



2025 WORK PLAN

Oak Park Municipal Advisory Council

Draft – October 24, 2024

Introduction

At the April 25, 2024, meeting of the Oak Park Municipal Advisory Council (MAC), senior staff from Supervisor Jeff Gorell's office presented an 18-page report approved by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors (BOS) entitled "County of Ventura Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) Policies".

As per the report, the Chair and Vice Chair of each MAC shall create an annual report regarding MAC activities, accomplishments, membership attendance, and records of required training. Additionally, they are required to prepare a draft proposed work plan for the following year that MAC members review, provide input, finalize, and recommend to their County Supervisor (Jeff Gorell). The public shall have the opportunity to review and provide input to the plan at the MAC's meeting prior to finalization.

2025 Work Plan of the Oak Park MAC

- 1. Establish a working committee of community stakeholders to prepare a recommended long-term management plan for Medea Creek and Lindero Canyon Creek that would be implemented by County of Ventura Agencies, Rancho Simi Recreation & Parks District (RSRPD), and other organizations with jurisdiction.**

Representation would include Supervisor Gorell's office (who would serve as Committee Chair), a MAC appointee, an Oak Park resident, Ventura County Watershed Protection District, RSRP, Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish & Wildlife, Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council, and Friends of Oak Park Open Space. The committee's term limit would be no more than one year and would sunset upon completion of its assignment.

The finalized management plan would offer a balanced approach recommending a diversity of Oak Park resident concerns for flood control, wildland fire prevention, health and protection of plant, wildlife, and other environmental considerations, passive recreation activities, and community aesthetics.

The plan would include regulatory and enforcement procedures that governing agencies would implement for construction and maintenance activities within the creek channels and adjacent riparian lands. Additionally, the plan would include a process for agencies to provide timely notification to Supervisor Gorell and the MAC prior to the commencement of work activities.

- 2. Establish a Lindero Canyon Road "Welcome to Oak Park" signage monument and planting area.**

A new signage monument would serve as a gateway feature to the City of Oak Park. The design could be like what exists on the Kanan Road center median between Tamarind Street and Conifer Street. Design features could include a visually attractive monument, planting bed with seasonal flowers, and solar lighting for evening identification.

3. Develop a community disaster preparedness, response, and evacuation plan for Oak Park.

Oak Park and its surroundings have experienced several wildfire events that threatened lives and caused significant damage to residential properties and open spaces: the most recent being the Rockfield Fire (July 2024) and the Woolsey Fire (November 2018). Past flooding has also occurred on Medea and Lindero Canyon creeks. Kanan Road and Lindero Canyon Road are the only vehicular evacuation routes for the City's 13,627 residents.

The MAC could develop a community disaster preparedness, response, and evacuation plan in partnership with key stakeholders including the Ventura County Sheriff's Department: Office of Emergency Service, County Fire and Public Works departments, Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council, Oak Park Unified School District, Rancho Simi Recreation & Park District, and the public. Additional outcomes might include preparation and distribution of information flyers, posts on Supervisor Gorell's Oak Park MAC website, and other means of public communication.

4. Develop a comprehensive communication channel for delivering valuable information to the community, promote public engagement and provide resources on how the community may raise and get concerns addressed.

In 2024, the MAC heard from many Oak Park residents about problems and concerns affecting their quality of life. These include home break-ins, abandoned household items left on curbsides and Medea Creek, unsightly property maintenance and derelict vehicles, loud noise after 11:00 p.m., illegal street parking and non-permitted oversized vehicles, overgrown vegetation from private properties obstructing public sidewalks, raised/dangerous sidewalks that potentially could result in trip and falls, living with nature and wildlife including coyotes and rattlesnakes, and barking and unleashed dogs, to name a few.

Communication channels may include options such as social media, brochures/ flyers, ads in the Acorn newspaper, updating information on the Kanan Road community board (near Tamarind Street), and Supervisor Gorell's website.

5. Develop a phased program to replace the current CSA 4 irrigation system with an updated and more water efficient system that uses reclaimed water.

The existing CSA 4 irrigation delivery system is antiquated, requires constant repairs, and coverage does not reach all landscape areas. It is not water efficient and often causes hillside erosion and mud flows on sidewalks which is a pedestrian safety concern. Expensive potable water is being used in many areas of CSA 4, rather than reclaimed water.

The benefits of an upgraded irrigation system can include all-area coverage, improved visual environment, reduced budget costs for water use and replacing dead plants, and increasing pedestrian safety. This is likely to be a costly initiative, and the MAC may decide that the program be implemented in phases (e.g., 5-years).

6. Develop an online Geographic Information System (GIS) map of the CSA 4 landscape district that identifies property ownership.

The MAC regularly receives community complaints and requests for landscape maintenance and improvements in CSA 4. Lands include street boulevards, creek corridors, parks, greenways, and open spaces. Not all landscape areas in CSA 4, however, are owned and managed by the County of Ventura and are the responsibility of others. Landscape property ownership is a “quilt work” situation in Oak Park including Ventura County, Rancho Simi Recreation & Parks District, Oak Park Unified School District, water, gas and other private utility companies, private homeowner associations, and private property owners.

It is time consuming for the MAC and Supervisor Gorell’s staff to identify the responsible owner. A digital GIS property ownership map that is posted on the Oak Park MAC website for anyone to access would be a helpful and needed resource to the MAC, the Landscape Committee, and the community. Some of these property databases exist and would need to be assembled into a single GIS resource tool. Others may take some time to research and for the County to acquire.

7. Develop community information updates on Supervisor Gorell’s website pertaining to MAC and other Oak Park activities.

As a community service, the MAC could heighten Oak Park residents’ awareness of what is happening in their community by preparing monthly articles for posting on Supervisor Gorell’s website. Community service topics might include, for example:

- Highlights of decisions made at monthly MAC meetings.
- Upcoming community meetings and open houses sponsored by Ventura County agencies, RSRPD, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council, and Oak Park Unified School District.
- Community volunteer events.

8. Sponsor “Speakers Nights” from government agencies and community experts on topics of importance to Oak Park residents.

In addition to the MAC meetings, it could be arranged through Supervisor Gorell’s office to also have quarterly events where government and community experts would speak on topics of importance to Oak Park residents. Topics might include:

- Ventura County Fire Department and the Fire Safe Council regarding community and home fire safety.
- Ventura County Sheriff’s Department on crime prevention and home protection.
- RSRPD on parks, trails, recreation programs, and other community facilities.
- Las Virgenes Municipal Water District and Master Gardeners of Ventura County on water conservation and drought tolerant planting.

- End of Report -