

Affordable Housing in Ventura County Cities

Summary

The 2005-2006 Ventura County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) conducted a limited investigation into Affordable Housing plans and achievements of the county's ten cities. This study focused on *Very Low Income* and *Low Income* families of four for the years of 2000-2005 and for the year 2006. Large disparities were found in the goals, plans, and achievements. The future social, economic, and environmental health of the county is dependent upon quality housing for all income levels.

The Grand Jury learned that all ten cities are well aware of the problems of Affordable Housing and are dealing with them despite difficult state requirements and local land use regulations. Additional constraints include public resistance to development of open space, cumbersome approval processes, and funding priorities.

Data received from the cities are displayed in the Attachment. The charts for each city depict the range of housing units unique to that city and cannot be directly compared to any other city. The data reflect the most accurate evaluation of past and current plans and achievements according to the best information available to both housing staff members and the Grand Jury. Where there are no numbers in the chart, the data were not provided by city staff.

In general cities are paying very little attention to the *Very Low Income* level of needs for housing. They are doing a more adequate job with the *Low Income* level.

In this study the Grand Jury did not include information on specialized programs such as the Housing Authorities (both Area and in the cities), the Ag Futures Alliance Farm Worker Housing Task Force, Habitat for Humanity, Senior Concerns, and private groups with other specialized interests and programs.

While acknowledging that housing for farm workers, military personnel, and senior citizens is scarce, and efforts to remedy this problem continues to be a challenge separate from overall family housing, the Grand Jury did not address those problems in this report.

Background

According to the California Department of Housing and Community Development:

State law recognizes the vital role local governments play in the supply and affordability of housing. Each governing body (City Council or Board of Supervisors) of a local government in California is required to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the city, city and county, or county. ... housing element law, enacted in 1969, mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The law recognizes that, in order for the private market to

adequately address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt land use plans and regulatory systems which provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development. ...

The Grand Jury became aware of the extensive need for Affordable Housing, which includes both purchase and rental units in the cities and County of Ventura, during discussions with county and city leaders. While there is great demand in Ventura County for skilled professional and technical personnel including teachers, nurses, public safety staff, hospital personnel, and county and city employees, as well as service workers, the cost of housing in many cases prohibits them from living in the county. It is not uncommon for long term renters to be priced out of the housing market due to high rental rates resulting in relocation, long commutes, or even homelessness.

Methodology

The Grand Jury collected data on income limits for families of four. *Very Low Income* families average \$40,300 per year and *Low Income* families average \$64,500.

The Grand Jury interviewed housing staff in the ten cities in the County and collected data on housing goals, achievements, and plans for two separate time periods; past years from 2000 to 2005, and the current year 2006.

The Grand Jury reviewed state guidelines for Affordable Housing and the unique interpretation by each city. Data was double checked with each city housing staff for accuracy.

Findings

- F-01.** Affordable housing is acknowledged as a serious challenge in the County and in all ten cities.
- F-02.** Each of the cities is currently addressing the challenge of Affordable Housing within the constraints of state law, local land use regulations, and their unique city needs.
- F-03.** *Very Low Income* limits for families of four average \$40,300, and *Low Income* limits average \$64,500. Many professional entry-level salaries, including those of teachers and nurses, fall into the *Very Low Income* range.
- F-04.** To date, efforts have fallen short of the need to provide housing for *Very Low Income* and *Low Income* level residents, with the greatest need in the *Very Low Income* level.
- F-05.** Some cities are constrained in their efforts to provide Affordable Housing because of local public opposition.
- F-06.** The City of Port Hueneme has a unique problem. The City has limited open space for new housing and currently focuses only on programs that provide financial assistance using existing housing units.
- F-07.** Lack of Affordable Housing inhibits the region's ability to attract new business and industry as well as qualified employees to the area.

- F-08.** Specialized programs and organizations within the County, including the Housing Authorities (both Area and in cities); the Ag Futures Alliance Farm Worker Housing Task Force; Habitat for Humanity; Senior Concerns; and private groups with other specialized interests, assist low income families. These organizations were not addressed in this study.

Conclusions

- C-01.** The lack of Affordable Housing is acknowledged by county and city leaders as a serious challenge facing all segments of the County. (F-01, F-02, F-06)
- C-02.** Most cities in the County are making efforts to address Affordable Housing, despite financial and political obstacles. (F-02, F-04, F-05)
- C-03.** Continued lack of Affordable Housing and failure by cities to solve the needs of *Very Low Income* and *Low Income* residents will cause increasing adverse economic challenges. (F-06)
- C-04.** Local opposition to Affordable Housing impacts the ability of government and business to employ those who provide services desired by local residents. (F-05, F-07)
- C-05.** There is considerable disparity among cities in terms of goals, achievements, and planned Affordable Housing units (see Attachment). (F-02)

Recommendations

- R-01.** Each city should increase efforts to work with businesses and developers to actively pursue solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems associated with the issues of Affordable Housing. (C-03)
- R-02.** Each city should educate its residents on how local services (education, police, health care, etc.) depend upon the availability of Affordable Housing. (C-04)

Responses

Responses Required From:

Camarillo (R-01, R-02)	Port Hueneme (R-01, R-02)
Fillmore (R-01, R-02)	Santa Paula (R-01, R-02)
Moorpark (R-01, R-02)	Simi Valley (R-01, R-02)
Ojai (R-01, R-02)	Thousand Oaks (R-01, R-02)
Oxnard (R-01, R-02)	Ventura (R-01, R-02)

Attachment

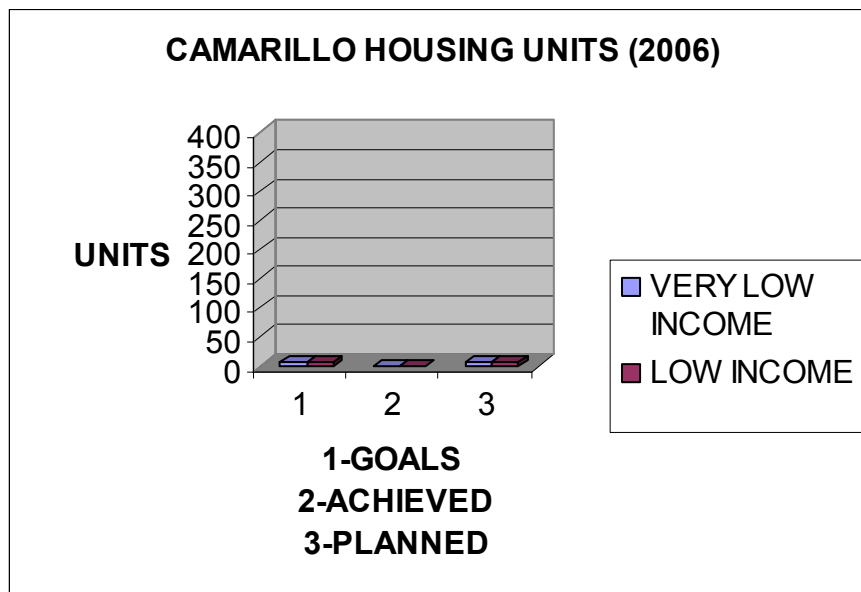
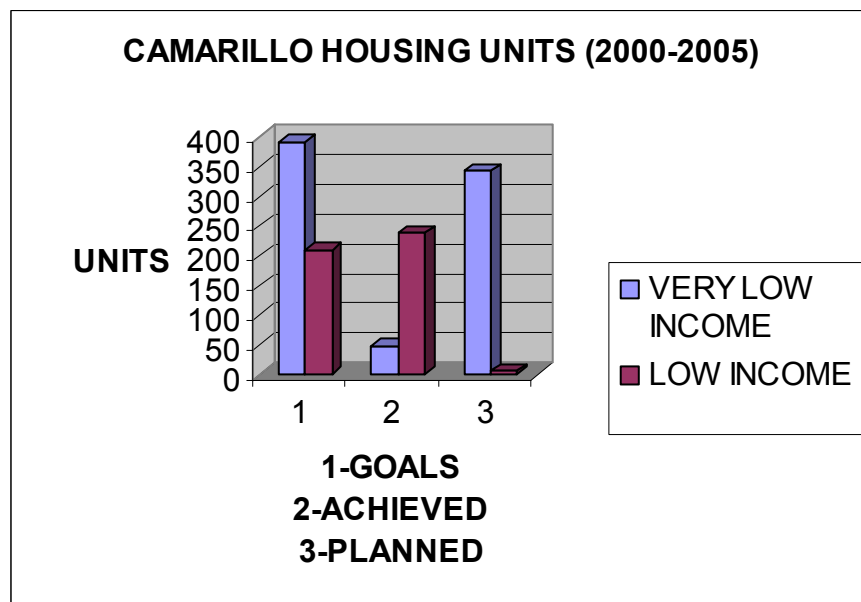
Affordable Housing Data from Ten Cities in Ventura County

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**Attachment: Affordable Housing Data from
Ten Cities in Ventura County**

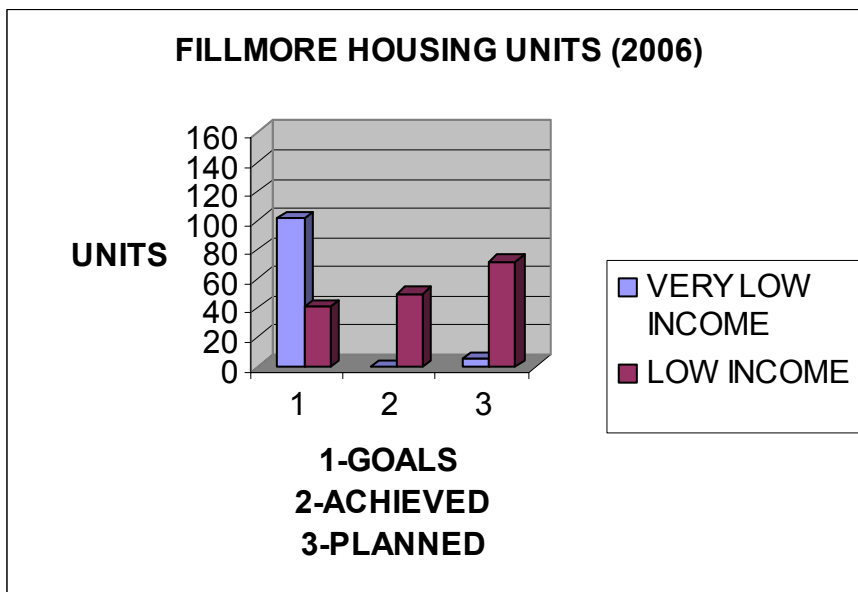
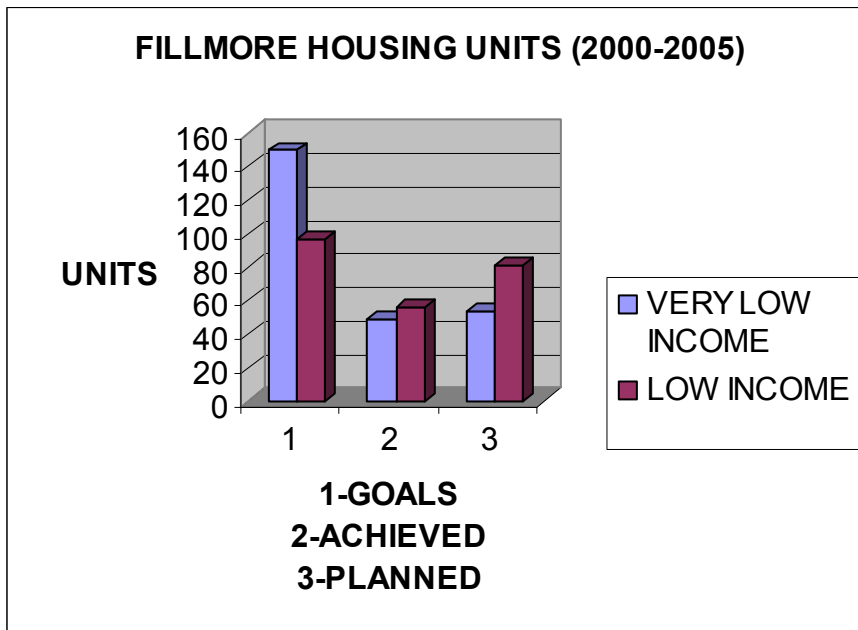
CITY OF CAMARILLO

	GOALS	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	392	48	344
LOW INCOME	210	238	6
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	6	0	6
LOW INCOME	6	0	6



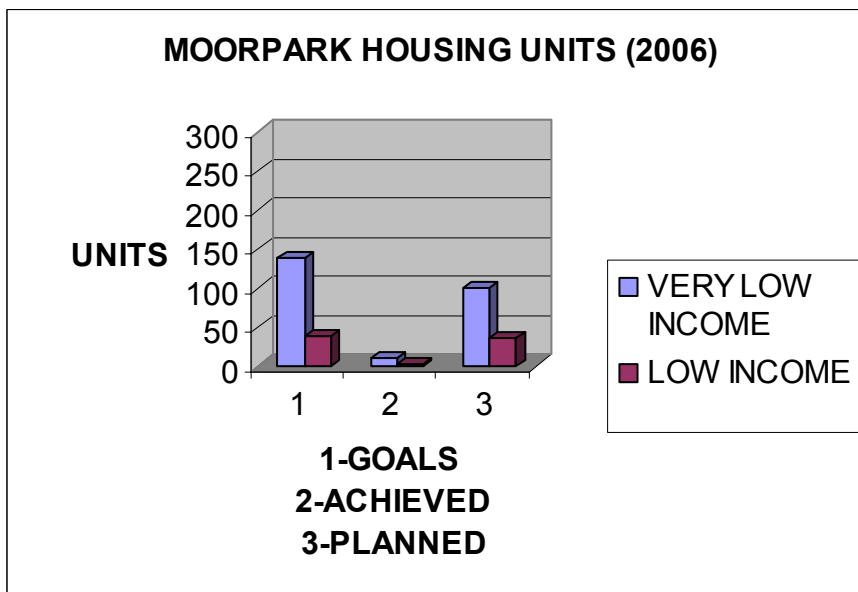
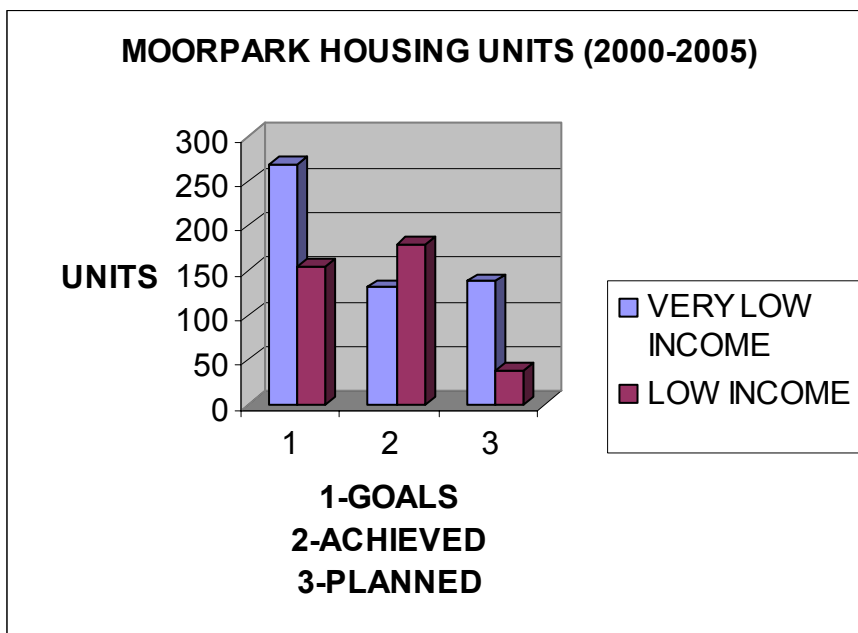
CITY OF FILLMORE

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	150	49	54
LOW INCOME	97	56	81
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	101	0	5
LOW INCOME	41	50	72



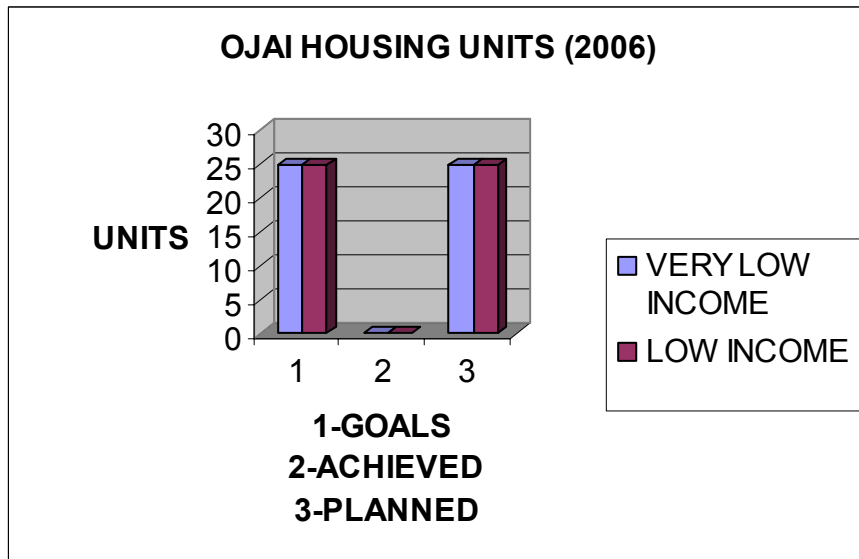
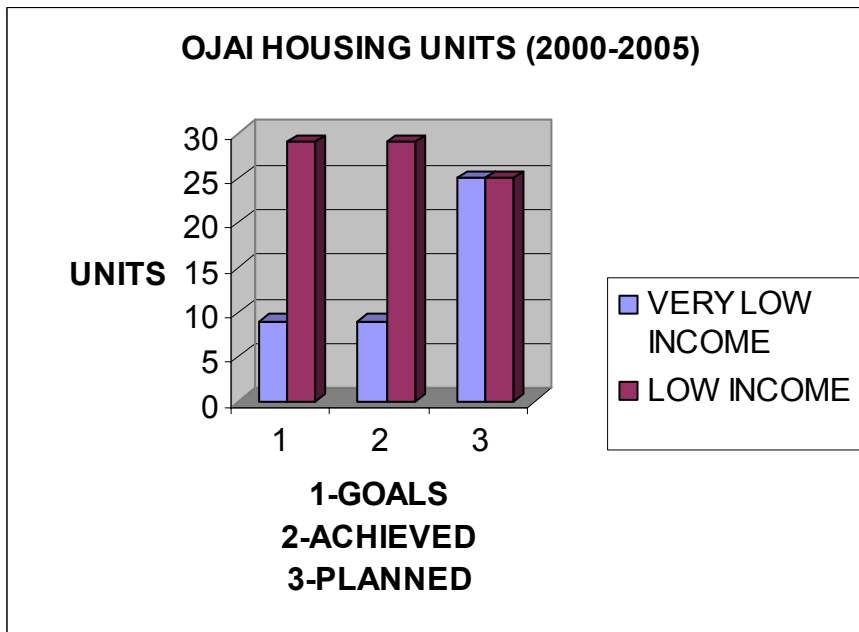
CITY OF MOORPARK

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	269	131	138
LOW INCOME	155	179	38
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	138	9 approved	100
LOW INCOME	38	2 approved	36



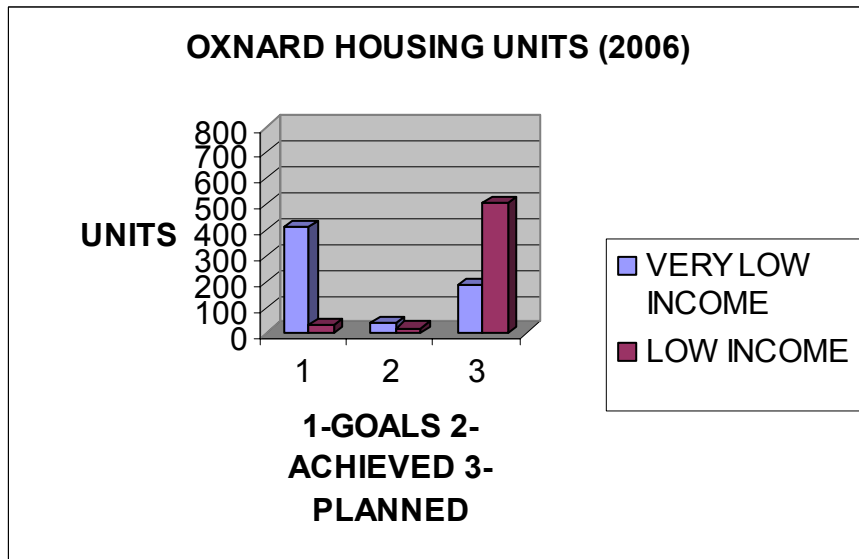
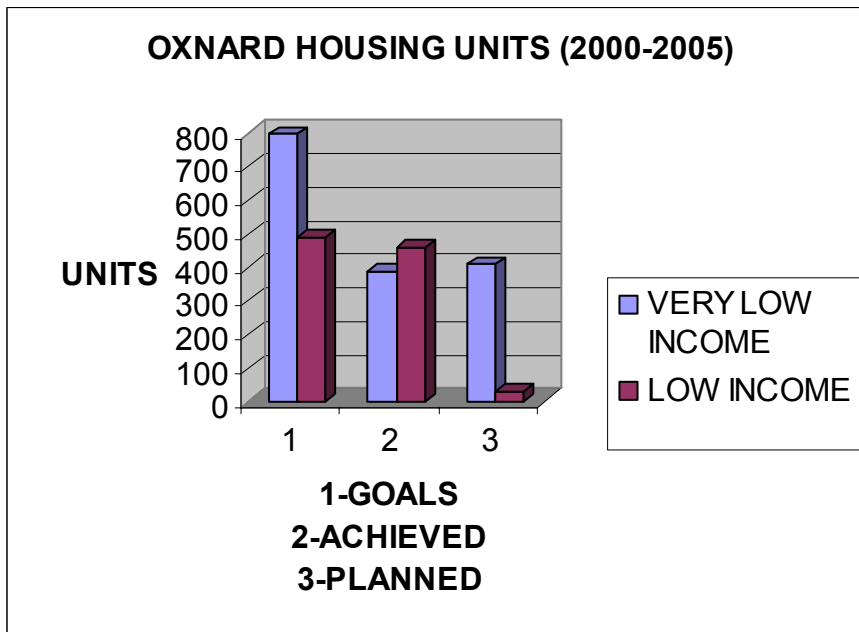
CITY OF OJAI

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	9	9	25
LOW INCOME	29	29	25
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	25	0	25
LOW INCOME	25	0	25



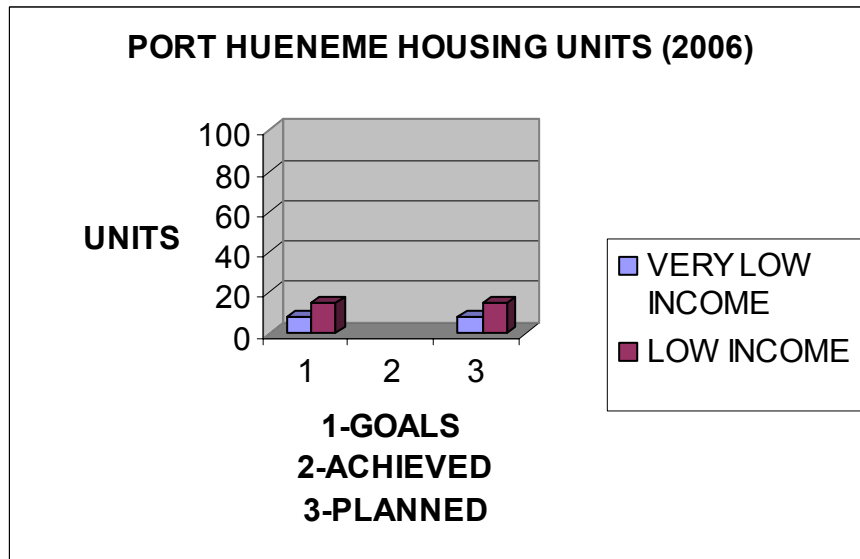
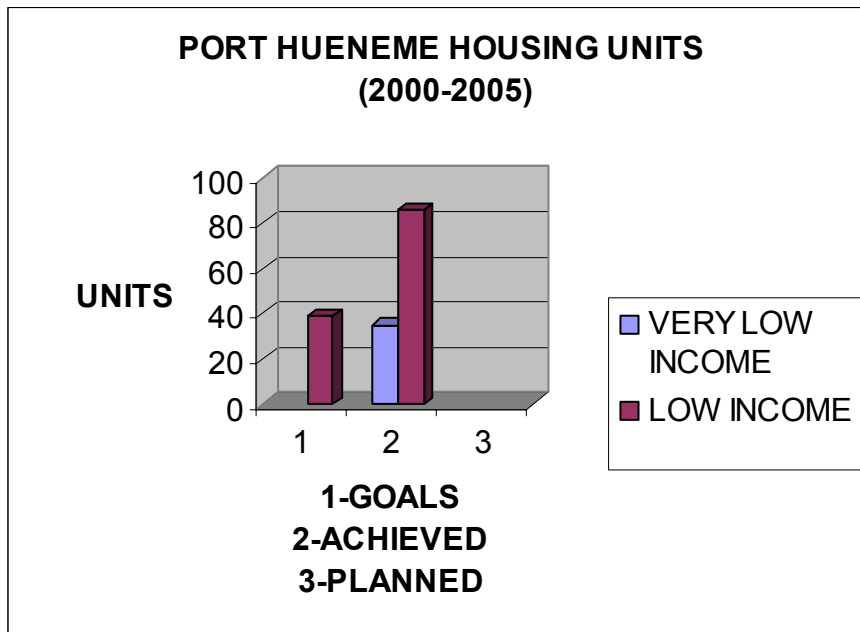
CITY OF OXNARD

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	797	388	409
LOW INCOME	489	460	29
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	409	39	188
LOW INCOME	29	20	506



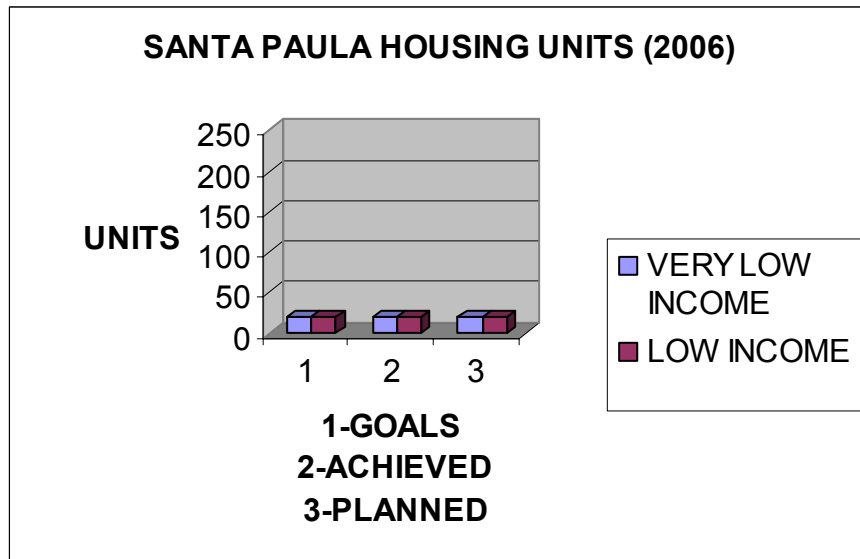
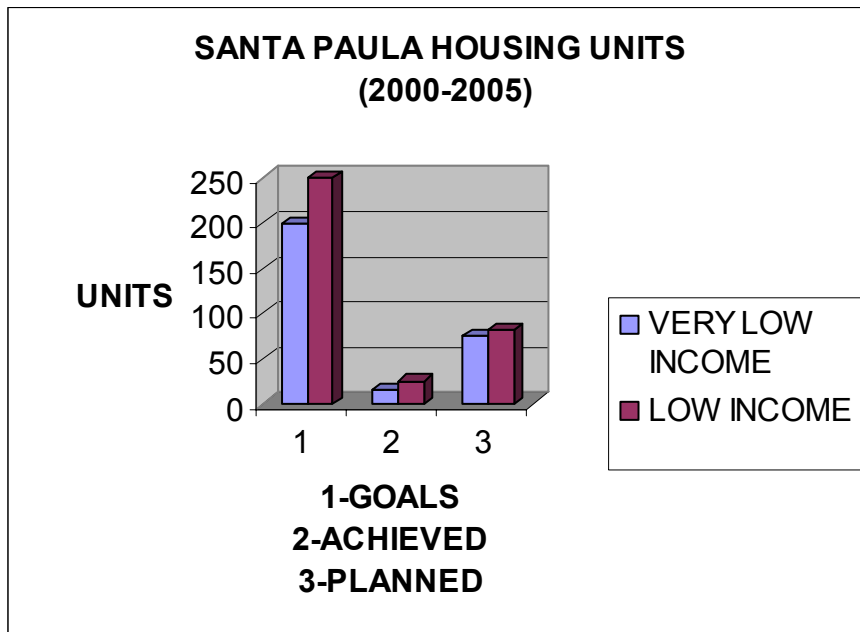
CITY OF PORT HUENEME

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME		35	
LOW INCOME	39	86	
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	8		8
LOW INCOME	15		15



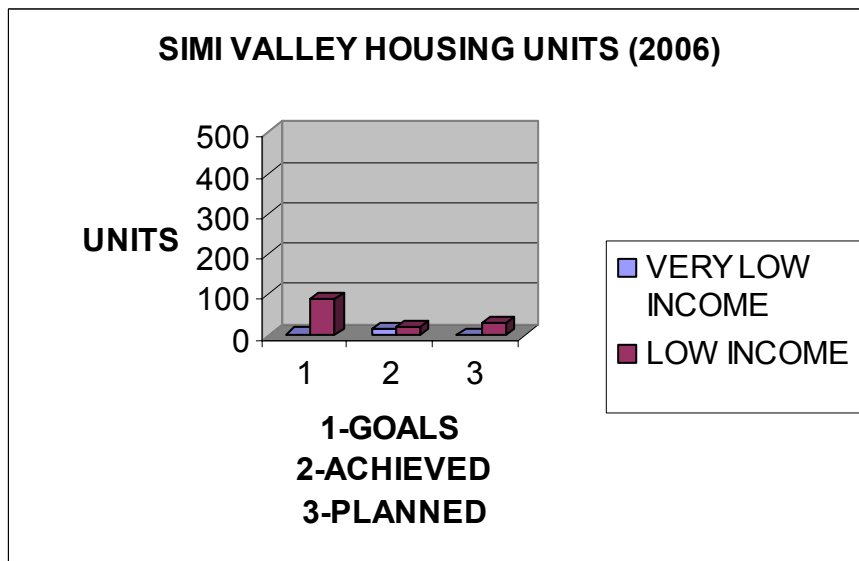
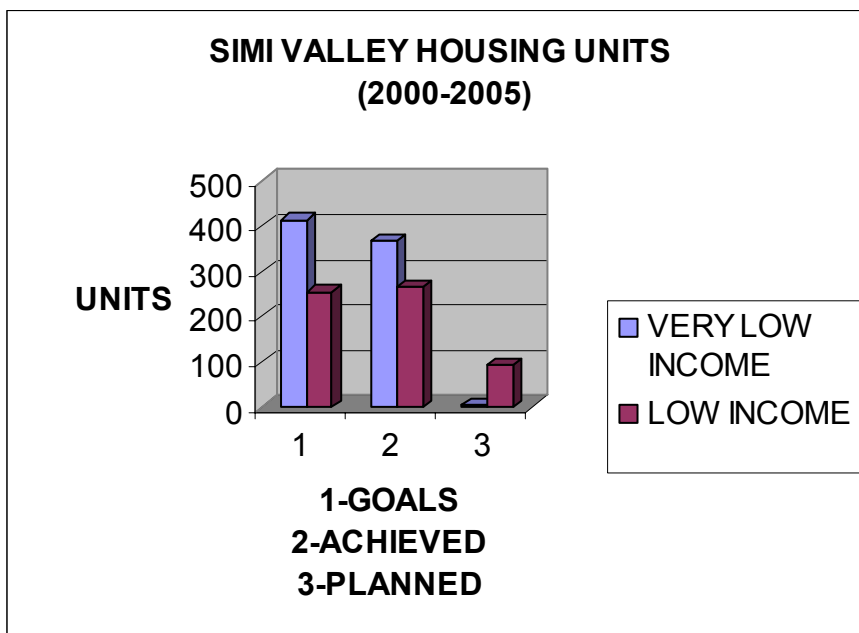
CITY OF SANTA PAULA

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	200	15	75
LOW INCOME	250	25	82
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	20	20 pending	20
LOW INCOME	20	20 pending	20



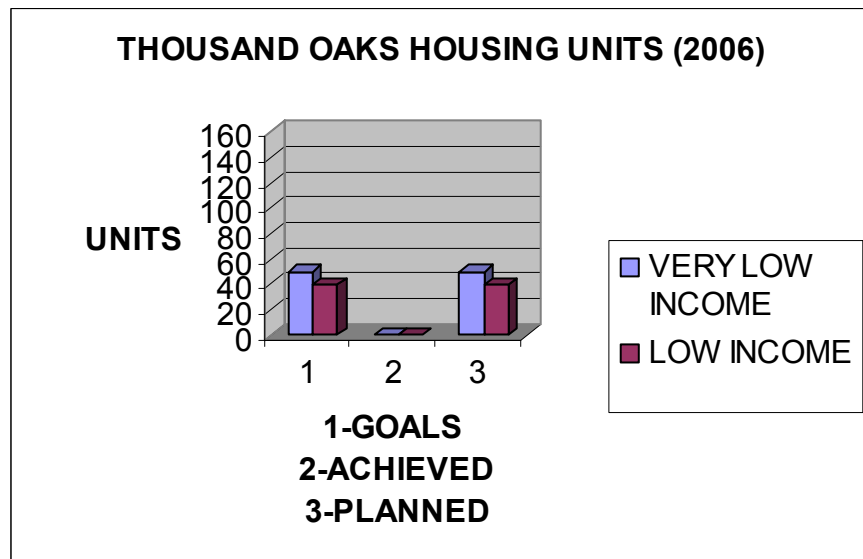
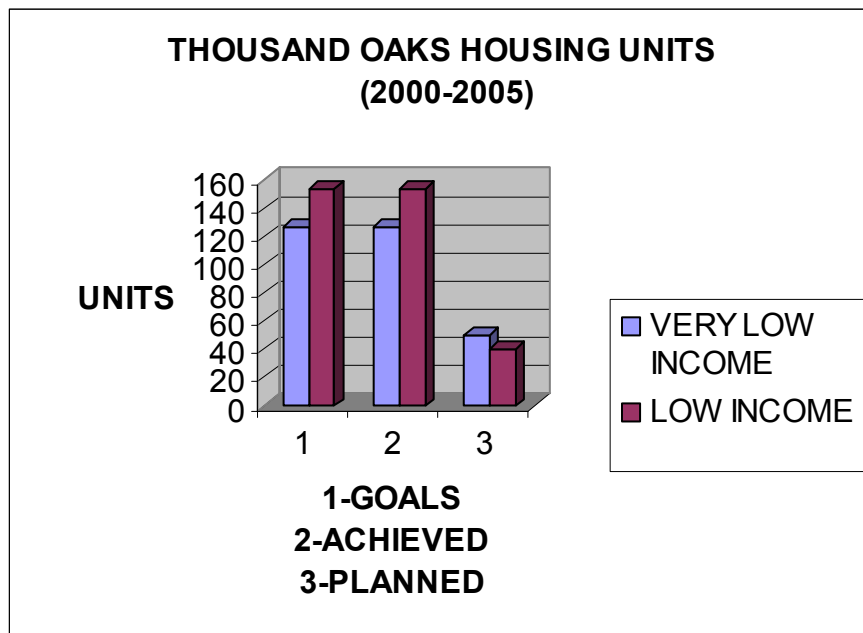
CITY OF SIMI VALLEY

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	414	367	3
LOW INCOME	254	265	91
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	3	16	0
LOW INCOME	91	20	31



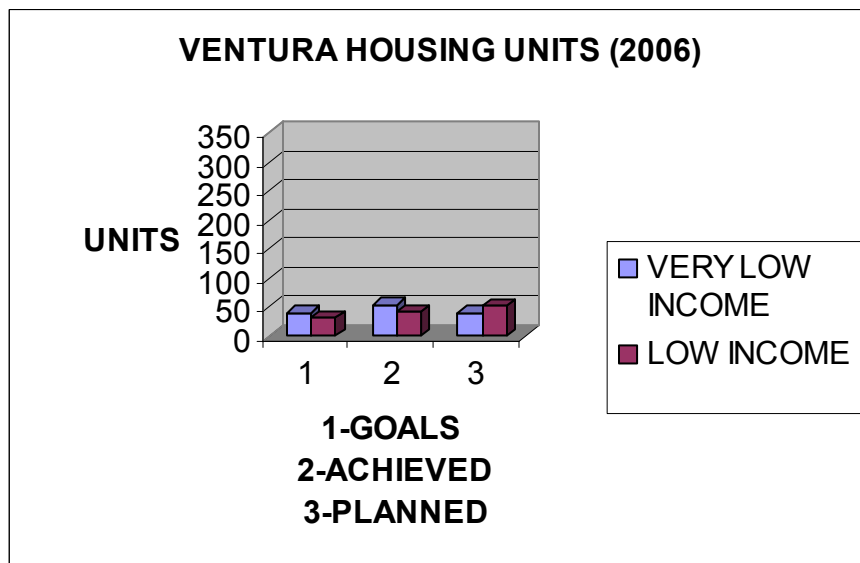
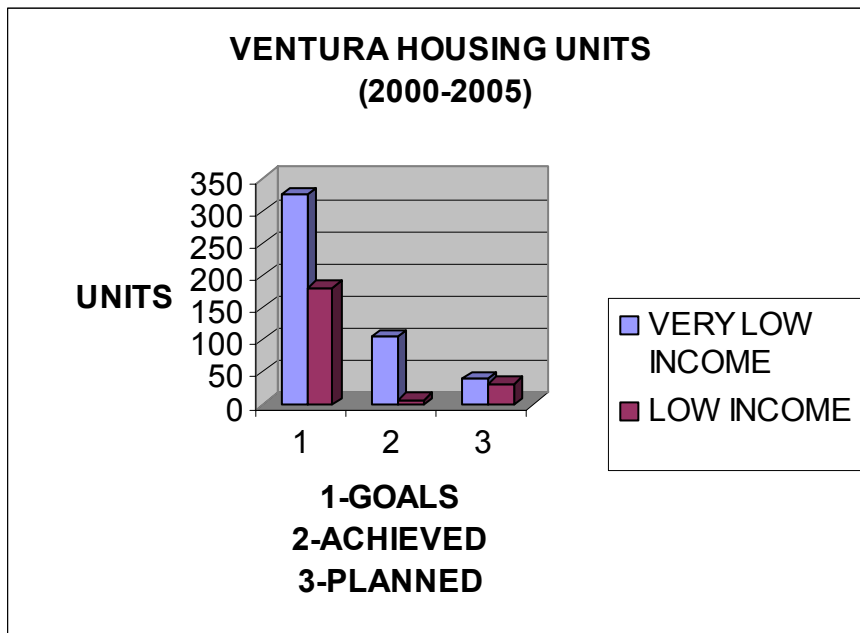
CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	127	127	50
LOW INCOME	154	154	40
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	50	several pending	50
LOW INCOME	40	several pending	40



CITY OF VENTURA

	GOAL	HOUSING UNITS ACHIEVED	PLANNED
HISTORY (2000-2005)			
VERY LOW INCOME	325	106	40
LOW INCOME	181	7	32
CURRENT (2006)			
VERY LOW INCOME	40	54	40
LOW INCOME	32	42	52



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