



**OJAI VALLEY
MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**REGULAR MEETING
NOTICE AND AGENDA
FINAL MEETING MINUTES**

**18 Valley Road, Oak View
Monday, June 20, 2022 - 7:00PM**

Chair: Chris Cohen, **Vice Chair:** Joseph Westbury

Council Members: Barbara Kennedy, Grace Malloy, Terry Wright

Public Comments FOR IN PERSON MEETINGS may be provided using the following TWO options:

Option 1: E-MAIL PUBLIC COMMENT- If you wish to make a comment on a specific agenda item, please submit your comment to the Executive Officer at ovmac@ventura.org for that item via email by 3:30 p.m. the day of the meeting to ensure your letter is received and entered into the record. PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN YOUR EMAIL: (A) MEETING DATE, (B) AGENDA ITEM NUMBER, (C) SUBJECT OR TITLE OF THE ITEM, (D) YOUR FULL NAME. DURING PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE AGENDA ITEM SPECIFIED IN YOUR EMAIL, YOUR COMMENT WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD. Please limit your written correspondence to 300 words or less.

Option 2 – IN PERSON PUBLIC COMMENT - If you wish to make a comment in-person, you must be present at the meeting location and provide your comment prior to the close of the public comment period for the item you wish to speak on. Each meeting will have sign-in sheets to participate in Public Comment at the meeting location for in-person comments.

1. Call to Order of the Meeting

2. Flag Salute

3. Roll Call

Member Wright, Member Malloy, Member Kennedy and Vice Chair Westbury Present
Chair Cohen Absent

4. Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda was adopted as presented; Moved by Wright, Seconded by Kennedy.
Approved Unanimously

5. Public Comments by Citizens on Matters Not Appearing on the Agenda

Public Speaker No. 1 - Teena Broumand –

Here to talk about Creek Road traffic and another fatality. Really significant impacts in terms of public safety; Deer, bear, mountain lion hit; a near head on collision at Encino/Creek. I would like the County to take another look at what we have been asking for a number of years: Making all of Creek Road 45 MPH, Install Stop Signs at Hermosa, Encino and Country Club Road, and

install more of the center bollards in the center of Creek Road to prevent passing.

Member Wright asked about the acceleration lane on SR 33 and if that's helped. Teena acknowledged its great, but had thoughts about distancing and approach that she will discuss with Caltrans when they give their presentation this Fall. And would like our decision makers to be proactive instead of reactive because it's a public safety issue.

Public Comment No. 2 - Bill Weirick -

Announced that Jeffrey Starkweather is now an appointed Planning Commissioner for the City of Ojai. And introduced Judy Murphy, the second newly appointed Planning Commissioner.

Public Comment No. 3 – Bill Miley –

Family have lived here since 1968. Love the valley and have been very active since I retired. Wanted to talk about the school district, and the bond issue in 2003; in the last month, 3 of the trustees have stated they believed and promised to voters is a school pool with community access in the Summer; Someone needs to work on that either getting a bigger pool or two pools to allow the community to use.

Public Comment No. 4 – John Brooks

Here to thank our Supervisor for really getting involved in my latest pet peeve, the gap in the sidewalk along SR 33 at Oak View Avenue. Turns out Caltrans has this on their list for 2026, allegedly. So it could be another decade, somehow, Supervisor LaVere has been championing this project and meeting with Public Works Director to see how this can be done sooner with an encroachment permit. Problem is the project would be about \$25K to do; can we find people to donate half? And have the County match them? And I put a feeler out there and people don't have enough money done. We are also researching whether or not we can get reimbursed back from Caltrans if we do the work. This is a very dangerous for accessibility concerns and it being adjacent to a bus stop. Also thank you for the request for the EIR and the SoCal Gas compressor station.

Councilmember Wright – Mentioned that Caltrans will be coming to do a presentation in the Fall; and Member Kennedy mentioned him outreaching to the Lions Club and the Women's Club.
Public Comment No. 5 - Steven Weed

I don't go to Santa Barbara much anymore but I went there today and came back through the 150 and took pictures of Lake Casitas. When Casitas shrinks it adds rings, and there are rings I've never seen before. We have it in the back of our minds; We can't let that get away from us.

6. City of Ojai Planning Commission Update

Commissioner Judy Murphy gave an update on the meeting of June 1st and the PC approved a proposed Development Agreement for a 65 Unit - Multi Family housing project with Affordable units located at four separate sites, along with a zone change for one of the sites. They are returning the Development agreement to Council with the following conditions; a traffic study for S. Montgomery Site, a Relocation plan be included for the existing residents, and a water recapture plan be fully documented.

The following recommendations were made at the June 15th Meeting - for formula businesses, the City separates the retail business category from all the others, primarily food establishments. And reduced the number of establishments from 10 to 5 or more that qualifies it as a formula business. There was also an AT&T project for roof top enclosure that was approved to expand

their signal; and lastly, we adopted a multi-tenant comprehensive sign program at corner of 345 E. Ojai Ave.

Member Malloy had a question about what level of affordable housing is for the 65 unit project?

Judy said they are creating 25 low/moderate (5 @ Low, 20 @ Moderate) affordable housing units (rent is set with a 55 year covenant) of the 65. Those are replacement units for what already exists. The numbers get complex as it looks at various income brackets and number of people.

Councilmember Weirick (City of Ojai) commented that 25 will be moderate/low which is about half of our RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Assessment). He spoke to history of the project from a few years ago and an expired entitlement that was caught by a member of the public as it was not consistent with our Housing element; this allowed us to ask for the affordable units.

Jeffrey Starkweather commented about the four or five categories associated with Associated Median Income (AMI). Extremely Low, Very Low, Low, Moderate, Above Moderate (market). HUD has guidelines related to these categories.

7. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of May 16, 2022 - Draft Minutes attached

Member Wright noted that there are duplicative “Members” in the Cover Sheet of the Meeting Minutes.

Member Malloy asked about the number of pages of meeting minutes; and commended the meeting minutes as detailed.

Member Malloy made a motion to approve the minutes as amended during the meeting. Member Kennedy seconded. The Motion was approved Unanimously.

8. Approval of the Meeting Minutes of May 25, 2022 – Draft Minutes attached

Member Wright noted that there are duplicative “Members” in the Cover Sheet of the Meeting Minutes.

Member Malloy made a motion to approve the minutes as amended during the meeting. Vice Chair Westbury seconded. The Motion was approved Unanimously.

Informational Items:

- 9.** Receive an informational presentation from the County of Ventura Planning Division regarding recent State of California Housing Laws and the implication on related Ojai Valley Area Plan and County General Plan Traffic Impact Policies, and potential effects on future housing development opportunities. A power point presentation will be provided with additional time for general questions and discussion.

County Staff Presenting: Dave Ward, Planning Director, County of Ventura
Franchesca Verdin, Assistant County Counsel

County Staff presented the attached Power Point Presentation, and followed up via email with an Exhibit detailing all prior public outreach efforts through out the General Plan effort.

Council Comments after Dave Ward’s presentation:

Member Kennedy - Asking about parking and the need for housing.

Member Malloy – About the Commercial element, in my memory, about the Auto Zone, we had requested it will come back before the MAC, as I know we had a lot of concern about expanding the businesses in the County.

Dave Ward – you just reviewed the question of the area plan amendment, giving it a green light. When it's actually filed, then it will come back with complete analysis and will see the policy change.

Member Kennedy – Had question about setback exhibit in presentation which was just an example.

Member Malloy – Could you please speak about the Highway 33 Multi Modal project? How does that fit into this LOS rating system. If the proposal is to reduce the lanes, wouldn't that put us in a worse position?

Dave Ward – the Traffic Policies would not apply. LOS would become moot. And would have to bring in objective standards to analyze future projects. It's just the evaluative metric that would merit approve or deny a project.

Member Kennedy – what about commercial and residential? Do you foresee a balancing at some point in the future?

Dave Ward -With BOS and looking at the Auto Zone exception, the BOS may also ask to expand the discussion and applicability of the polices. Overall update of the Ojai Valley Area Plan is called for in our General Plan. The first one is El Rio, then N. Ave Area plan, and then Ojai. More of a comprehensive look in alignment with the general plan.

Member Malloy – so this loosening, just applies to the low income housing? Or it applies to all housing

Dave Ward – It applies to all housing.

Public Comment:

Teena Broumand - I guess I have two questions and the first being a question – this issue of housing and traffic and was presented in the April meeting; Is that correct? Are some communities issuing guidelines of housing and projects? And that Ventura County, and there may be some comment to have to address it slightly differently?

Dave Ward – The state laws apply; different jurisdictions are addressing new ordinances and guidelines; there are different approaches to how that is done.

Teena Broumand – Really what is the overdevelopment of Ojai – my beef is Creek Road. We have this push to address housing in a different matter and not looking at traffic as a safety issue; I think a lot of people would be in agreement that we need the housing, but we are leaning way to heavy towards the wealthy; we are ripping out other housing, but there is no limit of expensive housing for Ojai, but there isn't any concern for that.

Dave Ward – the state requires us to identify the acreage where housing could occur, the inventory of incomes have to be identified, and we are supposed to call out where they can occur. If you don't meet that when the project comes forward, you have to evaluate that if you didn't get the income levels you didn't get, you have to show in the rest of your inventory where that shuffle was done. And if you don't then you have to rezone elsewhere to demonstrate no net loss. We are not the ones that build the housing, but we have to show where they can go.

Teena Broumand - Councilmember Weirick said that the last housing didn't have any outside funding;

Dave Ward – The county historically has not built too many multifamily- because the cities is where the growth is expected to occur; we have SOAR, we have the guidelines of orderly development.

Teena Broumand – does County have the staff to look for funding for low-income housing?

Dave Ward – the CEO office handles CDBG b/c that's where the development is occurring; and now we have a new program that shows where we pull money just to our jurisdiction. But we now have a program that show more dollars going to more County residential projects; this could be group care, not just

Bill Weirick – we recently entered a MOU with Habitat for Humanity in terms of redevelopment and construction on limited City property. I'm curious, but I didn't hear the VMT as a substitute criterion for substituting LOS - I didn't hear that from staff whether or not the Ojai Valley Area Plan would be adjusted to those guidelines specifically; because in my opinion is now that with LOS and that the State has acknowledged, is that LOS is associated with more sprawl development outcomes; So I was curious why that phrase never occurred. I'm a commissioner with the VCTC and we just approved the development of a template for addressing the VMT in housing development specifically, in order to address sustainable development. With the Ojai valley, has the highest percentage of commuting; but the lack of the switch to a specific VMT approach might still be inhibit the kind of housing development that would address the commuting issue.

Member Kennedy - how do we look at Amazon? How is that being interpreted in our traffic analysis? There are not in our valley, but they are certainly contributing to that. Those numbers are not being used, but those affect people who want to redevelop their businesses.

Dave Ward – the VMTs are the new standard for CEQA. LOS is no longer part of the environmental review. All environmental review has to use VMT standard. Our general plan from 2020 identified VMT; we did not remove the LOS completely b/c it still allows you to do fee gathering and assess traffic safety patterns. We have been working with PWA to look at our initial guidelines (our local way of implementing CEQA); we all have to use and we are all working together. Some projects won't trigger the metric of the threshold. Ultimately is the impact to GHG but its in the context of formal environmental review/discretionary. Those that are ministerial, it would not trigger CEQA.

Jeffrey Starkweather – On the commercial side, I would like to point out on my plan, that you have land use determinations, that are all tied to LOS; all the policies are tied to LOS. You have exception that does not include Ojai Valley,; One of my arguments that you should be looking at the commercial as well as residential, when you are providing more commercial uses, you are preventing commuting and lessening the traffic. It's hard for me to think that someone is going to go to out of the valley to use; so every time you add another service, you'll be reducing the traffic. I would mention that delivery people, they could also do 30 people not leaving the valley, but its hurting local businesses. But sometimes I Have to do Amazon because there are not any local businesses. But I understand that cannot be regulated by land use.

My concern about RHNA and housing affordability standpoint - I was involved in the City of Ojai for Housing Element – and I was looking at the County document for the lots that are not identified for housing; I would hope that in addition to changing the overall plan that you would also have to change your Housing Element (I think that needs to be amended) and we need to identify lots in the unincorporated area that are rural; but you can't say Meiners Oaks is less dense than Ojai. Miramonte is probably just as dense as Ojai, and Oak View – you have three urban areas that if you did infill that would be supplying affordable housing. Every time you can supply affordable housing in Ojai that's potentially less trips into/out of the Ojai Valley. I hope we would look at the Ojai Valley Plan, the Housing Element, and the General Plan - I don't think Ojai should be third in line after the Area Plan update; I think those things need to be done now; and looking at the Ojai plan and the air quality standards and are completely out of line; and one more thing re: the issue of water - the City of Ojai is allowed the exact number given to the City; But, research has shown that we can reduce water by appliances, golfing, water use retrofit programs; there is a lot that we could be doing and I think that this organization and the County and our various water districts need to start thinking about this; we haven't looked at the very serious efforts of how we can save water; water is a crisis, services is a crisis, housing is a crisis; climate is in crisis; People are paying over what they should be paying; and we need to finally address this crisis; I hope there is some public

process that comes out with this amendment; no one has time to go to a PC meeting at 8am. The MAC is the place that you need to bring it to give people the opportunity.

Dave Ward - The General Plan effort was a 5 year process and there was ample public outreach and BOS gave the direction that Area Plan should not be updated until the General Plan was adopted; that said, every element of the General Plan. Every program of the General Plan has policies and programs to implement over the next 20 years. I disagree with you that there wasn't public outreach, there was; we received an award; Ojai is in there; its not tomorrow, but its' in there. The Housing Element was just adopted; the Element is correct; and we had to prove to the state how we were addressing constraints and have a certified Housing Element. You asked about sites, the Housing Element, you have to show where you need to meet your RHNA; a number of sites hasn't been developed; we had to explain what was going on with this site; we were able to defend why these sites are still viable to be developed.

Teena Broumand – Bennett did affect Creek Road and prevented Creek Road from going to be held to two lanes and Wendy Drive (was to stay a 4 lane).

Steve Weed – First of all that was a very poised presentation; it's a complicated issue; I've had friends that are City planners and developers; also wanted to give a shoutout to Matt to spearhead getting the Commercial adjustment to the General Plan; I also like the idea that he has not put a stake in the ground related to traffic and residential development; having said that, I know that when you get mandates from the State, you have to do what you got to do and it's not much fun. But I would also say that for Matt and the BOS you have to enforce the laws but also to push back where the push back needs to be. I appreciate that we are short on housing, so does Sacramento, and I appreciate that we need water and that we don't have that yet; from my perspective and requirements that we need certain goals without plans for water is pennywise and pound foolish. We really need to do that; so, having said that, three quick points – state requirements that evaluates Ojai valley simply does not work; a lot of the people come from out of the valley; what I would say that if there is a proposal that takes a look at the traffic impacts for new development in Ojai, assuming multifamily, you have a lot of people living in multifamily. May be that would not be favorable to approve those developments but those are the developments we need in Ojai. There is vacant land outside of Ojai proper; I don't know if it's considered farmland but developing via some other partnership and looking at multifamily there where the values aren't so high. We cannot rely on commercial development to do that. We need to take a look at the realities, or we aren't going to get a solution long term. The idea of looking at VMTs vs LOS, when you have big events, such as festivals, well maybe that's not peak time, but it does affect local people in the valley; Are you going to Ojai day? No I'm going away from Ojai day. But we need to look at traffic for anyway it affects the Ojai people. Teena talked about the significant accident that occurred; state was doing work on the bridge with Casitas Springs and Oak View (today). Part of the reason why is that we are doing construction on Santa Ana bridge; there should be coordination between the two projects; as it impacted a lot of people on today's.

Bill Miley – I travel Creek Road a lot- I like it in that it's a country road, and I drive it as a country road; I think that we should drop the Creek Rd. to 35 if not 40. Also, I agree with stop sign at Hermosa. I like to look at issues of a puzzle; with the water issue, the state law says you cannot deny affordable housing due to water unless there is a city-wide prohibition. We have three water basins in the valley; and they are all working on their sustainability. The other thing is that 80% of water in the valley is used on Ag which is why we like to live here. Go to the basin agency meetings; then there is the issue of cost burden housing – if you haven't looked at the American Community Survey by the US Census Bureau, if you go to Ojai and Ventura County, you can find out what their costs are and their income and it will tell you 52% of all households in Ojai are renters. And half of those renters are cost burden. And that's another issue with housing is the cost burden. High percentage of people how are paying up to 50% for their roof over their head; now let's look at the school districts; in the year 2000, City of Ojai 4500; today they have 2100 students. I think it's because the cost of housing; Terry you have lived here longer than I have; we bought a house in 1968 for 22K. and the biggest mistake I made was not buying 7. The big issue is getting affordable housing; for families to come in and reinhabit the Ojai valley. Please look at the American community survey as it will give you facts and data to work with. I believe state law says

that local jurisdictions are required to reduce the parking requirements for housing, is that true? And also with affordable housing, you can limit the number of cars people own; use bikes, walk, etc. we are doing that Habitat for Humanity project on Thunder Street. We are going to limit the household ownership and offer incentives for people that don't have cars. One of my friends says the architecture of affordable housing and that they need to look good; they need to look relaxed and pretty; they need to say come and kiss me; or whatever; I have an opinion about the four story on the avenue, they don't look nice. I would've had an overhang or something. Affordable housing needs to be mixed. There is Extremely Low, Very low, low, moderate and market rate housing. Based on income and the number of people in the household. As for potential, old industrial sites, the state has even a category called "the missing middle". And they allow Counties and Cities to buy apartments and convert them into moderate income affordable housing, so its rent controlled. I never got involved in the MAC. But I will.

Nick Oatway – it's in agreement with a lot of words that were used today; in particular Bill Weirick – we need to be sustainable with this climate crisis housing crisis air crisis. I'm the architect for the lot that the City owns on N. Montgomery that will have five affordable housing units. A few questions were asked about "what does affordable mean", but when we try to build affordable, no one can afford it. It's going to take a combination of private and public partnership/funding. It's going to take a lot of coordination. I'd love to hear the word transportation-housing instead of traffic-housing. 60% of commercial buildings are empty and I'm proposing much of that ground be converted to housing.

Ward – a housing project that may trigger a traffic analysis for a collection of fees, or other safety analysis that will all still happen. But for deciding a project that is a discretionary project, the LOS would not be part of the analysis. And up to this point we have had policies that have been affecting; we are going to implement per the HAA, we need to go and update the Area plan, section provisions with verbiage and that would go to the PC and the BOS. Similar to what is happening right now with the Auto Zone project.

Member Malloy – is that how it happens? That there isn't any in-between, but this could be a boom that could happen.

Dave Ward – again there are a lot of aspects that affect housing not just traffic and circulation and those are big items. The water supply, how they address wastewater (Sewer or septic), and that are at the hear of public safety; wildfire access is also critical. Again, tied directly to health and safety. Please do not leave tonight this is a free for all.

Member Malloy – I feel like it's important that we do this.

Member Kennedy – my point was how do we be fair to all?

10. Announcements and Updates

- CHP Public Information Officer Presentation – July 18, 2022
- Hwy 33 Intermodal Study – Cal Trans Update – Fall 2022
- Congressman Carbajal Meet-n-Greet – October 17, 2022

11. Councilmember Comments

Member Wright noted the MPH in the SR33 at Casitas Springs still iterate the wrong MPH.

12. Adjournment:

Next Meeting will be held on **Monday, July 18th at 7:00PM IN PERSON at the Oak View Community Center**

obtain information or assistance by Supervisor Matt LaVere's Office at 805-654-2703 or e-mail ovmac@ventura.org. Any such request for disability accommodation must be received at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting for which assistance is requested. Additional Ojai Valley MAC information is available online at: <https://www.ventura.org/board-of-supervisors/district-1/ovmac/>