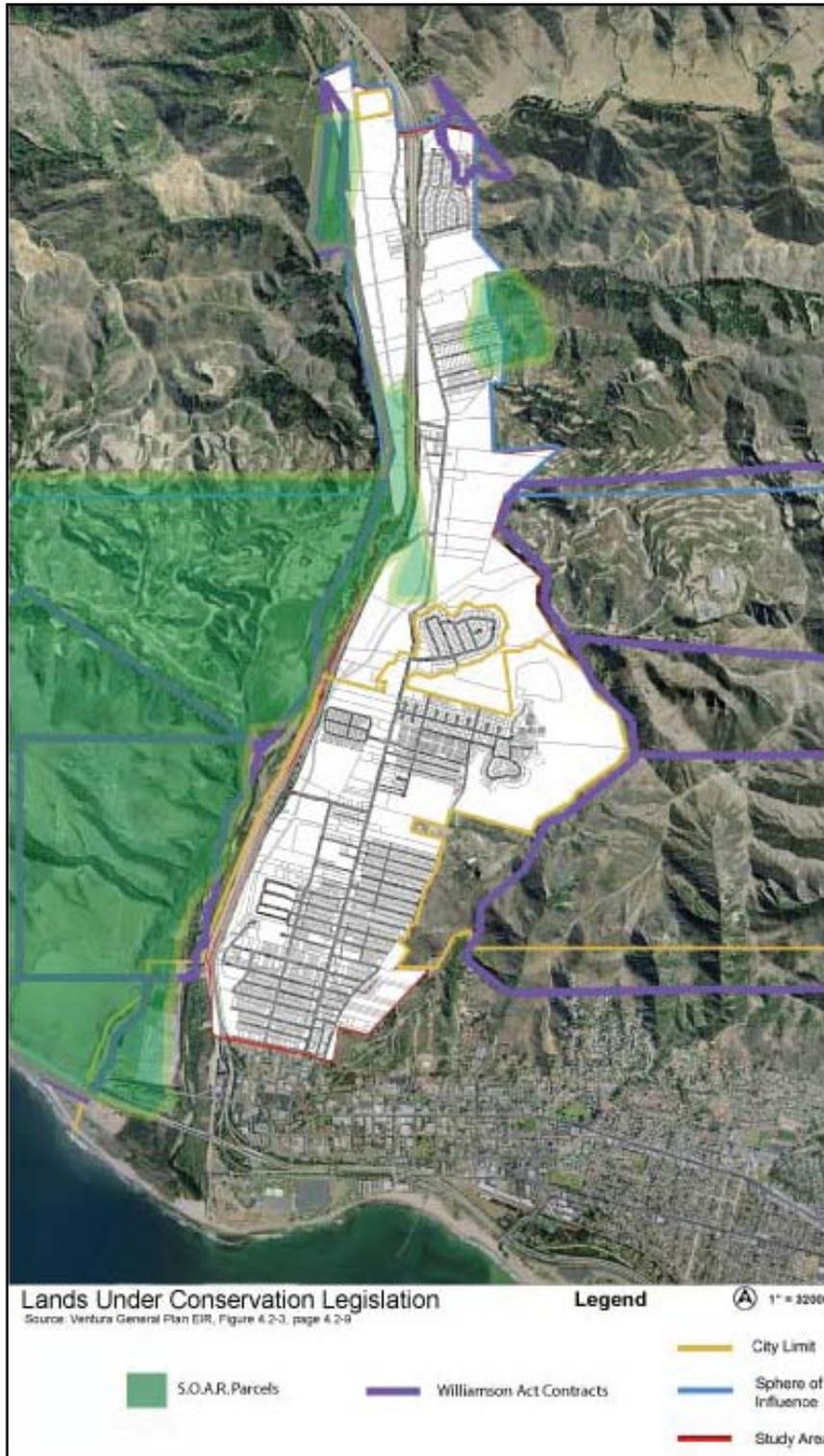
The Save Our Agricultural Resources (SOAR) ordinance, which was established in 1995, is another tool used to ensure the preservation of the agricultural land in Ventura. SOAR designated parcels within the Study Area can be seen in Figure 2-12. In addition, The Ventura County Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources Initiative (also known as Measure B) was passed by Ventura voters in 1998. This implements Objective 4 of the Comprehensive Plan, which states the desire to, “Continue to preserve agricultural and other open space lands within the City’s Planning Area.” Both of these pieces of legislation prevent changes in land use categories to non-agricultural or non-open space uses without voter approval. This means that the City Council cannot plan to reduce the amount of agricultural or open space area in the region without a majority vote by the public at least until the year 2030. The SOAR ordinance is also in place to help mitigate and monitor issues involving urban encroachment onto the agricultural areas.

### **WILLIAMSON ACT**

One of the primary tools used to protect agricultural lands in the state of California is the Land Conservation Act (LCA) or Williamson contract program. This act allows for landowners to enter into a contract that states that the landowners will keep their land in agricultural uses for at least ten years in return for reduced property tax assessments on their land. The land located within Taylor Ranch, as well as the hillsides to the east, are currently under Williamson Act Contracts (Figure 2-12). The tax assessments are based on open space and agricultural land, which is assessed far lower than if they were done on the full market value of the land in the area. The contracts are automatically renewed annually, unless the landowner provides notice of non renewal.

### **RIGHT TO FARM ORDINANCE**

Additionally, a Right-to-Farm ordinance was approved by the City in 1997. This ordinance serves to protect farmers from legal implications regarding the conflicts that may arise as a result of the close proximity of agricultural to other uses. The ordinance requires that realtors inform possible buyers of lots that abut agricultural uses of any and all conflicts that may arise as a result of this proximity. The ordinance also states that nuisance claims may not be filed against farmers as long as their agricultural practices are being performed according to current regulations and standards.



**Figure 2-12:** SOAR and Williamson Act Location Map within North Avenue and Westside Ventura

**FIRE**

The hillsides to the east of the Study Area are constantly subject to wildfires. Over the last thirty years, fires have affected the entire hillside (Figure 2-13). This area also lies within the City Hillside Management Program. The City of Ventura Fire Department and the Ventura County Fire Department recommend various techniques for fire-risk reduction.

**Figure 2-13:**  
Fire Potential



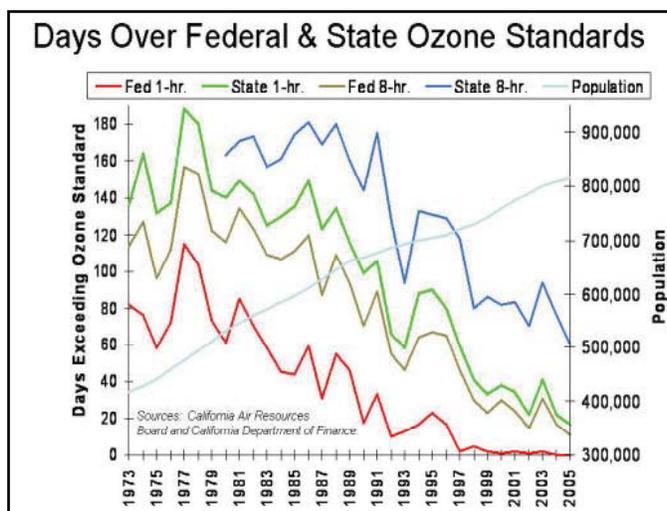
## AIR QUALITY

The Study Area is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin and monitored by the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District. Because of the close proximity of the Study Area to the Ojai Planning Area the emissions from the Ojai Valley airshed can seriously affect the air quality in the North Avenue and Westside planning communities. The air quality is monitored by stations in El Rio as well as a Station at Emma Wood State Beach. Data from the Ojai monitoring station is also applicable to the Study Area.

The major sources of air pollution in Ventura are from automobiles, agricultural equipment and trucks on city streets and main highways. Emissions from the use of pesticides, production of the oil industry, and electric utilities also diminish the air quality in the area. Dust from the roads, agricultural operations and construction also negatively affect the air quality on the Westside. Emissions from diesel vehicles accounts for nearly 70 percent of the pollutants in the air.

While the ozone levels at El Rio did not exceed state or federal standards during 2002 – 2003, the state standards were exceeded four days from 2003-2004 at the Emma Wood Station. The state and federal standards were also exceeded many times at the Ojai station during the years from 2002-2003. Although that district does not directly cover the Westside and North Avenue areas, because of metrological and physical constraints the quality of the air in Ojai can seriously affect the air in and above the Study Area.

In recent years there has been a downward trend in the days that air quality has been above standards; meaning that air quality has significantly improved (Figure 2-14). The increase in Air Quality can be attributed to both the California Clean Air Act and the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) of the County. The California Clean Air act reduced the state standards for air quality, making them stricter than the federal standards. As a result, automobile emissions were forced to seriously decrease, which led to the increase in air quality statewide.

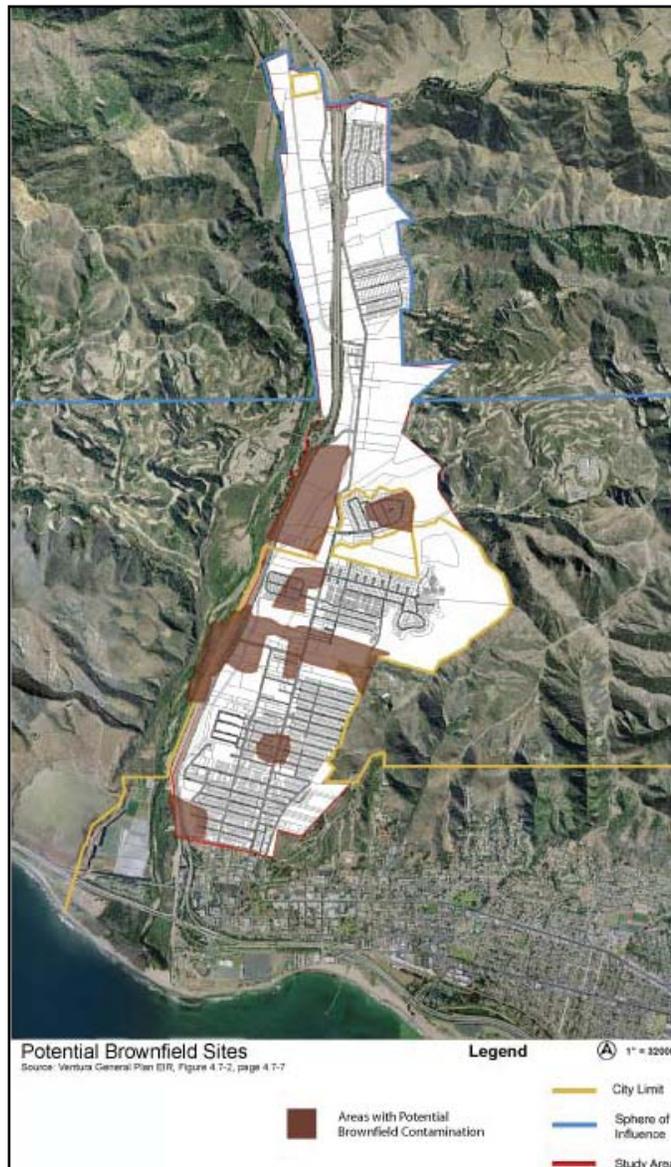


**Figure 2-14:**  
Days over Federal & State Ozone Standards for the County of Ventura  
Source: Ventura County Air Pollution Control District Website, [www.vcapcd.org](http://www.vcapcd.org)

## BROWNFIELDS

Within the Study Area there are 30 brownfield sites. They are scattered throughout the Westside and North Avenue areas. Figure 2-15 shows the location of brownfields within the Study Area. Brownfields through the EPA are defined as “real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.” Not all brownfield sites in the Study Area have been identified or labeled as brownfields because of the EPA’s strict restrictions on funding for brownfields containing petroleum. For example, old gas stations have been left out of the Westside Brownfield Project. These brownfield sites pose a big hindrance to the revitalization of the project area.

**Figure 2-15:**  
Brownfield  
Locations within the  
Study Area



## **HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF THE WESTSIDE OIL INDUSTRY**

The history of the City of Ventura includes a great deal of industrial activities. In 1910 the Ventura Avenue Oil Field was discovered. In the 20 years following the Ventura Avenue Oil Field discovery, the population of the Westside had doubled from 5,000 to 10,000. By the late 1920s the Westside and North Avenue was producing 57,000 barrels of oil per day. There were 113 oil wells in the area. Due to the major boom in the oil industry, many new merchants that specialized in oil specific products and services moved into the Westside. Some of these merchants included machine shops, chemical suppliers welding shops, scrap metal recyclers, a rock quarry and salvage yards. This created many more jobs for the people living in the area and incentives for people to move into the area. This boom in the oil industry continued until the 1970s when the rate of oil production started to wane. Within the next twenty years, many of the merchants that had located themselves into town had either moved or closed down their business. This left the city with many abandoned sites and reduced investment in the area. These sites having once been used for industrial purposes have created the perception that all the sites have considerable contamination.

## **CURRENT STATE OF THE BROWNFIELDS**

Several of the brownfield sites that were once prosperous during the oilfield boom still look much the same as they did when they were first constructed. Many were built on large properties because they needed the space for their large-scale operations, but now since the oil industry is not operating at the magnitude it once was, these facilities “appear to be less active ... suggesting that these properties may be underutilized.” (Historical Overview, 2001, 15) Many of the industrial properties were never connected to the city’s sewer system. These sites are located through out the Study Area, but a large concentration of the sites found north of Stanley Avenue. They disposed of their wastes into on-site septic tanks and leech fields. Due to this fact, there exists the potential for contamination in these areas to the soil and ground water.

In order to assess what contaminants might be present on these brownfield sites, the EPA’s Industry Fact Sheet is used. Any possible contaminants that are present depend on the prior use of the site. Table 2-2 shows the contaminants that might be present at any given site due to their prior use.

**Table 2-2:** Possible Contaminates by Industry Site

Industry Type	Potential Contaminants	Typical Operations
Oilfield and Oilfield Services	Toxic metals, petroleum solvents, chlorinated solvents, semivolatile hydrocarbons, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)	Oil production and handling, oil tool, welding, and machine shops, vacuum truck services, equipment storage yards, waste disposal, wireline, perforation
Scrap Metal and Salvage Yards	Toxic metals, petroleum solvents, chlorinated solvents, semivolatile hydrocarbons, PCBs)	Meal recycling, equipment scrapping, waste disposal, auto salvage, vehicle scrapping
Chemical Facilities	Toxic metals, petroleum solvents, chlorinated solvents, semivolatile hydrocarbons, caustics & acids, PCBs.	Chemical supply, refineries, natural gas processing/compression plants, bulk fuel storage/sales.
Quarry Sites	Toxic metals, petroleum solvents, chlorinated solvents, semivolatile hydrocarbons, explosive charges.	Rock quarries, mining, processing, mixing

From the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, the city has been able to conclude which areas would be most likely to contain brownfield sites. These areas have been identified as locating:

- Along the north and south side of Stanley Avenue
- Along Ventura Ave. at various location and near the intersection of Franklin Ln.
- West of Ventura Avenue north of Barry Lane
- On both sides of Rocklite Road
- Between Olive Street and Highway 33, north of West Lewis Street
- North of Main Street along Julian and Peking Streets
- Along West Park Row and Dubbers Street
- Along Olive Street immediately north and south of Main Street
- Along Ventura Ave, north of Thompson Boulevard

## **BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT, FUNDING PROGRAMS & REGULATIONS**

Due to the difficulties related to revitalizing areas that are designated as brownfield sites, many initiative and funding programs have been created. In order for a brownfield site to be considered for potential funding, it must be determined that an actual release or substantial threat of release of a hazardous substance is present. The amount of petroleum contamination on the site is also a factor in site's eligibility for potential funding. These programs also have many regulations. Some of the programs are The Department of Housing and Urban Development Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program, Department of Transportation Livable Communities Program, Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, various programs through the Department of the Interior, State Department of Toxic Substances Control Cleanup Loans and Environmental Assistance to Neighborhoods (CLEAN) Brownfields Loan Program and the Brownfield Assessment Demonstration Pilot Program. Ventura has a program underway with the main purpose of locating the brownfield sites within the City and assess which are optimal for revitalization.

### **BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

The Brownfield Assessment Program has selected the Westside of Ventura to be a part of its two year program. "EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields." ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov), 2006) For the Assessment Pilot Program there must be a perception that there may be a substantial hazardous release on the property. However, the EPA will not assist with brownfield sites contaminated with petroleum. They have strict rules dealing with the presence of petroleum on a site that are outlined in the "petroleum exclusion." Because of the petroleum exclusion act only those sites that have contamination other than by petroleum have been thoroughly considered in previous studies of the area thus making it hard to identify all potential brownfield sites.

The Study Area cannot receive EPA funding because of petroleum contamination. The EPA states that "for petroleum-contaminated sites to be eligible for Brownfields grant funds, the EPA or the state must determine: that the sites are of "relatively low-risk" compared with other "petroleum-only" sites in the state; and the sites have no viable responsible party; and the funding will be used by a party that is not potentially liable for the petroleum contamination to assess, investigate, or clean up the site. In addition, petroleum-contaminated sites must not be subject to a corrective action order under the Resources Conservation and Recovery Act." (Environmental , 2006)

It is not yet clear which, if any, sites contain petroleum, or which sites are still candidates for funding through the EPA.

### **WESTSIDE BROWNFIELD PROJECT**

The Westside Brownfield Project, sponsored by the City of Ventura with the help of the Westside Community Council, has been in progress since the early 1990s. The City's main efforts through the project are to identify the brownfield sites within the Westside, locate the sites that possess the most potential for revitalization, assess the amount of contamination on the brownfield sites and design strategies for the sites that are selected. Only properties that are volunteered have been included in the Westside Brownfield Project. The Historical Overview: The Ventura Brownfield Project A Look at the Environmental History of Ventura's Westside is one of the city's first efforts as part of this project and contains a great deal of the existing information on Ventura's brownfields.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

#### **GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND EROSION**

A number of geologic constraints limit development within portions of the Study Area. The City's goal, as stated in the General Plan, would limit uses that would exploit the mineral resources still abundant in the hillsides surrounding Ventura Avenue.

The soils in the Study Area have varying degrees of expansion. The highly expansive soils are located in the hillside areas. The majority of the Study Area contains soils of low or moderate expansion. Through adherence to applicable section of the California Building Code and General Plan Action 7.7, impacts due to expansive soils will be reduced to less than significant levels.

Fault lines are a concern and should be accounted for in design guidelines as laid out in the Safety Element of the Ventura General Plan Policy 7B to "Minimize risks from geologic and flood hazards." Also, areas within the Alquist-Priolo zones must be identified for mitigation purposes, such as setback requirements administered by the Alquist Priolo Act.

Landslides are a pressing issue on the hillsides to the east of Cedar Avenue. Because of previous landslides and continued vulnerability, this hillside is overseen by the City Hillside Management Program. Development along and above Cedar Avenue, should be sensitive to the requirements of the Hillside Management Program. The Hillside Management program restricts development on slopes greater than 30 percent. The 2005 General Plan, Policy 7B Action 7.7 "requires geotechnical analysis and mitigation prior to development of any site within an area with slopes greater than 10 percent or with the potential for landsliding."

With such a high percentage of the Study Area susceptible to liquefaction, design and density sensitivity should be used. The General Plan Safety Element, Policy 7B, Action 7.6 states that the City adopt building codes that follow the California Building Code and the International Code Council. Action 7.7 also warrants “geotechnical evaluations and mitigation prior to development in areas mapped as having moderate or high risk of liquefaction, subsidence or expansive soils.”

### **HYDROLOGY AND DRAINAGE**

The Ventura River, the two dams to the north of the Study Area, and the Ocean are contributing factors to hydrologic life of the Study Area. The river, which provides aesthetic beauty and water to farmers, can also flood into the Ventura Avenue neighborhoods. The river currently contains few access points for pedestrians or bikers on the adjacent bike trail. The Community Development Department has expressed an interest in extending a Grant Park trail to the Ventura River bike trail. Beautification and accessibility issues would need to be addressed before the river could become a public recreational resource.

The Ventura River, its northern dams and connecting creeks pose high risk of flooding. The FEMA 100-year flood zone applies to a portion of the Study Area. Exact location of these zones must be assessed to prepare the proper design guidelines. FEMA and the National Flood Insurance Program will be consulted closely regarding development in these areas.

The barrancas are currently lined with concrete and the Ventura General Plan aims to restore them to their natural state. Natural restoration would probably result in increased erosion.

The dams on the site are the Casitas Dam and Matilija Dam. The Matilija Dam is in the process of being decommissioned, however the Casitas Dam has a large enough capacity so that the watershed of the Study Area should not be significantly affected.

### **BIOLOGY**

Fire hazards make the hillside to the east of Cedar Avenue a high priority. It is managed by the City Hillside Management Program. The City of Ventura Fire Department and the Ventura County Fire Department have an open active program to encourage city officials, the fire department and residents to be active in their roles to prevent damage from fires. The Safety Element of the General Plan, Policy 7C, Action 7.12 wants development plans referred to the fire department to “assure adequacy of structural fire protection, access for firefighting, water supply and vegetation clearance.”

### **AIR QUALITY**

The air quality in the Ventura area has increased in recent years as a result of the California Clean Air Act and their Air Quality Management Plan. These two plans are in place to enforce the State and Federal Standards and to help in the organization of efforts to reduce air pollution.

### **AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

Because of the location of the agricultural lands in and around the Westside and North Avenue communities, there is a large amount of competition with the industrial, commercial, and residential uses for irrigation water. As a result of the rising value of land in the Ventura area, it is increasingly less financially feasible for farm owners to purchase abutting land parcels to expand their farming operations. The diversity in uses surrounding the agricultural land is also becoming a problem. Agricultural uses conflict with commercial and residential uses by dust from farming operations, noise, and livestock associated odors and possible pollution from runoff of pesticides. The agricultural community's primary complaints of the conflicts in land use include the effects of dust from nearby construction on crops and livestock, trespassing, littering/dumping, and theft, and pressures to sell farmland acreage for conversion to other uses.

### **BROWNFIELDS**

Because of the previous prominence of the oil industry, there are a large number of potentially contaminated Brownfield sites within the Study Area. These sites are mostly located in the North Avenue region. With the Brownfield Assessment Program as well as the Westside Brownfield Project, all of the sites and their hazards and contaminants will be identified. Once it is known exactly what the potential risks are, and then the land use options for those affected areas can be properly determined.

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*Population and  
Housing*

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**Chapter**

**3**

### INTRODUCTION

The unique populations and housing characteristics of the Study Area have been established through reviewing data from primary and secondary sources. Based on the findings, the study area consists of a older, single family homes and younger, mostly Hispanic families. There are drastic differences in ethnicity and culture between the Westside and the City of Ventura as a whole. This chapter provides the data which sets the demographic and economic context for the Westside and reveals planning opportunities and constraints.

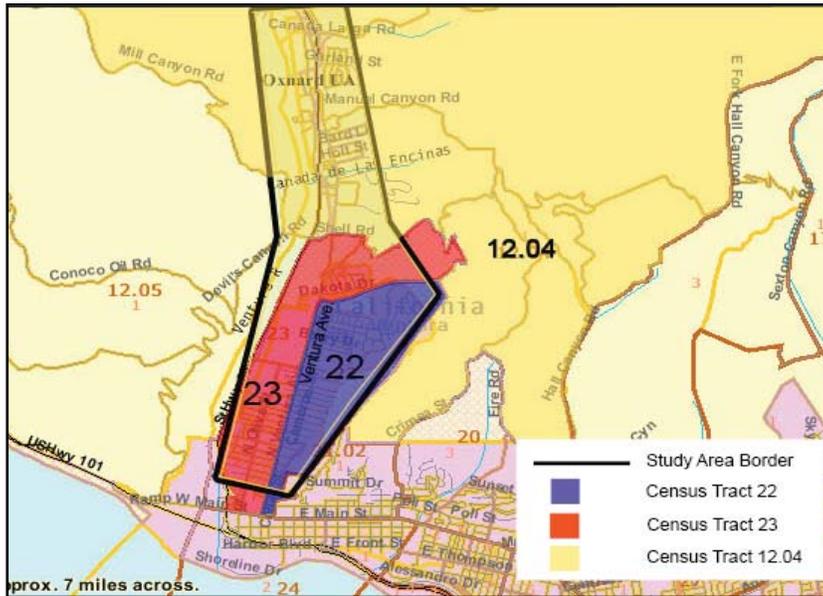
The Westside and North Avenue neighborhoods of San Buenaventura are home for about 14,111 people. Data from the U.S. Census, Westside Revitalization Plan, the Ventura General Plan, and other sources, illustrate the basic characteristics of the demographics and housing of the Study Area. Population topics focus on age composition, race and ethnicity, income characteristics, as well as education. Housing topics concentrate on housing supply, type, condition and age, housing costs, vacancy rates and affordability. Data was collected through several site visits, which was necessary to provide context and personification to otherwise lifeless figures.

### METHODOLOGY

Population and housing data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data for the study area was collected on three separate site visits. Secondary data was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau, Trulia.com, City of Ventura, Westside Revitalization Plan, Comprehensive Background Report, and the Ventura General Plan. Comparing these sources provided a strong base of information that gave a general context of the population and housing stock characteristics.

On all three site visits the team was able to conduct a visual assessment of the Westside as well as a preliminary review of the area. This primary data has been incorporated into all aspects of the project.

The study area is located within census tracts 22, 23, and 12.04 (see Figure 3.1). Census tracts 22 and 23 are within city limits and are almost completely included within the study area boundaries. Census tract 12.04 is located in Ventura County and contains the northern section of the study area. Although it is county land, this area is within the City's sphere of influence.



**Figure 3-1:** Census Tracts  
Source: US Census Bureau

Since the study area is concerned with only a small portion of Census Tract 12.04 it is difficult to obtain accurate numbers. Therefore, North Avenue is included only in total population and the projected growth of the study area. In order to find the estimated population, the City of Ventura staff provided an approximated number of existing housing units in the North Avenue, and this number was multiplied by the average household size in Ventura as a whole (2.5 persons per household). This calculation gave us a population of around 1,000 for North Avenue. This was the most accurate information that was obtained on the North Avenue area, all of other graphs and tables only represent data collected from the Westside (or the area within city limits), unless otherwise specified.

## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

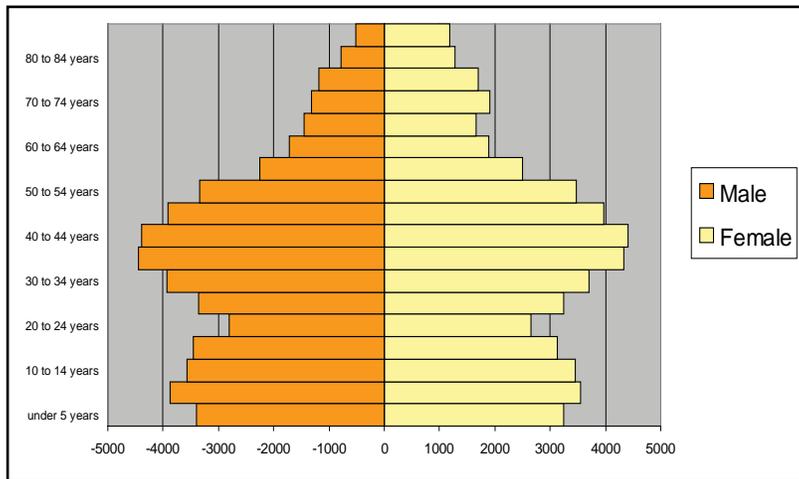
### POPULATION

As of 2005, Ventura City had 106,096 residents with the Westside accounting for 13% of that total with 14,111 residents. Since 1980 the Westside has seen a steady growth rate of 2% per year and the General Plan estimates a total population of 18,433 in 2025, a 31% increase.

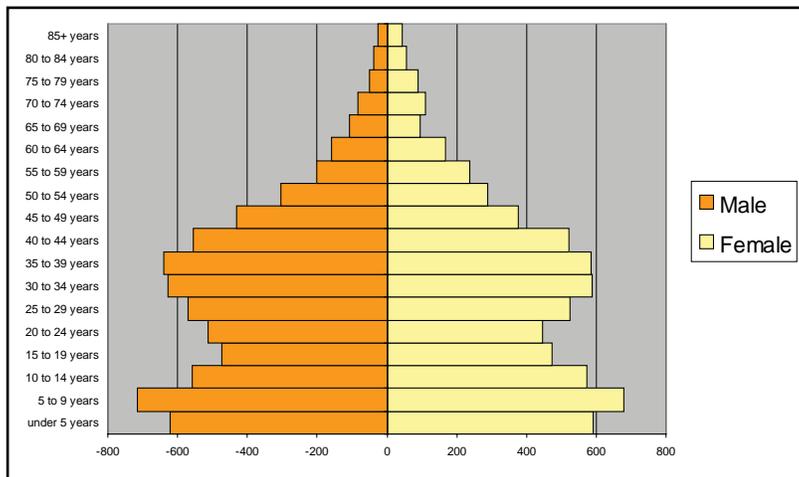
**AGE**

Westside consists of a younger population when compared to the entire City of Ventura (see Figures 3-2 and 3-3). The median age in Ventura is currently 36, while median age in Westside is between the ages of 28-31. This younger population will require different needs and should be considered in any future planning efforts.

**Figure 3-2:** Ventura Age Distribution  
Source: 2000 US Census Bureau

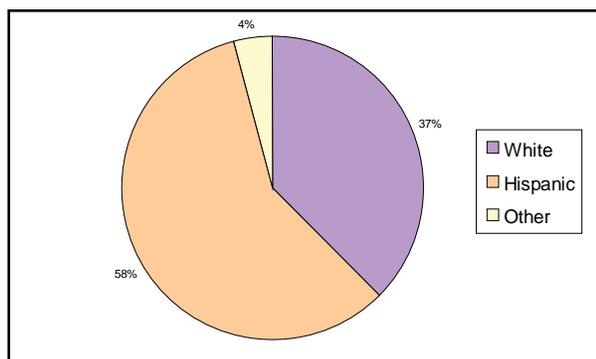


**Figure 3-3:** Westside Age Distribution  
Source: 2000 US Census Bureau

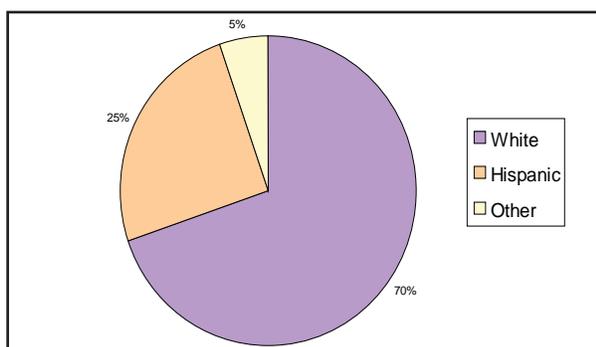


**RACE AND ETHNICITY**

The neighborhood of the Westside predominantly consists of Hispanics/Latinos (see Figure 3-4). In comparison, the City of Ventura is largely made up of white residents (see Figure 3-5). The Hispanic culture also presents different needs in addition to a unique neighborhood character that must be carefully considered.



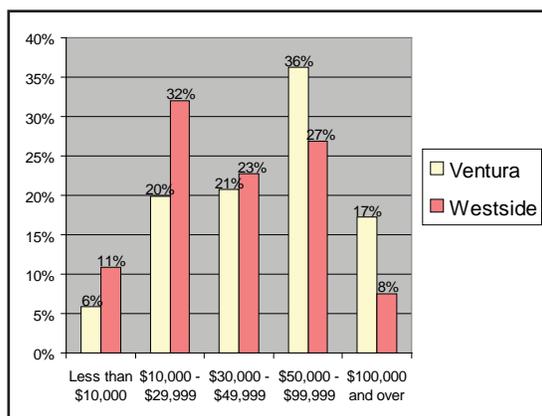
**Figure 3-4:** Race and Ethnicity in the Westside  
Source: 2000 US Census Bureau



**Figure 3-5:** Race and Ethnicity in Ventura  
Source: 2000 US Census Bureau

### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Household income in the Westside is much lower than that of the City of Ventura. The larger percentage (32%) of Westside residents earn an income of between \$10,000 and \$29,000 a year, whereas a larger percentage (36%) of Ventura residents make between \$50,000 and \$99,000 (see Figure 3-6). Additionally, white residents in Westside make a higher average income than Hispanics. According to the 2000 US Census, white residents had a median income of \$37,119 in 1999, while Hispanic residents had a median income of \$33,433.

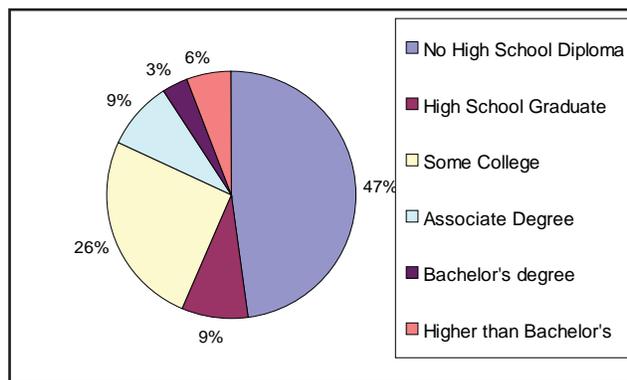


**Figure 3-6:** Household Income in Ventura and the Westside  
Source: 2000 US Census Bureau

### EDUCATION

The entire study area is served by the Ventura Unified School District. There are two elementary schools and one junior high school, as well as Brooks Institute in North Avenue, which is privately operated. The area is close to the high school and area community colleges. Nearly half of the population in Westside has not received a high school diploma and 82% of the population has not received any college degree (see Figure 3-7). However, 6% of the population has received higher than a bachelor's degree.

**Figure 3-7:**  
Educational  
Attainment (adults  
25 and older) in the  
Westside  
Source: 2000 US  
Census Bureau



### HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

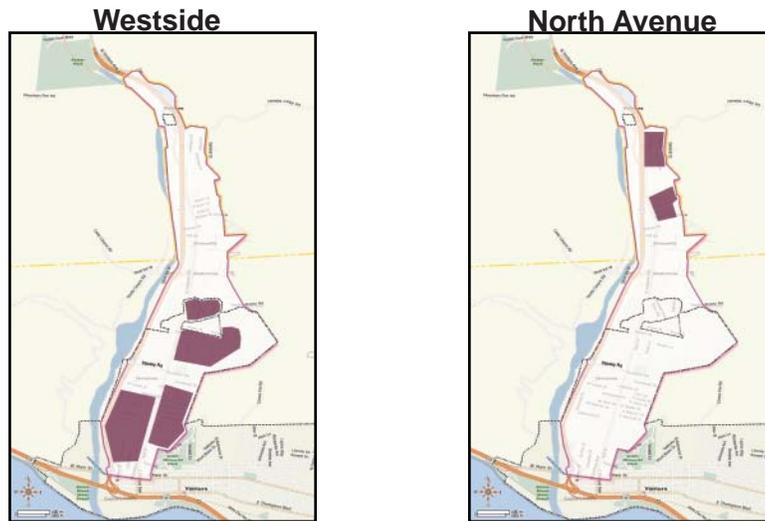
#### SUPPLY

There are 4,184 housing units in the Westside and North Avenue. There are also 190 proposed residential units that lie in various stages of the development process as of November, 2006.

#### SIZE AND TYPE

The units found in the Westside, census tracts 22 and 23, are mostly smaller units consisting of one and two bedroom single-family homes (see table 3-1). In addition, there are several multiple family units. During the initial site visit, it was clear that single-family detached homes were the main housing type.

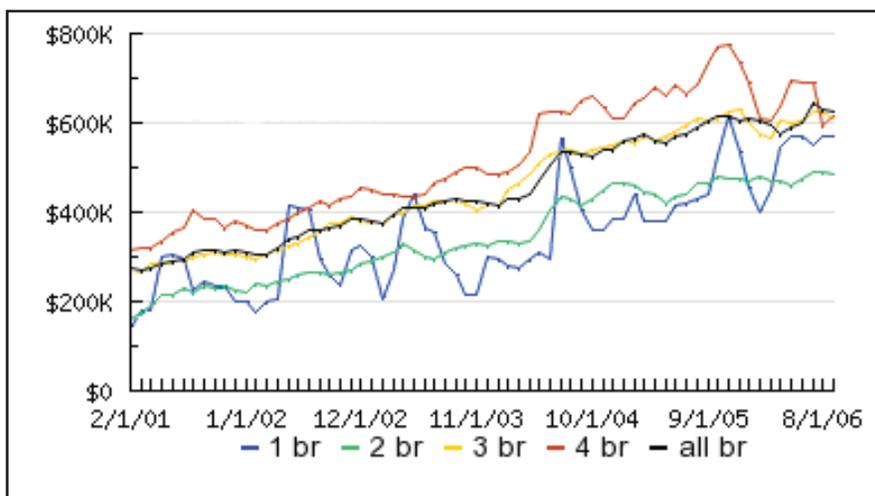
Some single family detached homes have second units, increasing the density of the area neighborhoods. There are also apartment buildings, town homes, and mobile home parks located sporadically throughout the Westside. Newer multi-family units have recently been built along Ventura Avenue. The North Avenue mainly consists of larger, older, single family homes concentrated in two main areas. The main neighborhoods in the Westside and North Avenue can be seen in Figure 3-8.



**Figure 3-8:**  
Neighborhoods in  
the Study Area  
Source: MapQuest

### HOUSING COST

According to the Westside Economic Initiative, housing in the Westside consists of the lowest priced units in the City of Ventura. According to Trulia.com, a real estate database website, the average listed home price within the Westside is \$690,000 and housing prices range from as low as \$389,000 to a high of \$2,799,000. The median sale price of a home on the market in the Westside as of November, 2006 is \$485,000. All of these figures include both attached and detached residential units. The average listed price of a home city-wide is \$742,800. Prices in the area reflect the current housing “boom” in California. Figure 3-9 shows the rising cost trend for all home sizes in Ventura. Although these costs are high, the area serves as the most viable option for first time home buyers.



**Figure 3-9:**  
Housing costs in  
Ventura  
Source: www.trulia.  
com

**AFFORDABILITY**

Affordability is determined by a number of key factors. Housing affordability is an issue that is managed at all levels of government from the city level to the federal level. There are programs at every level of government to address the issues posed by the growing cost of housing. Every program has a unique structure, approach, and set of solutions to deal with affordability, but each program must rely on a consistent set of standards that determine what is affordable. These standards originate from guidelines that are published at the federal level by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, (HUD). According to federal standards, housing is considered affordable if it costs 30% or below of household income. If a household is spending more than 30% of gross income on housing costs, whether on rent or on a mortgage, the house is not considered affordable. The California Department of Housing and Community Development, (HCD) publishes standards, which include methods of how to determine the affordability of housing. The calculation is based on median income, family size, housing cost, and dwelling size. The City of San Buenaventura uses these standards to compile calculations of affordability on a city-wide basis as well as calculations at the neighborhood level. According to the Westside Economic Initiative, housing in the Westside is the most affordable in the City of Ventura. Despite this fact, the homes in the Westside are not affordable when calculated using the provisions provided by HUD and HCD.

**Table 3-1:**  
Affordability  
Calculations

Westside Median Income	Income (Pre-tax)	Affordable Payment	Amount which can be financed*	Affordable Rent
Census Tract 12.04	\$ 49,089	\$ 1,878	\$ 210,795 - \$ 224,763	\$ 1,127
Census Tract 22	\$ 40,854	\$ 1,701	\$ 190,985 - \$ 203,640	\$ 1,021
Census Tract 23	\$ 29,219	\$ 1,216	\$ 136,561 - \$ 145,611	\$ 730
Median Income Avg.	\$ 38,387	\$ 1,598	\$ 179,446 - \$ 191,336	\$ 960

**Table 3-2:**  
Affordability Gap  
Calculations  
Source: US Census  
Bureau, www.  
bankrate.com,  
Fannie Mae

Westside Median Income	Income (Pre-tax)	Loan Amount for Lowest Published Market Interest Rate**	Total Loan Gap Amount	Monthly Payment Affordability Gap
Census Tract 12.04	\$ 49,089	\$ 224,763	\$ 358,086	\$ 1,534
Census Tract 22	\$ 40,854	\$ 203,640	\$ 379,209	\$ 1,711
Census Tract 23	\$ 29,219	\$ 145,611	\$ 437,238	\$ 2,196
Median Income Avg.	\$ 38,387	\$ 191,336	\$ 397,513	\$ 2,320

*\*\*Amount which can be financed is based on gross income, assuming no other notes are outstanding and down payment of 3%*

*\*Affordability Gap Calculation to finance a mortgage with a 5.779% interest rate based on the maximum eligible home price of \$600,875*

*\*\*Maximum eligible home price is based on the affordable housing criteria for qualification by the Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation for a single-family detached unit. Details on this program are described in the next section 11*

*\*\*\*Lowest published fixed 30-year mortgage rate is 5.779% APR according to <http://www.bankrate.com>*

Table 3.2 details the gap calculation for the median income in all three census tracts that encompass the Westside. The Affordable Payment is the amount that can be afforded at the respective income level according to lenders' qualifications at current interest rates. The Amount which can be financed is the maximum mortgage market lenders would finance for a 30 year fixed mortgage for the respective income level. The Affordable Rent is a calculation based on 30% of the gross monthly income. The affordable rent is calculated as 30% of the gross monthly income, but does not take into account taxes, which would lower take home income and in turn lower the rent considered affordable.

This data indicates that ownership of housing is clearly not feasible for the residents that currently occupy the Westside. The median gross rent for listings on the market in 1999 was \$638 for Census Tract 22, which is to the north of Ventura Avenue and \$748 for Census Tract 23 to the south. It is important to note that rents have increased since the last census, due to inflation and the housing boom of the last several years. According to the Ventura County Area Housing Authority, there are currently three properties available in the North Avenue area that have rent control and one property in the Westside. Also, the County of Ventura and the City of Ventura do not offer any programs for rent subsidy at this time. All affordable programs for rental units are owned and regulated by state or federal agencies.

## **AFFORDABILITY PROGRAMS**

### **City of Ventura: Homebuyer Assistance Program**

The primary affordable housing program for residents is provided through the City of Ventura, by the Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation. This program is designed to assist first time home buyers, or home buyers who have not had interest in a primary residence in at least three years. There are several eligibility requirements including (but not limited to) the maximum gross income based on the number of members in a household and the maximum price of a home that is eligible for the assistance. The program reduces the mortgage amount by creating a second mortgage on the house that is subsidized by the city to supplement as a down payment with deferred interest. The city then owns an equity share of the property based on the percentage of subsidy. The maximum price of a detached single family home that is eligible for the program is \$600,875. The program also requires that the purchaser contribute a minimum of 3% of the house cost at the time of signing (\$18,026 down for a \$600,875 purchase). The gap calculations in Table 3.2 incorporate figures for a home eligible for the Homebuyer Assistance Program. The Total Loan Gap Amount is the amount that the city would have to subsidize as a down payment in order for the mortgage to be affordable for each respective income.

### **County of Ventura: Mortgage Credit Certificate**

The County of Ventura cooperates with Affordable Housing Applications, Inc. to offer a program that offers assistance to buyers who have not owned a home in at least three years. The program issues an IRS tax credit certificate that reduces federal tax liability to the recipient. Subsequently, the net income, or take-home pay is increased, resulting in the ability to qualify for a larger mortgage loan from market lenders.

### **Housing Authority: City of San Buenaventura: Public Housing & Section 8**

The Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura is a non-profit public agency that is chartered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. The program is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Public housing includes designated units that are contracted affordable. They are rented to eligible applicants and the program pays the owner the difference between the calculation of 30% of gross income for all inhabitants of the unit and the market rent. Section 8 is a federal program that assists families who are eligible under a series of strict criteria and are selected from a waiting list. The selected families are able to choose a market unit they want to rent. The Section 8 program pays the difference between 30% of the gross family income and the market rent. The difference between the public housing program and the Section 8 program is the fact that Section 8 families can choose units that are not designated affordable under contract.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on existing population and housing data, there are a number of important planning considerations. Characteristics such as age, race and ethnicity, family compositions, and housing affordability serve as indicators for the uniqueness of the Study Area.

Specifically, the Study Area contains a younger population when compared to the City of Ventura, which indicates that there is a large presence of young families and young professionals. These populations have specific needs that planning should address.

Since the population is 57.3% Hispanic/Latino, the planning process must include input from the Latino community. Community participation and planning information needs to be provided in Spanish. The demographics of Latino families are much different from that of the White/Caucasian majority found in the City. They have different values and unique neighborhood characteristics that need to be preserved. The art culture is vibrant in the Westside and the Latino culture adds a cultural vitality to the Westside.

Lastly, housing affordability is an existing problem, which will continue to deteriorate, unless special precautions are taken. Measures must be implemented to avoid gentrification, while the Study Area evolves to create a sense of place and enjoyable environment for the existing residents as well as new ones. It is integral that planning efforts benefit existing residents primarily; revitalization should not alter existing demographic characteristics by gentrifying the Study Area and bringing in a new population with different demographics, characteristics, and values.

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*Land Use and  
Urban Form*

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**Chapter**



## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the existing characteristics of land use and urban form that define the existing built environment of Westside Ventura and North Avenue communities which comprise the Study Area.

The analysis of land use attributes begins with an assessment of urban elements, including landmarks, nodes, gateways, paths, edges and districts. These elements of urban form define a community's uniqueness and distinction from other cities, communities or bordering districts. Massing, patterns, scale and legibility are also included as elements which define the urban experience for the public. Massing, patterns, scale and legibility are particularly important in distinguishing between the pedestrian experience and the vehicular experience of the community.

The bulk of discussion in this chapter focuses on the characteristics and distribution of existing land uses and development constraints. A thorough indexing of existing land use acreage has been compiled, as well as build-out projections for both Westside and North Avenue.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Most of the information gathered for this chapter was obtained from field surveys. Several regulatory documents also aided in gathering information previously established by the City. Previous community workshop conclusions, questionnaires, and the community input from the most recent community workshop held in November 2006 were also reviewed.

To determine build-out potential, a complete inventory of existing residential, commercial and industrial units and square footages was created using Arc GIS, assessors parcel data, aerial photographs and field surveys. This comprehensive inventory also included the total acreage of vacant land in the Study Area. Build-out projections were calculated on the assumption that each parcel will be developed to the fullest extent allowed under the zoning code.

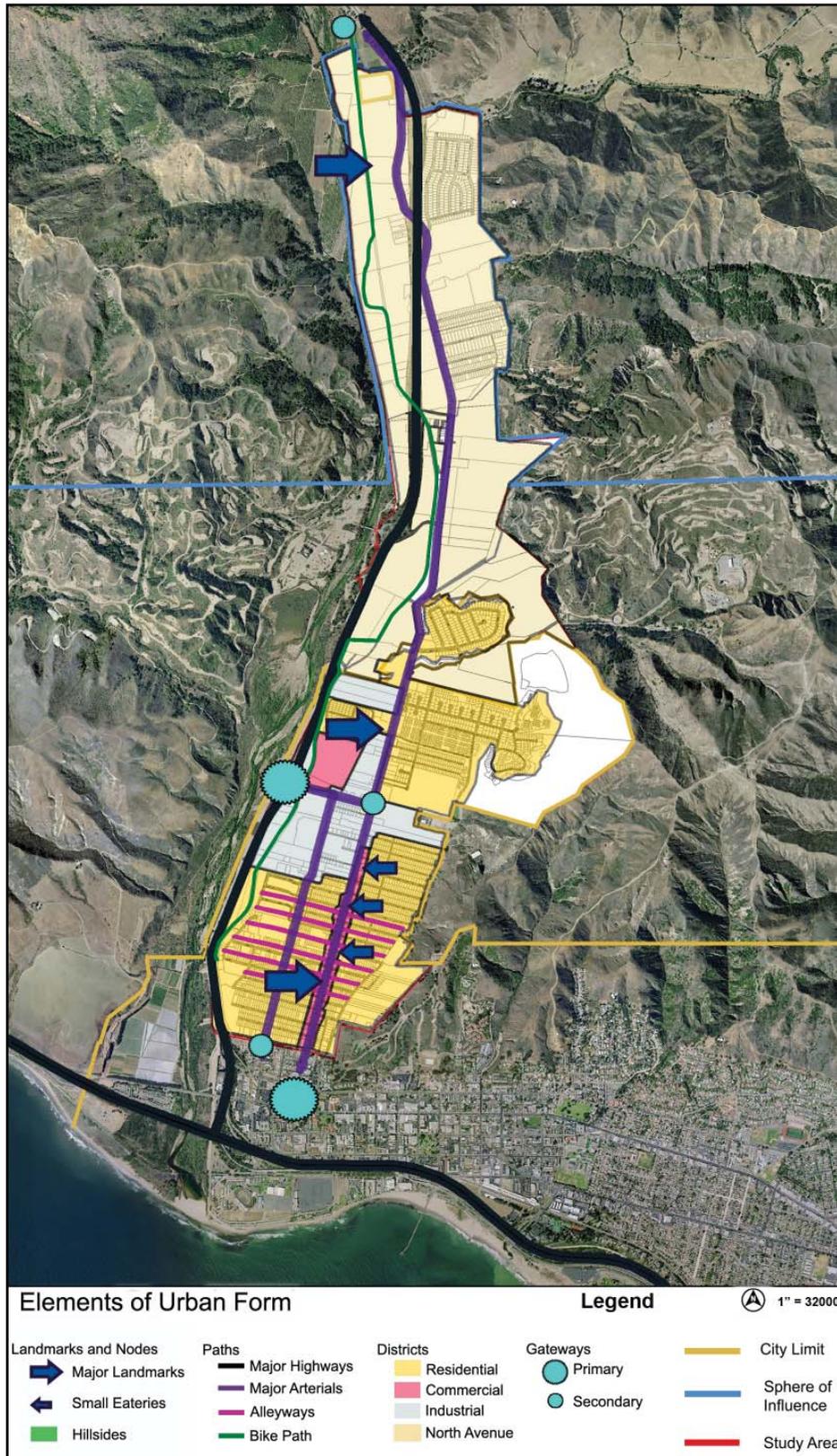


Figure 4-1: Urban Form Elements

## ELEMENTS OF URBAN FORM

Elements of urban form define a community's uniqueness and distinction from other cities, communities or bordering districts. They include landmarks, nodes, paths, districts and gateways. Massing, patterns, scale and legibility are also included as elements which define the urban experience for the public. (see figure 4-1).

### LANDMARKS

A landmark is a natural or built object which acts as a point of reference for the observer. Landmarks assist residents and visitors in orienting themselves and in recognizing specific areas of the community.

The Casa De Anza the most notable landmark in the Study area and contains apartments and the community's local library. Figure 4-2 illustrates its recently refurbished façade along Ventura Avenue. The hillsides stretching along the eastside of the Westside community are a recognizable natural landmark that is a strong element of the identity of the Westside. The Brooks Institute is located in the northern region of the North Avenue District. The Brooks Institute serves as a regional cultural landmark and the unique use of the property (Figure 4-4) makes it an architecturally interesting attraction.

**Figure 4-2:** Casa de Anza Building



**Figure 4-3:** East Hillside visible from Ventura Avenue



**Figure 4-4:** Brooks Institute



### NODES

Nodes are community centers that serve as conspicuously active gathering places. Nodes are most common at path junctions and commercial centers.

The neighborhoods along Ventura Avenue support a number of small nodes located at restaurants and other small shops with outdoor seating. These restaurants cater to many residents and workers predominantly during the lunch hour. Sycamore Village Shopping Center is a good representation of an inviting node(Figure 4-5). Brooks Institute is a center of activity for students and faculty in Ventura.



**Figure 4-5**  
Sycamore Village  
Shopping Center

## **PATHS**

Paths are the routes the residents and visitors most commonly follow to get where they want to go. Notable paths usually provide easy mobility to a large center of activity. Paths also aid in the formation of nodes and districts.

Ventura Avenue is the primary commercial corridor for the neighborhood and is the primary path for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. It has access to the downtown district and serves as a bridge from Main Street all the way into the North Avenue District. Stanley Avenue is the primary connection between Ventura Avenue and Highway 33 for the Westside. Olive Street runs parallel to Ventura Avenue between Ventura Avenue and Highway 33.

In addition, several alleyways branch off from Ventura Avenue. These alleys serve the residents as quick, pedestrian-oriented paths to access Ventura Avenue. These alleys range in size from a few feet in width to two dozen feet, which some residents use as a driveway.

The Ventura River Bike Trail is an important path for Westside and North Avenue residents. It runs north to south along Highway 33. Lack of access and incompatible surrounding land uses on some portions of the path were of concern to the members of the November 18 workshop.



**Figure 4-6:** Ventura  
Avenue

**Figure 4-7:** Ventura  
River Bike Trail

### **DISTRICTS**

Districts are areas which have homogeneity within a larger locale. Elements of distinctiveness that define a district can include architectural, social, economical, cultural, or land use characteristics.

The Simpson Historical District located in the southern portion of the Westside is the first planned development on the west side of Ventura. The Simpson Historical District is comprised of homes built within the same era, with similar massing and architectural styles.

Sycamore Village has a distinct character which is notably different from the other residential neighborhoods in the Westside. The newer, homogenous homes, maintained landscaping and single access path into the neighborhood lend to Sycamore Village's gated feel.

The North Avenue District grew from the oil industry boom in the early 20th century. The building typologies range from warehouses to ranch houses. Its sparsely developed land with mostly agricultural uses makes the North Avenue area a much more rural landscape than the southern section of the study site.

### **EDGES**

Edges are the recognizable lines between districts that help to define an area. Edges may come to an abrupt stop or they may form a gradual change at the end of a district.

The hillsides to the east and the river bed to the west form natural edges for the Study Area, making the Westside a distinct district within Ventura. There is also a distinct edge along the southern boundary of the study area, where Ventura Avenue meets Main Street.

Edges in the North Avenue portion of the study area are more gradual than in the Westside. Agricultural uses provide a change in landscape which separates the fields of oil industry equipment from the distribution centers.

### **GATEWAYS**

**Gateways** are the entry and exit points located along the edges of the community. They can be natural or built and are the points which provide the observer with the expectation for a new area.

The intersection of Ventura Avenue and Stanley Street is crucial in introducing the commercial corridor of Ventura Avenue; however, this intersection has little in terms of signage or architectural features to signify the oncoming commercial sector.

The southern gateway into the Westside is at the intersection of Main Street and Ventura Avenue. Although this gateway does not formally introduce the Westside and North Avenue, there is an abrupt transition from downtown into the Westside.

More minor gateways into the Study Area include the intersection of Olive Street and Stanley Street and the Sheriff's Outpost at the end of the Study Area.

## **SCALE**

Scale is used to describe the vertical size and shape of a community and typically is described in relation to the pedestrian. The commercial corridor scale along Ventura Avenue (Figure 8) ranges from small single story shops to larger two-story mixed-use buildings. The commercial corridor is at an appropriate pedestrian scale, although the Study Area has a smaller scale in comparison to Downtown Ventura.



**Figure 4-8** Ventura Avenue Commercial Corridor Representative Scale Example

## **MASSING**

Massing is the layout the built structures form on the ground. Massing is an influential factor in forming nodes and gathering points in a community. Massing can also contribute to the legibility of a city by making them easy to navigate and recognize.

Buildings along Ventura Avenue are generally small and elongated along the parcel. Some buildings form the common “L” shape which draws pedestrians with some street frontage retail, while maintaining room for on-site parking as well.

Overall, the discontinuous land uses along the Ventura Avenue provide for poorly identifiable massing patterns outside of fully developed residential neighborhoods. Storage yards and industrial uses directly along Ventura Avenue are evident culprits for the disjointed feel of the commercial corridor.

### **PATTERNS**

Building patterns describe the frequency of building sizes, positioning, and architectural characteristics present in a community. Patterns produce unity in a neighborhood and can function as a representation of a community's identity.

The patterns of the Westside are the main factor which separate the different land uses into districts. The residential structures are usually setback around 10-20 feet with subtle architectural features adorning a small simple building. Commercial uses generally have no setback from Ventura Avenue and are larger than residential uses. The architecture of Commercial and Industrial uses consists primarily of warehouse buildings. This architectural pattern significantly contributes to the Study Area's highly industrial ambiance. The patterns in the North Avenue are much harder to identify because of the large distances between many of the built up land uses.

### **LEGIBILITY**

Legibility refers to the degree of ease with which an observer can easily recognize districts, navigate paths, and generally understand the built form around them.

The Study Area is not very legible. The lack of clear districts and inadequate transitional spaces makes it difficult for observers to form a visual map of the area. However there are still existing characteristics that help add to the legibility of the area, including:

- Decorative Street Lamps
- Small front setbacks along Ventura Avenue
- Land Use districts in the southern portion of the Westside
- Mission revival style architecture dominant in the historic neighborhoods
- Signage along the commercial corridor of Ventura Avenue

## EXISTING LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

The Study Area developed during the oil boom of the early 1900s, and the overall distribution and development patterns of land use throughout the past century reflect a strong connection to the oil industry. This connection is manifested in the clustering of residential neighborhoods south of Stanley Ave, and the dominance of support businesses for the oil industry within the commercial and lighter industrial uses. With the decline of the oil industry in the 1970s, new residential developments started to appear in the northern portions of the study area, while the older sections continued to suffer neglect. Many support businesses for the oil industry, such as welding shops and heavy machinery yards, continue to operate in the Study Area, despite the diminished oil industry.

Existing Land Use	Total Net Acreage	Percent of Total Net Acres	Acres developed	Percent Developed	Vacant Acres	Percent Vacant	Total Residential Units per Land Use	% of Units per Land Use
<b>Residential</b>	490	32%	456	93%	34	7%	4,173	99.76%
<b>SF Residential</b>			348				2,576	62%
<b>Mobile Homes</b>							237	6%
<b>3-4 units per lot</b>			25				465	11%
<b>MF Residential</b>			84				895	21%
<b>Commercial</b>	63	4%	60	95%	3	5%	10	0.24%
<b>Commercial</b>			57				0	
<b>Mixed Use</b>			3				10	0.24%
<b>Industrial</b>	538	36%	361	67%	177	33%	0	
<b>Other</b>	414	28%	396	97%	18	3%		
<b>Agricultural</b>			41					
<b>Open Space</b>			254					
<b>Public/Civic</b>			101					
<b>Total</b>	1505	100%	1,273	85%	232	15%	4,183	100%

**Table 4-1:** Westside and North Avenue Existing Land Use Distribution

Table 4-1 illustrates the total units and acreage of the existing land uses, including; Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Agriculture, Open Space, Public and Civic, and vacant land. The most dominant use is residential, which is comprised of 456 acres and includes 4,173 units. Residential properties represent 30% of all developed acreage in the Study Area.

The second largest land use area is Industrial, which is comprises 24% of developed land in the Study Area (360 acres). The amount of industrial property in the Study Area is a strong indicator of the Study Area's close connection and dependence on industry. Commercial uses only account for 4% of developed land in the study area, which further demonstrates the dominance of the industrial based economy in the Study Area.

The amount of vacant land in the Study Area is also noteworthy. Vacant land comprises 15% of the total land in the study area. There are approximately 232 acres of vacant land, consisting primarily of parcels in North Avenue, which represents 191 acres of vacant land.

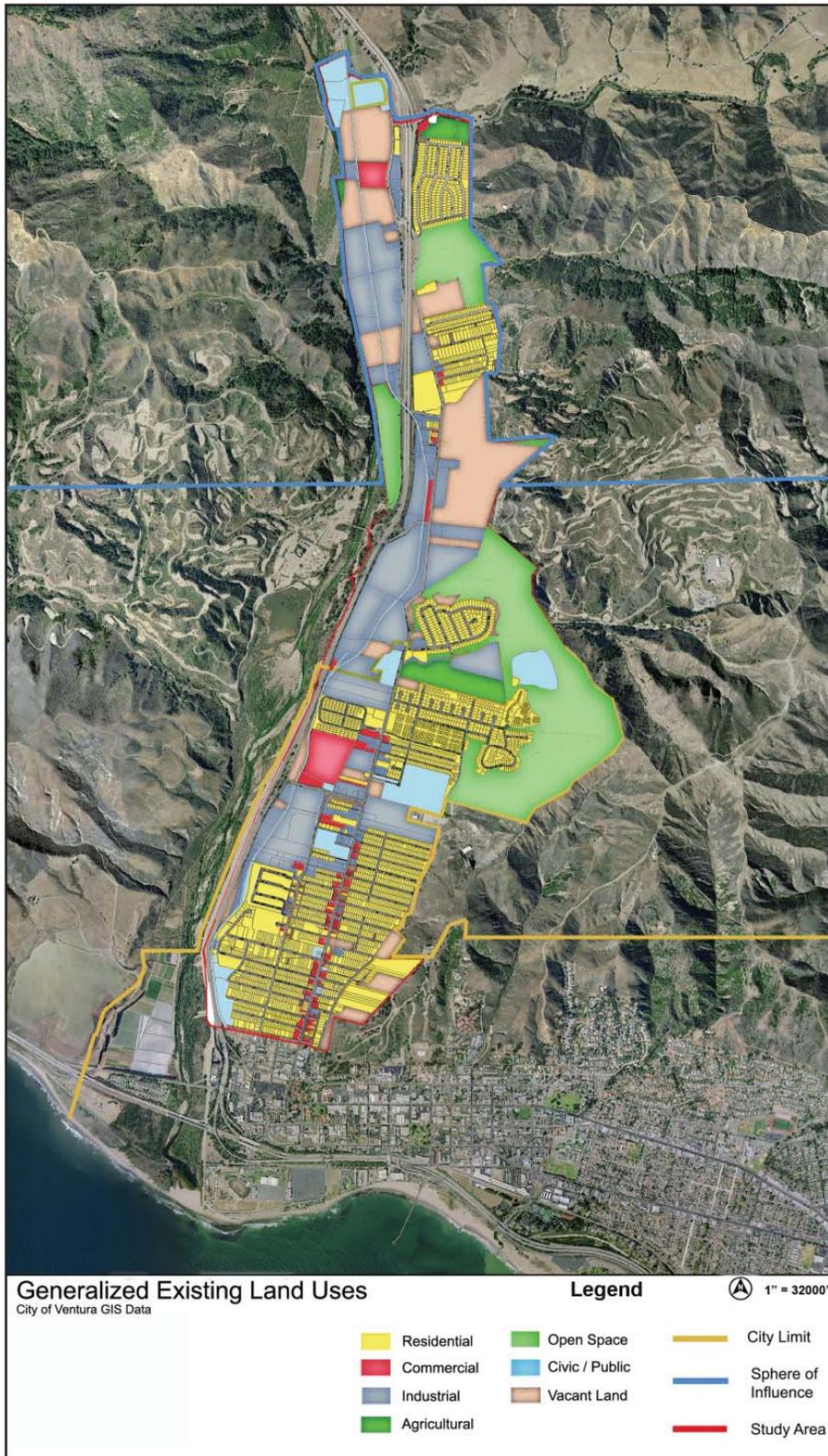
There are very abrupt land use transitions in the Study Area. With the exception of early residential developments in southern Westside, most land uses are haphazard. There are often no transitions between Industrial uses and Residential uses, or Industrial uses and Educational uses.

The neighborhoods in southern Westside are near maximum density. These neighborhoods were developed as workforce housing during the initial oil industry boom in the early 1900's. These older homes are much smaller than homes in newer developments and have a much higher density. The neighborhoods in southern Westside are near maximum allowable density and there are few vacant parcels in this district.

Ventura Avenue is the commercial spine of the Study Area. Commercial uses are immediately adjacent to Ventura Avenue, with Residential uses located directly behind commercial uses. Residential neighborhoods border the Ventura Avenue commercial corridor throughout the lower Westside. Many of these blocks have pedestrian alleys that serve as connectors from the Residential uses on either side of Ventura Avenue to the Commercial uses along the Avenue.

Along North Avenue and Upper North Avenue, Land Uses become more haphazard and discontinuous. There is a higher concentration of industrial support retail, often intermixed with a single home located between machine shops. In the northernmost portion of the Study Area there is no transition between oil derricks, residences and agricultural land.

**Figure 4-9**  
Generalized  
Existing Land Use



## RESIDENTIAL

As mentioned previously, the existing land use patterns within the Study Area are closely tied with the history of the oil industry, including residential developments in Westside and North Avenue. The residential neighborhoods were developed in Westside as the oil industry moved into the region. The first few blocks of these neighborhoods now fall within the Simpson Tract Historical District (Figure 4-9), and are under the stricter design and development requirements of the Historic Preservation Regulations, as per the Zoning Ordinance of the City's Municipal Code (Sec. 24.455 Historic Preservation Regulations). The lots in this district are characterized by relatively smaller, historical homes surrounded by large yards. The preservation of this historic feel and character is of utmost importance to the community, as evident from the July 2006 workshop questionnaire, and the November 18 community workshop. The oldest and densest of the residential uses are concentrated around the Simpson Tract Historic District, south of Stanley Ave, and include the majority of the homes built prior to 1950s.

In contrast, the housing stock is newer and less dense north of Stanley Ave. The most recent development, Sycamore Village, provides a variety of densities and housing types. There are two clusters of residential uses in North Avenue, separated by large areas designated as Open Space, along Ventura Avenue and Highway 33. These neighborhoods fall outside of City of Ventura's boundaries, and as such, have somewhat varying designation definitions and requirements.

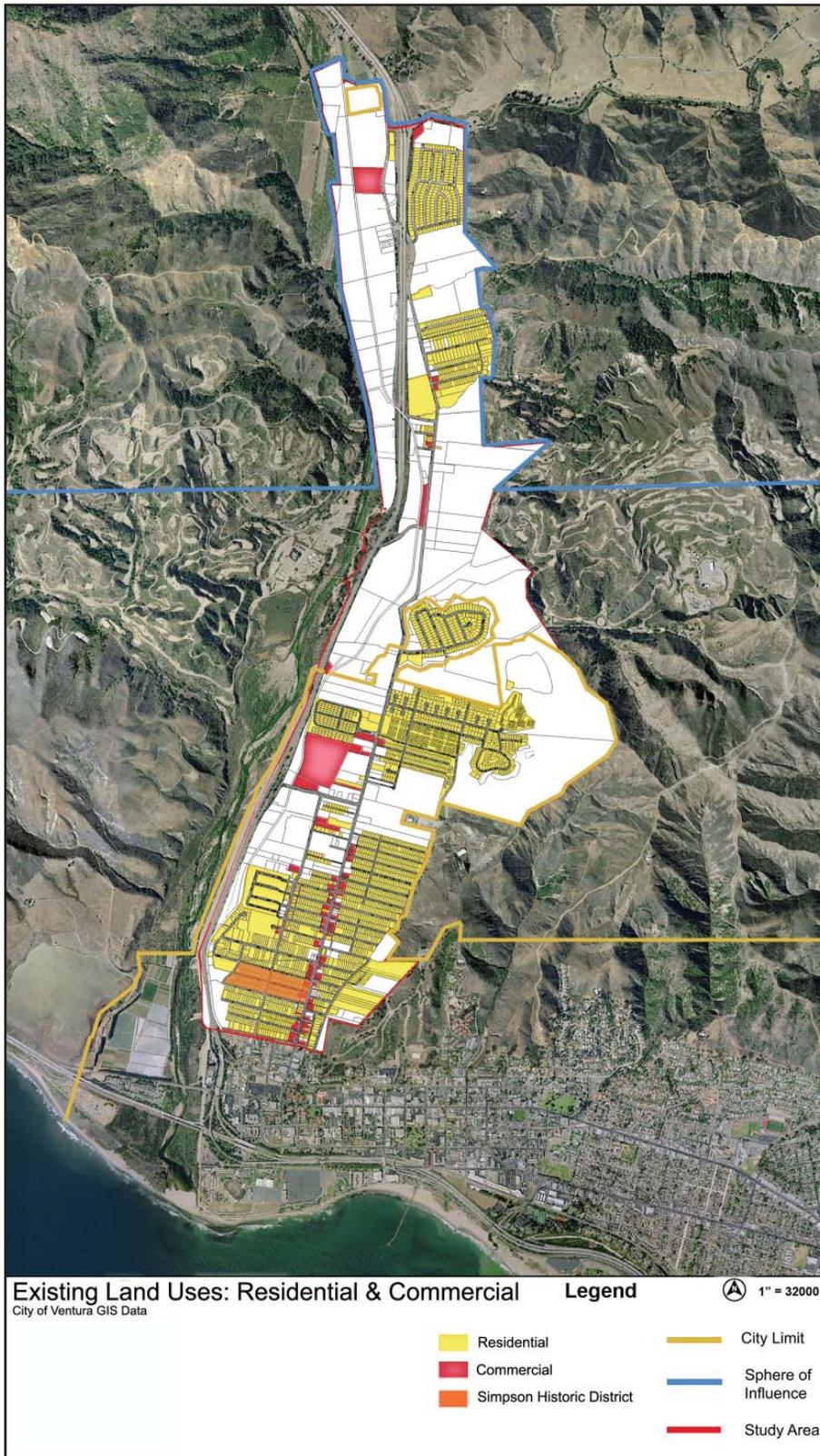
Overall, there is a variety of architectural styles and types within the study area. The style most common is set by the historically dominant Mission style prevalent in the Simpson Tract Historical District, with elements of Spanish, Santa Fe and Hacienda. The later housing developments have introduced more architectural styles that have weakened the dominance of Mission Revival, and these range from Craftsman and Bungalow to French and Country European; however, Mission Revival continues to provide the most dominant architectural character to the Study Area.

**Figure 4-10** Mission Revival Home



**Figure 4-11** Newer California Bungalow Home





**Figure 4-12:**  
Residential and  
Commercial Land  
Use

## COMMERCIAL

Ventura Avenue is the commercial spine of the study area and is identified as its own separate commercial district. The bulk of commercial uses on Ventura Avenue is concentrated almost exclusively south of Stanley Avenue, alongside the dense residential areas. There are one or two additional commercial uses along Olive Street, and a few along the Avenue in the northern portions of the study area (Figure 4-12).

The commercial corridor is predominantly automobile oriented, even though it is within relatively short walking distance from the older residential parts of the study area. The uses vary from corner grocery shops and liquor stores, to thrift stores and discount shops, to gas stations and car washes. Industrial influences become most apparent at Stanley Street. Within the northern portion of the commercial corridor, the majority of commercial uses include machine and welding shops, wire rope yards, and heavy machinery yards.

The architectural style of commercial uses is also directly influenced by the industrial history. Many businesses are housed in structures that have been previously utilized for industrial uses, including warehouses (Figure 4-13, 4-14).

Commercial Mixed-uses usually, but not exclusively, consist of a mix of commercial and residential uses within the same lot/parcel. These are typically vertical mixed uses, with the commercial being downstairs, and the residential upstairs. There ten unit of Mixed Use in the Study Area on three acres. The most notable Mixed Use development is the commercial component of Sycamore Village.

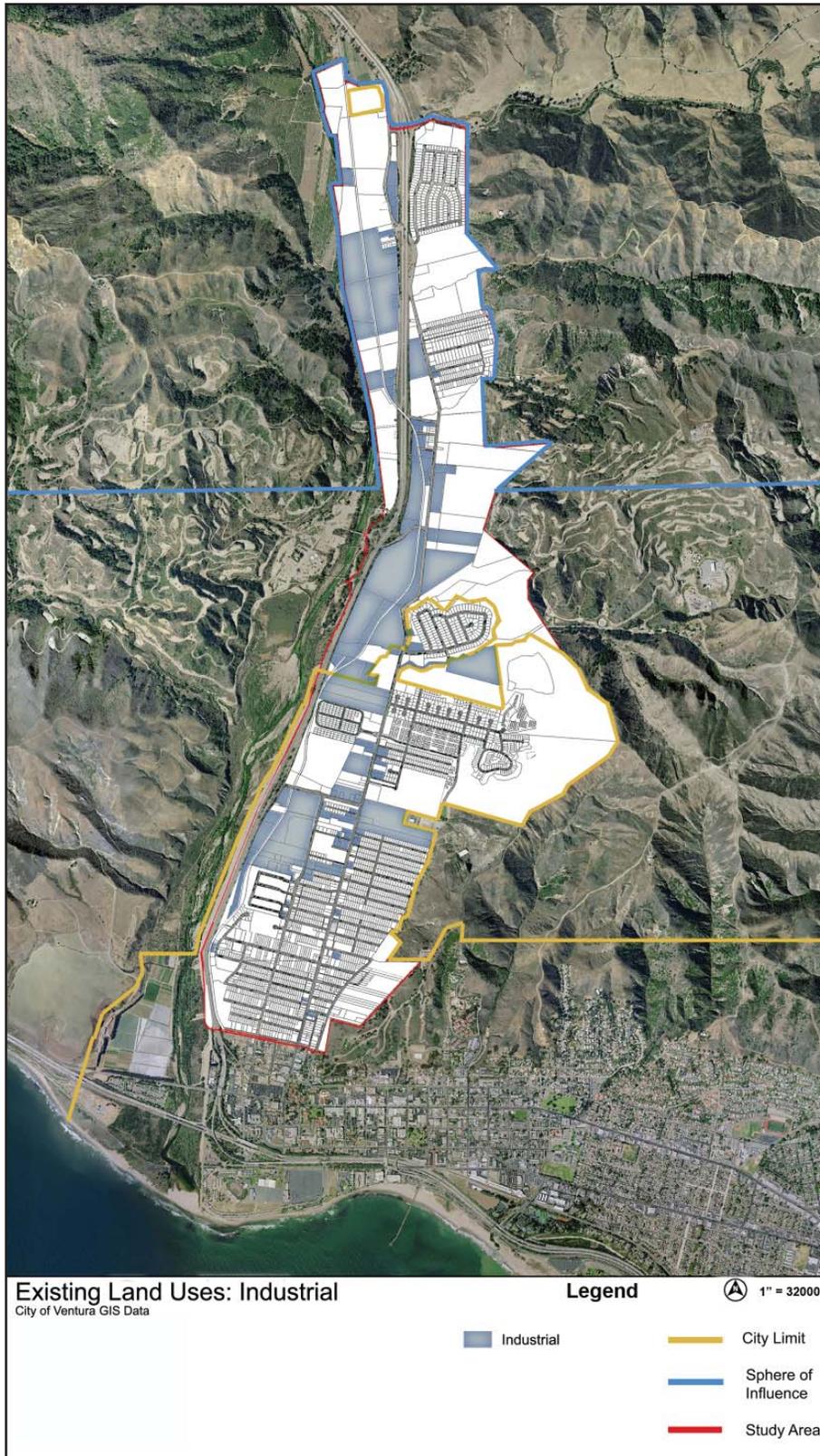
**Figure 4-13**  
Ventura Avenue  
Retail



**Figure 4-14:**  
Ventura Avenue  
Retail



Figure 4-15  
Industrial Land Use



### **INDUSTRIAL**

The Study Area has evolved since the peak days of the oil industry. However, remnants of the oil industry are still present in North Avenue, where some oil derricks still remain active and in production. Although the oil industry has largely declined in the Study Area, many of the support Industrial uses remain, including; machine and welding shops, wire rope and heavy machinery yards, and scrap metal storage areas.

One key issue of Industrial uses in relation to land use and urban form is how the aesthetics and community character of the Westside and North Avenue is defined by Industrial uses. There are design guidelines and requirements addressing the Industrial uses within Oil District Overlay Zones. Yet many of the heavier industries are located in the Northern portion of the study area, outside the City's jurisdiction (Figure 4-15) and are not subject to these requirements. Consequently, Industrial Uses outside the Oil District Overlay Zones have an unpleasant visual impact on the overall character of the study area and many of industrial properties appearing barren and empty.

### **CIVIC / PUBLIC**

Civic and Public land uses include schools, parks or land that is held by the Ventura County or the City of Ventura to provide a public service, such as fire stations, sheriff's outposts or wastewater treatment facilities. There is a notably uneven distribution of these uses within the Study Area. There is a clear lack of public facilities in North Avenue (figure 4-9). Even within the Westside, these uses tend to be concentrated on the edges of residential areas.

### **AGRICULTURAL**

Although Ventura has a strong agricultural heritage, there are only four parcels currently used for agriculture within the Study Area, all of which are in North Avenue. The largest agricultural parcel is planned to be developed into a residential neighborhood (refer to Pending Projects).

## **DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS**

The Study Area is bounded geographically by hills to the east, the Ventura River to the West, Downtown to the South, and Highway 33 to the north. New development is limited to areas within these natural and built boundaries.

The Study Area has limited room for new large scale projects. The Study Area south of Stanley Avenue is the most built out, and contains few undeveloped parcels. Redevelopment is limited due to the small size of existing parcels. However, current zoning allows for development that is denser than existing developments. There is great potential to redevelop the existing uses along Ventura Avenue based solely on the underutilization of land; however, although there is potential for revitalization along the commercial corridor, citizens worried about displacing the existing commercial business owners.

The Study Area north of Stanley Avenue has a large amount of undeveloped land (191 acres, 82% of total vacant land in the Study Area) surrounded by existing developments. However, several industrial uses and brownfields north of Stanley Avenue constitute a constraint on new development due to the incompatibility of adjacent uses and the infeasibility of brownfield clean-up.

Since North Avenue is outside of City limits, land uses are regulated by the County of Ventura. However, North Avenue is within the City of Ventura's Sphere of Influence. The City is expected to eventually annex North Avenue into City limits, thereby potentially applying all existing City Land Use Regulations. The annexation of land will occur most likely as new projects are proposed in North Avenue. The annexation process involves LAFCO, and requires the City to expand its official city limits, once again, placing a regulatory constraint on new developments slated to occur in North Avenue.

## **BUILD OUT POTENTIAL**

Build out potential is an estimate of the development that the Study Area could accommodate based on the current land use categories and development standards. To establish build-out potential, a complete inventory of existing residential, commercial and industrial units and square footages was created using Arc GIS, assessors parcel data, aerial photographs and field surveys. This comprehensive inventory also included the total net acreage of vacant land in the Study Area. Build-out projections were calculated on the assumption that each parcel will be developed to the fullest extent under the zoning code.

Build out calculations for the Study Area indicate that there is development potential for 326 new dwelling units, 102,031 commercial square feet and approximately 3 million industrial square feet. Two hundred sixteen new dwelling units can be constructed in the Westside; 66% of these units would be multi-family. There is no indication of further commercial development in North Avenue; however, North Avenue can accommodate the vast majority of industrial development.

**Table 4-3:**  
Westside Build-  
out Potential

Zoning of Existing Vacant Land	Vacant Acreage	% of Total Vacant Land	Vacant Land Square feet	Square Feet per Unit	Potential* Lot Coverage	Total New Dwelling Units	Total Potential Square Feet
<b>Residential</b>	19	45%	815,083			216	
R-1-1AC	1	3%	59,943	43560		1	
R-1-6	9	22%	393,423	6000		66	
R-2	0	1%	15,455	3000		5	
R-3-5	8	19%	346,262	2400		144	
<b>Commercial</b>	3	8%	145,759		70%		102,031
<b>Industrial</b>	16	38%	685,281		70%		479,697
<b>Other</b>	3	8%	145,490				
<b>Westside Vacant Land</b>	41	100%	1,791,613			216	581,728

1) Vacant land includes parcels with “projects in the pipeline”, defined as projects that are currently in any stage of the planning process.

2) Total net acreages rounded to the nearest whole acre.

3) Potential lot coverage has been calculated with an assumed development potential of 70% lot coverage based on parking requirements using surface parking. 70% max Commercial/Industrial intensity based on potential build-out limited by parking regulation of 1 parking spot per 250 square feet of gross building floor area. (Based on assimilation of City of Ventura Zoning Ordinance Chapter 24)

Current Zone	Vacant Acreage	% of Total Vacant Land	Vacant Land Sq. Ft.	Maximum Intensity (DU/Ac)	Potential Lot Coverage**	Total New Dwelling Units	Total Potential Square Feet
<b>Residential</b>	16	8%	684,763			110	301,296
Single Family	16	8%	684,763	7	44%	110	
Multi Family	0	0%	-	13	55%	0	
<b>Industrial</b>	161	84%	6,991,380				2,468,632
General Industrial	123	64%	5,351,999		40%		2,140,800
Petroleum	38	20%	1,639,163		20%		327,833
<b>Other</b>	15	8%	641,203				
<b>Public Services</b>	15	8%	641,203				
<b>North Avenue Vacant Land</b>	191	100%	8,317,346			110	2,468,632

1) Maximum density and potential lot coverage based on Ventura County General Plan, North Ventura Avenue Area Plan adopted by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors April 17, 1984, last amended Dec. 11, 1990.

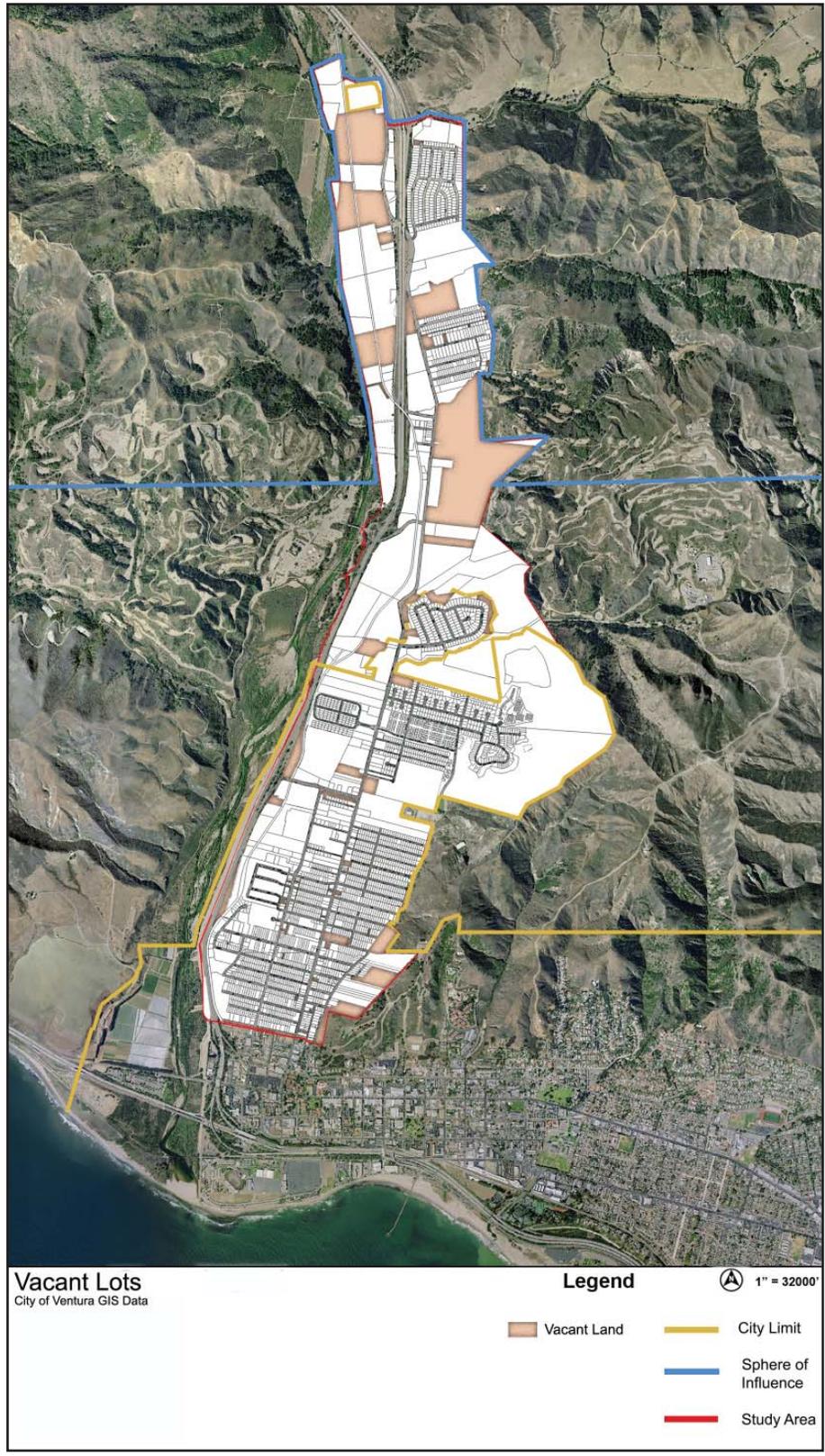
2) Total net acreages rounded to the nearest whole acre.

3) Vacant land calculated by inspection of aerial maps and parcel data.

4) Future land uses based on parcel data gathered from Ventura County Geographic Information Systems.

**Table 4-3:** North Avenue Build-out Potential

Figure 4-16 Vacant Lots



## PENDING PROJECTS

The following information was obtained from the city of Ventura Pending Projects Status List (July 2006). Table 4-3 outlines a detailed description of the proposed projects. Figures 4-17 and 4-18 illustrate the location of each pending project.

**In Planning Process** - Project application has been filed for one or more discretionary planning approvals (Planned Development Permit, Change of Zone, Tentative Tract Map)

**All Planning Approvals** - The project has received all major discretionary and planning approvals from the City, with no appeals pending.

**In Plan Check** - The project has received all planning approvals; final plans have been submitted to the Inspection Services Division.

**Building Permits Issued** - The project has received all planning approvals; final plans approved; building and other permits have been issued; may be under construction.

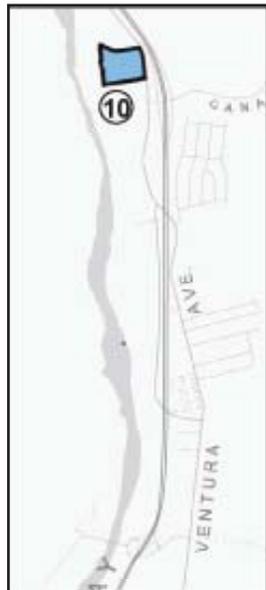
	Proposed Land Use Project Location	*Status Date Filed	DU, DU/AC, **POP, Acres	Current Zone APN
1	Residential Single Family 2686 N. Ventura Avenue	In Planning Process 04/30/04	113 DU 6 DU/AC 283 POP	R-P-D 069-0-020-050
2	Residential Condominiums 1150 N. Ventura Avenue	In Plan Check 06/19/03	12 DU 35.3 DU/AC 30 POP	C-2 069-0-111-225
3	Residential Apartments 1155 N. Olive Street	Building Permits Issued 01/15/03	5 DU 27.8 DU/AC 13 POP	C-2 068-0-112-020 068-0-112-030
4	Residential Apartments 221 N. Garden Street	In Plan Check 01/23/03	14 DU 15.9 DU/AC 35 POP	M-X-D 071-0-180-170 071-0-180-180
5	Senior 100% Affordable Apartments 2686 N. Ventura Avenue	In Planning Process 04/30/04	50 DU 6 DU/AC 125 POP	R-P-D 069-0-020-050
6	Residential Apartments 901 Olive Street	In Planning Process 06/06/05	4 DU 22.2 DU/AC 10 POP	C-2 068-0-122-065
7	Residential Apartments 901 Olive Street	In Planning Process 06/06/05	4 DU 22.2 DU/AC 10 POP	C-2 068-0-122-065
8	Mixed Use Condominiums Commercial/Residential 1150 N. Ventura Avenue	In Plan Check 6/19/03	1,430 .34 Acres	C-2 069-0-111-225
9	Mixed Use Industrial/Residential 221 N. Garden Street	In Plan Check 01/23/03	27,000 .88 Acres 14 units	M-X-D 071-0-180-170 071-0-180-180
10	3 New Buildings at Water Treatment Plant 5895 N. Ventura Avenue	Building Permits Issued 05/21/04	18,619 12.54 Acres	R-1 063-0-040-025
11	New Educational Operation Support Center 255 W. Stanley Avenue	All Planning Approvals 07/20/05	41,470 2.83 Acres	C-P-D 068-0-082-115

**Table 4-3:** Pending Project Status

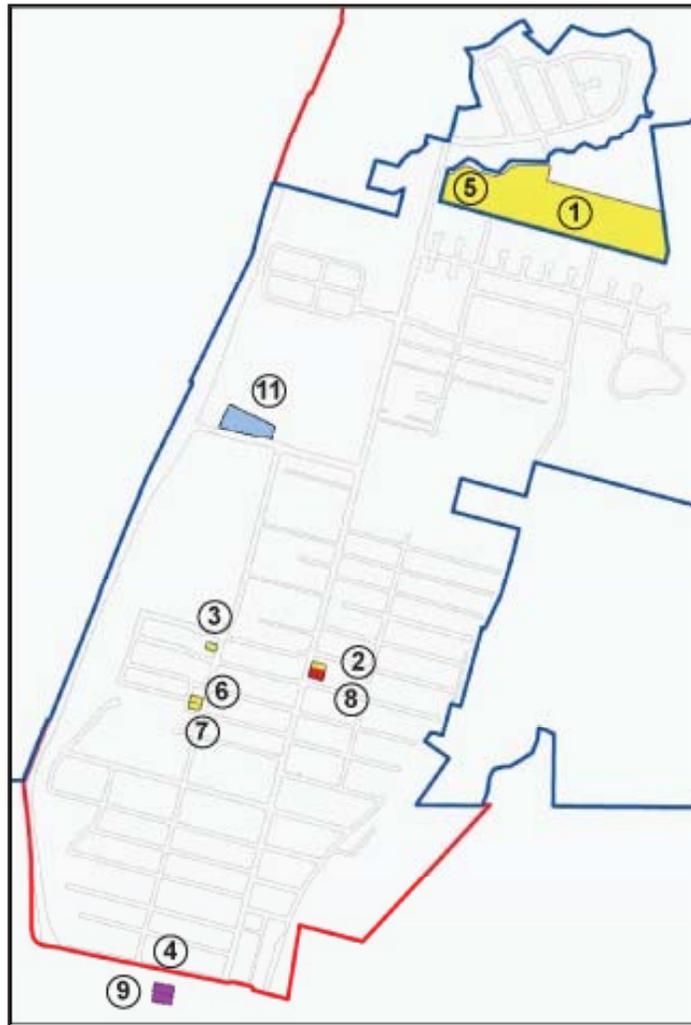
\* Status

\*\* Population is calculated at 2.5 persons per unit as established by the City's 2005 General Plan.

**Figure 4-17** North Avenue Pending Projects Map



**Figure 4-18** Westside Pending Projects Map



Several proposed projects address the affordability needs requirements of the Study Area. Most notably, the proposed senior affordable living apartments will add 50 affordable units for senior living. The senior apartment project is coupled with a proposed 113 single family detached units, making it the largest planned project in the study area. In addition, several new apartment and condominium projects are proposed, which typically sell for less than a brand new single family home. Two mixed use projects provide a mix of both residents and commercial or industrial uses, further increasing the mix of housing types and jobs in the study area.

The Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) has chosen the study area for its new educational operation support center. This project will bring jobs to the study area while expanding the VUSD educational operations capacities. Finally, the Sewer Treatment Plant is planned to add three new buildings to improve its functions.

During the November 2006 Community Workshop, participating citizens noted several other pending projects throughout the study area. Table 4-1 is updated quarterly, and does not reflect every pending project slated for development.

Brooks Institute has partnered with Hollywood West LLC and USA Petroleum Corporation to develop The Village at Crooked Palm (Appendix !). The total site area is approximately 136 acres, of which 106 acres is buildable. The project will include major expansions to the Campus Core, coupled with 600-700 market rate homes. In addition, 300 units will be dedicated to student housing. Finally, a mix of commercial uses is proposed, as well as uniquely designed improved drainage system. The existing petroleum plant site may have soil contamination due to existing uses, warranting extensive environmental review. This project still in a conceptual phase, and has not yet been formally submitted to the City.

## **CONCLUSION**

Analysis of existing land uses and potential needs of the West Ventura and North Avenue study area, several principal planning considerations have been established, including: historic community character of the study area, underutilization of land, haphazard land uses, brownfield sites, and potential for revitalization.

The historic character of the study area not only provides character context for the Westside and North Avenue, but for the City of Ventura as a whole. The study area includes numerous historic sites which are reflected in the architectural styles, massing, patterns and landmarks that fashion the distinct character of the community. Thus, an important planning consideration is future preservation and incorporation of the historical character of the study area as the community evolves.

Due to the influence of the oil industry on the Study Area's historical development patterns, underutilization of land, haphazard land uses and brownfield sites have resulted. Particularly along Ventura Avenue, vacant and underutilized lots could allow for economic growth through commercial infill. Evidence from build out projections illustrates that the Westside has 41 vacant acres and North Avenue has 191 vacant acres. Utilizing these vacant acres could allow for an additional 326 new housing units and an additional 102,031 square feet of commercial development in the Study Area. Continued underutilization of developed land limits the economic growth of the study area, while increasing the potential for sprawl to accommodate for new development. Existing Industrial uses in proximity to residences and civic spaces constitute another important planning consideration.

In addition to the underutilization of land and discontinuous land uses, another consequence of oil production is brownfields. Brownfields present both an opportunity and a constraint for planning consideration. Like underutilization of land, brownfields offer an opportunity for economic development through infill and revitalization. However, by the nature of being contaminated, brownfield sites may pose health, safety and welfare risks for existing and future citizens.

However, a constraint of infill and revitalization worth consideration is the possibility of gentrification. Existing residential, commercial and industrial tenants are attracted to the Westside and North Avenue precisely because existing conditions lend to low rent costs. Revitalizing the study area could lead to a displacement of existing tenants who might be unable to afford any increase in land prices.

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*Circulation  
and Noise*

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**Chapter**



### INTRODUCTION

This Chapter focuses on the overall circulation and noise in and around the Study Area. Due to the nature of the hills surrounding the Study Area, connectivity to the rest of the City is limited. There are three main roadways (Ventura Avenue, Stanley Avenue, Olive Street) that serve as primary routes within the Westside area.

In addition to looking at circulation for vehicles, this Chapter also addresses pedestrian connections, bike paths, and public transit. Pedestrian pathways are analyzed, including the degree of walkability, safety, and connectivity. Bike paths are assessed by their existing characteristics, future routes, and proposed amenities. Public Transit is considered by looking at the number of routes, frequency, and para-transit. Furthermore, streetscapes and parking are analyzed in terms consistency, aesthetics, capacity and integration. Noise is also briefly addressed in regard to its levels and sources.

The sources of information included several City documents and other material from regional agencies, such as the Ventura General Plan, the General Bikeway Plan, the 2005 Annual Traffic Report, the City of Ventura's Capital Improvement Project Plan 2005-2010, the City's 1989 Circulation Plan Map, Ventura County's Regional Trails and Pathways Master Plan 1995, the City of Ventura's website (<http://www.ci.ventura.ca.us/>), and the SCAT ([www.scat.org](http://www.scat.org)) and VISTA (<http://www.goventura.org/home/index.asp?page=101>) websites.

### EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

#### ROADWAYS & ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is key to achieving a higher quality of life for a community. Although traffic on local roads is generally free-flowing, a few key intersections and road segments experience congestion during peak traffic hours. Simply widening roads to add lanes does not solve traffic congestion. Instead, the transportation system needs integrated solutions to improve mobility for all mediums of travel.

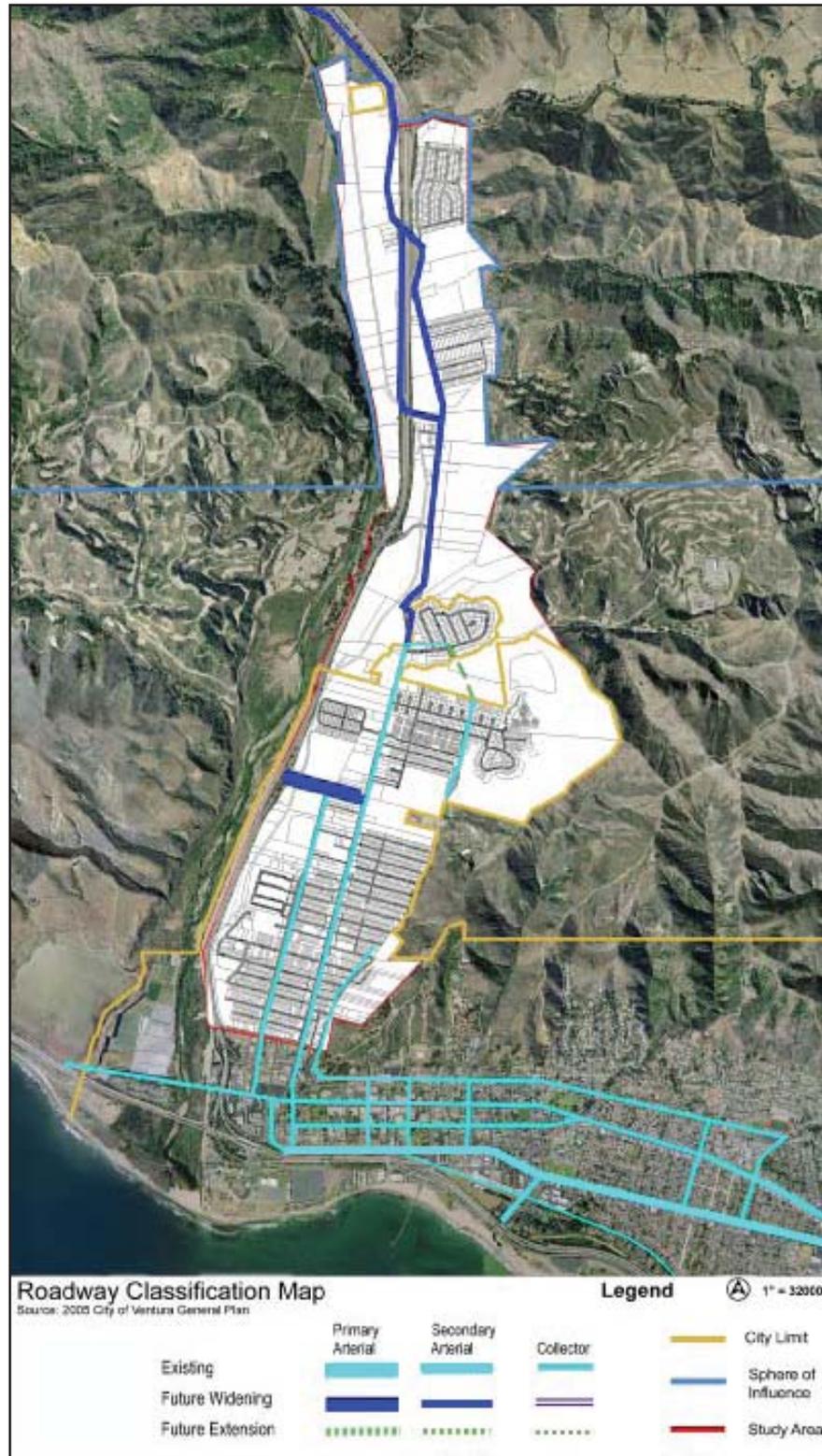
Local thoroughfares provide mobility within neighborhoods and usually include lanes, alleys, and "yield" streets. Collector streets generally link local thoroughfares and may occasionally front neighborhood uses. An example of a collector street is Park Row Avenue. Collector streets may also be known as boulevards, avenues, streets, and main streets. Arterials are the primary means of cross-town travel and generally serve as major centers of activity. Two types of arterials exist, primary arterials and secondary arterials. Ventura and Stanley are both considered secondary because they don't have the volume of traffic that would classify them as being primary arterials.

Figure 5-2 illustrates the existing primary and secondary arterials and collector streets. It also depicts the potential extensions that may be implemented to increase the connectivity and linkage of the Westside.



Figure 5-1: Existing Streets Network.

**Figure 5-2:**  
Roadway  
Classifications





### PEDESTRIAN PATHS

When cities plan with the pedestrian in mind, the result is a greater amount of outside activity and community interaction. Pedestrian paths should be interesting, enjoyable, and link many destinations ranging from small pocket parks to major civic centers.

The greater challenge of the pedestrian path in the Study Area system is discontinuity. Some sections of thoroughfares have no sidewalks, and pedestrian connections between some key use areas are in poor condition. Crosswalks are not always well lighted and visible at night along some corridors, and pedestrian signal phases are not always accurate in the amount of time given to pedestrians to cross. Traffic-calming measures may also be necessary to improve walkability around town. Figures 5-4, 5-5, and 5-6 depict some techniques for improving pedestrian activity.

**Figure 5-4:**  
Textured Crosswalk



**FIGURE 5-5**  
Round-a-bout



**Figure 5-6**  
Sidewalk



### BIKE PATHS

Bicycles are a very important aspect of the City's system of mobility. The City currently uses its adopted General Bikeway Plan to create a safe, accessible, and interconnected network of bike paths, lanes, and routes that will ensure a bicycle friendly community. In addition, according to the Bikeway Plan, there are a substantial amount of planned amenities for bike paths such as park benches, drinking fountains, trash bins, and other facilities to improve aesthetics and connectivity. However, there are growing concerns about bicyclists riding on sidewalks because of the lack of bike lanes, especially along Ventura Avenue. The map below identifies the City's current and proposed bikeways throughout the Westside.

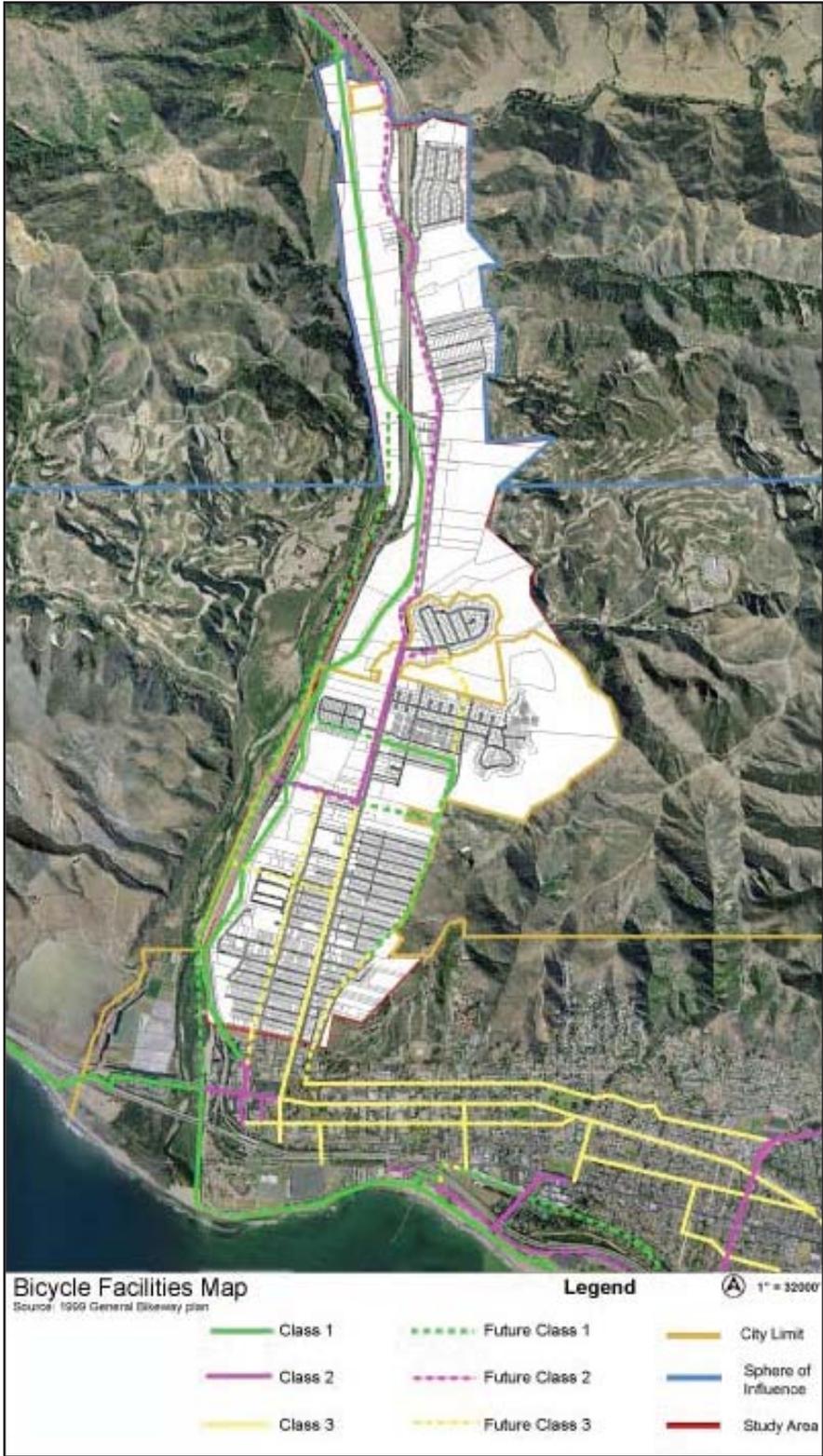
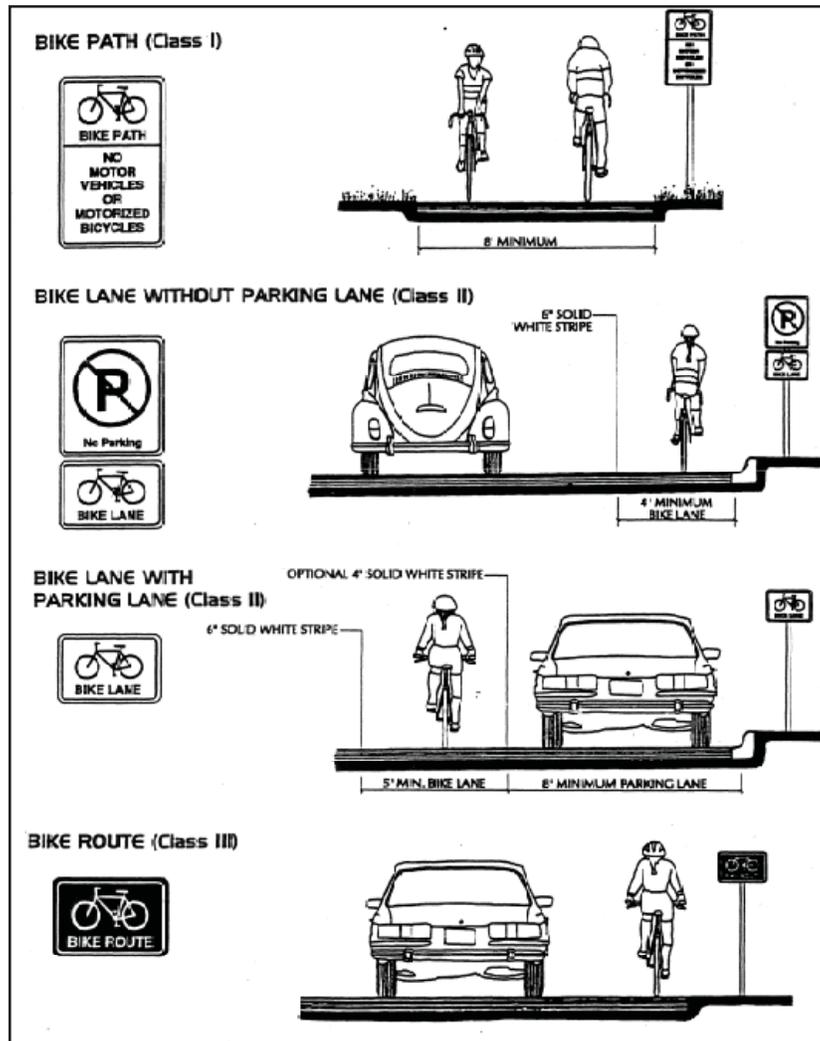


Figure 5-7 Bicycle Facilities

There are three main Bikeway typologies the City uses in bikeway planning (see Figure 5-8 for illustrations):

- Class I bike paths are separated from roads by distance or barriers, and cross-traffic by motor vehicles is minimized.
- Class II bikeways are roadway lanes reserved for bicycles. These lanes are marked with pavement lines, markings, and lane dedication signs.
- Class III bike routes share existing roads and provide continuity to other bikeways or designated preferred routes through high traffic areas. There are no separate lanes, and bike routes are established by placing signs that direct cyclists and warn drivers of the presence of bicyclists.

**Figure 5-8** Bike Path Classifications



**PUBLIC TRANSIT**

Public Transit services in Ventura include bus and rail operations. The South Coast Area Transit, otherwise known as SCAT, provides local bus service to the Westside, the Ventura Intercity Transit Authority, also known as VISTA, runs regional routes, and Greyhound offers statewide and national connections. The Metro-link provides rail service to and from Los Angeles, but not on a very efficient schedule, while Amtrak trains that stop in Ventura run between San Luis Obispo and San Diego. (See Figure 5-9.)

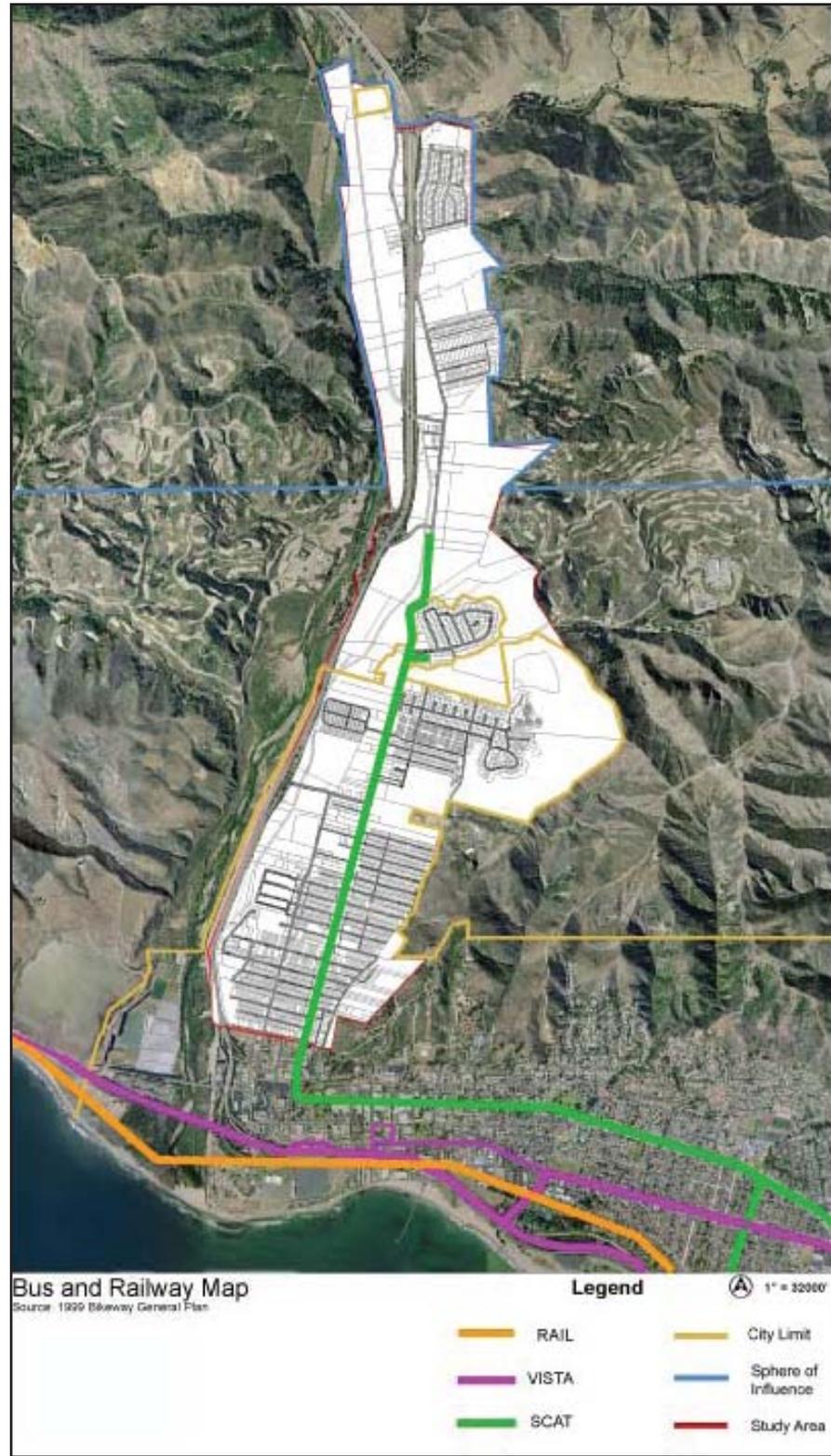
The SCAT travel route offers three lines that go through the Westside, the 6A, the 6B, and the 16. These busses run from around 5:00 am to around 9:30 pm. SCAT bus services are also compatible with people of all ages and physical abilities. Each bus is equipped with wheelchair lifts and adjustable steps to ensure access for all riders. SCAT also offers discounted fares for seniors and disabled riders, as well as dial-a-ride service. However, seniors and mobility impaired persons also desire frequent fixed route service in smaller vehicles.



**Figure 9:**  
SCAT Bus

**Figure 10:**  
AMTRAK Station  
Downtown

Figure 5-11 Bus and Railway Routes



## STREETSCAPES & PARKING

Streetscapes play a vital role in the way communities portray themselves, not only to outsiders, but to the constituents of the community. They may also enhance the existing beauty of the area using unique landscaping or provide traffic calming measures such as planted roundabouts and medians. Ventura Avenue is undergoing many changes to better address streetscape issues, but because of time and money not all streets and streetscapes can be conditioned at the same time. This sort of phasing has led to some parts of the Avenue looking immaculate with new textured walkways and night lighting, while others remain unlighted, untextured, and potentially hazardous.

Most of the Westside is characterized by either on-street parking or personal driveways; there are no parking garages and very few public parking lots.

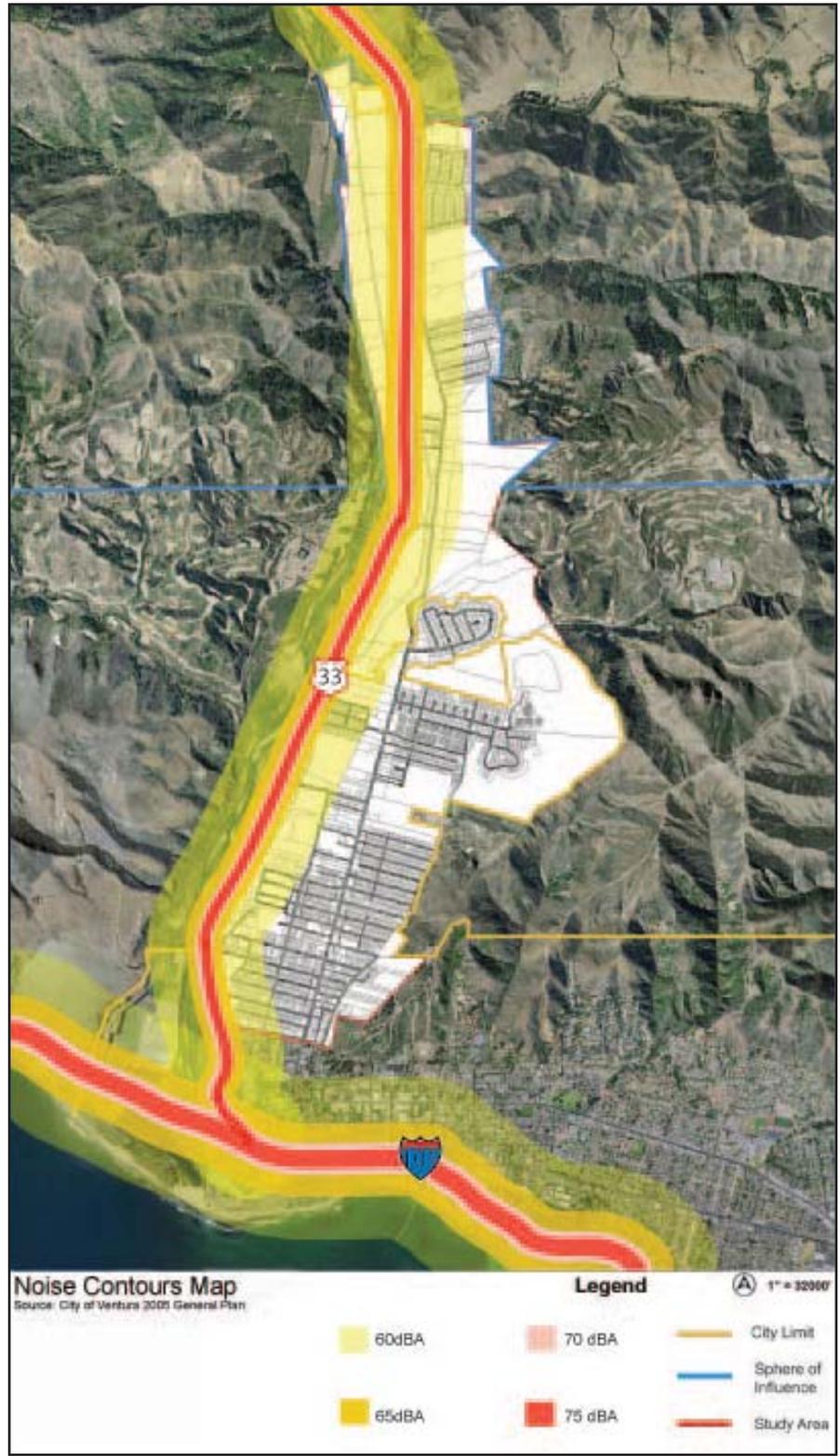


**Figure 5-12:** Bulb-out Traffic Calmer

## NOISE

Noise is fairly circumstantial often depending on where people live in the Westside. The main noise source in the project site is found to be Highway 101, Highway 33, the rail line, and the Ventura Shooting Range. The noise map below illustrates noise contours. Red zones illustrate 75 and over decibels of sound and yellow represents 60 and below. The small flag icons represent schools and the red/green/blue boxes are public facilities. This map shows that there is minimal noise being emitted from Ventura Avenue and other non-freeways.

Figure 5-13: Noise Contours



## **CONCLUSION**

After a detailed study, the circulation system was found to be sufficient in many respects, but lacking in certain areas. A brief summary of all conclusions and recommendations for future needs are summarized below:

Roads are able to handle current demand. However, with future developments in the Westside and North Avenue area, street expansion or new street creation may be necessary.

There is a need more sidewalks and crosswalks to improve safety and mobility. Crosswalks are scarce, and to alleviate jaywalking, more crosswalks should be placed particularly along Ventura Avenue. Connectivity within the Westside and to North Avenue is also an area of concern.

There is a demand for more access to the River Trail. It is difficult to get from neighborhoods to the Ventura River Trail. Also, bike lanes would be beneficial along Ventura Avenue to prevent cyclist use of sidewalks, adding to pedestrian safety.

South Coast Area Transit's service to the Westside is currently suitable, but may require more stops along the Avenue. With future development, bus stops should be much more frequent to accommodate the pedestrian.

More vegetation and parkways are needed to improve aesthetics and safety. Careful consideration should be given to Ventura Avenue, which is the gateway into the Westside.

Levels of noise are anticipated to increase with future development, and should be reevaluated once development occurs.

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*Public Facilities  
and Services*

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**Chapter**

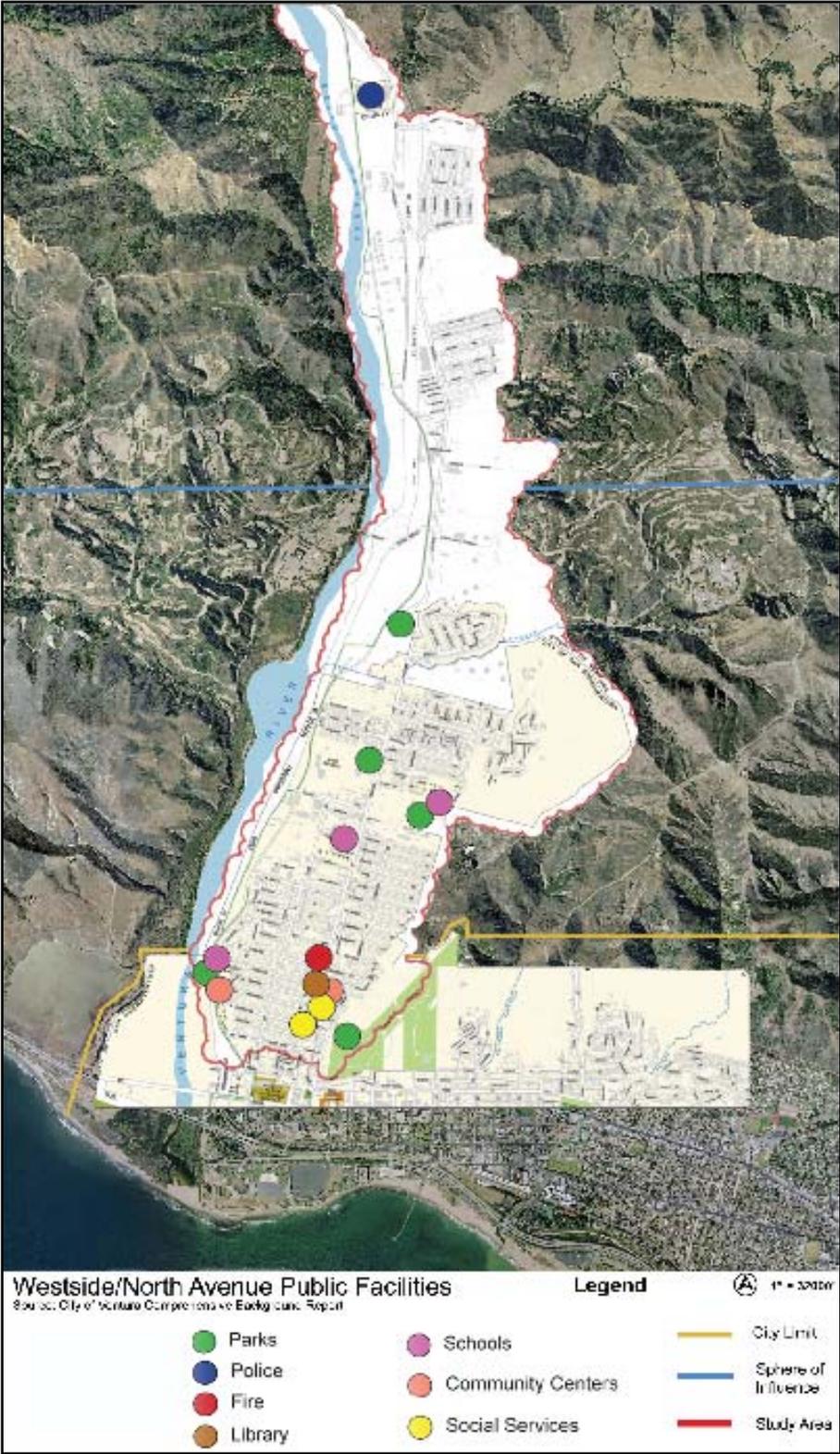


### INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the existing public facilities and services in the communities of Westside and North Avenue, including information on police and fire services, crime, water and sewer facilities, community facilities and services, parks and recreation, and educational facilities.

This analysis found deficiencies in the current levels-of-service for police and fire, which would require an additional 25 police officers and 25 fire fighters to meet national standards. The sewer collection system serving the Westside / North Avenue planning area is also inadequate and needs to be updated to meet future growth. Park facilities are highly concentrated in the Westside portion of the Study Area, and lack over 50 acres necessary to meet the City of Ventura standards. Elementary school facilities are nearing capacity in the Westside Attendance Area without a school available for residents in the North Avenue. The SAGE charter school opened in Fall 2006 to students in Kindergarten through seventh grade, and has helped alleviate some of the overcrowding in the schools. This analysis found the two community centers, Westpark and the Ventura Avenue Adult/Senior Center, to be unequally distributed and concentrated in the southern portion of the Study Area. There are currently no major health facilities or services provided for the residents in the study area.

As identified by Figure 6-1, the public facilities and services serving the Study Area are concentrated in the Westside community. Due to the highly industrial nature of the North Avenue, existing land uses are unsuitable for public facilities, but future revitalization and conversion of the North Avenue industrial areas would present the need for additional public facilities and services to be distributed more evenly in the Study Area.



**Figure 6-1:**  
Westside and North  
Avenue Public  
Facilities

### **METHODOLOGY**

Information for the existing Community Facilities and Services came from primary and secondary data sources. The primary data came from a field survey conducted in October 2006 and a public workshop conducted in November 2006. The purpose of the visits was to gather information and map the spatial dispersion of the community facilities in the Study Area and their relative physical condition. The results were used to analyze level of service for parks, social services, emergency response times, and community centers. During the public workshop, additional information was gathered from the local residents and is reflected in this analysis. Other sources of primary data include field visits to the City of Ventura, meetings with City staff, and conversations with local developers.

Included in this study are sewer facilities, drainage systems, solid waste management, and water supply facilities availability. Educational facilities were also looked at for capacity and room for growth, and police/fire ratios for the city were researched. Most of the information comes from the city's Comprehensive Background Report (2002), the Ventura Unified School District's School Accountability Report Card for 2004-2005, and the Westside Revitalization Plan.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

#### **POLICE SERVICES**

Police headquarters is located at 1425 Dowell Drive in Ventura. In addition to police headquarters, there are four other station locations including Downtown, Westside, Ventura Mall and Montalvo. In Ventura there are 1.2 officers per 1000 residents. This number has stayed relatively the same over the last 15 years. The national average for a city similar in size is 1.5 officers per 1000 residents, which leaves a deficient of 25 officers for the City of Ventura to meet national standards.

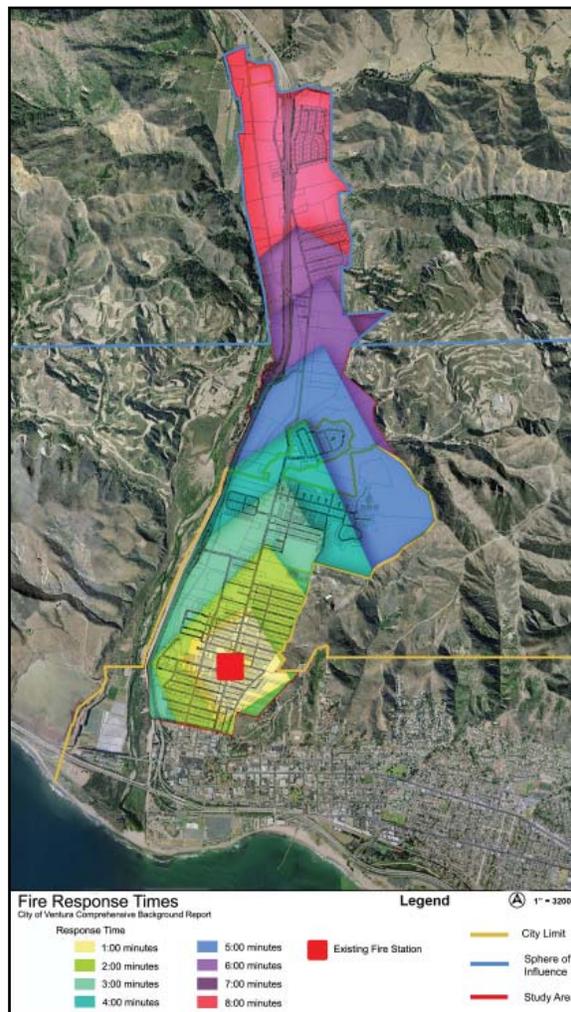
There were 300 crimes reported in 2005, which is a 15% increase in a single year. This means that there are 39.8 crimes per 1000 residents (See Appendix A). In addition, local residents have expressed a concern for crime in the area and have reported that the most relevant crimes were theft and vandalism. Right now the Ventura Police Department (VPD) only staffs Downtown and the promenade with two officers for twelve hours a day. The VPD has also cut other community programs. The Gang Enforcement team is half the size it was five years ago. The VPD has had to discontinue its School Resource Officer (SRO) Program due to a lack of personnel. Thus, there are no officers patrolling the campuses and interacting with the youth.

On average, a five minute response to a Call for Service (CFS) is considered satisfactory. The VPD was able to respond to Priority One calls in less than five minutes only 56% of the time. The VPD considers immediate threat to life, injury traffic accident, or an in progress felony as a Priority One call. In 2005, there were 87,223 Calls for Service. On average there are 239 CFS per day, a 40% increase since 1990, yet the number of officers has remained relatively the same.

## FIRE SERVICES

The Ventura City Fire Department, established in 1878, is the oldest in the county. Fire Station Number One is located in the Westside on North Ventura Avenue and Ramona. In Ventura there are 0.69 firefighters per 1000 residents. The national average for a city similar in size is 1.0 firefighter per 1000 residents. Again, Ventura demonstrates a deficiency of 25 firefighters to meet national standards.

Since 1990 Ventura's population has increased by 12% and emergency calls have increased by 66%, yet the number of firefighters has remained the same. Approximately 73% of the calls that come into the VCFD are for medical emergencies. In order to respond to the entirety of Ventura with a response time less than five minutes, the VCFD needs to hire more firefighters and paramedics. They also need a new station to be able to respond to these calls. Finally, more firefighters are needed to be able to respond to flooding, brushfires, and earthquakes. Fire response times within five minutes are considered satisfactory; according to the fire response map (See Figure 6-2), there is a need for additional fire services in the North Avenue area.



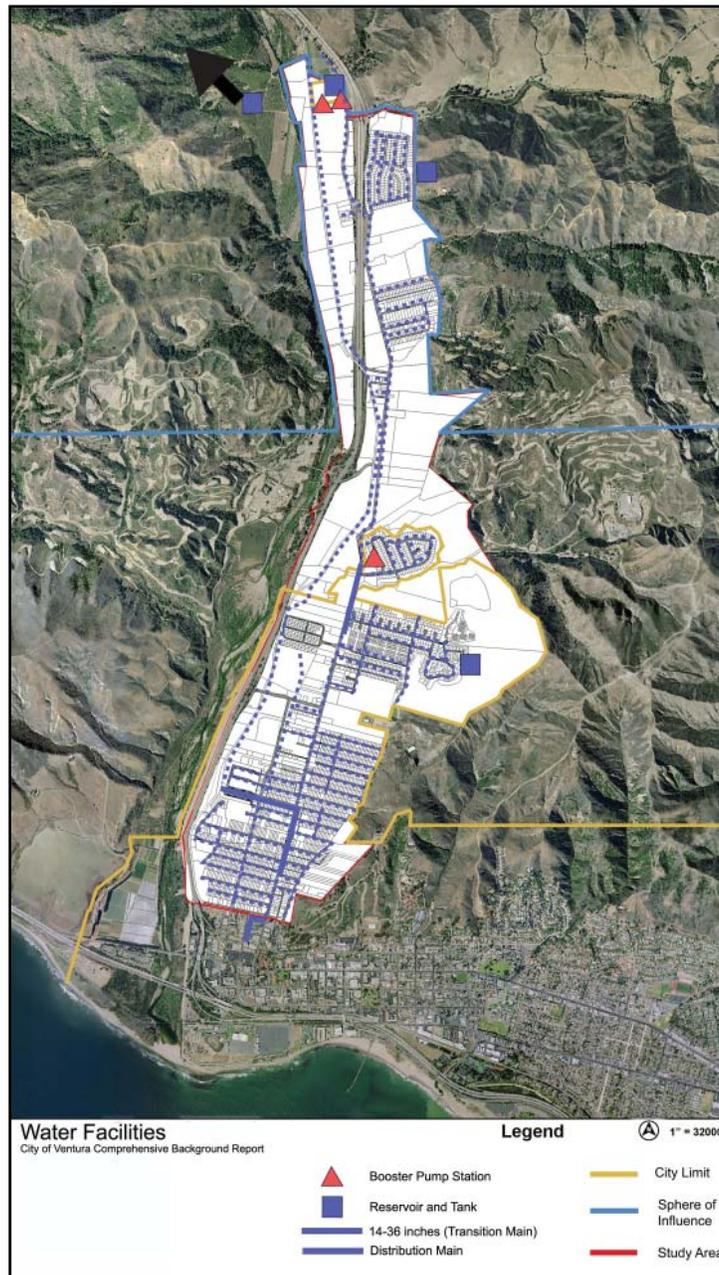
**Figure 6-2:** Fire Response Times

## WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES

### WATER SUPPLY AND FACILITIES

The Study Area currently derives its domestic water supply from the Casitas Municipal Water District, United Water Conservation District, and ground water basins including the Nye Water Wells at Foster Park (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report, 2002).

Figure 6-3: Water Facilities



Booster Pump Stations	Pressure zones 400/260R and 210			
	Total Capacity (gpm)	Horsepower (hp)	Zones Supplied	Status
Power Booster Pump Station 1	9000	150	210	Active
Valley Vista Booster Pump Station	120	40 & 75	210	Active
Gosnell Pump Station	1500	200	400	Out of Service

**Table 6-1:** Water Facilities

Source: City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report; Suzan Rungren, City of Ventura.

Reservoirs & Tanks	Pressure zones 400/260R and 210			
	Total Capacity (gpm)	Horsepower (hp)	Zones Supplied	Status
Valley Vista Tank (New)	1.0 million	-	400	Active
Seneca Tank	1.2 million	-	400	Active
Power Reservoir	15.17 million	-	210	Active
Kingston Reservoir	10 million	-	210	Active

Nye Foster Wells at Forest Park	Pressure zones 400/260R and 210				
	Total Capacity (gpm)	Horsepower (hp)	Zones Supplied	Status	
Unit 1A	500	15	210	37	Active
Unit 2	550	10	210	40	Active
Unit 7	1670	25	210	36	Out of Service
Unit 8	1034	15	210	33	Out of Service

Damage to Nye Water facilities during 1995, however, has reduced its production to approximately 25% of normal. The City currently anticipates repairs necessary to restore full production to be completed by the summer of 2007. According to the General Plan EIR, the City of Ventura will have sufficient water resources to accommodate development well past the year 2025. Also, with the completion of the new Valley Vista Tank, water storage and larger transmission facilities in the Westside are adequate to meet currently anticipated Community Plan needs. Significant deviation from the Comprehensive Plan would require reevaluation of capacities. As with all development, local impacts of a particular development often will require improvements to local distribution facilities to provide adequate water service. Evaluation and, if necessary, mitigation of these potential impacts are routinely part of project conditions. Further information of facility condition will be available when the Water System Master Plan is complete in late spring of 2007 (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report 2002 and Suzan Rungren – City of Ventura 2006).

### **SEWER FACILITIES**

The study area is served by the Ojai Valley Sanitary District (OVSD) and the City of Ventura. Figure 6-4 illustrates the various sewer facilities within the study area. The Ojai Valley Sanitary District Treatment Plant, constructed in 1963 and expanded in 1965, is located on northern most portion of our Study Area and treats sewage from the North Avenue community. The average daily flow for this facility is 2.14 MGD or 71% of capacity (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report, 2002). The City of Ventura is responsible for the collection and treatment of the sewage for the Westside community. City facilities include the trunk lines in Ventura Avenue, Olive Street and associated street mains. Wastewater is delivered by gravity to a pump station located at the foot of Figueroa Street, where it is move through a 3.7-mile force and gravity main to the City's Ventura Water Reclamation Facility near Ventura Harbor. While the treatment facilities are operating below capacity and are able to undertake additional sewage, there are deficiencies with the existing sewer collection systems that bring the sewage to the treatment plants. Projects necessary to correct these deficiencies are included in the 2007-2021 CIP. A Sewer line replacement on Olive Street and Mission Street is currently taking place and is fully funded. There is also a citywide effort to replace aging sewer lines, including those within the Study Area (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report and Suzan Rungren – City of Ventura).

### **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

The Environmental Services Office (ESO) in the City Public Works Department manages the collection and disposal of solid waster. The City has a franchise agreement with Harrison Industries for residential and commercial solid waster removal. The majority of Ventura's solid waste is sorted at the Gold Coast Material Recovery Facility and Transfer Station. Any waste that cannot be recycled or diverted is sent to landfills. The majority of Ventura's non-recycled waste (88.1%) goes to the Toland Road Landfill. Approximately 10.5% of the City's waste is sent to the Simi Valley Landfill. The remaining 1.4% is shipped either to the Azusa Land Reclamation Company, Inc., Chiquita Canyon Sanitary Landfill, or Nu-Way Live Oak Landfill. Toland Road Landfill is operated by the Ventura Sanitation District and has a permitted throughput of 1,500 tones of waster per day. Its total permitted capacity is 30 million cubic yards of waste, and it is projected to reach capacity in 2027 (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report, 2005).

### **DRAINAGE SYSTEMS**

Storm water runoff from the adjacent Avenue hillsides to the east is intended to drain into the Ventura River to the west. However, there are serious drainage issues within our study area that include undersized, inadequate and in some case incomplete drainage systems. Figure 6-5 illustrates the various drainage facilities within the study area and Figure 6-6 highlights the deficiencies with the existing drainage facilities. The Study Area has the majority (75 percent) of undersized or inadequate facilities within the City (City of Ventura Comprehensive Background Report, 2002). There are three storm drain projects currently planned in the Westside. However, their current status is on hold due to lack of funds.

Figure 6-4: Sewer Facilities

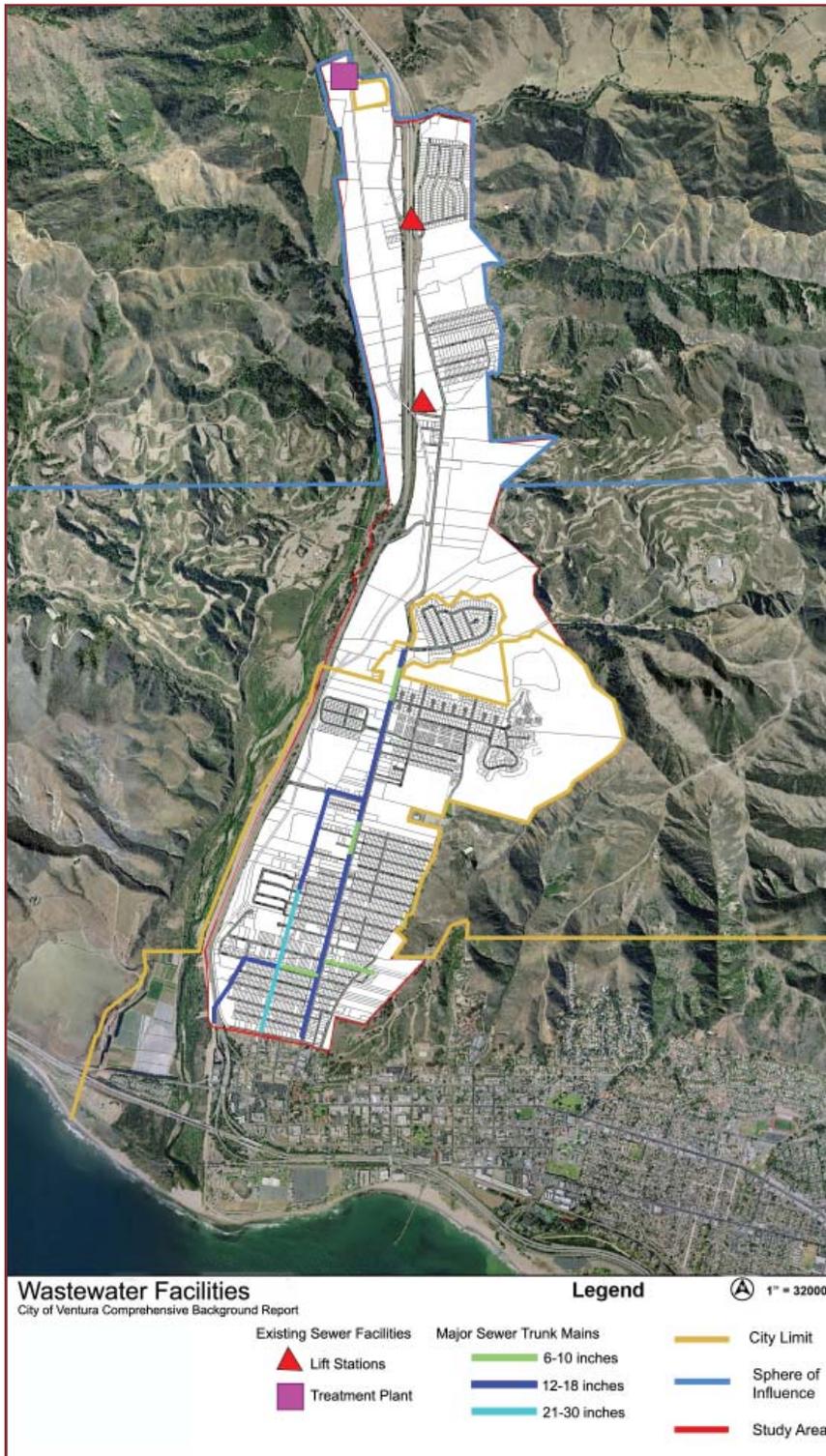
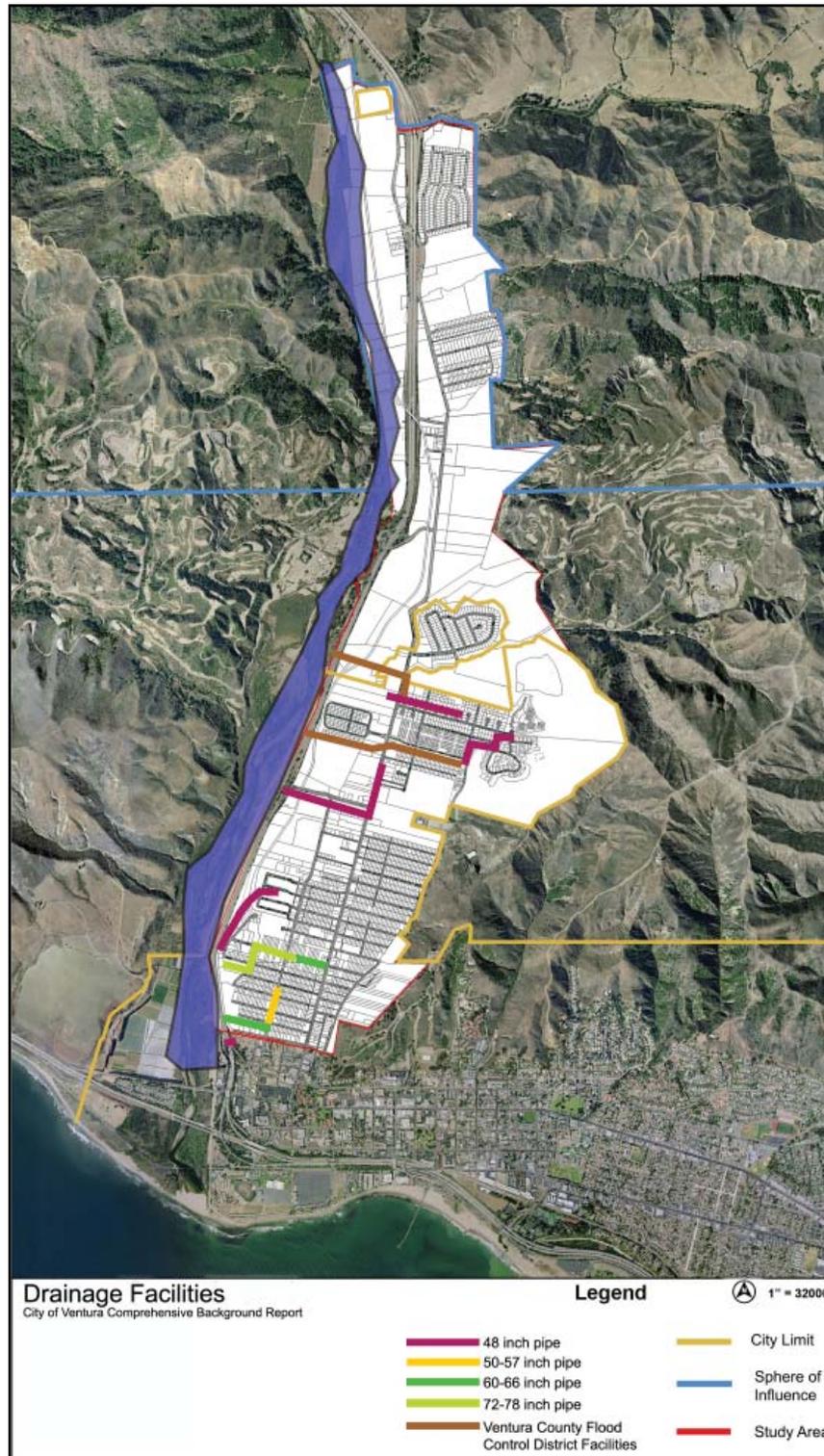
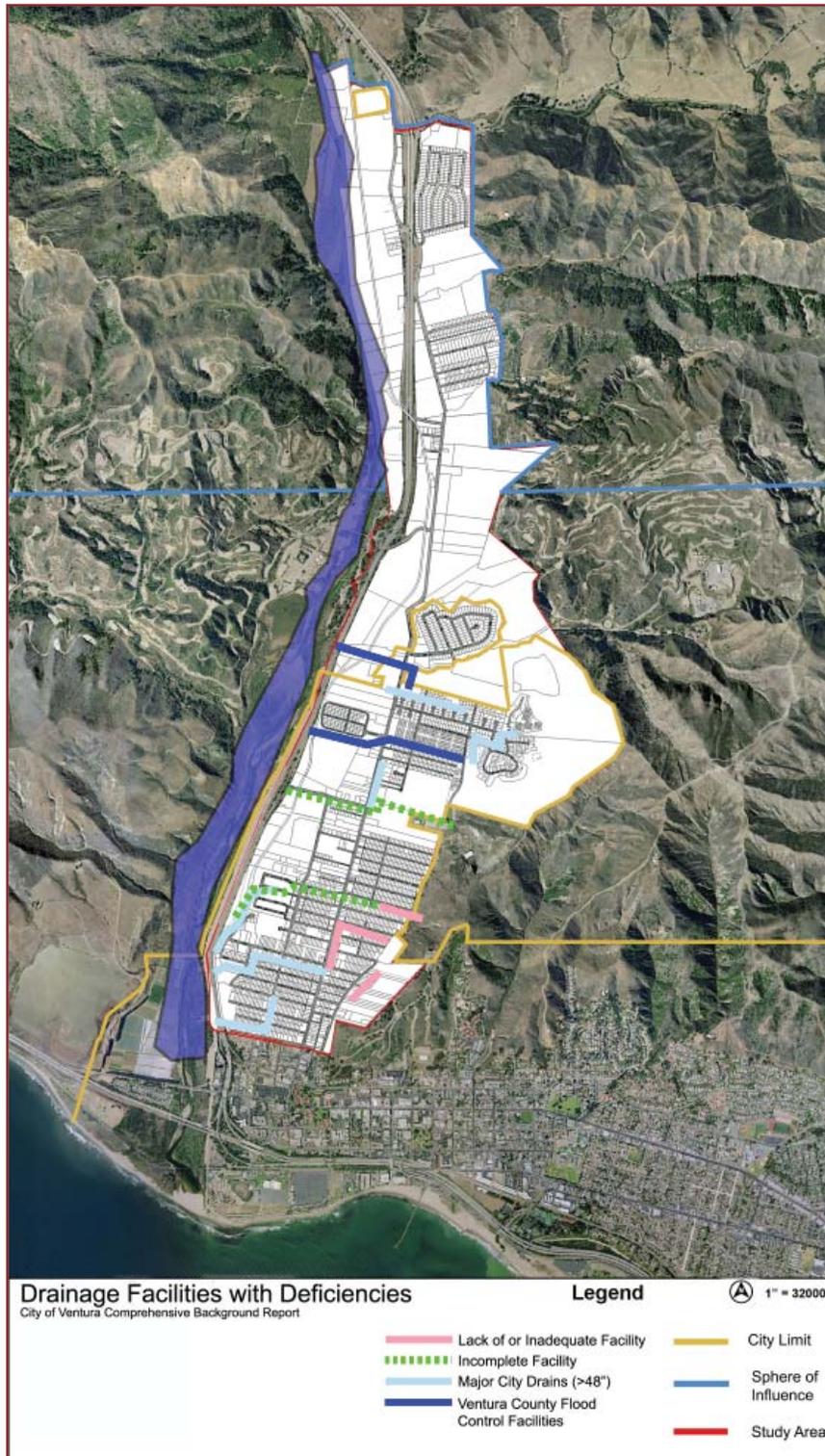


Figure 6-5:  
Drainage Facilities





**Figure 6-6:**  
Drainage Facility  
Deficiencies

## EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

### SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Ventura Unified School District (VUSD) operates the public school system in the City of Ventura. The VUSD is divided into four attendance areas: West Side, Midtown, Montalvo, and East End. The Study Area contains three public schools located within the West Side Attendance Area (WSAA): E.P. Foster Elementary, Sheridan Way Elementary, and De Anza Middle School. As of 2001, both elementary schools were operating at 99-100% capacity (See Table 6-3), but due to the overcrowding, some students in the WSAA have the opportunity to attend other schools in the City. De Anza Middle School's enrollment was only at 79% capacity in 2001. The nearest high school to the Study Area is Ventura High School, located E. Main Street approximately two miles away. The high school was operating at 88% capacity in 2001. Although there is no high school serving the immediate WSAA, VUSD indicates that a new high school is unnecessary; however, future growth in the North Avenue may create a need for an additional high school. According to the 2005 American Community Survey, 16.3% of the citywide enrolled population attends private schools.

**Table 6-2:** Public School Facilities

Source:  
VUSD School  
Accountability  
Report Card,  
City of Ventura  
Comprehensive  
Plan Background  
Report 2002

	Capacity	2001 Enrollment	Utilization (2001)	2004 Enrollment	Utilization (2004)
<b>Elementary Schools (K-5)</b>					
E.P. Foster	534	534	100%	507	95%
Sheridan Way	634	629	99%	521	82%
<b>Middle Schools (6-8)</b>					
De Anza	946	745	79%	715	76%
<b>High Schools (9-12)</b>					
Ventura (~2 mi)	2,344	2,055	88%	2,100	90%

E.P. Foster Elementary School (K-5th Grade) is centrally located in the Westside community on the corner of Pleasant Place and North Ventura Avenue. In the 2004-05 school year, 507 students were enrolled (as of 2001, the school was at capacity with 534 students) with an average class size of 22 students. A majority of the students are Hispanic or Latino (76%), with 50% in the English Learner program (double the state average). The 42,000 square-foot school was built in 1929 and updated in 2001; Figure 6-7 shows the school's sign at the corner of Ventura Avenue and Pleasant Place. The campus includes nine permanent classrooms, thirteen portable classrooms, a lab/shop, cafeteria, and multipurpose room.

The other elementary school in our study area is Sheridan Way, located next to Westpark Community Center on Sheridan Way (See Figure 6-8). For the 2004-05 school year, there were 521 students (down from 629 in 2001). There is a greater majority (92%) of Latino or Hispanic students with 70% in the English Learner program. The school was built in 1950 and modernized in 2001. The 44,000 square foot facility sits on 6.3-acres and consists of sixteen permanent classrooms, nine portable classrooms, a multi-purpose room, cafeteria, and library.

De Anza is the only middle school (6th – 8th Grade) located in the WSAA. It is adjacent to Harry A. Lyon Park on the corner of Cameron Street and De Anza Road (See Figure 6-9). There were 715 students in the 2004-05 school year (745 students in 2001) with 74% Hispanic or Latino students and 20% white. The 79,000 square-foot school was built in 1956 and has 32 permanent classrooms, a computer lab, technology modules lab, woodshop, library, six labs/shops, a multipurpose room, gym, and a large special education room.

The School of Arts and Global Education (SAGE) charter school opened on September 5, 2006, at the De Anza Middle School campus. The SAGE school has about 225 students in kindergarten through seventh grades, and will expand to eighth grade the following school year. The SAGE school is based on the Open Classroom Program, which favors less conventional teaching methods featuring a non-graded, multi-age program that focuses on each child's learning style and requires weekly parental involvement. With an emphasis on arts programs, global and environmental education, the introduction of the SAGE charter school help supports Ventura's vision of a "New Art City" (Wiebe 2006).



**Figure 6-7:**  
EP Foster  
Elementary

**Figure 6-8:**  
Sheridan Way  
Elementary

**Figure 6-9:**  
De Anza Middle  
School

## BROOKS INSTITUTE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Brooks Institute is located about four miles from Downtown Ventura at the northern tip of the Study Area. It is a "boutique school" owned by Career Education Corporation, owners of many specialty schools worldwide. Brooks was founded in 1945 as a School of Photography in Santa Barbara, but recently extended its campus to Ventura to accommodate the increasing enrollment and emerging interest in film and digital technologies (See Figures 6-10 and 6-11). The 2-3 year program costs about \$21,000 tuition per year. Currently, there are plans to expand the campus to accommodate a future enrollment of up to 4,500 students.

**Figure 6-10:**  
Brooks Institute  
Campus



**Figure 6-11:**  
Film Set on  
Campus



**Figure 6-12:**  
Avenue Library

## LIBRARIES

The Avenue Library is the newest and smallest of the three libraries in Ventura occupying 3,000 square feet located on the ground floor of the historic Casa de Anza apartment building, which was restored in 1998 (See Figure 6-12). According to the library’s website, their circulation contains about 23,000 books and is open 25 hours per week. There are a variety of services and programs offered, including: internet access on seven computers, a copy machine, a small public meeting room with projection screen (rented at \$10/3 hours), story time, crafts, and a homework center. As of 2001, there were 5,272 cardholders, consisting of about 7% of the city’s overall library patronage. Currently, there is a need to expand the City’s library system in terms of space, hours of operation, and book collection.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

### PARKS

The City of Ventura’s park standards are more strict than national standards with a minimum requirement of 10 acres/1,000 persons. According to these standards, the Westside and North Avenue communities are severely deficient in their neighborhood and service area park requirements (See Table 6-4). Although the City of Ventura has planned improvements for both Harry A. Lyon Park and Westpark, these improvements will not result in increased park size. The playfields have become overused due to field sharing between school facilities and public recreational activities—a result of the lack of park facilities in the West Side and North Avenue.

**Table 6-3:** West  
Side Parks and  
Standards

Source: City of  
Ventura General  
Plan 2005, Ventura  
Comprehensive  
Plan Background  
Report

	Park Size (in acres)	Total Acres	Acres Required	Additional Acres Needed
<b>Citywide Parks (Standard: 5 acres/1,000 persons)</b>				
Grant Park	107.29	107.29		--
<b>Service Area Parks (Standard: 3 acres/1,000 persons)</b>				
Harry A. Lyon	10.66	16.48	42.33	25.85
Westpark	5.82			
<b>Neighborhood Parks (Standard: 2 acres/1,000 persons)</b>				
Westpark	1.5	1.5	28.22	26.72
<b>Other</b>				
Brock Linear Park	2.5	2.5		--
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>127.77</b>		<b>52.57</b>



**Figure 6-13:**  
Park Distribution  
Map

**Figure 6-14:**  
Westpark  
Skatebowl



**Figure 6-15:**  
Harry A. Lyon  
Baseball Field



**Figure 6-16:**  
Brock Linear Park



Westpark is a 7-acre athletic/recreational complex and neighborhood park located on the southwestern edge of the study area. The Westpark Community Center was built in the 1940s, and is located at the northern tip of the park. Although the structure is outdated, it is known and valued for having the best basketball court in the City. The Community Center also acts as a hub for kids in the community, and provides a variety of amenities and activities that include: a lighted baseball/soccer field, children's play area, horseshoe pits, a recreational center that offers a gym with showers, game and crafts rooms, a kitchen, and community meeting rooms. Located at the southern end of the park is one of the City's ten skate bowls, which were built ten years ago in lieu of a larger skate park (See Figure 6-14).

Harry A. Lyon Park is a 10.7-acre sports-oriented park located adjacent to De Anza Middle School and on the school's property. Amenities include tennis courts, basketball courts, a lighted softball/baseball field, two youth baseball fields, and open grass and barbecue areas (See Figure 6-15).

Brock Linear Park is a 2.5-acre strip that is part of the 46-acre citywide linear park system. The bike/walking path curves alongside a greenbelt and picnic tables, and is located along Shoshone Street and continues through Sycamore Village to the River Trail (See Figure 6-16).

Although Grant Park is not in the immediate Study Area, it is located to the southeast on Ferro Drive. It is one of the largest parks in Ventura (107-acres), and is known for the best views in the City with sightings of the Channel Islands on a clear day. It is also known for the large controversial cross on the property. In addition to the views, the park offers picnic areas, restrooms, and a public shooting range.

Ventura Avenue Plaza is a privately owned pocket park that has been made available to the public and maintained by the West Side Neighborhood Council. It is located next to the Ventura Ave Adult/Senior Center between East Center and East Simpson Streets.

The Ventura River Trail is a 6.3 mile pedestrian and bicycle path that begins on Main Street and follows the Ventura River inland. The trail follows the old Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way and links the Omer Rains Trail along the coast to the Ojai Valley Trail for a 17-mile urban bike ride from the Ventura Pier to Ojai.

The parks in the study area are highly concentrated in the Westside community, and are primarily sports-oriented parks. There is only one Neighborhood Park, located at the southwestern edge of the study area, within walking distance to a small percentage of the study area. There is an obvious need for neighborhood parks placed in the more dense parts of the study area to provide much needed open space. The River Trail is the only recreational outlet provided for the residents in the North Avenue, but lacks sufficient access points and tends to divert away from the river and through industrial areas through this part of the trail.

### CITY RECREATION PROGRAMS

Westpark Community Center and Ventura Avenue Adult/Senior Center are two of the four neighborhood centers in Ventura are located within our study area. Organized sport activities have high membership—33,478 participants citywide in 2000. Youth and adult arts education programs also have high turnout with 8,000 participants annually.

## COMMUNITY CENTERS AND SERVICES

### COMMUNITY CENTERS

Located on the river front, the Westpark Community Center is a 7-acre park and facility that offers a recreation center with a gymnasium and showers, restrooms, game and craft rooms, a kitchen, and community meeting rooms (See Figure 6-17). The park features a lighted softball/soccer field, two handball courts, children's play area, horseshoe courts and restrooms. An important and highly utilized feature of the Westpark Community Center is the PEAK after-school program aimed at keeping kids off of the streets. The facility also has a skate park and runs adjacent to the River Trail.

The Ventura Avenue Adult/Senior Center is open Monday through Friday and provides various activities and support programs for the community's elderly population (See Figure 6-18). This includes: health screening, a senior nutrition program, home energy assistance program, transportation services, health insurance counseling, and income tax preparation, reduced priced lunches, driver's training, and gentle yoga.



**Figure 6-17:**  
Westpark  
Community Center

**Figure 6-18:**  
Ventura Avenue  
Adult/Senior Center

**Figure 6-19:**  
Catholic Charities  
Center

### **SOCIAL SERVICES**

Residents have expressed concern for the high concentration of social services located in the West Side community, as well as the large number of halfway houses (around 100) present within the study area. Because many of the services provide short-term care and fail to provide job training and rehabilitation programs, residents feel these services contribute to higher crime rates in the Study Area.

### **HOMELESS SERVICES**

The Catholic Charities Center located at the southern edge of the Study Area at the corner of West Park Row and Ventura Avenue (See Figure 6-19). It is a non-profit organization providing services to individuals and families from cost childcare, immigration and refugee assistance, psychological services, computer and job skills training and other supportive services.

Project Understanding is a faith-based agency founded and established on the principles and ideals of Judaism and Christianity whose mission is two-fold: To do justice by serving the poor, hungry and oppressed with compassion and mercy, and to provide avenues for those who wish to serve others. Project Understanding initiates, develops, and maintains special projects pulling together the efforts of individuals, local congregations and groups to meet the needs of those in need.

Programs offered:

- *Reception Center* - A program that utilizes an intake process with skilled, supportive listeners to minister to and assess the needs of individuals and families in order to make appropriate referrals.
- *Focus on Food Emergency Food Pantry* - A pantry program designed to help homeless and hungry people through times of crisis. The Pantry provides recipients with a three-day supply of food.
- *SARAH (Simply Arranging Real Assistance Here)* - A source of basic services for homeless people. Services include shower and laundry facilities, a mail and message center for job seekers, medical help from a Public Health nurse, and a listening ear in times of stress.
- *The Tutoring Station* - To assist economically disadvantaged children, this program provides a minimum of one hour per week of extra classroom instruction with volunteer tutors in one-to-one interaction at five locations in Ventura and Oxnard.
- *Religious Coalition for the Homeless* - Churches and synagogues joining in faith-based action to provide transitional shelter and a voice for the County's homeless.
- *Homeless Center and Emergency Shelter* - Project Understanding works with a coalition of interested agencies and individuals to provide year-round emergency shelter, short-term transitional housing, and a center where homeless people may receive a wide variety of services all at a single location.

**ETHNIC SERVICES**

El Concilio del Condado de Ventura is a non-profit advocacy and multi-service community organization. El Concilio del Condado de Ventura is the umbrella to other community based organizations and strives, through programs and services to improve the quality of life of Latinos in Ventura County and the community at large. The agency serves as advocates for the enhancement of public health and human services to Latinos and others through collaboration with county, state and local city governments. The organization also serves as conveners for meetings with groups of residents and/or community organizations to resolve other community problems affecting Latinos and the community at large.

**CULTURAL SERVICES**

The Cultural Funding Program includes five components: Artist Fellowships: funding to individual artists who live in Ventura; General Operating Grants: organizational support to large and small organizations in the City of Ventura; Cultural Project Grants: funds to County organizations to conduct projects and/or programs within the City of Ventura; Community grants: small grants to local non-profits developing cultural programs in partnership with artists or arts groups; Facility Use Grants: in-kind support to local groups, providing for the use of City Hall performance venues at no charge.

The purpose of the Community Partnership Granting Program is to allow organizations providing services to the City of San Buenaventura to submit a request to meet significant community needs. The City has historically set aside approximately \$200,000 annually to fund services such as recreation, food, counseling and medical and legal assistance. In recent years this funding has been from the General Fund.

In 2004-2006, twenty-four projects received grants of cash and in-kind contributions ranging from \$2,250-\$24,500. The City Council has appropriated \$210,000 for the first year (FY 2006-07), and it is anticipated that Council will appropriate \$210,000 for the second year (FY 2007-08). Proposals submitted for this funding will be required to comply with the policy and procedures established by the Community Partnerships Granting Program Policy and Procedures.

Groups applying for funding must be incorporated as a non-profit, charitable organization, or be chartered as a local unit of an organization so incorporated; and must be tax-exempt under the Internal Revenue Code, and under the corresponding section of the State Franchise Tax Code Section. Public entities are also eligible.

### **SENIOR SERVICES**

The Ventura Avenue Adult/Senior Center located at the corner of East Center Street and Ventura Avenue provides various services for the elderly population in the West Side. There are currently no senior services offered in the North Avenue, but paratransit or expanded bus routes would increase accessibility to the existing facility.

#### **Caregivers Volunteers Assisting the Elderly**

United Way organization offers non-medical volunteer-provided assistance to frail, home-bound seniors in Ventura County to enable them to remain in the comfort of their homes for as long as possible.

#### **Legal Assistance**

Commission on Human Concerns offers free legal advice for all ages to help one sort out social security benefits, divorce, adoption or wills and many other legal issues.

#### **Home Energy Assistance Program**

Home Energy Assistance Program assists income-eligible households with current gas or electric bills between 9-11 am on the 4th Thursday at the Ventura Avenue Adult Center

#### **Homeowners/Renters Assistance**

Home owners and renters assistance provides tax relief to citizens 62 years of age or older, blind or disabled. Claim forms, preparation and filing assistance are available July-September:

#### **Free Tax Preparation**

Free tax preparation is available for low income and people 50 and over through AARP and the Commission for Human Concerns. This free service is available at the Ventura Avenue Adult Center Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

#### **SCAT Senior Dial A-Ride**

Service offers mini-bus transportation as a low cost alternative.

#### **HICAP**

The Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program provides free assistance for beneficiaries at 1:30-3:30 pm on the fourth Thursday at the Ventura Avenue Adult Center.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **POLICE/FIRE PROTECTION**

A top concern is fire and police protection, which currently fall significantly below the national standards. The area is currently under-represented with a ratio of 0.69 fire fighters per 1,000 residents; the national ratio is 1.0/1,000. To meet these national criteria, 25 new fireman would need to be added to the department citywide. Police protection also falls short at 1.2 officers per 1,000 residents, whereas, the national standard is 1.5/1,000. An additional 25 police officers citywide are needed to bring Ventura to the national standard. Police/Fire protection services for the study area will need to be increased in order to accommodate future development.

### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

The current storm water infrastructure is inadequate to serve a growing Westside. Expansion of the facility will need to occur before significant growth is allowed. The sewer collection system serving the West Ventura/ North Avenue planning area is also inadequate and needs to be updated.

### **PARKS**

Park ratios are the most under-performing area of the Community Facilities and Services. The area is in need of 25.85 acres of Service Area Parks and 26.72 acres of Neighborhood Parks. There are currently 95 % less Neighborhood Park acres than are mandated by the City.

### **SCHOOLS**

Elementary schools are at 95% and 82% capacity, and will need expansion with significant new growth. DeAnza Middle School is at 76%, and should be adequate. Ventura High School, located 2-miles outside the Study Area, is currently at 90% capacity, and will need to be expanded in the future.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

There are two community centers that are not spatially distributed in the planning area. Both are located on the most southern area, and do not actively serve northern neighborhoods. An additional community center and plaza are needed in the northern part of North Avenue.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

There are currently no health services or facilities provided for the West Side or North Avenue residents. A small health clinic or facility is needed to serve the study area. As identified by Figure 6-1, the public facilities and services serving our study area are concentrated in the Westside. Due to the highly industrial nature of the North Avenue, existing land uses are unsuitable for public facilities, but future revitalization and conversion of the North Avenue industrial areas would present the need for additional public facilities and services to be distributed more evenly in the Study Area.

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*Community  
Involvement*

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**Chapter**



## **SYNTHESIZED WORKSHOP COMMENTS**

A Community Plan should, as a priority, address the desires of the residents. The City of Ventura emphasizes community participation as a planning resource and the Ventura General Plan was based on a synthesis of community participation entitled The Ventura Vision. Previous planning efforts in the Westside and North Avenue have emphasized community involvement to establish the existing needs of the residents. Because this study, and subsequent community plan, endeavor to build upon previous planning efforts and will act as a supplement to the Ventura General Plan, community participation is particularly crucial.

The first community workshop was held November 18 community workshop. Residents were asked to discuss the existing assets and negative attributes of their community (Table 7-1). Residents also specified existing needs in the community they would like to see addressed in the future. The issues residents established are summarized below and organized into the following categories: History, Environmental Resources and Hazards, Population and Housing, Land Use and Urban Form, Circulation and Noise, and Public Services and Facilities.

### **HISTORY**

The history of Ventura Avenue was established to be an important defining characteristic of the Study Area. Residents indicated that future development should recognize the history of Ventura Avenue. Residents expressed a major concern that new development was too modern and did not fit in with the cultural and historical heritage of the community. They felt it was important to emphasize the Avenue's heritage and create new development that continued the historical character of the area.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND HAZARDS**

The Avenue has a wide variety of environmental resources and hazards that are key in the development of the community. Residents enjoy mountain and ocean views, agricultural land, fishing, and trails along the Ventura River. The common dislikes of the area are landslides, brown field contamination, light pollution and unnecessary flood sirens. Residents would like to see a better flood disaster plan. Also, residents would enjoy more access to the river and hiking trails throughout the nearby hillsides.

### **POPULATION AND HOUSING**

The population and housing of the Westside and North Avenue is unique from other districts in the City of Ventura. The population is predominantly Hispanic and housing is most affordable in Ventura. Residents were generally pleased that the housing on the Avenue was unique, but did not approve of the abundances of homes that run down due to absentee ownership. They felt low income and high income housing should be mixed together to create a good balance of housing choices within the community. Another concern was that the architecture of new homes is too uniform. Finally, the community expressed concern for the number of halfway homes, which are an eyesore and cause many homeless people to hang out in the riverbed or orange groves.

### **LAND USE AND URBAN FORM**

Concerns addressing land use and urban form included the dominant oil industry, abandoned brown fields, and blighted areas along Ventura Avenue. Residents feel land uses are inconsistent and industrial areas should be screened with landscaping. Residents stated that open storage yards, abandoned houses, schools, and brown fields make many parts of the Avenue uninviting and unsafe. Residents want to see more mixed use and enhancements to older developments. Sidewalk cafes, parks, bike lanes, and street landscaping were common requests among residents.

### **CIRCULATION AND NOISE**

Residents felt improvements such as bike lanes, traffic calming measures, improved and maintained streetscapes and off-street parking for businesses would address existing circulation needs. Residents felt the streets in the Study Area were wide enough, but there is not enough parking. Residents also like the grid system of streets, but felt that it is an unsafe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. Sidewalks need to be widened and bike lanes need to be made more prominent. Better bike access throughout neighborhoods to the bike path along the river was recommended by many residents. Noise from the nearby fairgrounds was a common complaint, as well as noise from the shooting range to the east of the Study Area. In the future, residents would like to see transportation improvements connecting the avenue to the downtown with trolleys, new and improved bike lanes, and better public transportation.

### **PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES**

Many residents strongly expressed that there is a high crime rate and a lack of police enforcement in the Study Area, which is a priority to address. Residents also stated that they wished to see improvements in parks and sports fields, as well as the addition of a high school. Many residents would also like to see more doctors and retailers along Ventura Avenue.

### **CONCLUSION**

Overall, residents expressed that Ventura Avenue had an enjoyable community feel and has limitless revitalization potential. Ventura Avenue's proximity to Downtown Ventura and Ojai offer great opportunities to draw in future development. Residents feel that industrial clean up, revitalization of blighted areas, and an increase in economic development are vital to revitalization efforts.

	Likes	Dislikes	Future
<b>History and Government</b>	Designated historical district Historic aqueduct Rich cultural history of the Area Simpson District Homes		Maintain historic character that embodies the Historical spanish colonial and Native American cultures.
<b>Population and Housing</b>	Unique housing types	Amount of homeless living in the orange groves Homes in Sycamore Village are too similar Pacific Point Mixed-Use Buildings	More Spanish-revival theme Mix of affordable housing for low income families and higher end income families to bring increased revenue to city for Westside programs. Homeless shelters
<b>Land Use and Urban Form</b>	Mixed Use at Sycamore Village Existing agricultural lands Street lights Older facades De Anza Buildings Spanish revival building with arches	Too many liquor stores Industrial area unsafe/ugly- no screening Commercial along the Avenue "unoccupied, run-down, filthy." Land uses in the county are inappropriate for North Avenue area (asphalt plants, etc) Industrial uses put in neighborhoods in county jurisdiction (should it be annexed?) Abandoned industrial sites Inefficient land use Open storage yards No cohesiveness, continuity or community feel along avenue No trees/Landscaping not maintained Lack of Hills and Vacant Lots for parks and trails. Inconsistency of Uses	Sidewalk cafes/restaurants Large commercial park Higher densities in older neighborhoods Focus revitalization efforts on Ventura Avenue More architectural continuity along the avenue More trees/streetscapes Industrial cleanup More nodes (european style plazas, paseos, benches and fountains, pocket parks) A walkable "avenue village" Revitalization of existing buildings, especially strip malls Build hill trails/parks in the hills along the edges of town Make use of the vacant lots More commercial development to keep consumers in Ventura Supermarket other than Von's Video Rental Store
<b>Circulation and Noise</b>	Grid System Width of Stanley Ave. Stanley Corridor/ Intersection	No bike lanes on Ventura Ave. Connect Cedar Street Stanley Rd. on/off ramps Bikes on sidewalks (need C2 lanes) Suicide lane pointless/unsafe Improved access from neighborhoods/bike paths Parking Shooting range (noisy, not safe) Racetrack noise Unmaintained or non-existent streetscapes Circulation during disaster and/or disaster drills. Speed of traffic along the Avenue. Traffic (Difficult to make left turns) Lack of traffic signals Dead ends End of Stanley Ave. Sidewalks not pedestrian friendly	More C1/C2 bike lanes Parking for alternative modes of transportation (electric cars, motorcycles) Wider/better sidewalks Lighted/sensored crosswalks Trolley along Avenue Streetscape improvements Increased access to downtown (particularly with public transit) Traffic calming measures. Recommend moving the shooting range. Create bike lane Garden Street Extension Stanley Road Extension Transportation other than bus to commercial areas (Shuttle/Trolley)

<p><b>Public Services and Facilities</b></p>	<p>Brooks Institute Library Fairground Skatepark Grant Park Public Art Undergrounded Utilities</p>	<p>Not enough parks River trail through industrial in North Ave. Crime Inadequate police presence Overall lack of public services</p>	<p>Underground utilities Outdoor amphitheater New parks A high school School/community garden Parks evenly distributed through community Increased police presence Police should focus on crime. Increased public/private facilities such as laundrymats, parks, doctors, dentists, grocery store. Better services for homeless Reduction of half-way housing. More lighting and more directed towards shops and sidewalks Sports Fields/ Complex</p>
<p><b>Environment Resources and Hazards</b></p>	<p>Mountains and ocean views Agricultural land Ventura River and trail Fishing along river River access Pristine surrounding hills Viewsheds (east, west, north) 1700s Fig trees throughout site</p>	<p>Area of flooding along Avenue Landslide areas Unnecessary flood sirens Too much light Not enough stars Noise from shooting range and racetrack Disaster plan</p>	<p>More access to river trail Greenbelt More access to open space and surrounding hillsides Better Education about flood disaster plans and and drill logistics.</p>
<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p>Good community feeling Close proximity to downtown Incorporation of art "Great place to live" Ojai Adjacency Relocation of Unified School District offices to Westside</p>	<p>Homeless in river area Unorganized emergency testing Absentee ownership (leads to degradation of properties) Halfway houses (affects homebuyers)</p>	<p>Industrial clean-up incentives Public music (sidewalk speakers) Better emergency preparedness/notification Greater effort to bring in ECO Industrial park or like revitalization efforts for existing industrial sites Increased economic opportunities</p>

**Table 7-1:**  
Synthesis of  
Community Input

## VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

The Visual Preference Survey is an informative component of the Westside and North Avenue community planning and urban design process. It provides a valuable tool for public input on the design and form of public places, which best reflects the public's desires and vision.

The process involved presentation of 72-images at the Community Planning Workshop on November 18, 2006 held at Brooks Institute. Participants rated each on a scale of -3 to +3 based upon the image's appropriateness in the defined study area, and were asked to identify both positive and negative features.

Based on the survey analysis, it is clear that the community values its rural history, and puts a great deal of emphasis on landscaping/trees, architectural style (a balance between modern and modest), community safety, and public gathering spaces. In addition, parking and streetscape were identified as major areas of concern.

Density, massing and architectural style faced the most controversy, often being named as both a negative and a positive attribute for the same image. To address this, the design team will need to be very cognizant to the sensitivity of these issues and work to find a sufficient balance.

Images were organized into five categories: Ventura Avenue Corridor, Neighborhoods, Civic Uses and Open Space, Thoroughfares and Streetscapes, and Districts, per the General Plan. The ratings and comments have been synthesized and the images that received the strongest reactions have been included in this report. Each image is accompanied by qualitative and quantitative data, and a bar chart.

Slide 8: Ventura Avenue Corridor



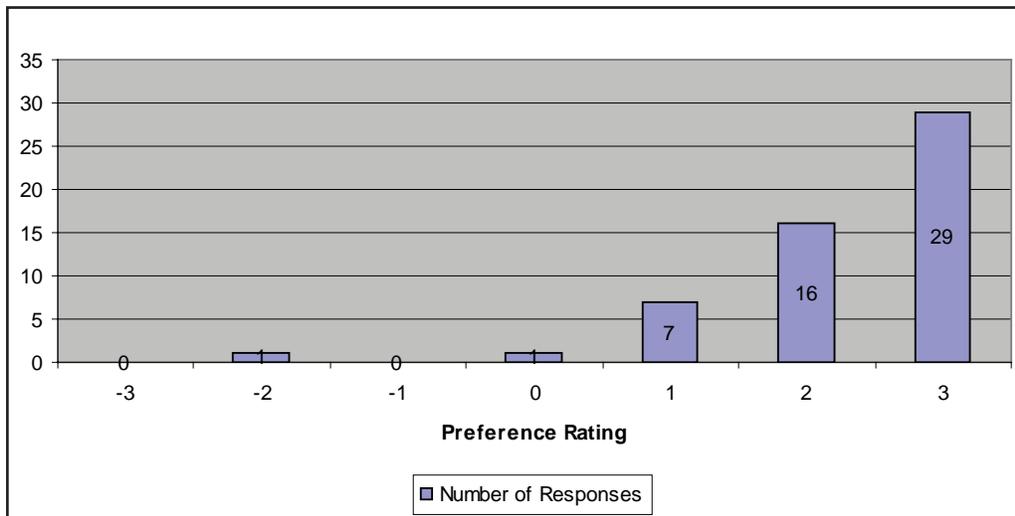
**Positive Comments:**

- Trees & Awnings, Greenery,
- Very people friendly
- Warm atmosphere, Walkability
- Mixed Use, High Density
- Patios, Outdoor gathering/seating

**Negative Comments:**

- Narrow street
- “Not Ventura”
- Too tall

**Results**



Mean: 2.31

Mode: 3

Slide 4: Ventura Avenue Corridor



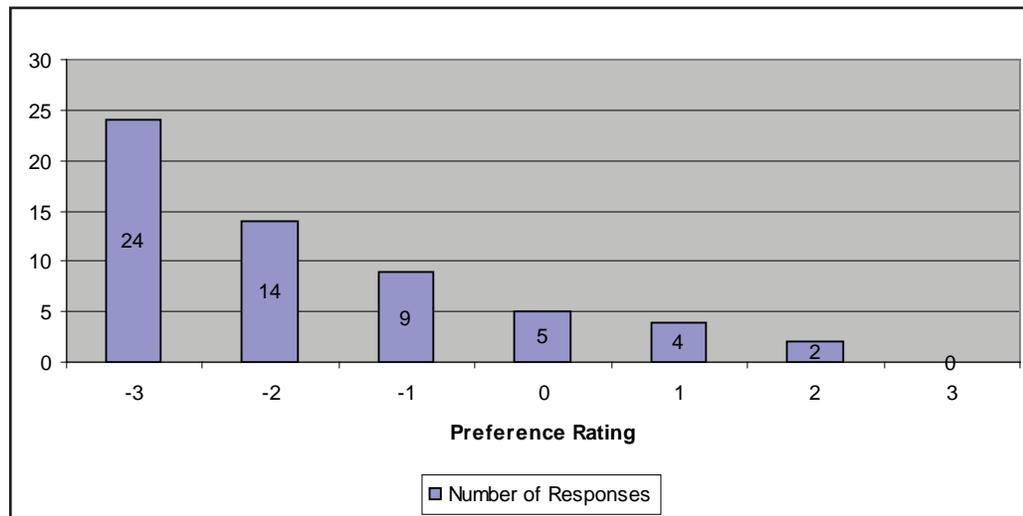
**Positive Comments:**

- Quite area, Looks historic
- Setback from sidewalk, Single story
- Industrial zoning/use, Necessary commerce, Maintains jobs
- Off-street parking

**Negative Comments:**

- Unattractive (Ugly) building
- No screening
- Rundown

**Results**



Mean: -1.74

Mode :-3

## Slide 19: Neighborhoods



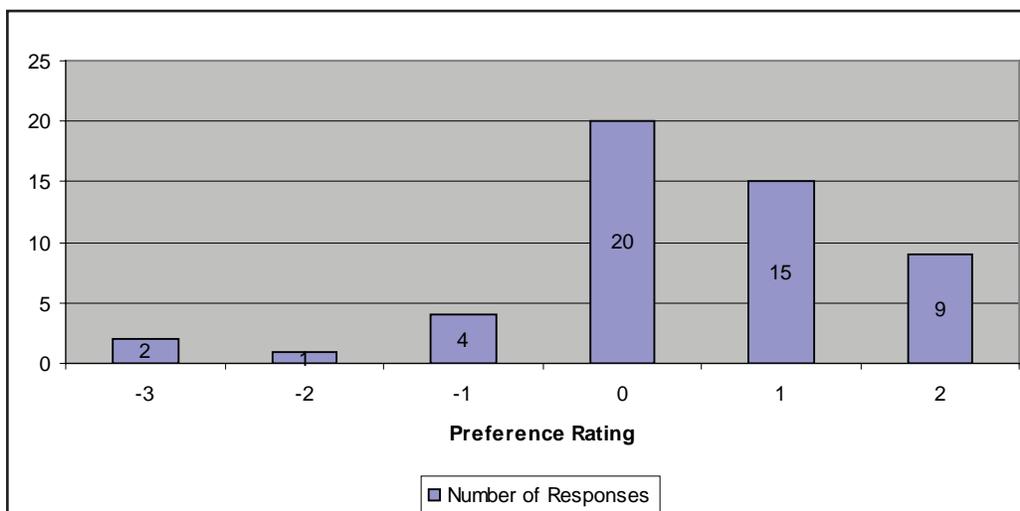
### Positive Comments:

- High density
- User friendly, Shared common area
- Trees, Grass
- Architectural style, Large porch
- “Safe looking,” “Neat & Clean”

### Negative Comments:

- Homes too close, “Too cramped”
- “Children need space”

## Results



Mean: 1.41

Mode: 1

### Slide 14: Neighborhoods



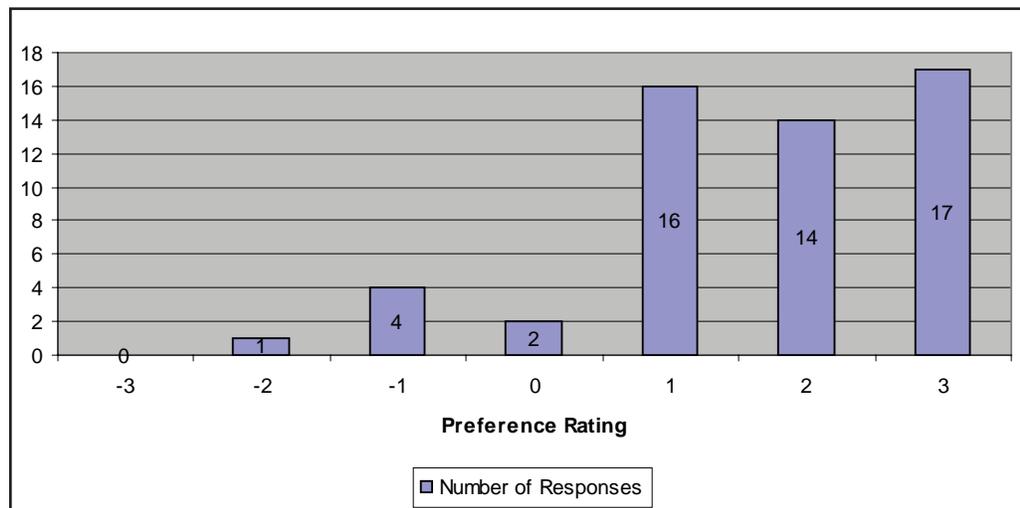
#### Positive Comments:

- Architectural style, Color, Visual variety
- Trees, Greenery, Landscaping
- Density, Set-back
- Underground Parking

#### Negative Comments:

- Pretentious
- Not enough architectural detail
- Massing, Density, "HUGE", Too tall

### Results



Mean: 1.65

Mode: 3

Slide 16: Neighborhoods



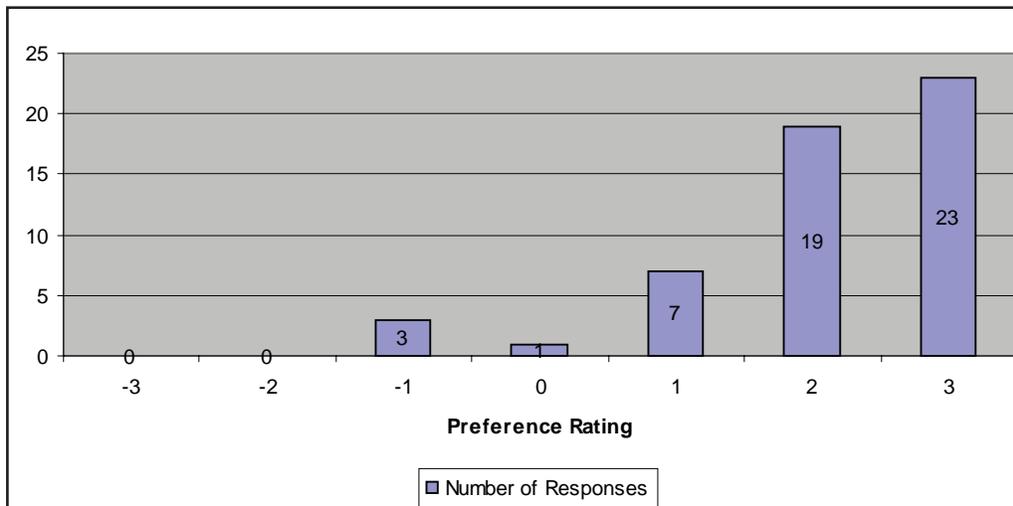
**Positive Comments:**

- Style, Spanish theme, Colors
- 2-story patio living space, Common area, Courtyard, Internal focus
- “Clean looking”, Quality, Umbrellas
- Unique

**Negative Comments:**

- Too sharp
- Close quarters, Too dense

**Results**



Mean: 2.09  
 Mode: 3

Slide 24: Neighborhoods



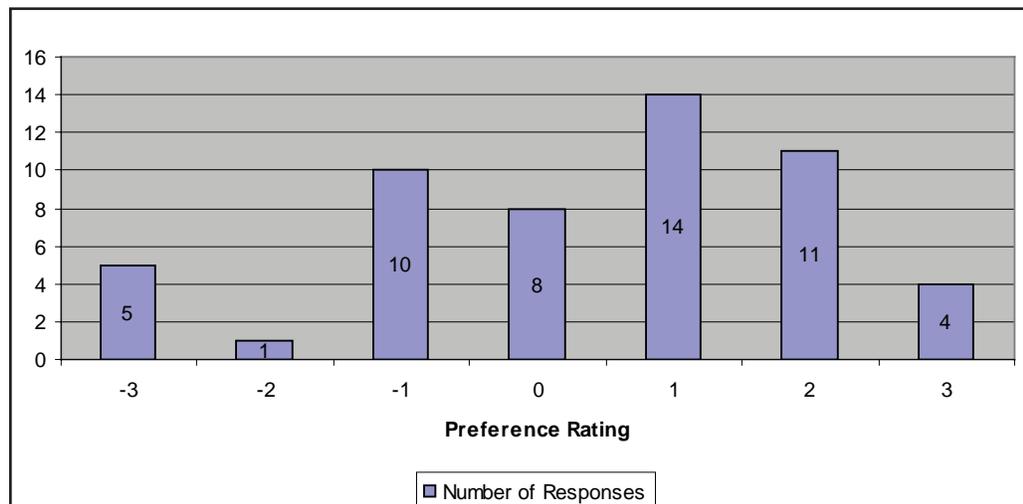
**Positive Comments:**

- Landscaping, parkway, Swales for storm water run-off
- Good density
- Architecture, façade, Open area/feel
- Facade, Balconies

**Negative Comments:**

- Density, Massing, Architectural style, Stairs
- Too boxy, too tall
- HOA fees
- Landscaping, No trees

**Results**



Mean: 0.4

Mode: 1

### Slide 30: Civic Uses & Open Space



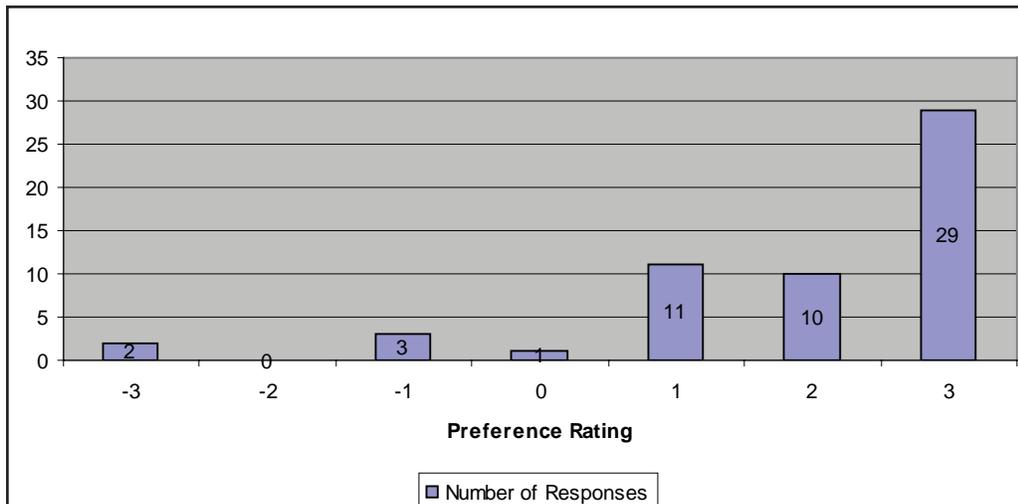
#### Positive Comments:

- Nice refuge, quiet, Rural feel, River, Natural/Nature
- Bike/ped path
- Water features, Open Space, Picnic Tables, Bridge
- Public/handicap usable
- “Give us access to Ventura River!”
- Good use of right-aways

#### Negative Comments:

- Walkway
- Needs new path

### Results



Mean: 1.95

Mode: 3

Slide 29: Civic Uses & Open Space



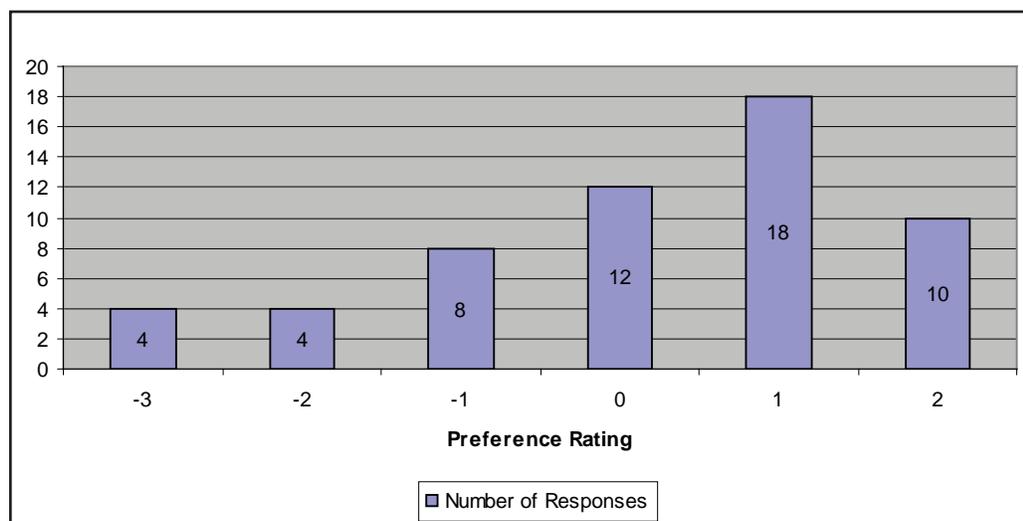
**Positive Comments:**

- Community pool/space, Child friendly
- Great trees
- Needed
- Very nice, Fun

**Negative Comments:**

- Too small, overcrowded, too many people
- Too large, too many people
- Small lake area would be better
- Noise, No shade
- Landscape, Architecture, Fence

**Results**



Mean: 1.18

Mode: 2

**Slide 32: Civic Uses & Open Space**



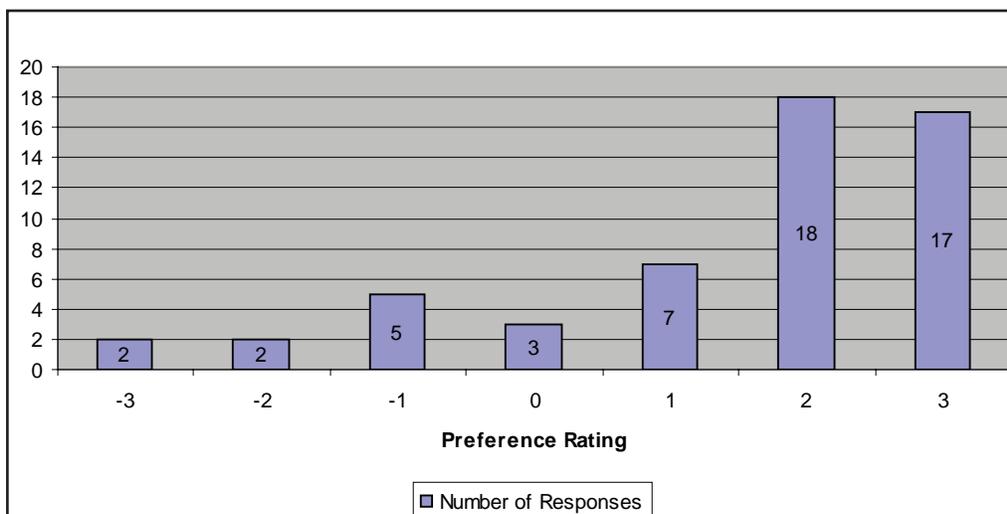
**Positive Comments:**

- Use of limited space
- “Lovely”
- Design, Water feature, Invites evening life, Light
- Public/handicap accessible
- Walking space, River walkway

**Negative Comments:**

- Too much railing, Light poles/Lights
- Walkway, Lack of Sitting space, Concrete
- Overdone

**Results**



Mean: 1.46

Mode: 2

Slide 38: Civic Uses & Open Space



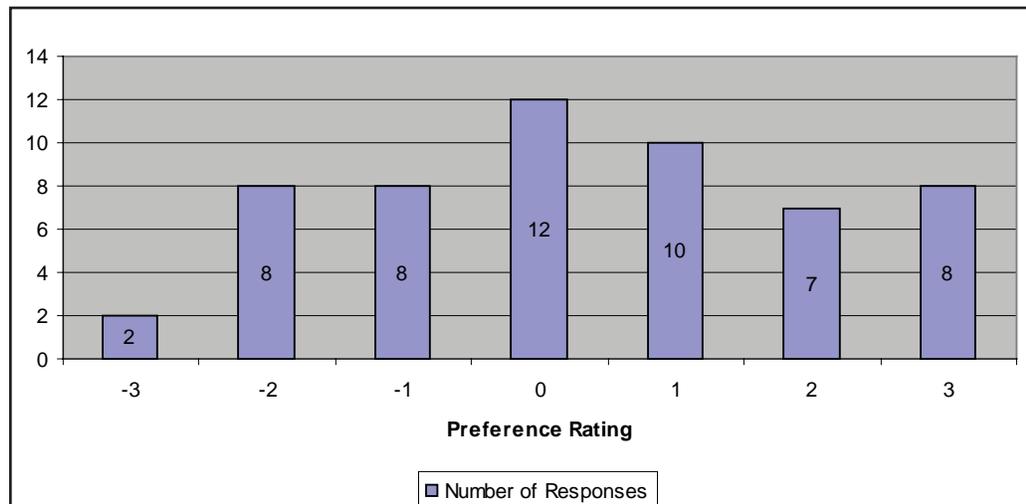
**Positive Comments:**

- Open space, Lawn, Grass

**Negative Comments:**

- Needs a focus
- “Pathetic with no life”, Play area too small
- Railing, Architecture
- Not natural enough
- Too dense, Too plain, Not good design, Blah”

**Results**



Mean: 0.33

Mode: 0

**Slide 50: Thoroughfares & Streetscapes**



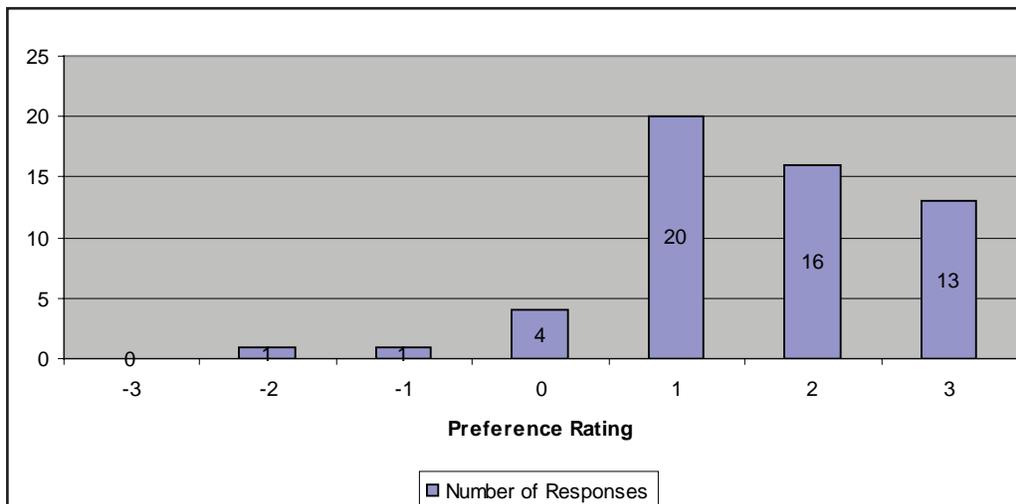
**Positive Comments:**

- Benches, Defined bus stop
- Materials and design, High maintenance, Lights, Wide
- Good shade at bus stop

**Negative Comments:**

- Needs more trees

**Results**



Mean: 1.6

Mode: 1

### Slide 51: Thoroughfares & Streetscapes



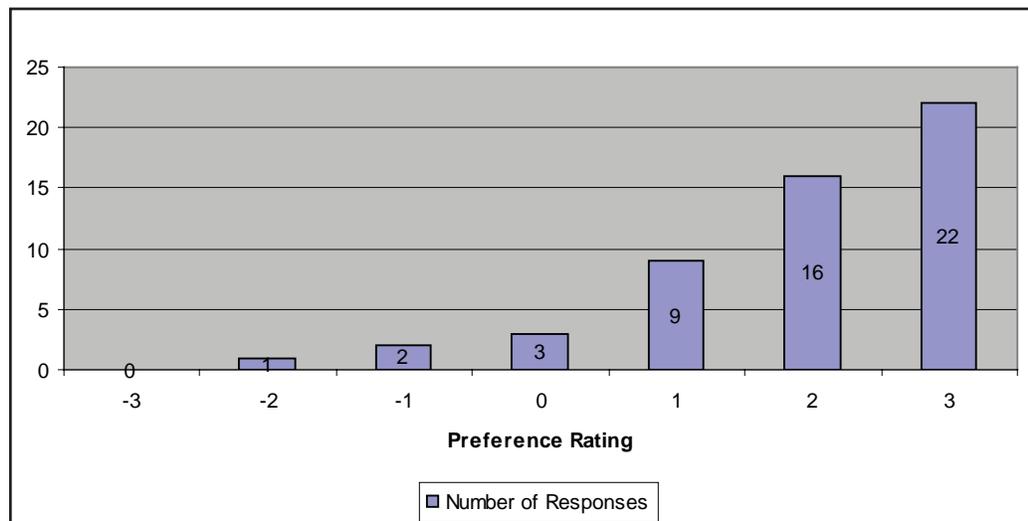
#### Positive Comments:

- Beautiful, Trees
- Textured/wide sidewalk and landscape, Brick
- Well marked, Spacious
- Shopping area

#### Negative Comments:

- Dangerous, Crowded
- Too many trees
- Sidewalk is too big

#### Results



Mean: 1.94

Mode: 3

**Slide 46: Thoroughfares & Streetscapes**



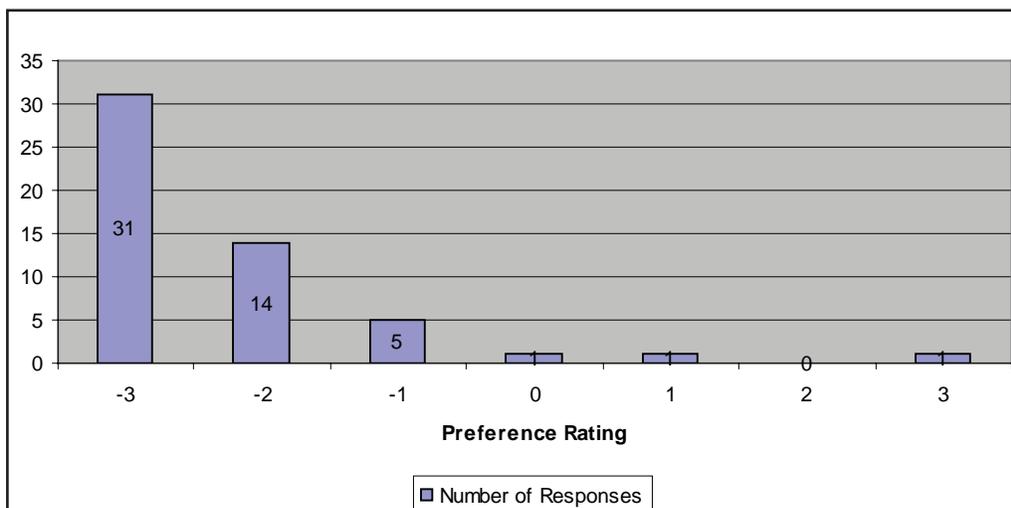
**Positive Comments:**

- No positive comments

**Negative Comments:**

- Sidewalk looks dangerous, too small, poorly maintained
- No greenery/landscaping, drainage
- Power lines and asphalt, paving
- Old, Disgusting, Ugly, Vacant lot
- Streets too wide, No bike lane, Needs roadwork

**Results**



Mean: -2.3

Mode: -3

Slide 65: Districts



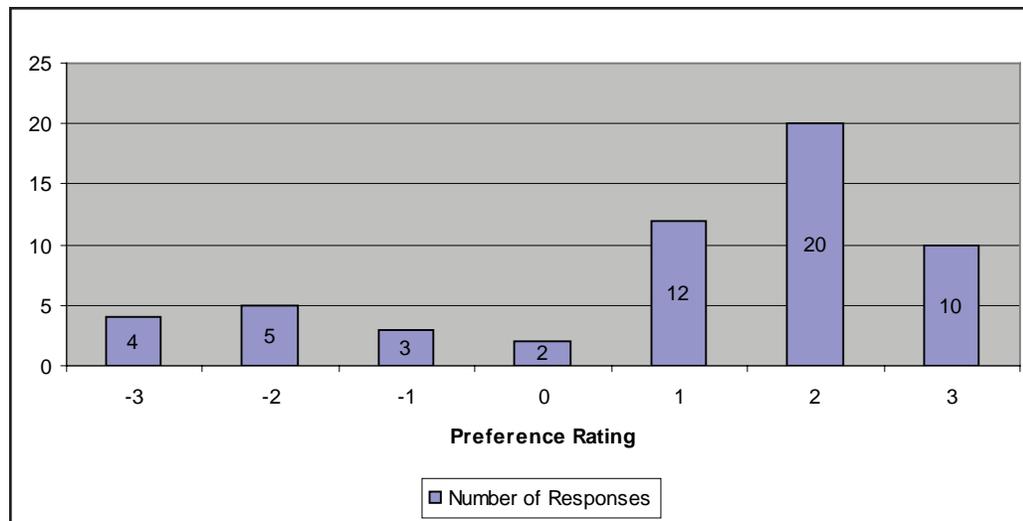
**Positive Comments:**

- Mixed use, Massing, “Live/Work”
- Attractive, Green, Architecture, Eastern style
- Interesting features, Color and material
- Quaint for high density

**Negative Comments:**

- Style does not fit, Red brick, Scale
- Live and work

**Results**



Mean: 1.02  
Mode: 2

Slide 66: Districts



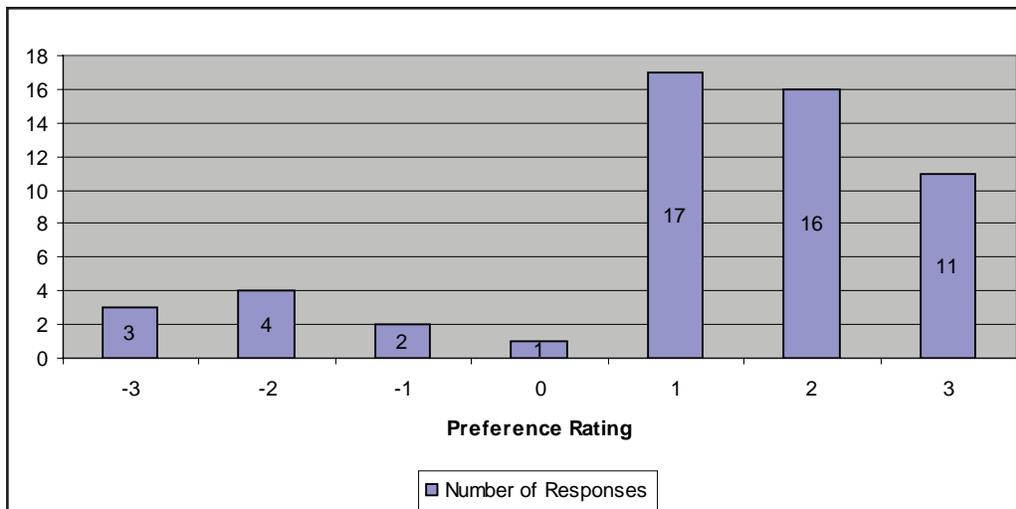
**Positive Comments:**

- Trees, Landscaping
- Mixed use and compact, Variety
- Style, Color, Welcoming design
- Modest and not too overdone
- Feel and size, Scale
- Space utilization above

**Negative Comments:**

- Three stories high, Too tall
- Not industrial
- Not for Westside

**Results**



Mean: 1.17

Mode: 1

Slide 56: Districts



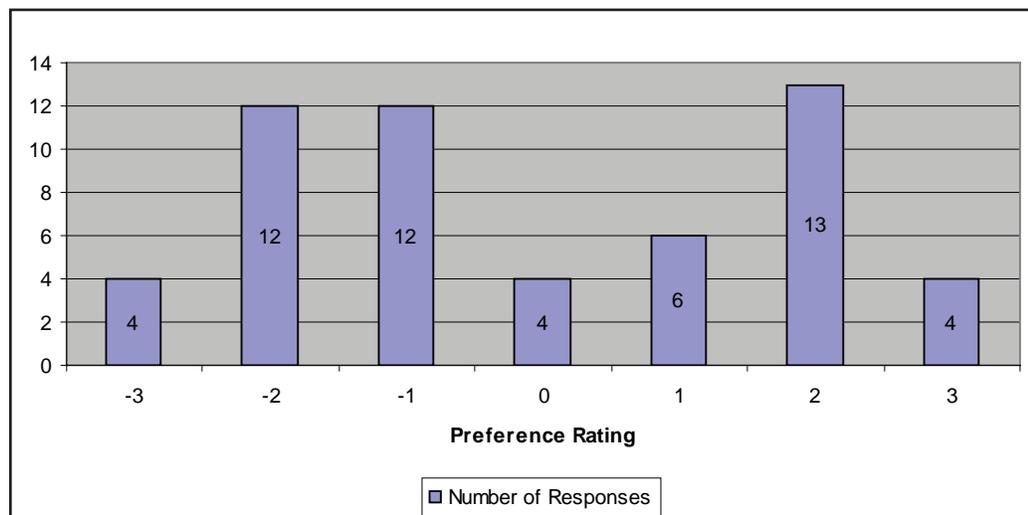
**Positive Comments:**

- Colors, Form, Scale
- Appropriate and modern, Crisp, Style of facade
- Compliments city neighborhood
- Parking, Curb stops

**Negative Comments:**

- Yellow car stops, Parking
- Color, Style, Too plain
- No landscape, No trees, Stone wall

**Results**



Mean: -.07

Mode: 2

Slide 53: Districts



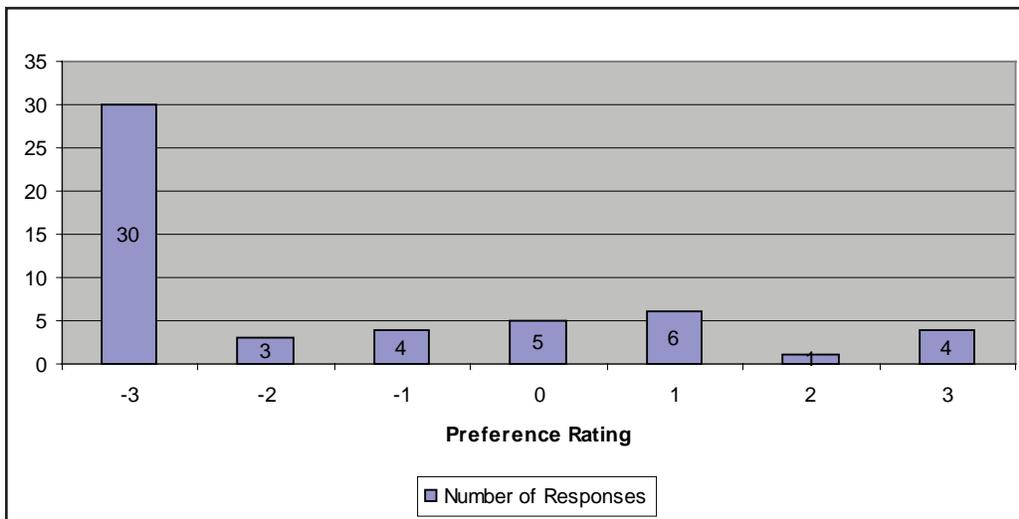
**Positive Comments:**

- Accommodates new, high paying jobs

**Negative Comments:**

- Get rid of it
- Style, Scale, Size
- Looks out of place; Too big, Too tall
- Out of context, Looks like Irvine, "No way"

**Results**



Mean: -1.51

Mode: -3

Slide 59: Districts



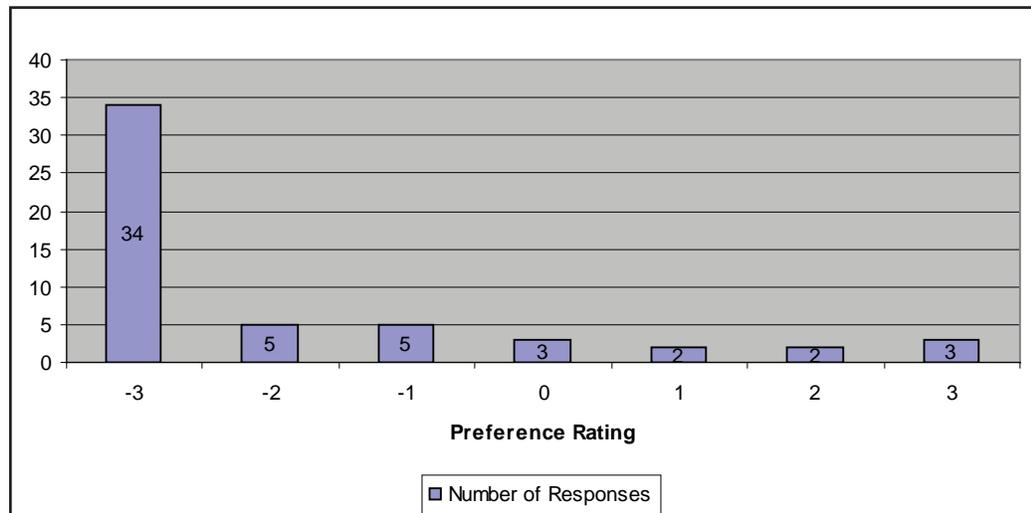
**Positive Comments:**

- Looks cool, Personality, Nice artist space
- Reuse of a building
- Need industrial area

**Negative Comments:**

- Colors, Shape, Condition; ugly
- Hide with landscaping
- Needs improvement, No appeal, Paving; "Ghetto"
- Under utilized

**Results**



Mean: -1.89

Mode: -3

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## *Glossary*

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**Affordable Housing:** Housing capable of being purchased or rented by a household with very low, low, or moderate income, based on a household's ability to make monthly payments necessary to obtain housing. Housing is considered affordable when a household pays less than 30 percent of its gross monthly income (GMI) for housing including utilities.

**Agriculture:** Use of land for the production of food and fiber, including the growing of crops and/or the grazing of animals on natural prime or improved pasture land.

**Algae:** Chlorophyll containing non-vascular organisms, plant or plant-like.

**Arterial:** Medium-speed (30-40 mph), medium-capacity (10,000-35,000 average daily trips) roadway that provides intra-community travel and access to the county-wide highway system. Access to community arterials should be provided at collector roads and local streets, but direct access from parcels to existing arterials is common.

**Brownfields:** An area with abandoned, idle, or underused industrial and commercial facilities where expansion, redevelopment, or reuse is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.

**Buildout:** Development of land to its full potential or theoretical capacity as permitted under current or proposed planning or zoning designations.

**Capital Improvements Program (CIP):** A program that schedules permanent City improvements at least five years ahead to fit projected fiscal capability. The CIP is reviewed annually.

**Caustics & acids:** Includes materials that are hazardous due their corrosive nature. Examples include hydrochloric acid, sodium hydroxide, and sulfuric acid. Various manufacturing processes utilize this type of material.

**Channelization:** The straightening and/or deepening of a watercourse for purposes of runoff control or ease of navigation; often includes lining banks with retaining material such as concrete.

**Chaparral:** A vegetation type dominated by shrubs and small trees, especially evergreen trees with thick, small leaves.

**Chlorinated solvents:** Includes carbon-based compounds that contain chlorine, such as perchloroethylene, trichloroethylene, vinyl chloride and carbon tetrachloride. These compounds were primarily used as cleaning and degreasing compounds.

**City:** When capitalized, refers to the governmental entity; "city" refers to the geographic area.

**Civic:** the term defining not-for-profit organizations dedicated to the arts, culture, education, recreation, government, transit, and municipal parking.

**Class I Bike Path:** A paved route not on a street or roadway and expressly reserved for bicycles traversing an otherwise unpaved area. Bicycle paths may parallel roads but typically are separated from them by landscaping.

**Class II Bike Lane:** A corridor expressly reserved for bicycles, existing on a street or roadway in addition to any lanes for use by motorized vehicles.

**Class III Shared Roadway:** A facility shared with motorists and identified only by signs, a bicycle route has no pavement markings or lane stripes.

**Coliform:** Microorganisms that usually occur in the intestinal tract of animals, including man, and are the most widely accepted indicators of water quality.

**Collector Street:** Relatively-low-speed (25-30 mph), relatively low-volume (5,000-10,000 average daily trips) street that provides circulation within and between neighborhoods. Collectors usually serve short trips and are intended for collecting trips from local streets and distributing them to the arterial network.

**Community Park:** Land with full public access intended to provide recreation opportunities beyond those supplied by neighborhood parks. Community parks are larger in scale than neighborhood parks but smaller than regional parks.

**Contamination:** An impurity in air, soil or water that can cause harm to human health or the environment.

**Earthfill:** Any dam constructed of excavated natural materials in which more than 50 percent of the total volume is formed of compacted earth layers are generally smaller than 3-inch size.

**Endangered Species:** A species of animal or plant whose prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes.

**Erosion:** (1) The loosening and transportation of rock and soil debris by wind, rain, or running water. (2) The gradual wearing away of the upper layers of earth.

**Eutrophy:** Material in the water, mostly on the bottom, that is rich in nutrients.

**Fault:** A fracture in the earth's crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.

**Fault Trace:** Intersections of faults on the ground surface.

**Floodplain:** The relatively level land area on either side of the banks of a stream regularly subject to flooding. That part of the flood plain subject to a one percent chance of flooding in any given year is designated as an "area of special flood hazard" by the Federal Insurance Administration.

**Gentrification:** The restoration of run-down urban areas by the middle class resulting in the displacement of lower income residents.

**Grasslands:** Lands with herbaceous types of cover, typically graminoids. Tree and shrub cover is less than 10 percent.

**Habitat:** The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

**Households:** Persons who occupy a housing unit.

**Housing Unit:** A room or rooms intended for occupancy, separate from any other living space, with direct access from outside or through a common area.

**Infrastructure:** Public services and facilities, such as sewage-disposal systems, water-supply systems, and other utilities.

**Leech Field:** Part of a septic system. The leaching field consists of a series of distributed pipes laid in absorption trenches under the ground. Water from the septic drain runs through the distribution pipes which are perforated to allow the water to enter the trench and be absorbed by the surrounding soil.

**Level of Service:** A scale that measures the amount of traffic an intersection is capable of handling. Levels range from A, representing free-flow, to F corresponding to significant stoppage.

**Liquefaction:** The transformation of loose water-saturated granular materials (such as sand or silt) from a solid into a liquid state, which can lead to ground failure during an earthquake.

**Marshlands:** Also known as wetlands. Transitional areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water. Under a “unified” methodology now used by all federal agencies, wetlands are defined as “those areas meeting certain criteria for hydrology, vegetation, and soils.

**Median:** a value in an ordered set of values below and above which there is an equal number of values or which is the arithmetic mean of the two middle values if there is no one middle number.

**Mineral Resource:** Land on which known deposits of commercially viable mineral or aggregate deposits exist. This designation is applied to sites determined by the California Geological Survey as being a resource of regional significance and is intended to help maintain the quarrying operations and protect them from encroachment of incompatible land uses.

**Neighborhood Park:** A facility intended to serve the recreation needs of people living or working within a one-half mile radius of the park.

**Oak Woodland:** Areas in which oaks and pines are fairly close together mixed in with tall and short shrubs and openings of wildflowers, forbs and few grasses.

**Open Space:** An area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to outdoor recreation and/or the preservation of natural resources.

**Outdoor Recreation:** Recreation in an urbanized outdoor setting (active recreation) or open-space outdoor setting (passive recreation). (a) Active outdoor recreation includes participant sports or other activities conducted in open or partially enclosed or screened recreational activities facilities. Typical uses include driving ranges, miniature golf courses, golf courses, amusement parks, swimming pools, and tennis courts and usually rely on permanent above-ground improvements, including, but not limited to, playing fields or courts, restrooms, and tables. (b) Passive outdoor recreation includes recreational activities, usually of an individual or small group nature, such as sunbathing, walking, hiking, bird watching, or nature study, conducted in an open-space setting and which, generally, do not rely on the use of permanent aboveground improvements or involve motorized vehicle use.

**Parks:** Open space lands whose primary purpose is recreation.

**Parkway:** The area between curb and sidewalk, usually planted with ground cover and/or trees.

**Pedestrian Shed:** An area defined by the average distance that may be traversed at an easy walking pace from its edge to its center. This distance is applied to determine the size of a neighborhood or extent of a community. A standard Pedestrian Shed is one quarter of a mile radius or 1,320 feet. With transit available or proposed, a long Pedestrian Shed has an average walking distance of ½-mile or 2,640 feet. Pedestrian Sheds should be conceived as oriented toward a central destination containing one or more important intersections, meeting places, civic spaces, civic buildings, and the capacity to accommodate a T5 Transect Zone in the future. Sometimes called a Walkshed.

**Petroleum Solvents:** Includes petroleum-based compounds such as benzene, toluene, mineral spirits and acetone. These compounds were primarily used as cleaning and degreasing compounds by a wide variety of industries.

**Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs):** Compounds that are highly stable and persistent in the environment. PCBs were primarily used in electrical transformers and capacitors, commonly found in oilfield activities.

**Public and Quasi-public Facilities:** Institutional, academic, governmental and community service uses, either publicly owned or operated by non-profit organizations.

**Regional:** Pertaining to activities or economies at a scale greater than that of a single jurisdiction and affecting a broad geographic area.

**Riparian:** Areas adjacent to perennial and intermittent streams delineated by the existence of plant species normally found near fresh water.

**Runoff:** Quantity of water discharged in surface streams. Runoff includes not only the waters that travel over the land surface and through channels to reach a stream but also interflow, the water that infiltrates the soil surface and travels by means of gravity toward a stream channel.

**Secondary Units:** A self-contained living unit, either attached to or detached from, and in addition to, the primary residential unit on a single lot.

**Seismic:** Caused by or subject to earthquakes or earth vibrations.

**Semivolatile hydrocarbons:** Includes heavy hydrocarbon compounds, such as polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons. A common source of these compounds is from the combustion of heavier oils and fuels.

**Sensitive Species:** Plant and animal species or sub-species for which there is a concern for population viability, including plant and animal species that are found on the federal list of threatened and endangered species, the State Department of Fish and Game's list of California listed species, the California Native Plant Society's inventory of plants, species that could become candidates for listing, and locally rare species.

**Septic System:** A sewage-treatment system that includes a settling tank through which liquid sewage flows and in which solid sewage settles and is decomposed by bacteria in the absence of oxygen. Septic systems are often used for individual-home waste disposal where an urban sewer system is not available.

**Sphere of Influence:** The probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of the city, as determined by LAFCO.

**Streetscape:** the urban element that establishes the major part of the public realm. The streetscape is composed of thoroughfares (travel lanes for vehicles and bicycles, parking lanes for cars, and sidewalks or paths for pedestrians) as well as the visible private frontages (building facades and elevations, porches, yards, fences, awnings, etc.), and the amenities of the public frontages (street trees and plantings, benches, and streetlights, etc.).

**Subsidence Inversion:** An increase in temperature with height produced by the adiabatic warming of a layer of subsiding air. This inversion is enhanced by vertical mixing in the air layer below the inversion.

**Surface Inversion:** A temperature inversion based at the earth's surface; that is, an increase of temperature with height beginning at the ground level. This condition is due primarily to greater radiative loss of heat at and near the surface than at levels above. Thus, surface inversions are common over land prior to sunrise and in winter over high-latitude continental interiors.

**Recreation, Active:** A type of recreation that requires organized play areas, such as softball, baseball, football and soccer fields, tennis and basketball courts and various forms of children's play equipment.

**Recreation, Passive:** Recreation that does not require organized play areas.

**Regional Park:** A park typically 150-500 acres in size focusing on activities and natural features not included in most other types of parks and often based on a specific scenic or recreational opportunity.

**Toxic metals:** Include antimony, arsenic, barium, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, copper, lead, mercury, molybdenum, nickel, selenium, silver, thallium, vanadium and zinc. These metals can be found in drilling muds, lubricants, paints, coatings, and metal shavings.

**Watershed:** The total area above a given point on a watercourse that contributes water to its flow; also, the entire region drained by a watercourse.

**Williamson Act:** Known formally as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, it was designed as an incentive to retain prime agricultural land and open-space in agricultural use, thereby slowing its conversion to urban and suburban development. The program entails a ten-year contract between the City or County and an owner of land whereby the land is taxed on the basis of its agricultural use rather than its market value. The land becomes subject to certain enforceable restrictions, and certain conditions need to be met prior to approval of an agreement.

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