

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Ventura County Grand Jury Announces Release of its Report “Building Better Together: Suggestions for Smoother Permitting Processes”**

In response to public complaints, the 2023-2024 Ventura County Grand Jury researched the difficult and lengthy process to approve building projects in the cities of Oxnard and Ventura.

The complexity of a project mirrors that of the approval process. A development project, like a multi-unit housing project, may take years, involving land use guidelines, laws, environmental regulations, public hearings and detailed plan assessments by multiple city departments. The process for permitting an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) can be less complex.

The Grand Jury found that Oxnard and Ventura are not in compliance with state-mandated timelines in scheduling hearings for multi-unit housing projects. Additionally, Oxnard is not in compliance with state-mandated timelines for approving ADUs. According to the housing requirements for Oxnard and Ventura, both cities failed to meet their regional housing needs from 2014 to 2021. These shortcomings are caused by high turnover in leadership and staff, difficulties implementing and using software systems and inefficiencies in the approval process.

The Grand Jury also found that Oxnard and Ventura are striving to improve their processes, hire staff and comply with state laws that combine stricter timelines with more flexible land use.

The Grand Jury makes recommendations to remedy these deficiencies and recognizes the efforts to improve the process.

To read the entire report, please go to <https://www.ventura.org/grand-jury/fiscal-year-2023-2024/>

The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury is a panel of 19 local citizens established to investigate public complaints about county, city or special districts management, practices and processes. More information about the Grand Jury can be found at: <https://www.ventura.org/grand-jury/>