

**Community Council Meeting  
Summary:  
Round 2 (Summer 2021)**



## Introduction

Between July and September, 2021, the General Plan team attended virtual meetings with all of the Community Councils in Ventura. Except for the Downtown, all meetings were held during regularly scheduled meetings of the Community Council. The objectives of the meetings were to:

- Summarize progress made to-date;
- Present key findings from recent existing conditions analysis, and
- Elicit feedback on each Council's vision for their areas and desired physical improvements

The meetings with the Community Councils were held on the following dates:

1. Montolvo – July 13, 2021
2. College – July 29, 2021
3. Midtown – August 12, 2021
4. Pierpont – August 17, 2021
5. East Ventura – August 19, 2021
6. Downtown – August 24, 2021 (*Note: Downtown Ventura Partners, which is the Community Council for the Downtown, declined a meeting. The team met with a self-selected group of residents to discuss the Downtown.*)
7. Westside – September 1, 2021

Attendance and participation at each meeting varied between approximately a dozen people and over 50 people. With the exception of the Westside Community Council, all meetings were held in English; the Westside Community Council included simultaneous Spanish interpretation.

This document summarizes the high-level comments and feedback received from each of the meetings. Videos and chat content from each meeting may be available from each Community Council.

# Montolvo (July 13, 2021)

## Desired Physical Improvements

### Land Use

- Create a senior center at Kimball Park.
- Provide more flexible spaces in parks at Montalvo Hill Park.
- Reduce homelessness issues at Montalvo Hill Park.
- Create a coherent design theme in the area that unifies lighting, painting, and signage, among other features.
- Conduct aesthetic and infrastructure improvements in the industrial area west of Johnson Drive, including sidewalks/crosswalks and public open space.
- Explore mixed-use redevelopment along Crescent Street and Sherwin Avenue.
- Consider office development near Loop Road.
- Revitalize the Johnson Drive corridor south of the railroad tracks as a “mini Downtown” for East Ventura. Provide mixed-use housing, restaurants, and walkable streets.

### Transportation/Infrastructure

- Encourage the evolution of the Telephone Road corridor over time, including new bike lanes
- Widen Ramelli Avenue.
- Create bike paths and/or walking trails to connect all green spaces along the Harmon Barranca.
- Conduct sidewalk improvements around all residential areas.
- Provide galleries, murals, and other artists amenities south of the railroad tracks.
- Improve traffic congestion and gateway treatment at the Highway 101 offramp (e.g., landscaping, murals, etc.).
- Improve trail safety at the Harmon Barranca near Highway 101.

# College Area (July 29, 2021)

## Visioning

### What is your Vision for the College Area in 2045?

- Retain the existing character of the community. Because the College Area is largely an older community, many residents do not want to see a lot of changes.
- Continue to welcome new families and younger households to bring new vitality to the community.

## Desired Physical Improvements

### Land Use

- Consider developing incentives to attract businesses to underutilized commercial areas.
- Work with landowners/retailers to redevelop and/or revitalize existing commercial centers, such as Ashwood Shopping Center, which are rusted and underutilized.
- Build higher density, infill housing on corridors, such as Telegraph Road, to serve student and senior populations.
- Ensure gradual, well-designed increases in building height as the community densifies.
- Make ADUs less expensive to build.
- Spread housing equitably across the city, especially affordable housing.
- TOD around the Metrolink station may not be feasible, since it is not well used.

### Transportation/Infrastructure

- Provide adequate parking for new housing development.
- Encourage healthier ways of moving across the city. An option in the College Area is to designate Foothill as a scenic byway with protected bike paths.
- Improve traffic congestion at the Highway 126 off-ramp onto Victoria Avenue.
- Reduce speeding and thru-traffic on Loma Vista Road.
- Very little parking near the vacant Day Rd. site.
- Improve management of the hillsides.
- Improve intersections safety and function.
- Build more tree-lined medians on roadways.

## Midtown (August 12, 2021)

### Visioning

#### What is Your Vision for Midtown in 2045?

- Building heights are limited to 3-4 stories on corridors, specifically Thompson Boulevard.
- The community is served by frequent and reliable transit.
- Residents have a diversity of choices for housing, jobs, and amenities, among other things.
- The City has joint-use agreements with local schools – specifically Will Rogers Elementary – to open their recreational space for public use during non-school hours.
- Residents enjoy greater access to open space.
- The urban forest and tree canopy is expanded, helping to combat climate change and the urban heat island effect.
- All houses are equipped with solar panels.
- There is a diversity of housing types.
- Slow-moving, electric vehicles are how people move around the city.

#### How is Midtown Different in 20 Years than Today?

- Transportation infrastructure is improved as new development occurs.
- Power lines and utilities are undergrounded.
- Community Memorial Hospital is better integrated with the rest of the community.
- Walk and bike access to the beach is improved.

### Desired Physical Improvements

#### Land Use

- Build mixed-use housing and a park at the Pacific View Mall site.
- Add more amenities to the park by the hospital.
- Define a mixed-use vision for the Thompson and Main corridors, achieving a balance between residents and businesses.
- Redevelop underutilized banks near Pacific View Mall.
- Coordinate with Community Memorial Hospital to potentially acquire and redevelop some of their underutilized buildings.
- Encourage Ford of Ventura to relocate near Ventura Auto Center, then redevelop that site for some community use.

#### Transportation/Infrastructure

- Create a bus bulb-out at the depot on Telegraph Road.
- Improve the pedestrian experience on Seaward Avenue, including wider sidewalks, trees, and pockets of green space.
- Establish a new, consistent speed limit sign on Poli Street.

- Build a new traffic circle near Main and Santa Clara Streets.
- Make the major corridors (Main and Thompson) more walkable.
- Improve dangerous and misaligned intersections along Foothill Road.
- Add gateway signage (e.g., a marquee) at the Five-Points intersection.
- Improve bike/pedestrian connectivity along both Sanjon Road and Alessandro Drive, ultimately creating a multi-use path that extends from Sanjon to the Arundell Barranca.
- Implement a “road diet” on Main Street, specifically between the Five-Points intersection and Mills Road.
- Improve pedestrian access over the railroad tracks at Seaward Avenue.
- Improve pedestrian conditions (e.g., crosswalks) at the Main Street/Mills Road intersection.

## Pierpont (August 17, 2021)

### Desired Physical Improvements

#### Land Use

- Redevelop one (or multiple) of the four gas stations along Harbor Boulevard. New uses could include a dedicated arts space or street-level parking lot.
- Work with the Marriott to acquire and redevelop their unused structure as a parking garage.
- Cultivate a cohesive design theme along Seaward as development occurs in the area.
- Preserving beach views and the overall beach town feel of the area.
- Identify underutilized sites in the area that could be redeveloped as public parking lots.
- Address building scale and adjacencies when developing design guidelines to cohere with existing community character.
- Pursue action to regulate short-term vacation rentals (STVRs). This should happen as part of the General Plan update process.

#### Transportation/Infrastructure

- Encourage beachgoers and visitors to use the parking lot at the San Buenaventura State Park, which is underutilized. This would help relieve congestion on local streets.
- Improve pedestrian and bike access along the coast from the State Beach up toward the Promenade.
- Address congestion and parking issues at the intersection of Seaward Avenue and Pierpont Boulevard.
- Beautify and maintain beach entrances from residential lanes.
- Implement traffic control measures on Pierpont and Harbor Boulevards, such as speed bumps and other pedestrian improvements.
- Improve landscaping and planting on the median along Pierpont Boulevard.
- Pursue transportation and design improvements at the Seaward underpass at railroad tracks to make it safer and more inviting.
- Create a new underpass along “Little Seaward” that travels underneath the railroad tracks.
- Create a multi-use path on Beachmont Street extending from Harbor Boulevard to the marina.
- Expand opportunities for water recreation (e.g., paddleboarding) at the sailing center.

## East Ventura (August 21, 2021)

### Desired Physical Improvements

#### Land Use

- Retain existing commercial amenities at current shopping centers. Potential redevelopment should be sensitive to this.
- Consider incorporating Old Saticoy into Ventura.
- The area near Highway 126 and Kimball Park could be ripe for new improvements and development.
- Develop a community center at the community park.
- Consider future development on SOAR properties.
- Consider intensifying the commercial area at Telephone and Scandia.

#### Transportation/Infrastructure

- Insert a traffic light on Wells out of Saticoy to improve traffic safety.
- Insert better lights and speed bumps in Old Saticoy to calm vehicle traffic.
- Create a continuous sidewalk and protected bike lane on Foothill Road.
- Improve connectivity from Saticoy to Petit with pedestrian infrastructure, including sidewalks.
- Develop a continuous sidewalk on the stretch of Telegraph between Hill Road and Barranca Avenue.
- Replicate use of native planting like what is done at these projects.
- Improve ped/bike conditions along Saticoy, including new sidewalks near Saticoy/Avalon.
- Improve bike conditions at the freeway onramp.
- Build a pedestrian bridge over Highway 126 at Petit Avenue.



## Downtown (August, 24, 2021)

### Visioning

#### What is Your Vision for Downtown in 2045?

- Keep downtown walkable, visible, and commercially focused.
- Implement an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance that emphasizes historic buildings.
- Retain the diverse mix of architectural styles.
- Preserve and promote public art.
- Create a historic walking tour of Downtown.
- Form a greenbelt along the hillsides, using reclaimed water.
- Keep the natural views of hillsides and the ocean.
- Promote context-appropriate design.
- Place Downtown on the register of historic places.
- Adhere to the vision established in the 2005 General Plan.
- Maintain and incorporate existing large trees in new development projects.
- Designate some streets as pedestrian-only walkways.

#### How is Downtown Different in 20 Years than Today?

- Expand the urban forest, tying tree planting to new development.
- Improve transit.
- Provide landscaping and drainage wells on all parking lots.
- Create appropriate building setbacks for new development.
- Improve outreach to local businesses.
- Enforce a cohesive, granular design theme for new development.
- Reduce noise pollution.
- Maintain adequate parking demand.
- Create wider sidewalks throughout Downtown.
- Update land use and parking regulations.

### Desired Physical Improvements

#### Land Use

- Activate the Fairgrounds for public use.
- Allow a new grocery store in Downtown, perhaps along Front Street.

#### Transportation/Infrastructure

- Work with the State to open the road/bridge adjacent to the Fairgrounds, making it more inviting to pedestrians and improving access to the beach.

- Create a traffic plan (including pedestrian safety) for Poli Street, which is overburdened by traffic due to the impact of Main Street Moves. Santa Clara Street and Thompson Boulevard would also benefit from traffic calming measures.
- Improve pedestrian access to Grant Park, including a ped/bike path on Church Street.
- Activate and redesign Valdez Alley.
- Improve the corridor adjacent to the Mission.
- Consider widening sidewalks and eliminating parking on Main Street.
- Make the California/Harbor and Ash/Harbor intersections more pedestrian-oriented.
- Improve pedestrian safety near the Pier.
- Form a greenbelt along the hillsides, looping around Grant Park and connecting with other linear parks in the city.
- Create green alleys on the backside of Main Street.

## Westside (September 1, 2021)

### Community Input

#### Community Engagement

- To effectively engage the Spanish-speaking population, the City should conduct door-to-door outreach and distribute surveys (and other planning materials) as hard copies. These can be advertised at key community locations, such as stores, parks, and schools, among others.
- Bilingual materials are needed for civic engagement processes. The City should strive to be 100% bilingual.
- As the General Plan Update process moves forward, community outreach for the Housing Element needs to be prioritized.

#### Desired Physical Improvements

##### Housing and Land Use

- Ventura is experiencing a housing affordability crisis that is putting pressure on many lower-income households. The City should urgently pursue rent stabilization, inclusionary housing, and/or a just cause for eviction ordinance as potential solutions. Compensation could also be offered in the case of evictions.
- The Ventura community cannot allow people to go homeless anymore.
- The General Plan should work towards phasing out the oil and gas industry in Ventura. A land trust could manage and rehabilitate existing brownfield sites. This is a critical issue for Westside residents and was mentioned many times during the meeting.
- The City needs to buffer existing residential areas from heavy industry.

##### Transportation and Infrastructure

- Ventura Avenue needs several improvements, including ADA-accessible sidewalks, tree shade, and street cleaning.
- Traffic calming measures are needed throughout the Westside.
- Higher density housing could be appropriate in the Westside if it accompanied by improvements in transportation, transit, and parking infrastructure.