AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026, 6:00 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

OJAI CITY COUNCIL

ANDY GILMAN, MAYOR

DISTRICT 1 - LESLIE RULE
DISTRICT 2 - RACHEL LANG
DISTRICT 3 - ANDREW WHITMAN
DISTRICT 4 - KIM MANG

BEN HARVEY	BETHANY BURGESS	WESTON MONTGOMERY
CITY MANAGER	CITY ATTORNEY	CHIEF DEPUTY CITY CLERK

VIEWING & ACCESS

Public participation is encouraged! The Ojai City Council meets regularly on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 6:00 p.m. The meetings are conducted in a hybrid model, providing both in-person attendance and virtual public comment via the Zoom link below. Virtual attendance via Zoom is the only way to remotely provide public comment. Pre-registration is not required for public comment via Zoom. Instead, Zoom participants will utilize the “hand-raise” function to indicate their desire to speak on an item. The meeting is also livestreamed on the City's website at ojai.ca.gov/525/2968/Public-Meetings, on YouTube at youtube.com/@ojaicity, and on Spectrum Channel 10. See “Public Comment Options” below for further instruction.

ZOOM LINK - July 14, 2026 - Regular Meeting

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

PRESENTATIONS

1. **Members of the Ventura County Fair's Junior Fair Board to Present the 2026 Ventura County Fair Announcement and Poster**

2. **Proclamation Honoring July as Parks and Recreation Month and the Parks and**

Recreation Commission

COMMISSION REPORTS

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Public Communications is the time set aside during the meeting for members of the public to address the City Council on items of City business other than scheduled agenda items. Matters raised at this time may be briefly discussed by the Council, and will generally be referred to staff and/or placed on a subsequent agenda. Under State law, other than for emergency items, no action can be taken.

CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed on the Consent Calendar are to be considered routine and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. There will be no discussion of these items unless, before the vote on the motion to adopt, specific items are removed from the Consent Calendar for separate motions.

3. City Council Minutes

RECOMMENDATION: Approve.

05 28 26 Special Meeting
06 02 26 Special Meeting
06 09 26 Regular Meeting
06 11 26 Special Meeting
06 16 26 Special Meeting
06 23 26 Special Meeting
06 23 26 Regular Meeting
06 30 26 Special Meeting

4. Planning Commission Minutes

RECOMMENDATION: Receive and file.

06-03-26 Regular Meeting
06-17-26 Regular Meeting

5. City of Ojai Warrants for June 08 - June 21, 2026

RECOMMENDATION: Receive and file.

Administrative Report - Warrant Report
Attachment A - Warrant Register Report
Attachment B - Disbursement by Category
Warrant Cover Letter

6. Revision of Ojai Trolley Advertising Program Rates, Contract Terms, and Inclusion in the Master Fee Schedule

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Review and approve revisions to the Ojai Trolley advertising program, including updated advertising rates and contract structure.
2. Approve limiting advertisers to one ad space per trolley.
3. Approve establishing a one year contract term for all ad placements, with an exception for rear placements limited to three consecutive terms per advertiser.
4. Approve a unified rate for driver side and pedestrian side panels and a higher rate for the rear (back) panel due to increased visibility.

5. Direct staff to add all trolley advertising rates to the City's Master Fee Schedule.

Administrative Report - Trolley Advertising and Terms
Attachment A - Advertising Brochure Modified for 2024
Attachment B - Advertising Rates and Term Comparison

7. On-Call Trade and Professional Services – Award of Agreements

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Authorize the City Manager to execute amendments for one (1) additional two-year term to the current On-Call Professional Services Agreements that have expired on June 30, 2026 extending them to June 30, 2028 and increase the not-to-exceed amount of each On-Call Professional Services Agreement as provided in this report; and,
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute an On-Call Trade Agreement with Ventura Pest Control and authorize future amendments for an additional one (1) one-year term with compensation not-to-exceed $75,000; and
3. Receive and file the task orders issued during Fiscal Year 25/26.

Administrative Report - On Call Award of Agreements
Attachment A - Sample Trade Agreement
Attachment B - Task Order Summary for Fiscal Year 25-26

8. Introduce Ordinance No. 973 Suspending Certain Requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code ("Well Construction, Modification, and Demolition Standards"), Subject to Biennial Review by City Council, and Creating a New Section 224 of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Introduce, for first reading by title only with further reading waived, Ordinance No. 973, an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Ojai, Suspending Certain Requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code ("Well Construction, Modification, and Demolition Standards"), Subject to Biennial Review by City Council, and Creating a New Section 224 of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code; and
2. Direct staff to return to the City Council for second reading and adoption of the Ordinance at the August 11, 2026, City Council meeting.

Administrative Report - Suspend Well Permit Ordinance
Attachment A - Ordinance No. 973

DISCUSSION

9. Approval of Resolution Adopting the 2026 City of Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan *(City Council Direction)*

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Resolution adopting the 2026 City of Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan as presented, thereby establishing a comprehensive vision for the revitalization, stewardship, and long-term management of the City Hall campus.

Administrative Report - City Hall Campus Master Plan
Attachment A - Resolution No. 2026-29
Attachment B - OVGC Master Plan

10. County of Ventura Civil Grand Jury Report Regarding Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project (*Legal Requirement*)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Discuss report issued by County of Ventura Civil Grand Jury regarding the Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project on June 25, 2026.
2. Direct the City Attorney to prepare a draft response to the report for further consideration by the City Council at a regular or special meeting of City Council in August, 2026.

Administrative Report - Grand Jury Report
Attachment A - Grand Jury Report, OPSH

11. Municipal Code Revisions (*Legal Requirement*)

RECOMMENDATION: Provide direction to the City Attorney's Office to work with staff to prepare recommended Code revisions to various ordinances as further described in this report.

Administrative Report - OMC Updates

12. Concept Review of Contracted Services *(City Council Direction)*

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Review the attached list of contracted services and identify those contracts for which the City Council would like additional analysis; and
2. Direct staff to return at a future meeting with a detailed evaluation of the selected contracts, including operational, staffing, financial, legal, and service level considerations associated with potentially bringing those services in-house.

Administrative Report - Concept Review - Contracted Services
Attachment A - Log of Contracts

13. Affordable Housing Agreement Located at 312 West Aliso Street And Third-Party Income Qualify Household for Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing Units *(City Council Direction)*

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Receive the staff report and presentation and ask clarifying questions related to the Affordable Housing Agreement associated with Cottages Among the Flowers.
2. Direct the City Manager and City Attorney to finalize and execute the Declaration of Land Use Restrictive Covenants (Affordable Housing Agreement) with Ojai Bungalows LP, associated with the two deed-restricted units within the Cottages Among the Flowers site and cause it to be recorded in the Official Records of Ventura County (Attachment A).
3. Direct the City Manager to negotiate and execute a formal Professional Services Agreement with Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura. The proposal from Area Housing Authority includes performing third party services to income qualify households for deed-restricted affordable housing units. The Area Housing Authority proposal for third-party services is Attachment B.
4. Direct the Community Development Director to establish a reporting schedule and compliance format associated with those households which are income qualified to reside within the deed-restricted units.

Administrative Report - Cottages, AHA
Attachment A - Affordable Housing Covenant
Attachment B - AHA Proposal
Attachment C - Application, Deed Restricted Units

14. **Ad Hoc Committee Formation for Community Land Trust *(City Council Direction)***
RECOMMENDATION: Select two (2) City Council Members to form an ad hoc committee for a six-month term.
Administrative Report - Ad Hoc Community Land Trust

15. **Concept Review - Building Code Options Return *(City Council Direction)***
RECOMMENDATION: Receive the information and presentation by Staff, ask clarifying questions and consider providing additional direction on alternative building code options for local amendments to the building code.
Administrative Report - Building Code Options

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORTS

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Posted July 10, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS
Written public comments will be published here for public access. Please see PUBLIC COMMENT OPTIONS below for instructions on how to submit.

COMMENTS
Written Public Comments 07 14 26

ACCOMMODATIONS

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please call (805) 646-5581. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

If you feel that a language interpreter is necessary for you to participate in this meeting, notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements for an interpreter to assure your participation/understanding of this meeting.

Si considera que un intérprete de idiomas es necesario para participar en esta reunión, la notificación 48 horas antes de la reunión le permitirá a la Ciudad hacer arreglos razonables para que un intérprete asegure su participación/comprensión de esta reunión del Concejo Municipal.

Para Español por favor llame al (805) 646-5581 ext. 100 o por correo electronico a cityclerk@ojai.ca.gov.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Agenda reports and other disclosable public records related to agenda items are available on the City's website at ojai.ca.gov/525/2968/Public-Meetings and at City Hall located at 401 S. Ventura St., Ojai, Ca., during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT OPTIONS

Written Comments: In order for staff to provide the City Council with written public comments timely, written/emailed public comments must be submitted no later than 3:00 p.m. on the day before the meeting.

You may always submit written comments to the City Clerk via mail, in person at City Hall, or via email to cityclerk@ojai.ca.gov. If your written comment is received by 3:00 p.m. on the day before the meeting date, the City Clerk will distribute copies of your comments to all Council Members and recorded on the City website. Written comments received after 3:00 p.m. may not be distributed to the Council Members and recorded on the City website until after the meeting.

Verbal Comments: Verbal Comments will be received on any item on the agenda at the time the agenda item is heard. Comments may be made in person at the meeting or through Zoom, via the link at the top of the Agenda. Pre-registration is not required for public comment via Zoom. Instead, Zoom participants will utilize the hand-raise function to indicate their desire to speak on an item.

IMPORTANT NOTES:
All materials related to an item on this agenda, including written public comments, will be available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, and following the meeting, will be accessible on the City of Ojai's website at ojai.ca.gov.

As a government agency, the City of Ojai is subject to the California Public Records Act (Government Code § 6250 et seq.). Please be advised that all communications submitted to City officials and staff are subject to public disclosure under the California Public Records Act. There are limited exceptions that allow the City to redact personal information under the California Public Records Act. If you have concerns regarding privacy, please do not include your personal identifying information, such as your name, e-mail, phone number, and home address in your correspondence to the City, including, but not limited to, public comment.

If you challenge the actions of the City Council in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in the public notices, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Council at, or prior to, the public hearing (California Government Code Section 65009).

Any legal action by an applicant seeking to obtain a judicial review of the City Council's decision on a Hearing listed on this Agenda may be subject to the 90-day filing period of and governed by Code of Civil Procedure Section 1094.6.

LEVINE ACT WARNING
Applicants and their agents before the City Council are subject to the campaign disclosure provisions detailed in Government Code Section 84308. No City Council Member may accept, solicit, or direct a contribution of more than $500 from any party or agent for 12 months

subsequent to the date a final decision is rendered by the City. This prohibition commences when your application has been filed, or the proceeding is otherwise initiated.

A party to a City proceeding - which includes both applicants and agents - shall disclose on the record of the proceeding any contribution of more than $500 made to any Council Member by the applicant or agent, during the preceding 12 months. No party to a City proceeding, or agent, shall make a contribution to a Council Member during the proceeding and for 12 months following the date a final decision is rendered by the City.

Prior to rendering a decision on a City proceeding, any Council Member who received a contribution of more than $500 within the preceding 12 months from any party, or agent, to a proceeding shall disclose that fact on the record of the proceeding and shall be disqualified from participating in the proceeding. However, if any Council Member receives a contribution that otherwise would require disqualification and returns the contribution within 30 days of knowing about the contribution and the relevant proceeding, the Council Member shall be permitted to participate in the proceeding.

If you believe that these provisions apply to you or a Council Member, please inform the City Clerk at the earliest possible opportunity. Failure to do so may affect the City's ability to process your application.

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026, 6:00 PM

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Rule, and Whitman. Council Member Lang was absent.

Also present: City Manager Harvey, City Attorney Burgess, Assistant to the City Manager Cervantes, Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery, and Community Development Director Seibert.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Rule, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

WORKSHOP

1. **Second Community Workshop on Expansion of the Tree Ordinance (City Council Direction)**
   RECOMMENDATION: Gather public input for potential update and expansion of the Tree Ordinance.

Staff received input from the public and City Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk
Approved:

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2026, 6:00 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Rule, Lang, and Whitman.

Also present: City Manager Harvey, City Attorney Burgess, Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery, and Recreation Manager Rivera.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION

1. **Community Aquatics Program Implementation and Adoption of Resolution Amending the Salary Schedule to Update the Salary for the Lifeguard Classification, Effective June 3, 2026**

   RECOMMENDATION:

   1. Adopt a resolution amending the Salary Schedule to update the salary for the Lifeguard classification, effective May 20, 2026; and
   2. Approve a $5.00 per person entry fee for open and lap swim Program Hours and authorize a $5,000 allocation to fund reduced-fee waivers for income qualified participants; and
   3. Approve program hours as presented for daily open swim operations; and

4. Receive and file the completed Agreement with Ojai Unified School District.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Rule, to approve Item 1 as recommended, and return with a concept for a family membership program.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. Request for Proposal for Sarzotti Park Playground Reconstruction

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Review and provide input for a draft request for proposals for the planning and design of the Sarzotti Park playground reconstruction project.
2. Direct staff to proceed with issuing a request for proposals for the planning and design of the playground reconstruction project.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Rule, to approve Item 2 as recommended, and directing the Parks and Recreation Commission to review without a return to Council needed.

The motion carried unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION 6:58

3. Conference with Labor Negotiators - Government Code Section 54957.6
City/Agency Designated Representatives: Ben Harvey, City Manager; Kathy Holman, Human Resources/Risk Manager
Unrepresented Employee(s): All Unrepresented Employees

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney Burgess reported out of Closed Session that City Council directed a 3.5% cost of living increase for staff with the annual budget adoption, except for the City Manager position, and that City Council provided direction to update the employee handbook.

ADJOURNMENT 7:30

Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk
Approved:

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2026, 6:00 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Rule, Lang, and Whitman.

Also present: City Manager Harvey, City Attorney Burgess, Assistant to the City Manager Cervantes, and Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Unanimous consent reached through the Mayor for the approval of the agenda, with Item 2 continued to a future meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

1. **Proclamation Honoring Pride Month 2026 and Helen Allen**

2. **Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council to Provide a Quarterly Update**

Item 2 was continued to a future agenda.

COMMISSION REPORTS

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Public Works Director Palmer provided an oral report on behalf of the City Manager regarding accessible sidewalk ramps.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Public Communications is the time set aside during the meeting for members of the public to address the City Council on items of City business other than scheduled agenda items. Matters raised at this time may be briefly discussed by the Council, and will generally be referred to staff and/or placed on a subsequent agenda. Under State law, other than for emergency items, no action can be taken.

CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed on the Consent Calendar are to be considered routine and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed. There will be no discussion of these items unless, before the vote on the motion to adopt, specific items are removed from the Consent Calendar for separate motions.

3. **City of Ojai Warrants for May 11, 2026 - May 24, 2026**
   RECOMMENDATION: Receive and file.

4. **City Council Minutes**
   RECOMMENDATION: Approve.

5. **Appointment of Area Housing Authority Commissioner**
   RECOMMENDATION: Consider appointment of applicant on file to serve a four-year term as the City of Ojai's representative on the Ventura County Area Housing Authority Board.

6. **Confirm Appointment to Fill Inaugural Vacancy on the Public Safety Commission**
   RECOMMENDATION: Confirm nomination of applicant Randy Coggan as Public Safety Commissioner to fill an inaugural vacancy (four-year term ending May 2030).

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Mang, to approve Consent Item 3.

The motion carried unanimously.

Item 4 was pulled for corrections and to return on a future agenda. No action taken.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Lang, to approve Consent Item 5.

The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve Consent Item 6.

The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

7. **Report and Public Hearing on City of Ojai Job Vacancies and Recruitment and Retention Efforts in Compliance with Government Code §3502.3 *(Legal Requirement)***
   RECOMMENDATION: Receive a report and conduct a public hearing regarding the City of Ojai job vacancies and recruitment and retention efforts in compliance with Government Code §3502.3.

Mayor Gilman opened the Public Hearing, accepted public comment, and closed the Public Hearing. City Council received the report.

8. **City of Ojai's Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-27 *(Operational Need)***
   RECOMMENDATION: Review the City of Ojai's Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-27 and provide feedback. This item will be coming back to City Council at the June 23rd
   meeting for adoption.

Mayor Gilman opened the Public Hearing, accepted public comment, and closed the Public Hearing. City Council received the report and provided feedback to staff to return for Budget Adoption.

9. **Levy and Collection of Assessments for Landscaping and Lighting District No. 1, Plaza Maintenance Assessment District No. 2, and Landscaping and Lighting District No. 3 for FY 2026/2027 *(City Council Direction)***
   RECOMMENDATION:
   1. Conduct a Public Hearing to receive public testimony relative to the established assessments for Landscaping and Lighting District No. 1, Plaza Maintenance Assessment District No. 2, and Landscaping and Lighting District No. 3 for Fiscal Year 2026/2027; and,
   2. Adopt Resolution No. 2026-17, approving the Engineer’s Annual Levy Report, confirming the diagrams and assessments for Landscaping and Lighting District No. 1, Plaza Maintenance Assessment District No. 2, and Landscaping and Lighting District No. 3, and ordering the work and the levy of assessments for Fiscal Year 2026/2027; and,
   3. Direct staff to transmit the necessary documents to the County of Ventura for the levying and collection of property assessments for said Districts.

Mayor Gilman opened the Public Hearing, accepted public comment, and closed the Public Hearing.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Rule, to approve Item 9, as recommended.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION

10. **Adoption of Resolutions Calling for and Giving Notice of the City of Ojai's General Municipal Election on November 3, 2026; Requesting County of Ventura Consolidation with the Statewide General Election; and Adopting Regulations for Candidates Statements *(Operational Need)***
    RECOMMENDATION:
    1. Adopt the following resolutions:
        a. A resolution calling and giving notice of the City of Ojai's General Municipal Election to be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, for the election of certain officers as required by the State of California relating to General Law Cities; and
        b. A resolution requesting the Board of Supervisors of the County of Ventura to consolidate the General Municipal Election with the Statewide Gubernatorial General Election and to render specified services in relation to the conduct of the Ojai General Municipal Election; and
        c. A resolution adopting regulation for candidates for elective office pertaining to candidate statements.
    2. Direct the City Clerk to prepare all appropriate documents for election consolidation and submit to the County of Ventura by the required date of Monday, June 29, 2026.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Rule, to approve Item 10, as recommended.

The motion carried unanimously.

11. **Consider Appeal of Planning Commission Denial | The outdoor storage and use of an existing walk-in freezer and proposed modifications to the existing outdoor dining area located to the rear of Ojai Mountain Farm restaurant, addressed 242 East Ojai Avenue (Design Review Permit [DRP 26-003] and Conditional Use Permit [CUP 26-003]). Assessor's Parcel Number 021-0-140-370. Representative: Patrick Housh, Paul Poirier + Associates Architects. Property Owner: Verna Joy Adams; Applicant: Tony Yanow, Ojai Mountain Farm. *(Requested by Mayor Gilman)***

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council determine whether to appeal the Planning Commission's May 20, 2026, decision to deny a design review permit and conditional use permit for the use of an outdoor walk-in freezer and proposed modifications to the existing outdoor dining area associated with Ojai Mountain Farms restaurant
located at 242 East Ojai Avenue.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Rule, to approve Item 11, proceeding with the appeal.

The motion carried 3-1-1 (Mayor Pro Tem Mang dissenting. Council Member Whitman abstaining.).

12. **Authorization to Purchase One (1) 2026 BMW Police Motorcycle *(Operational Need)***
RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the purchase of one (1) new 2026 BMW police motorcycle for the Ojai Police Department's Motor Officer Program, in an amount not to exceed $50,000, including an 84-month/unlimited-mileage full-service warranty, from authorized BMW dealer Long Beach BMW Motorcycles.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Rule, seconded by Council Member Whitman, to approve Item 12, as recommended.

The motion carried unanimously.

13. **Award Maintenance Agreement for Janitorial Services *(Operational Need)***
RECOMMENDATION:
    1. Authorize the City Manager to execute Maintenance Agreement No. 2026-31 with Kelly's Cleaning & Supplies for janitorial services in the amount of $115,263.96 annually for a three-year period commencing July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029, and;
    2. Authorize the City Manager to execute, in their sole discretion, future amendments for up to two (2) additional one-year terms for a maximum agreement term not to exceed five (5) years.

OR

3. Direct staff to appropriate funding for two full-time Maintenance I employees. If option one, two, or three are not selected then:
4. Provide alternative direction to the City Manager

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve Item 13, with a three-year agreement modification, additional language added for cancellation, and to return to Council with options.

The motion carried 4-1 (Mayor Pro Tem Mang dissenting.).

14. **Award of Contract – State of the City Video Production, Scriptwriting, and Event Presentation Support *(Council Direction)***
RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the City Manager to execute a one-year contract with Tripepi Smith & Associates in the amount of $35,802, for the State of the City Video Production, and Event Presentation Support.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Lang, to approve Item 14, and to direct staff to return with an item to establish a communications ad-hoc committee.

The motion carried 3-2 (Mayor Pro Tem Mang and Council Member Whitman dissenting.).

15. **Award of Contract for Communications and Social Media Services Contract for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 *(Operational Need)***
RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Tripepi Smith & Associates for Communications and Social Media Services for Fiscal Year (FY)26-27, based on their proven experience with the City, competitive pricing, and compliance with the City's purchasing policy.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve Item 15, for a one-year agreement term, and establishing Mayor Pro Tem Mang and Council Member Mang to a Communications Ad-Hoc committee, to be involved in agreement discussions.

The motion carried 3-2 (Mayor Pro Tem Mang and Council Member Whitman dissenting.).

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORTS

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Gilman and Council Member Rule requested future items for a Soule Park acquisition and a Goals and Tactics workshop scheduling.

Mayor Pro Tem Mang, with consensus, requested a special meeting to discuss a Fourth of July chair placement policy.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk
Approved:

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026, 3:00 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

AGENDA UPDATED - 6/10/26, 1:00 PM - UPDATED TO INCLUDE DISCUSSION ITEM #1

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Rule, Lang, and Whitman.

Also present: City Manager Harvey, City Attorney Burgess, Assistant to the City Manager Cervantes, Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: Unanimous Consent reached through the Mayor to approve the agenda.

DISCUSSION

1. **Concept Review: Placement of Chairs and Other Personal Property within Right-of-Way Along Ojai Ave For the Fourth of July Parade (Mang/Whitman)**
   RECOMMENDATION: Receive and discuss a concept regarding the placement of chairs and other personal property within the public right-of-way along Ojai Avenue in advance of the annual Fourth of July Parade and provide direction to staff, if desired.

ACTION: Unanimous Consent reached through the Mayor, to direct staff to work with the City Attorney and return with the item at a June 16 Special Meeting, and to provide public outreach regarding chair placement.

CLOSED SESSION

2. **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - EXISTING LITIGATION (Government Code § 54956.9(d)(1))**
   Name of case: Leslie Rule v. City of Ojai, Ventura County Superior Court Case No. 2025CUPT055697

3. **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (Government Code § 54956.9(d)(4))**
   Initiation of litigation in one matter.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney Burgess reported out of Closed Session that there was no reportable action for Item 2, and reported that for Item 3 that City Council authorized the City's intervention in the Byrne v. Rule case.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk
Approved:

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2026, 6:00 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

ADDITIONAL MEETING LOCATION - 901 PORTAL AVE, OAKLAND, CA 94610 - TO ACCOMMODATE COUNCIL MEMBER RULE WHO IS ATTENDING THE MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Lang, and Whitman. Council Member Rule was present remotely.

Also present: City Manager Harvey, City Attorney Burgess, Assistant to the City Manager Cervantes, and Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION

1. **Options for Regulating Placement of Chairs for the Fourth of July Parade *(Council Direction)***

   RECOMMENDATION:

   1. Establish a policy prohibiting placement of chairs no earlier than one week prior to the parade; or
   2. Direct staff to coordinate with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to investigate public encroachment permitting requirements and potential implementation along state-controlled segments of the parade route; or

3. Take no action regarding the early placement of chairs along the parade route,
   except where chair impedes sidewalk accessibility.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Lang, to direct staff to return with a policy for review, including a two-week placement period, restricted furniture types (no sofas or oversized armchairs), ADA access requirements, and implementation starting next year.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. **Introduce Ordinance No. 973 Repealing Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code Pertaining to Well Construction, Modification, and Demolition Standards (Operational Need)**
   RECOMMENDATION:
   1. Introduce, for first reading by title only with further reading waived, Ordinance No. 973, An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Ojai, California, Repealing Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code ("Well Construction, Modification, And Demolition Standards"), and;
   2. Direct staff to return to the City Council for second reading and adoption of the Ordinance at the July 14, 2026, City Council meeting.

Council provided direction to staff for a return on first reading.

3. **Consider Change in Council Protocols from Quarterly Rotation to Annual Rotation for Representation by Council Members at City Commission Meetings *(City Council Direction)***
   RECOMMENDATION: Provide assignments or direction, including amendment in Council Protocols, from quarterly rotation to annual rotation for representation by Council Members at City Commission Meetings.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Lang, to approve the resolution adopting revisions to the City Council protocols as modified to provide for six-month assignments, thus revising the time period for City Council commission assignments from a quarterly to a six-month rotation.

The motion carried unanimously (5-0).

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk
Approved:

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2026, 5:00 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Rule, Lang, and Whitman.

Also present: City Attorney Burgess, Assistant to the City Manager Cervantes, and Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

1. **Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation (Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2) and (e)(2))**
   Significant exposure to litigation in one matter, based on the following existing facts and circumstances known to a potential plaintiff: approval of Zoning Clearance No. 2CL 24-107 for a project located at 242 E. Ojai Avenue
2. **Public Employee Performance Evaluation (Government Code Section 54957(b))**
   Position Title: City Manager

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney Burgess reported that the City Council directed a “360 performance evaluation” of the City Manager. No reportable action was taken on Item 2.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk
Approved:

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2026, 6:00 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Rule, Lang, and Whitman.

Also present: City Manager Harvey, City Attorney Burgess, Assistant to the City Manager Cervantes, and Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

1. **Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council to Provide a Quarterly Update**

COMMISSION REPORTS

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Harvey provided an oral report

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

CONSENT CALENDAR

2. **City of Ojai Warrants for May 25, 2026 - June 07, 2026**
   RECOMMENDATION: Receive and file.

3. **Treasurer's Monthly Report of Cash and Investments for the City of Ojai as of May 31, 2026**
   RECOMMENDATION: Receive and file.

4. **Minutes - Planning Commission**
   RECOMMENDATION: Received and file.

5. **Annual Request for Services – Ventura County Animal Services**
   RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the City Manager to execute the second amendment to the Animal Services Agreement with Ventura County to exercise the second, one-year renewal period and extend the Agreement through June 30, 2027, and submit the annual Service Level Request to Ventura County Animal Services for Fiscal Year 2026/2027, at the existing service level and for the updated service costs
   identified in Attachment A.

6. **Fiscal Year 2026-27 Statement of Investment Policy**
   RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a resolution approving the City of Ojai's Fiscal Year 2026-27 Statement of Investment Policy and replace prior resolutions and policies relating to the City's Statement of Investment Policy, including but not limited to, the provisions contained within Investment Policy Resolution 25-25 adopted June 24, 2025.

7. **Award Amendment No. 1 to Ventura Regional Sanitary District (VRSD) for Storm Drain Cleaning and Video Inspections for the 2026 Pavement Rehabilitation Project (ST-3007)** ***(Operational Need)***
   RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the City Manager to execute Amendment No. 1 (PW Agreement No. 2025-31A) to the existing agreement with Ventura Regional Sanitary District (VRSD, a special district) for continued storm drain cleaning and video inspection services in support of the 2026 Pavement Rehabilitation Project (ST-3007), increasing the not-to-exceed amount by $51,781 for a total authorized expenditure of $109,629, and extending the term through December 30, 2026.

8. **Resolution Expressing Support for Conservation of Local Biodiversity and Stewardship of Natural, Coastal, and Public Lands**
   RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the Resolution expressing support for the conservation of local biodiversity and the stewardship of natural, coastal, and public lands within
   the City of Ojai.

9. **City Council Minutes**
   RECOMMENDATION: Approve.

10. **Commission Appointments**
    RECOMMENDATION: Confirm nomination of applicant Raymond Sims as Public Safety Commissioner to fill an inaugural vacancy (two-year term ending May 2028), Brenna Furness as Public Safety Commissioner to fill an inaugural vacancy (two-year term ending May 2028), and confirm reappointment of Suzi Taylor as Parks and
    Recreation Commissioner (four-year term ending May 2030).

Council Member Rule pulled Items 5 and 8.

Mayor Gilman pulled Item 10.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the remainder of the Consent Calendar, Item 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9

The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Rule, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve Item 5.

The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Rule, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve Item 8.

The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Whitman, to approve Item 10.

The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

11. **City Council Appeal of Planning Commission Denial | Outdoor Storage and Use of an Existing Walk-in Freezer and Proposed Modifications to the Existing Outdoor Dining Area Located to the Rear of Ojai Mountain Farm Restaurant; Addressed 242 East Ojai Avenue (Design Review Permit [DRP 26-003] and Conditional Use Permit [CUP 26-003]). Assessor's Parcel Number 021-0-140-370. Representative: Patrick Housh, Paul Poirier + Associates Architects. Property Owner: Verna Joy Adams; Applicant: Tony Yanow, Ojai Mountain Farm.** ***(Requested by Mayor Gilman and Council Member Rule)***
    RECOMMENDATION:

    1. Receive the Administrative Report and Presentation from Staff and the Applicant;
    2. Take Public Comment on this matter; and

3. Consider a resolution (Attachment A) approving the outdoor storage and use of an existing walk-in freezer and proposed modifications to the existing outdoor dining area located at 242 East Ojai Avenue, consistent with the findings associated with the Design Review Permit and Conditional Use Permit and subject to the conditions of approval, and finding that the project is categorically
exempt from CEQA.

Council members made ex parte disclosures. Mayor Gilman opened the public hearing, accepted public comment, and closed the public hearing.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the recommended Resolution with revisions to reflect a conditional and temporary, six-month approval of the freezer and the expanded outdoor dining area, and to return to City Council with an update regarding efforts to use a different freezer at the first regular meeting in August.

Motion carried 4-1 (Mayor Pro Tem Mang dissenting.).

Council Member Whitman exited the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

12. Recommended Fiscal Year 2026/27 Budget, Annual GANN Appropriations Limit, and Salary Schedules and Adoption of Related Resolutions *(Operational Need)*

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Hold a public hearing to receive comments on the recommended FY 2026-27 Budget and complete the budget review;
2. Review and approve the GANN Appropriations Limit computation;
3. Adopt a Resolution establishing the GANN Appropriations Limit for FY 2026-27;
4. Adopt a Resolution adopting the FY 2026-27 Budget; and
5. Adopt a Resolution amending the Salary Schedule for City Employees, effective July 6, 2026.

Mayor Gilman opened the public hearing, accepted public comment, and closed the public hearing.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Member Lang, to approve Item 12, as recommended.

The motion carried 3-1-1 (Mayor Pro Tem Mang dissenting. Council Member Whitman absent.).

13. **Zone Change (ZC 25-001) | Request for a zone change from Business Professional (BP) to Commercial (C-1) to allow for the sale of alcohol and bring an existing gas station "Ojai Gas" associated convenience store use into conformance regarding zone designation, located at 1124 Maricopa Highway, Assessor's Parcel Number 019-0-180-070. The subject site has a General Plan Designation of General Commercial (GC), and the Zoning Classification of the site is Business Professional (BP). Property Owner: Ojai Gas Inc. Applicant: Ojai Gas Inc. Raad Abasi. Representative: Alan Nelsen, Marquette Consulting, Inc.** ***(Operational Need)***

    RECOMMENDATION:

    1. Conduct a public hearing, accept public testimony, and close the public hearing; and
    2. Adopt City Council Resolution (Attachment A) approving Zone Change (ZC 25-001) from Business Professional (BP) to General Commercial (C-1) to allow for the sale of alcohol and bring existing gas station "Ojai Gas" associated convenience store use into conformance regarding zone designation, based on
       the findings and conditions in Attachment A as the proposal is consistent with the Ojai Municipal Code, and finding the project to be categorically exempt from CEQA.

Mayor Gilman opened the public hearing, accepted public comment, and closed the public hearing.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Rule, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve Item 13, as recommended.

The motion carried 4-0-1 (Council Member Whitman absent.).

DISCUSSION

14. **First Amendment to Agreement with Ventura County Behavioral Health for Intensive Services Coordinator for FY 2026-2027** ***(Operational Need)***

    RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the City Manager to execute the First Amendment to the Agreement with Ventura County Behavioral Health for continuation of Intensive Service Coordinator services for non-emergency mental health and case management for unhoused individuals citywide, to extend the term of the Agreement by one year and increase the Agreement's Not-to-Exceed Limit by $177,647, funded equally by General Fund (OTT) and ERF Grant Funds, for a new total Not-to-Exceed
    Limit of $371,955, in a form approved by the City Attorney.

Item 14 was continued to a future meeting.

15. **Concept Review for City of Ojai Speed Hump Policy** ***(City Council Direction)***

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Review the recommendations for a City of Ojai Speed Hump Policy and provide feedback to staff; and,
2. Decide whether to adopt the policy at a future meeting or have it reviewed by
   the Public Safety Commission.

Item 15 was continued to a future meeting.

16. **Council Member Town Hall and Panel Policy *(City Council Direction)***
    RECOMMENDATION: Review and adopt the Town Hall and Panel Policy establishing guidelines for City sponsored and Council member hosted town community meetings, including the use of City resources and compliance.

Item 16 was continued to a future meeting.

17. **Adoption of Updated Social Media Policy and Community Calendar Use Policy *(Operational Need)***
    RECOMMENDATION:
    1. Adopt the updated City of Ojai Social Media Policy, including Appendices A through E; and
    2. Adopt the BeWith Community Calendar Use & Posting Policy, to ensure consistent governance, public transparency, accessibility, and legally defensible content moderation practices.

MOTION: It was moved by Mayor Gilman, seconded by Council Lang, to approve Item 17, with minor modifications to content guidelines sections and direction to have Communications ad hoc committee review.

The motion carried 4-0-1 (Council Member Whitman absent.).

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORTS

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT
Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk
Approved:

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2026, 5:30 PM

KENT HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL CAMPUS - 111 W SANTA ANA ST, OJAI, CA

Mayor Gilman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Mayor Gilman, Mayor Pro Tem Mang, and Council Members Rule, Lang, and Whitman.

Also present: City Manager Harvey, City Attorney Burgess, Assistant to the City Manager Cervantes, Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Deputy City Clerk Montgomery led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve the agenda.

Unanimous Consent reached through the Mayor.

DISCUSSION

1. **First Amendment to Agreement with Ventura County Behavioral Health for Intensive Services Coordinator for FY 2026-2027 *(Operational Need)*** RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the City Manager to execute the First Amendment to the Agreement with Ventura County Behavioral Health for continuation of Intensive Service Coordinator services for non-emergency mental health and case management for unhoused individuals citywide, to extend the term of the Agreement by one year and increase the Agreement's Not- to-Exceed Limit by $177,647, funded equally by General Fund (OTT) and ERF Grant Funds, for a new total Not-to-Exceed Limit of $371,955, in a form approved by the City Attorney.

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Mayor Gilman, to approve Item 1, with modified conditions authorizing a shorter term of three months at prorated amount, allowing time to discuss with County Officials the Council's provided direction, and return with updated contract with the City Attorney's Office

The motion carried unanimously.

2. **Concept Review for City of Ojai Speed Hump Policy *(City Council Direction)***
   RECOMMENDATION:
   1. Review the recommendations for a City of Ojai Speed Hump Policy and provide feedback to staff; and,
   2. Decide whether to adopt the policy at a future meeting or have it reviewed by
      the Public Safety Commission.

   Agenda Report - Concept Review for Speed Hump Policy Attachment A - County of Ventura Modified Policy for Ojai
   Attachment B - Comparison and Listing of Speed Hump Policies from Various Municipalities

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Rule, seconded by Council Member Whitman, to request the advisory role the Public Safety Commission for review and recommendation of the item, as priority item and issue for the newly established commission.

The motion carried unanimously.

3. **Council Member Town Hall and Panel Policy *(City Council Direction)***
   RECOMMENDATION: Review and adopt the Town Hall and Panel Policy establishing guidelines for City sponsored and Council member hosted town community meetings, including the use of City resources and compliance.
   Administrative Report - Council Member Town Hall and Panel Policy Attachment A - Town Hall and Panel Policy

MOTION: It was moved by Council Member Lang, seconded by Council Member Whitman, approve the policy, allowing approval through Consent Calendar, and with minor language modification.

The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gilman adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

_____

Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk

Approved:

MINUTES
OJAI PLANNING COMMISSION
June 3, 2026

Call to Order

Chair Murphy called the *regular* meeting of the Ojai Planning Commission to order on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. (In-person and via teleconference).

Roll Call

On a call of the roll, the following Planning Commissioners were present in person: Chair Murphy, and Commissioners Hanson and Steward.
Absent: Vice Chair Chesley, Commissioner Rice Schmidt
City staff present: Maura Macaluso, Principal Planner, Darren Ziegler, Senior Counsel, Shari Herbruck, Principal Planning and Building Technician, PC Commission secretary.

Pledge of Allegiance Commissioner Bruce Hanson

Approval of the Agenda The Commission approved the agenda as submitted.

Public Communication None

Consent Item(s)

1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Planning Commission May 20, 2026

Motion: Commissioner Hanson moved and Commissioner Steward seconded the motion to approve May 20, 2026, regular PC meeting minutes as submitted.
The motion passed as follows:

AYES:	Hanson, Murphy, Steward
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Chesley, Rice Schmidt

Disclaimer of Site Visits and Ex-parte Contacts

All Commissioners present at the meeting had no site visit site or any ex-parte contacts for Item 2.

Public Hearing Item(s)

2. Zone Change (ZC 25-001) | Re Noticing for previously considered request for a zone change from Business Professional (BP) to Commercial (C-1) to allow for the sale of alcohol and bring an existing gas station "Ojai Gas" associated convenience store use into conformance regarding zone designation, located at 1124 Maricopa Highway, Assessor's Parcel Number 019-0-180-070. The subject site has a General Plan Designation of General Commercial (GC), and the Zoning Classification of the site is Business Professional (BP). Property Owner: Ojai Gas Inc. Applicant: Ojai Gas Inc. Raad Abasi. Representative: Evelyn Abasi, Esq.

Chair Murphy opened the item and turned the time over to staff
Staff –Principal Planner Macaluso presented the staff report.

Questions for staff
The Commission had not questions.

Chair Murphy invited the owner and owner's representative to the podium.
Owner, Mr. Raad Abasi and Owner's Representative, Alan Nelsen were available for questions.

Chair Murphy opened for public comments. There were none. Chair Murphy closed the public comment period

The Commission deliberated:

Motion: Commissioner Steward moved and Commissioner Hanson seconded the motion to adopt Planning Commission Resolution 26-03 recommending approval to City Council of a Zone Change (ZC 25-001) to allow for the sale of alcohol and bring existing gas station "Ojai Gas" associated convenience store use into conformance regarding zone designation, based on the findings and conditions as the proposal is consistent with the Ojai Municipal Code.
The motion passed as follows:
AYES: Hanson, Murphy, Steward
NOES: None
ABSENT: Chesley, Rice Schmidt

Informational Item(s)
3. Future Agenda Items
The Commission received a report from Planner Macaluso who said there is an item ready for review at the June 17, 2026, PC meeting.

Director's Report – Principal Planner had no report.

Commission Member Report - None

Adjournment
There being no further business brought before the Commission, Chair Murphy adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Sheri Herbruck
Shari Herbruck, Planning Commission Secretary

Reviewed by: for L Seibert CDD Dir.
Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director

Approved by
the Planning Commission: Judy Murphy
Judy Murphy, Planning Commission Chair

MINUTES
OJAI PLANNING COMMISSION
June 17, 2026

Call to Order

Chair Murphy called the *regular* meeting of the Ojai Planning Commission to order on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. (In-person and via teleconference).

Roll Call

On a call of the roll, the following Planning Commissioners were present in person: Chair Murphy, and Commissioners Hanson, Rice Schmidt and Steward.
Absent: Vice Chair Chesley.
City staff present: Maura Macaluso, Principal Planner, Darren Ziegler, Senior Counsel, Shari Herbruck, Principal Planning and Building Technician.

Pledge of Allegiance Commissioner Rice Schmidt

Approval of the Agenda The Commission approved the agenda as submitted.

Public Communication Andrew Whitman

Consent Item(s)

1. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Planning Commission June 3, 2026

Motion: Commissioner Hanson moved and Commissioner Steward seconded the motion to approve June 3, 2026, regular PC meeting minutes as submitted.
The motion passed as follows:
AYES: Hanson, Murphy, Steward
ABSTAIN: Rice Schmidt,
ABSENT: Chesley

Disclaimer of Site Visits and Ex-parte Contacts

Chair Murphy, Commissioners Rice Schmidt and Hanson visited the site and had no ex-parte contacts for Item 2. Commissioner Steward visited the site and had a conversation with the property owner.

Commissioner Steward recused himself from this item as he has a business in the area.

Discussion Item(s)

2. Concept Review (CR 26-003) | to provide comments regarding a request to amend the General Plan Designation from Commercial Manufacturing (CM) to General Commercial (GC) to be consistent with the existing General Commercial (C-1) zone designation, merge three existing legal vacant lots into one parcel through a Tentative Parcel Map, and consider a Design Review Permit, for the construction of a new hotel development "Wildflower" including 6 two-story and 2 one-story hotel units with parking area, private patios, and shared open space located at 923 E. Ojai Avenue, Assessor's Parcel Number 023-0-160-095. The site is located in Bryant Industrial Area Plan area, Thoroughfare Corridor Overlay (T-C-O) District, and East Ojai Avenue Design Guidelines area. Property Owner/Applicant: Nathaniel Mitchell, Flow Street Holdings, Inc.

   Chair Murphy opened the item and turned the time over to staff
   Staff –Principal Planner Macaluso reviewed the project described in the staff report and presented a PowerPoint.

   Chair Murphy turned the time over to the property owner/applicant Nathaniel Mitchell

   Chair Murphy opened the discussion item for public comments.
   :
   In person Speakers - Anita Cramm, Tara Jeffery, Vickie Carlton-Byrne, Bill Miley, Heidi Whitman, Karol Avalon, Doug LaBarre.
   Virtual Speakers – Chelsey Suttula, Larry Steingold.

   Chair Murphy closed the public comment period.

   The Commission asked questions about the proposal. Mr. Mitchell and staff responded.

   The Commission deliberated and provided comments to the property owner/applicant.

   Chair Murphy closed the item.

Commissioner Steward returned to the dais.

Informational Item(s)

3. Future Agenda Items
   The Commission received a report from Planner Macaluso and asked questions.

Director's Report - None

Commission Member Report - None

City Council Liaison – Mayor Gilman addressed the Commission.

Adjournment

There being no further business brought before the Commission, Chair Murphy adjourned the meeting 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: _____
Shari Herbruck, Planning Commission Secretary

Reviewed by: _____
Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director

Approved by
the Planning Commission: _____
Judy Murphy, Planning Commission Chair

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**
Brenda Cho, Finance Director

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **City of Ojai Warrants for June 08, 2026 – June 21, 2026**

RECOMMENDATION
Receive and file.

DISCUSSION
Disbursement Warrant Check Numbers: 80793-80860
Payroll Warrant Check Numbers: 38400-38401
Number of Direct Deposits: 58

City of Ojai Disbursement Warrants for General Fund and Special Revenue Funds		$ 327,437.29
Payroll – June 11 & June 15, 2026 *Includes One Final Payout		117,983.33
	Total	$ 445,420.62

The purchase of a single-family residential property located at 503 S Ventura Street was approved at the March 10, 2026 City Council Meeting. Per the Agreement for Purchase and Sale of Real Property and Joint Escrow Instructions, a deposit of $25,000 was wired to Fidelity National Title Insurance Company on April 14, 2026. The remaining balance due of $817,722.06 was wired to Fidelity National Title Insurance Company on May 11, 2026. The transactions are included in this Administrative Report as these were unintentionally omitted from prior warrant reports.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT
Goal No. 8 - Financial Stability

OPTIONS
1. Take no action.
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT
There is no fiscal impact associated with this action. The list of warrants is presented for

informational purposes only and reflects payments previously authorized and budgeted.

Prepared by: Scott Avila, Senior Accounting Specialist

ATTACHMENT(S)

A. Check Register
B. Disbursement by Category

Check Register

Check Summary By Check Number

Check No	Vendor Name	Check Date	Check Amount
80793	**Aqua-Flo Supply** Supplies for Citywide Maintenance	06/11/2026	1,689.05
80794	**AT&T** May 2026 Telephone	06/11/2026	32.19
80795	**CA Dept of Justice** April 2026 Fingerprinting Fees	06/11/2026	113.00
80796	**CoStar Realty Information Inc** June 2026 CDD Software Program	06/11/2026	1,032.00
80797	**Delta Liquid Energy** May 2026 Trolley Fuel	06/11/2026	1,663.67
80798	**EideBailly LLP** May 2026 Accounting Services	06/11/2026	169.50
80799	**Emmanuel A Mendez** June 2026 City Transit Wash	06/11/2026	2,250.00
80800	**Fillmore Area Transit Corporation** April 2026 Trolley Driver Services	06/11/2026	1,352.00
80801	**Julie Gerard** Building Permit Reimbursement	06/11/2026	450.00
80802	**Greg Rents** May 2026 PW Equipment Rental	06/11/2026	451.41
80803	**Jordan Kear** May 2026 Ventura Watershed Litigation Support	06/11/2026	14,120.00
80804	**Meiners Oaks Hardware** Supplies for Citywide Maintenance	06/11/2026	2,380.98
80805	**Ojai Auto Supply** May 2026 Supplies for Trolley Maintenance	06/11/2026	906.37
80806	**Ojai Lumber Company Inc** Supplies for Citywide Maintenance	06/11/2026	2,988.40

Check Register

Check Summary By Check Number

Check No	Vendor Name	Check Date	Check Amount
80807	**Ojai Valley Sanitary District** June 2026 Sewer Services	06/11/2026	1,635.62
80808	**Prudential Overall Supply** Public Works Cleaning Supplies & Clothing Allowance	06/11/2026	130.39
80809	**Puretec Industrial Water** May 2026 Industrial Water for Trolley	06/11/2026	435.57
80810	**Secural Security Corporation** May 2026 City Unhoused Security	06/11/2026	7,785.44
80811	**So Cal Gas** May 2026 Gas	06/11/2026	223.89
80812	**United Site Services Inc** May 2026 OTT Porta Potty Rental	06/11/2026	1,356.71
80813	**County of Ventura** April 2026 PW Truck Repair	06/11/2026	7,951.28
80814	**Ventura Council of Governments** 2026 - 2027 Annual Member Assessment Dues	06/11/2026	2,305.00
80815	**AllGood Driving School, Inc.** Recreation Class - Online Driver Education	06/18/2026	84.00
80816	**Eilam Byle** June 2026 City Street Sign	06/18/2026	1,020.00
80817	**California State Disbursement Unit** June 2026 Payroll Expense	06/18/2026	82.15
80818	**Capco Analytical Services** April 2026 Storm Water Testing	06/18/2026	115.00
80819	**Casitas Municipal Water District** April 2026 Water	06/18/2026	599.42
80820	**Catalina Industries Inc** Supplies for General & Libbey Bowl Maintenance	06/18/2026	540.06

Check Register

Check Summary By Check Number

Check No	Vendor Name	Check Date	Check Amount
80821	**County of Ventura** May 2026 Monthly Rent for Soule Park Pickleball Courts	06/18/2026	515.00
80822	**County of Ventura Public Works Agency** June 2026 Hazardous Waste Program	06/18/2026	1,676.50
80823	**DATCO** Trolley Pre-Employment Drug Test	06/18/2026	60.00
80824	**David Hauptman CO.; INC** June 2026 Soccer Goal & Net for Sarzotti Park	06/18/2026	2,003.43
80825	**DFM Associates** 2026 California Elections Code Book	06/18/2026	150.85
80826	**Max Dickenson** Recreation Class - Weight Room	06/18/2026	991.50
80827	**DocuProducts** February - May 2026 Copy Machine Color Printing Fees	06/18/2026	3,687.34
80828	**Emmanuel A Mendez** June 2026 City Transit Wash	06/18/2026	1,250.00
80829	**Franchise Tax Board** June 2026 Payroll Expense	06/18/2026	100.00
80830	**Darrell Gooden** Recreation Class - Kung Fu	06/18/2026	520.00
80831	**Green Thumb Int'l** May 2026 Supplies for Street Maintenance	06/18/2026	1,183.89
80832	**Greg Rents** June 2026 PW Equipment Rental	06/18/2026	3,233.65
80833	**E.J. Harrison & Sons** May 2026 Rolloff Dumpster for OTT	06/18/2026	440.60
80834	**Help of Ojai Inc.** January - March 2026 Rental Assistance	06/18/2026	4,900.00

Check Register

Check Summary By Check Number

Check No	Vendor Name	Check Date	Check Amount
80835	**JMG Security Systems, Inc.** July - September 2026 Sarzotti Burglar & Fire Alarm	06/18/2026	420.00
80836	**Kelly Cleaning & Supplies, Inc.** June 2026 Janitorial Services	06/18/2026	8,378.08
80837	**Koolco Mechanical Inc** Final Payment for Recreation Ice Machine	06/18/2026	1,505.01
80838	**Jess D Leedy** Libbey Bowl Band Performance	06/18/2026	1,000.00
80839	**Living Aikido** Recreation Class - Aikido	06/18/2026	172.25
80840	**MV Cheng & Associates Inc.** May 2026 Finance Consulting Services	06/18/2026	5,560.00
80841	**National Graphics, LLC** Business Cards for City Departments & Council	06/18/2026	516.40
80842	**Norma Cervantes** Employee Reimbursement	06/18/2026	185.10
80843	**Ojai Auto Supply** May 2026 Supplies for Trolley Maintenance	06/18/2026	303.39
80844	**Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Inc.** Fire Safe Grant Installment Payment	06/18/2026	28,951.88
80845	**Ojai Valley Green Coalition** September - March 2026 City Hall Campus Master Plan	06/18/2026	36,000.00
80846	**Poway Gymnastics** Gymnastics Equipment for Recreation Dept	06/18/2026	3,844.44
80847	**Prudential Overall Supply** Public Works Cleaning Supplies & Clothing Allowance	06/18/2026	130.39
80848	**SAFECHECKS** June 2026 Finance Accounts Payable Check Stock	06/18/2026	697.69

Check Register

Check Summary By Check Number

Check No	Vendor Name	Check Date	Check Amount
80849	**Sinclair Sanitary Supply, Inc.** Supplies for Citywide Maintenance	06/18/2026	857.88
80850	**So Cal Gas** May 2026 Gas	06/18/2026	81.36
80851	**Solid Waste Solutions Inc.** June 2026 Cal Recycle Program	06/18/2026	597.00
80852	**Southern CA Edison** May 2026 Electricity	06/18/2026	22,836.46
80853	**SSD Systems** June 2026 Libbey Bowl Fire/ Burglar Alarm Services	06/18/2026	236.42
80854	**Stewart Title of California, Inc.** Preliminary Report	06/18/2026	3,570.00
80855	**Timothy Kresge Debra Kresge** Flooring Project at Recreation Dept	06/18/2026	2,972.03
80856	**Total Barricade Service, Inc.** May 2026 Signs for Recreation Open House Event	06/18/2026	25.00
80857	**Trail Rides of Ojai DBA Infinite Horsemanship** Recreation Class - Western Horsemanship Lessons	06/18/2026	665.00
80858	**Uline, Inc.** June 2026 Sarzotti Snack Bar Prep Table Replacement	06/18/2026	569.86
80859	**Ventura Signs & Screen Printing** May 2026 PW City Logo Apparel	06/18/2026	230.05
80860	**Westridge Market Inc** May 2026 Supplies for City Council Meetings	06/18/2026	414.44
ACH	**Ameriflex: Claims ACH** June 2026 Payroll Expense	06/08/2026	255.49
ACH	**Mission Square 457 ACH** June 2026 Payroll Expense	06/11/2026	10,843.81

Check Register

Check Summary By Check Number

Check No	Vendor Name		Check Date	Check Amount
ACH	**IRS ACH**		06/12/2026	43,268.15
	June 2026 Payroll Expense			
ACH	**Puget Sound System, Inc**		06/12/2026	6,633.64
	IT Computer			
ACH	**EDD ACH**		06/12/2026	6,950.69
	June 2026 Payroll Expense			
ACH	**Willdan Engineering**		06/12/2026	6,681.00
	April 2026 Plan Checking Services			
	Project 1011.001 304 Montgomery St	938.00		
	Project 1018.001 923 E Ojai Ave	681.00		
	Project 1019.001 611 S Montgomery St	1,518.00		
	Project 1021.001 107 N Ventura	57.00		
	Project 1024.001 509 Grand Ave	1,727.50		
	Project 1025.001 402 Bryant St	1,050.00		
	Project 1026.001 209 & 215 S Montgomery	709.50		
ACH	**Amazon.com/Sales, Inc**		06/12/2026	2,295.38
	June 2026 Miscellaneous Supplies			
ACH	**Executive Wood Products, Inc**		06/12/2026	6,047.10
	Council Chamber Wood Podium & Microphone			
ACH	**Ameriflex: Admin Fee ACH**		06/12/2026	120.00
	June 2026 Payroll Expense			
ACH	**Christopher Reno**		06/12/2026	5,300.00
	June 2026 Trolley Repairs			
ACH	**CalPERS Retirement ACH**		06/15/2026	26,797.76
	June 2026 Payroll Expense			
ACH	**Ameriflex: Claims ACH**		06/15/2026	2,364.91
	June 2026 Payroll Expense			
ACH	**U.S Bank National Association**		06/18/2026	8,444.62
	May 2026 Miscellaneous Supplies			

Check Register

Check Summary By Check Number

Check No	Vendor Name		Check Date	Check Amount
ACH	**EDD ACH**		06/18/2026	19.47
	June 2026 Payroll Expense			
ACH	**IRS ACH**		06/18/2026	319.28
	June 2026 Payroll Expense			
ACH	**Christopher Reno**		06/18/2026	5,800.00
	June 2026 Trolley Repairs			
				327,437.29
ACH	**Payroll**			
	Pay Period 5/26/2026-6/14/2026		6/11/2026 & 6/15/2026	117,983.33
		Wire & Paper Check Total		**117,983.33**
			Grand Total	**$ 445,420.62**

City of Ojai

Disbursement by Category

Category	Amount
Lease and Rentals	**5,997.37**
County of Ventura	515.00
E.J. Harrison & Sons	440.60
Greg Rents	3,685.06
United Site Services Inc	1,356.71
Payroll and Benefits	**209,105.04**
Ameriflex: Admin Fee ACH	120.00
Ameriflex: Claims ACH	2,620.40
California State Disbursement Unit	82.15
CalPERS Retirement ACH	26,797.76
EDD ACH	6,970.16
Franchise Tax Board	100.00
IRS ACH	43,587.43
Mission Square 457 ACH	10,843.81
Pay Period 5/26/2026-6/14/2026	117,983.33
Professional/Contract Services	**150,534.13**
CA Dept of Justice	113.00
Capco Analytical Services	115.00
Christopher Reno	11,100.00
County of Ventura	7,951.28
County of Ventura Public Works Agency	1,676.50
DATCO	60.00
EideBailly LLP	169.50
Eilam Byle	1,020.00
Emmanuel A Mendez	3,500.00
Fillmore Area Transit Corporation	1,352.00
Help of Ojai Inc.	4,900.00
Jess D Leedy	1,000.00
JMG Security Systems, Inc.	420.00
Jordan Kear	14,120.00
Kelly Cleaning & Supplies, Inc.	8,378.08
MV Cheng & Associates Inc.	5,560.00
Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Inc.	28,951.88
Ojai Valley Green Coalition	36,000.00
Secural Security Corporation	7,785.44
Solid Waste Solutions Inc.	597.00
SSD Systems	236.42
Stewart Title of California, Inc.	3,570.00
Timothy Kresge Debra Kresge	2,972.03
Ventura Council of Governments	2,305.00
Willdan Engineering	6,681.00
Recreation Classes	**2,432.75**
AllGood Driving School, Inc.	84.00
Darrell Gooden	520.00
Living Aikido	172.25
Max Dickenson	991.50
Trail Rides of Ojai DBA Infinite Horsemansh	665.00
Reimbursement and Refunds	**635.10**
Julie Gerard	450.00
Norma Cervantes	185.10
Subscription and Software	**1,032.00**
CoStar Realty Information Inc	1,032.00

City of Ojai

Disbursement by Category

Supplies	**50,275.29**
Amazon.com/Sales, Inc	2,295.38
Aqua-Flo Supply	1,689.05
Catalina Industries Inc	540.06
David Hauptman CO.; INC	2,003.43
Delta Liquid Energy	1,663.67
DFM Associates	150.85
DocuProducts	3,687.34
Executive Wood Products, Inc	6,047.10
Green Thumb Int'l	1,183.89
Koolco Mechanical Inc	1,505.01
Meiners Oaks Hardware	2,380.98
National Graphics, LLC	516.40
Ojai Auto Supply	1,209.76
Ojai Lumber Company Inc	2,988.40
Poway Gymnastics	3,844.44
Prudential Overall Supply	260.78
Puget Sound System, Inc	6,633.64
Puretec Industrial Water	435.57
SAFECHECKS	697.69
Sinclair Sanitary Supply, Inc.	857.88
Total Barricade Service, Inc.	25.00
U.S Bank National Association	8,444.62
Uline, Inc.	569.86
Ventura Signs & Screen Printing	230.05
Westridge Market Inc	414.44
Utilities	**25,408.94**
AT&T	32.19
Casitas Municipal Water District	599.42
Ojai Valley Sanitary District	1,635.62
So Cal Gas	305.25
Southern CA Edison	22,836.46
Grand Total	**445,420.62**

Warrant Register for the Meeting Date July 14, 2026

Per Section 37208 of the Government Code, I hereby certify that the referenced demands conform to the approved budget except as noted and have been paid. These demands are hereby submitted to the City Council for receipt and file.

Brenda Cho, Finance Director

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager and**
Bridget Mara, Admin Analyst I

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Revision of Ojai Trolley Advertising Program Rates, Contract Terms, and Inclusion in the Master Fee Schedule**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Review and approve revisions to the Ojai Trolley advertising program, including updated advertising rates and contract structure.

2. Approve limiting advertisers to one ad space per trolley.

3. Approve establishing a one-year contract term for all ad placements, with an exception for rear placements limited to three consecutive terms per advertiser.

4. Approve a unified rate for driver-side and pedestrian-side panels and a higher rate for the rear (back) panel due to increased visibility.

5. Direct staff to add all trolley advertising rates to the City's Master Fee Schedule.

DISCUSSION

With the introduction of two new (smaller) trolleys, staff would like Council to review the current rates and terms of Trolley advertising and move to update both the rates and terms while also updating the rates into the Master Fee schedule. The Ojai Trolley advertising program has historically offered annual advertising contracts in which participating businesses receive their advertisement on every trolley in the fleet (3 Trolleys), providing maximum visibility but limiting availability for other businesses seeking access.

Additionally, all payments under the current system are due up front and in advance. The 12-month contract term began and ended in the same month, making it so that staff were required to review contracts every month for renewal.

The existing program includes rate categories for side panels and two rear panel sizes—Back-Small and one rear panel Back-Large. However, the current system does not limit how many premium locations a single advertiser may occupy or for how long they may

keep priority locations.

To improve fairness, create more rotation opportunities, and provide transparency to the public, staff recommends several key updates:

1. Limitation to One Ad Space per Trolley
Current materials indicate that each advertiser receives placement on every trolley, eliminating flexibility for new advertisers. There is potential for advertisers to place ads on all five Trolleys in rotation.

Rear placement would be limited to one space only and not allow for advertisement on all trolleys. This will open these coveted spaces to more advertisers.

The proposed update provides that each advertiser may hold one ad space per trolley only, opening inventory for broader business participation.

2. Updated Contract Terms
The current contract is already structured as a 12-month annual agreement from start date. Staff recommends formalizing:

- A standard one-year contract by calendar year with prorated rates after January 31st, and
- A limit of two consecutive annual terms for rear (back) placements, which are the most sought-after spaces. This will ensure that high-demand spots rotate among interested businesses.

3. Updated Advertising Rates
Under the existing program, side panels share a rate structure, while back panels are priced higher due to their visibility.

Staff recommends continuing this pricing logic but updating the amounts for current market conditions:

- All rates will go up by 10% from previous rates
- Rear panel set at a higher rate due to premium visibility
- 15% discount for verified Chamber members and Non-Profit Organizations

4. Inclusion in the Master Fee Schedule
Trolley advertising rates have not historically been listed in the City's Master Fee Schedule. Adding these fees will:

- Improve transparency
- Provide a single public document where all City fees are located
- Support consistent application and billing practices

These updates align with the City's goals of transparency, fairness, and efficient program administration.

COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT
Goal No. 6 - Diversifying Ecomony/Tourism Management

OPTIONS
1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT
The proposed revisions are expected to increase program clarity and may increase advertising revenue by improving inventory rotation and aligning rates with demand. Precise revenue impacts depend on updated fee amounts adopted by Council and subsequent advertiser participation.

Prepared by: Bridget Mara, Admin Analyst I

ATTACHMENT(S)

- A - Advertising Brochure and Contract (2024)
- B – Advertising Rates and Term Comparison Sheet



Trolley Advertising 2024

ABOUT THE OJAI VALLEY TROLLEY

Established in 1989, the Ojai Trolley Service is owned and operated by the City of Ojai with the support from the County of Ventura. Having provided over 100,000 rides each year, the trolley offers a unique take on transportation with its daily, fixed routes throughout the City of Ojai and neighboring communities, Meiners Oaks and Mira Monte. These beloved classic red-green Victorian style trolleys are a staple to the community of Ojai Valley and are a part of what makes Ojai so special.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

After costs, 100% of the funds raised from the trolley advertising are used to support the operations of the Ojai Trolley Service. The revenue collected from advertising allows the City of Ojai to leverage additional State and Federal grants to keep the trolley service rolling.

WHY ADVERTISE?

Our Trolleys are hard to miss! With operating 7 days a week from morning until night, and two trolleys on route Monday through Friday, your ad is guaranteed to receive a high volume of exposure. To ensure this, we place your ad on every trolley in the fleet, so regardless of which trolleys are running that day your ad will be visible to all residents and visitors alike in the Ojai Valley.

Plus, the Ojai Trolley is an iconic feature in our city leaving it to be a part of many local community events, community service, and educational functions which can help further the exposure your ad receives!

WHO GETS TO ADVERTISE?

Although all businesses are welcome to apply, the Ojai Trolley Service encourages local businesses to take advantage of this unique promotional opportunity. We want our local businesses to receive the recognition they deserve from potential customers.

PLEASE NOTE

Spots available will change. We highly encourage that you inquire directly for availability questions. All spots are on a first-come, first serve basis.

Our service is an integral part of our community providing access to schools, jobs, healthcare, and anything else that can be found in our little valley.

Advertise with us, support our service, and support your community.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW LONG WILL MY AD RUN?

Ad contracts are available for annual 12 month contracts.

WHEN WILL MY SIGN BE UP ON THE TROLLEY?

Your signs will be up approximately 3 days after they are received.

HOW MUCH DOES THE ADVERTISING COST?

Below you will find the costs for advertising. All payments are due up front and in advance for the sign space. When making a payment be sure that all checks are payable to the City of Ojai – Trolley.

1 Year	Chamber Members	Standard
Back – Small	$1,800	$2,125
Side	$2,800	$3,300
Back – Large	$3,800	$4,475

MAY I KEEP MY SIGNS AFTER MY CONTRACT EXPIRES?

Yes. You own the signs and, when your contract is finished, you may keep your signs. Be sure to give us a call, and we will have your signs ready for pickup. However, please be aware that we are not responsible for cleaning off the dust and dirt after having removed them from the trolley.

WHAT ARE THE ACCEPTED ARTWORK SIZES FOR SUBMISSION?

SIDES: full size 16.25”H x 37.25”W includes bleed – (actual visible LIVE size 15.5”H x 36.5”W)
BACK CENTER: full size 16.25”H x 38.25”W – (actual visible LIVE size 15.5”H x 37.5”W)
BACK SIDES: full size 22”H x 22”W – (actual visible LIVE size 20.75”H x 20.75”W)

WHERE CAN I GET MY SIGNS DONE?

You can have them done anywhere! If you don’t know where to start, we recommend using FASTSIGNS Ventura. We have used them in the past and they are familiar with our size requirements, dimensions, and restrictions. Below is their contact information and website.

FASTSIGNS

Phone Number: (805) 600-5003
Website: www.fastsigns.com/ventura-ca/

Questions? Email: transit@ojai.ca.gov

APPLICATION & CONTRACT 2024 DATE: _____

Company Name:_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ____

Contact Person: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ___

Address: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ ___

City: _____ _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ _____ Email: ____ _____ _____ ____

All payments are due up front, in full, and in advance for the selected term

You may change signs every 30 days. 90 days, or 6 months for the price of the sign cost itself

Looking for a discount? We take 5% off for 2 year contracts!

1

1 Year	Chamber Members	Standard
Back – Small	$1,800	$2,125
Side	$2,800	$3,300
Back – Large	$3,800	$4,475

AD Placement $_____

2

TOTAL

(Make checks **payable to the City of Ojai-Trolley**)

$_____

I agree to the terms set forth in this contract (Refer to page 4 for terms)

Only completed signed applications, pages 3 and 4, with payment will be accepted

Signature _____ Date _____

Please remove this page and mail (or scan and email), and submit check as **payable to City of Ojai – Trolley** and mail to:
Ojai Trolley Service
408 S. Signal Street, Ojai, Ca 93023

CITY OF OJAI TROLLEY SERVICE ADVERTISING POLICY

The City o
accept limited advertising on and in its vehicles as it deems appropriate in accordance with the following guidelines:

I. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose and intent of this policy is to create definite, uniform standards for the display of advertising and announcements (collectively referred to herein as "advertising") on Ojai Trolley Service vehicles and all other forums owned, controlled or operated by the City of Ojai related to operation of the Ojai Trolley Service.

It is the City's purpose and intent that any and all forums for advertising under this policy are not public forums for political discourse or expressive activity. These areas are not intended to provide a forum for all types of advertisements but only the limited advertisements accepted under this policy. All advertising shall be subject to this uniform, viewpoint-neutral policy. The City's intent and purpose is to take into account interests which are of importance to the operation of the Ojai Trolley Service. These interests include the following:

A. Maintain a professional advertising environment that maximizes advertising revenues and minimizes interference with or disruption of the City's transit system.

B. Maintain an image of neutrality on political, religious or other issues that are not the subject of commercial advertising and are the subject of public debate and concern.

C. Continue to build and retain transit ridership.

II. ADVERTISING STANDARDS AND RESTRICTIONS PERMITTED ADVERTISING

The City's intent is to permit commercial advertising for products and services. All commercial and promotional advertising must meet or exceed high quality standards of art and design as exemplified in the industry and as determined by the City of Ojai or its authorized Advertising Contractor as defined herein.

1. Commercial and Promotional Advertising. Commercial and promotional advertising solely promotes or solicits the sale, rental, distribution or availability of goods, services, food, entertainment, events, programs, transactions, donations, products or property for commercial purposes or more generally promotes an entity that engages in such activity. Commercial and promotional advertising does not include advertising that both promotes a business or offers to sell products, goods or services, and also conveys a political or religious message, or issue advocacy, and/or expresses or advocates opinions or positions related to any of the foregoing.

2. Disclaimer. The City of Ojai reserves the right, in all circumstances, to require an advertisement to include a disclaimer indicating that it is not sponsored by and does not necessarily reflect the views of the City of Ojai.

must readily and unambiguously include the identity of the sponsor. Website addresses or phone numbers without more information are deemed ambiguous.

4. Government Use. The City reserves the right to utilize any areas it has deemed appropriate for advertising pursuant to this policy for its own promotional purposes, including, but not limited to, the promotion or announcement of City sponsored events, or to permit use by other governmental agencies for the promotion or announcement of local governmental services.

B. Viewpoint Neutral Limitations on Advertising Content

The following viewpoint neutral content based on limitations permitted for placement or display on Ojai Trolley Service vehicles owned or operated by the City of Ojai are established. No advertising is permitted on or in Ojai Trolley Service vehicles and any and all other forums owned, controlled or operated by the City of Ojai, if it or the information contained therein falls into one or more of the following categories:

1. False, Misleading, or Deceptive Commercial Speech. This advertisement proposes a commercial transaction, and the advertisement, any material contained in it, is false, misleading, or deceptive.

2. Unlawful Goods or Services. This advertisement, or any material contained in it, promotes or encourages, or appears to promote or encourage, the use or possession of unlawful or illegal goods or services under local, state, or federal laws.

3. Unlawful Conduct. The advertisement, or any material contained in it, promotes or encourages, or appears to promote or encourage, unlawful or illegal behavior or activities under local, state or federal laws.

4. Unauthorized Endorsement. The advertisement, or any material contained in it, implies or declares an endorsement by the City of Ojai or Ojai Transit of any service, product or point of view, without prior written authorization of the City of Ojai through its City Manager.

5. Obscenity or Nudity. The advertising contains any nudity, obscenity, sexual content, sexual excitement, or sadomasochistic abuse as those terms defined by California Penal Code section 311, et. seq., and as such laws may from time to time be amended or supplemented.

6. Community Standards. The advertisement contains material that describes, depicts, or represents sexual activities or aspects of the human anatomy in a way that the average adult, applying contemporary or community standards, would find offensive or inappropriate for viewing by minors.

7. Prurient Interests. The advertising, or any material contained in it, contains harmful matter or any other matter that is prohibited under the provisions of California Penal Code section 313, et. seq., and as such laws may from time to time be amended or supplemented.

the sale or use of tobacco or tobacco related products.

9. Alcohol, Marijuana, and Regulated Substances. Advertising that promotes the sale or use of beer, wine, distilled spirits, alcoholic beverages, marijuana, or any substance licensed and regulated under California law; however, this prohibition shall not prohibit advertising that includes the name of a restaurant that serves alcoholic beverages that is open to minors.

10. Firearms. Advertisement that promotes or solicits the sale, rental, distribution, availability, or use of firearms or firearms-related products.

11. Demeaning or Disparaging. Advertising that includes language, pictures, or other graphic representations that are derogatory or defamatory of any person or group because of race, color, national origin, ethnic background, age, disability, ancestry, marital or parental status, military discharge status, source of income, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

12. Profanity, Riot. The advertisement contains profane language or presents a clear and present danger of causing a riot, disorder, or other imminent threat to public peace, safety and order.

13. Violence. The advertisement contains an image or description of graphic violence or the depiction of weapons or other implements or devices associated in the advertisement with an act or acts of violence or harm on a person or animal.

14. Adult – Oriented Goods or Services. The advertisement promotes or encourages, or appears to promote or encourage, adult book stores, nude dance clubs, and other adult entertainment establishments, adult telephone services, adult Internet sites, and escort services.

15. Political. Advertisement promoting or opposing (i) a political party; (ii) the election of any candidate or group of candidates for federal, state or local government offices; (iii) any legislation, initiative, referendum or ballot measure; or (iv) a political action committee, political campaign or political philosophy.

16. Religious. Advertisement that contains any direct or indirect reference to religion, deity or includes the existence or nonexistence of any deity, religious creed, denomination, belief, tenet, cause or issue relating to religion.

17. Public Issue. Advertising expressing or advocating an opinion, position, or viewpoint on matters of public debate about economic, political, religious or social issues, that causes City owned property to become a public forum.

18. Harmful or Disruptive to Transit System. Any material in the advertisement that is so objectionable under contemporary community standards as to be reasonably foreseeable that it will result in harm to, disruption of or interference with the City's transportation system. The advertising, or any material contained in it, incorporates

or other moveable parts.

19. Traffic Interference. The advertising, or any material contained in it, displays any word, phrase, symbol or character likely to interfere with, mislead, or distract traffic, or conflict with any traffic control device.

III. ADVERTISING PROGRAM AND ADMINISTRATION The City shall incorporate this Policy into its advertising contracts.

Review by Advertising Contractor

The City's Advertising Contractor shall review each advertisement submitted for display on or in Ojai Trolley service vehicles to determine whether the advertisement complies with this policy. If it appears the advertisement may be questionable, the Advertising Contractor shall notify the City Manager, or designee, and obtain approval before the advertisement is installed.

Review by the City Staff

The City Manager or designee shall review the advertisement and supporting information to determine whether or not the advertisement complies with this policy. If the City Manager, or designee, determines the advertisement does not comply with this policy, a written document will be prepared and forwarded to the Advertising Contractor specifying the standard(s) with which the advertisement does not comply.

Notification to Advertiser

The Advertising Contractor will send the advertiser a prompt, written notification indicating advertisement rejection with specific standard(s) the advertisement failed to comply with and a copy of this policy. A copy of the rejection notification will be forwarded to the City Manager or designee for retention.

Appeal to City Manager

Rejection of an advertisement may be appealed to the City Manager, or designee, by written notification to the City Manager. The City Manager will review all pertinent documents and issue a written decision. The City Manager's decision shall be final and is not subject to appeal.

Unilateral Amendment

The City of Ojai reserves the right to unilaterally amend this policy at any time upon providing written notice to any advertiser then under contract with the City.

Moratorium

The City of Ojai, through the City Manager, reserves the right to at any time, subject to any contractual obligations, declare a complete ban or moratorium on all advertising on any real or personal property under the City's control and direct that no advertising of any kind, other than City advertisements or announcements, be accepted for display and posting.

INITIAL HERE

By initialing, I agree to the terms set forth in this contract

Advertising Rates and Term Comparisons

(Original Fees from 2024 Brochure)

The rates below include three ad spaces on all (3) separate Trolleys for one 12-month time frame.

Ad Panel Type	Ad Space Dimensions	Standard Rate (Non-Chamber)	Discount for Chamber Member and Not for Profits Rate	Number of Ad Spaces Available
Side Panel	16.25” H x 37.25” W	$3,300	$2,800	30
Back – Small Panel	22” W x 22” H	$2,125	$1,800	6
Back – Large Panel	16.25” H x 38.25” W	$4,475	$3,800	3

(Proposed Fees to add to Master Fee)

The rates below are for one each ad space per Trolley (5) for a calendar year time frame.

Ad Panel Type	Ad Space Dimensions	Standard Rate (Non-Chamber)	15% Discount for Chamber Member and Not for Profits Rate	Number of Ad Spaces Available
Side Panel	16.25” H x 37.25” W	$1210	$1028.50	48
Back – Small Panel	22” W x 22” H	$779.18	$662.29	10
Back – Large Panel	16.25” H x 38.25” W	$1641	1395.02	6

Side-by-Side Comparison of Trolley Advertising Program Rules

(Current vs. Proposed)

Topic	Current Program Rules (2024 Brochure)	Proposed Updated Rules
Ad Space Allocation	Advertisers receive their ad **on every trolley in the fleet**. 1 (3 ads on 3 Trolleys)	Advertisers may hold **one ad space per trolley** (driver-side, pedestrian-side, or back).

Topic	Current Program Rules (2024 Brochure)	Proposed Updated Rules
Access to Premium Back Spaces	No rotation or limitation specified. Same advertiser may retain back panels indefinitely.	Back panel contracts are limited to **two consecutive annual terms** per advertiser to ensure fairness and rotation.
Contract Length	**12-month** annual contracts that expire 12 months from contract start date.	**12-month** Calendar Year - Contract start date is January 1st with fees to be prorated when purchased after January 31st .
Contract Renewal Rules	No restrictions on renewals for Driver/Pedestrian side ad space	Rear placements have a maximum of **two consecutive annual terms,** after which the space must open to new advertisers.
Rate Structure (Sides)	Driver/Pedestrian sides priced at **$3,300 standard / $2,800 chamber/NP**. (rates are for up to 3 ad spots)	Driver/Pedestrian sides price suggested at **$1210 standard/ $1028.50 chamber/NP.** updated rates will be placed in Master Fee Schedule.
Rate Structure (Back)	Back-Small: **$2,125 standard / $1,800 chamber**. Back-Large: **$4,475 standard / $3,800 chamber**. (rates are for up to 3 ad spots)	Back Small: **$779.18 standard / $662.29 chamber/NP.** Back Large: **$1641 standard / $1395.02 chamber/NP.** Back Large panel continues to be priced higher than side panels due to premium visibility; updated rates will be placed in Master Fee Schedule.
Payment Terms	Payment due up front, in full, in advance of term.	Same requirement; no change other than prorated mid-year contracts
Placement Timing	Signs installed within 3 days of receipt.	Same operational timeline (unchanged).
Master Fee Schedule	Trolley advertising is not included in the Master Fee Schedule.	All trolley ad rates will be added to the Master Fee Schedule for clarity, transparency, and consistency.
Inventory Availability	No restrictions on number of spaces one advertiser may occupy (since ads appear on every trolley).	Availability becomes more equitable due to one-space-per-trolley rule and limits on back placements.

Other City/County bus advertisements rates and terms

Most cities that operate trolley systems similar in scale to the City of Ojai do not offer exterior advertising at all. In cases where cities and counties do sell advertising on buses, the available ad spaces are typically much larger than the Ojai Trolley panels and therefore command significantly higher rates.

As the City updates its own program, staff is proposing a structure that mirrors standard industry practice.

Advertising rates set on a "per space, per vehicle" basis. This ensures our pricing model is consistent with regional transit agencies, reflects the true value of each placement, and supports a fair and sustainable advertising program for local businesses.

Transit Agency	**Product**	**Ad Size (W × L)**	**Summer Months only**	**How many buses will ad be placed**
Avila Beach and Morro Bay (RTA)	Passenger Side	20" x 11'	$1000.00	Per ad per Trolley
Avila Beach and Morro Bay (RTA)	Driver Side	27" x 12'	$1000.00	Per ad per Trolley
Transit Agency	**Product**	**Ad Size (W × L)**	**12 Mo**	**How many buses will ad be placed**
Santa Barbara (MTD)	29' Gillig Queen Ad	18" x 55"	$2196	Per ad Per bus
Santa Barbara (MTD)	29' Gillig Tail Ad	22" x 58"	$3600	Per ad per bus
Transit Agency	**Product**	**Ad Size (W × L)**	**12 Mo**	**How many buses will ad be placed**
Ventura County (GCTD)	Special Queen	30" × 80"	$1788	Per ad per bus
Ventura County (GCTD)	Tail	16" × 72"	$3240	Per ad per bus
Ventura County (GCTD)	Special Tail	11" × 58"	$2184	Per ad per bus
Transit Agency	**Product**	**Ad Size (W × L)**	**12 Months**	**How many buses will ad be placed**
Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST)	Queen	30″ × 88″	$2448	Per ad per bus
Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST)	Tail	21″ × 72″	$2244	Per ad per bus
Transit Agency	**Product**	**Ad Size (W × L)**	**12 Months**	**How many buses will ad be placed**
Bakersfield (GETD)	King	30″ × 144"	$7500	Per ad per bus
Bakersfield (GETD)	Super Tail	36" x 80"	$6300	Per ad per bus

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**
Lindy Palmer, Public Works Director

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **On-Call Trade and Professional Services – Award of Agreements *(Operational Need)***

RECOMMENDATION

1. Authorize the City Manager to execute amendments for one (1) additional two-year term to the current On-Call Professional Services Agreements that have expired on June 30, 2026 extending them to June 30, 2028 and increase the not-to-exceed amount of each On-Call Professional Services Agreement as provided in this report; and,
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute an On-Call Trade Agreement with Ventura Pest Control and authorize future amendments for an additional one (1) one-year term with compensation not-to-exceed $75,000; and
3. Receive and file the task orders issued during Fiscal Year 25/26.

DISCUSSION

The Public Works Department routinely utilizes numerous contractors to perform a variety of services. To improve the efficiency and timeliness of completing necessary repairs and small projects, staff recommends entering into On-Call Trade Agreements and On-Call Professional Services with various contractors and consultants for those services most frequently used by the Public Works Department. When On-Call services are required, City staff will issue a task order to the appropriate contractor or consultant under the On-Call agreement which serves as the authorization to proceed with work and obligates the City to pay the Task Order amount. Until a task order is issued, these contractors and consultants are not guaranteed the opportunity to perform any work or receive any payment of any amounts under these contracts.

Recommendation #1

On October 24, 2023, the City Council authorized the City Manager to execute On-Call Professional Services Agreements for as-needed services. These agreements expired June 30, 2026. The chart below shows the current agreements recommended for the City Council to authorize the City Manager to extend their expiration to add one (1) additional two-year extension to expire June 30, 2028 and to increase the not-to-exceed amount of each agreement as set forth below:

On-Call Consultant	Discipline	FY 26/27 $	Exp.
Architerra Design Group	Architecture	$30,000	6/30/28
Benner & Carpenter, Inc.	Land Surveying	$30,000	6/30/28
Flowers & Associates	Civil Engineering	$100,000	6/30/28
General Technologies & Solutions	Transportation Engineering	$25,000	6/30/28
GPA Consulting	Environmental & Permitting	$40,000	6/30/28
Hamner Jewell Associates	Right-of-Way	$30,000	6/30/28
Jan C. Scow	Arborist	$10,000	6/30/28
Minagar & Associates	Transportation Engineering	$25,000	6/30/28
PAX Environmental	Arborist	$10,000	6/30/28
Phoenix Civil Engineering	Civil Engineering	$200,000	6/30/28
Willdan Engineering	Civil Engineering	$40,000	6/30/28
WM Surveys, Inc.	Land Surveying	$30,000	6/30/28

Recommendation #2

Staff has invited interested contractors and consultants to submit Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) for different trades and disciplines for FY 26/27. Staff reviewed all SOQs received and recommend awarding an on-call trade agreement (Sample Agreement, Attachment A) to one (1) contractor with the trade listed below:

On-Call Contractor	Trade	FY 26/27 $	Exp.
Ventura Pest Control	Pest Control	$75,000	6/30/27

The scope of services and total fee for each specific project or task will be negotiated on an as-needed basis and will be in accordance with the fee schedule established in the quote provided by the contractor. New On-Call Trade Agreements may be extended to up to one (1) one-year term. This contract is separate from and supplements the recently awarded contract with Ventura Pest Control in April 2026 for routine pest control services at City facilities and would only be used for additional services not covered by the City's routine contract.

Recommendation #3

Staff have prepared a summary report of task orders issued to contractors and consultants for Fiscal Year 25/26. The Public Works Department issued seventeen (17) trade-related task orders totaling approximately $124,000, and thirty (30) consultant service orders totaling approximately $150,000. Trades focused mainly on tree maintenance and HVAC repairs for city buildings. Consultant services were primarily for arborist reports, traffic studies, structural assessments for city facilities and infrastructure. The recommendation is for Council to receive and file this report.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

Goal No. 4 - Infrastructure Maintenance and Improvement

OPTIONS

1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact on the award of On-Call Professional Services Agreements or On-Call Trade Agreements, which do not guarantee assignment of any work to the firms. The contractor or consultant will be used on an as-needed basis and costs associated with capital improvement projects will be charged directly to those projects. The fiscal impact only occurs at the time a task order is issued to a particular contractor or consultant.

The costs for on-call professional or trade services will not exceed the adopted budget for each project.

Prepared by: Lindy Palmer, Public Works Director

ATTACHMENT(S)

A. Sample On-Call Trades Agreement
B. Task Order Summary for Fiscal Year 25/26

ON-CALL AGREEMENT FOR TRADE WORK

This Agreement ("Agreement") is effective as of _____("Effective Date"), and is by and among the City of Ojai, a California General Law city and municipal corporation, (City), and _____ a _____corporation/partnership/limited liability company ("Contractor"), collectively referred to as the "Parties." City and Contractor agree as follows:

1. Scope and Performance of Work:

1.1 Contractor represents and warrants that it has the qualifications, experience, equipment and facilities necessary to properly perform the type work described in the attached Exhibit A.

1.2 The Contractor has been selected by City following a review of the qualifications submitted by the Contractor. The Contractor has been added to a list of contractors who are available to perform this type of work for City.

1.3 Contractor understands and agrees that there is no guarantee that City will assign any work to the Contractor.

1.4 Contractor agrees to perform the work in a thorough, competent and professional manner consistent with generally accepted standards and practices utilized by persons engaged in providing work similar to those required of Contractor under this Agreement.

1.5 Contractor will furnish all of the labor, technical, administrative, professional and other personnel, all supplies and materials, equipment, and all other means whatsoever, except as otherwise expressly specified in this Agreement, necessary or proper to perform and complete the Work required of Contractor under this Agreement.

2. Procedure for Assignment of Work

2.1 Any work assigned to the Contractor during the term of this Contract will be by a task order which identifies the work ("Work") and timing for completion of the work. If the work proposed is a public works project and is the price is estimated to be over $25,000, then the task order will require performance and payment bonds pursuant to Section 6.2 of this Agreement.

2.2 City may ask the Contractor to submit a price quote for Work proposed by City and a time estimate for completion of the proposed Work.

2.3 City may request the Contractor to perform the proposed Work without a price quote in which event compensation for the Work will be paid on a time and material basis and in accordance with Section 4 of this Agreement.

2.4 Contractor must obtain City's prior written approval before utilizing any subcontractors to perform any Work under this Agreement. This written approval must include the identity of the subcontractor and the terms of compensation.

2.5 Contractor will not be compensated for any Work rendered in connection with this Agreement that is in addition to or outside of the work set forth in the task order unless such additional Work is authorized in advance and in writing by City.

2.6 City may request changes to the Work identified in the task order, consisting of additions, deletions, or other revisions, and the compensation to be paid Contractor will be adjusted accordingly. All such changes must be authorized in writing, and executed by

Contractor and City. The cost or credit to City resulting from changes in the Work will be determined by the written agreement between the Parties.

3. Term and Termination of Agreement:

3.1 The term ("Term") of this Agreement will be from the Effective Date to _____, unless terminated sooner by City as provided in this section or otherwise extended by the mutual written agreement of the Parties. This Agreement may be extended for up to three (3) one-year terms by the City Manager.

3.2 City may terminate this Agreement, with or without cause, at any time by written notice of termination to Contractor. In the event such notice is given, Contractor must cease immediately all Work in progress.

4. Payment for Work:

4.1 Total City payments to Contractor for all Work performed during the Term may not exceed the sum of $_____.

4.2 The task order shall specify the not-to-exceed amount Contractor will be compensated for the Work.

4.3 Contractor must furnish City with an invoice for all Work performed not more than once per month for the prior month's Work. Except as to any charges for Work performed or expenses incurred by Contractor that are disputed by City, City will cause Contractor to be paid within 30 days of receipt of Contractor's invoice.

4.4 Any payment to Contractor for Work performed under this Agreement will not be deemed to waive any defects in the Work performed by Contractor.

5. Labor Code and Prevailing Wage Requirements:

5.1 Contractor agrees to comply with the requirements of California Labor Code sections 1810 through 1815. Eight hours of labor constitutes a legal day's work per Labor Code section 1810. Contractor will forfeit the statutory penalty to City for each worker employed in the execution of this Agreement by Contractor or any subcontractor for each calendar day during which such worker is required or permitted to work more than eight hours in any one calendar day and 40 hours in any one calendar week in violation of the provisions of Labor Code sections 1810 through 1815.

5.2 Copies of the determination of the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations of the prevailing rate of per diem wages for each craft, classification or type of worker needed to execute this Agreement are available for download from the State website:

http://www.dir.ca.gov/OPRL/dprewagedetermination.htm.

5.3 Contractor must post at the work site, or if there is no regular work site then at its principal office, for the duration of the Contract, a copy of the determination by the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations of the specified prevailing rate of per diem wages. (Labor Code § 1773.2.) When applicable, copies of the prevailing rate of per diem wages will be on file at City's Department of Public Works and available to Contractor and any other interested party upon request.

5.4 Contractor, and any subcontractor engaged by Contractor, may pay not less than the specified prevailing rate of per diem wages to all workers employed in the execution of the contract. (Labor Code § 1774.) Contractor is responsible for compliance with Labor Code section 1776 relative to the retention and inspection of payroll records.

5.5 Contractor must comply with all provisions of Labor Code section 1775. Under Section 1775, Contractor will forfeit the statutory penalty to City for each worker employed in the execution of the Agreement by Contractor or any subcontractor for each calendar day, or portion thereof, in which the worker is paid less than the prevailing rates. Contractor may also be liable to pay the difference between the prevailing wage rates and the amount paid to each worker for each calendar day, or portion thereof, for which each worker was paid less than the prevailing wage rate.

5.6 Nothing in this Agreement prevents Contractor or any subcontractor from employing properly registered apprentices in the execution of the Contract. Contractor is responsible for compliance with Labor Code section 1777.5 for all apprenticeable occupations. This statute requires that contractors and subcontractors must submit contract award information to the applicable joint apprenticeship committee, must employ apprentices in apprenticeable occupations in a ratio of not less than one hour of apprentice's work for every five hours of labor performed by a journeyman (unless an exception is granted under § 1777.5), must contribute to the fund or funds in each craft or trade or a like amount to the California Apprenticeship Council, and that contractors and subcontractors must not discriminate among otherwise qualified employees as apprentices solely on the ground of sex, race, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry or color. Only apprentices defined in Labor Code section 3077, who are in training under apprenticeship standards and who have written apprentice contracts, may be employed on public works in apprenticeable occupations.

5.7 Contractor has reviewed and agrees to comply with any applicable provisions for any public work subject to Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) Monitoring and Enforcement of prevailing wages, including the registration requirements of Labor Code Section 1771.1(a). City hereby notifies Contractor that Contractor is responsible for submitting certified payroll records directly to the State Compliance Monitoring Unit (CMU). For further information concerning compliance monitoring please visit the website location at: http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/cmu/cmu.html.

5.8 Contractor must comply with Labor Code section 1771.1(a), which provides that Contractor may award any contracts and subcontracts for work that qualifies as a "public work" only to subcontractors which are at that time registered with the DIR and qualified to perform public work pursuant to Labor Code section 1725.5. Contractor must obtain proof of such registration from all such subcontractors."

6. Bonds

6.1 Payment Bond. For task orders of more than $25,000 on a public works project as defined by Public Contract Code Section 22002, the Task Order will require the Contractor to post a payment bond pursuant to Civil Code Section 9550.

6.2 Performance and Payment Bonds. For Work that will cost more than $25,000 on a public works project as defined by Public Contract Code Section 22002, City will request in the task order that the Contractor post performance and payment bonds. The cost for the performance and payment bonds must be included as a separate line item in any quote submitted by the Contractor.

7. General Legal Compliance:

7.1 In performing the Work, Contractor must comply with all applicable statutes, laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, OSHA requirements and the Ojai Municipal Code.

7.2 Contractor must, at Contractor's sole expense, obtain all necessary permits and licenses required for the Work, and give all necessary notices and pay all fees and taxes required by law, including, without limitation, any business license tax imposed by City.

Contractor is exempt from any City encroachment permit fee pursuant to Ojai Municipal Code Section 13.04.020.

7.3 Contractor must maintain a valid California Contractor's License throughout the term of this Contract.

8. Indemnification:

Contractor agrees to indemnify, defend, protect and hold harmless City from and against, any and all liabilities, claims, actions, causes of action, proceedings, suits, damages, judgments, liens, levies, costs and expenses of whatever nature, including reasonable attorneys' fees and disbursements (collectively, "Claims"), which City may suffer or incur or to which City may become subject by reason of or arising out the negligent or willfully wrongful acts or omissions of Contractor, its officers, employees, or agents committed in performing any Work under this Agreement. For the purposes of this section, "City" includes City's officers, officials, employees, agents and volunteers. The provisions of this section do not apply to Claims occurring as a result of City's sole negligence or willful acts or omissions. The provisions of this section will survive the expiration or earlier termination of this Agreement.

9. Insurance:

Contractor agrees to have and maintain in full force and effect during the term of this Agreement the insurance coverages listed in Exhibit C ("Insurance"), which is made part of this Agreement.

10. General Provisions:

10.1 In performing the Work under this Agreement, Contractor is an independent contractor and has control over the manner in which the Work is performed provided that it is consistent with this Agreement. Contractor may not at any time or in any manner represent that it or any of its officers, employees, agents, or subcontractors are in any manner officers, employees, agents or subcontractors of City.

10.2 There are no understandings or agreements between Contractor and City other than those set forth in this Agreement.

10.3 This Agreement may not be modified or amended except by written agreement of the Parties.

10.4 Contractor may not assign or transfer this Agreement or any portion of this Agreement or the performance of any of Contractor's duties or obligations under this Agreement without the prior written consent of City.

10.5 This Agreement is binding upon the successors and permitted assigns of the Parties.

10.6 This Agreement will be interpreted, construed, and governed according to the laws of the State of California.

10.7 In the event of litigation between the Parties, venue in state trial courts will be in the County of Ventura and venue in federal court will be in the Central District of California, in Los Angeles.

10.8 This Agreement may be executed and transmitted by email and shall have the same legal force and effect as an executed original.

The Parties have caused this Agreement to be executed by their undersigned authorized agents as follows:

CITY OF OJAI

_____
Ben Harvey, City Manager

ATTEST:

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk

CONTRACTOR, a California corporation (or a partnership, LLC or LLP, or individual)
(If not an individual, two signatures are required)

_____
Name, Title

_____
Name, Title

_____ _____
Ojai Business Tax Certificate Number Expiration Date

EXHIBIT A

SCOPE OF WORK

The following are general descriptions of the scope of work that may be required of the contractor. The scope of work is not exhaustive and could include other work related to or in support of work required. Maintenance work as described in Public Contract Code Section 22002 is not applicable to this contract.

LIST ALL TRADES HERE

EXHIBIT B

COMPENSATION

Contractor agrees that any work performed under the Agreement will be charged according to the terms of the task order which will specify either a fixed price for the work based upon the quote submitted by the Contractor or payment based on time and materials.

EXHIBIT C

INSURANCE

1. **General Requirements**. Contractor must procure and maintain in full force and effect during the term of this Agreement the following types of insurance with coverage limits complying, at a minimum, with the limits set forth below:

Type of Insurance	Limits (combined single)
Commercial General Liability	$1,000,000
Business Automobile Liability	$1,000,000
Workers' Compensation	Statutory Requirements

2. **Commercial General Liability Insurance.** This policy must meet or exceed the requirements of Insurance Services Office (ISO) CGL Form No. CG 00 01. The amount of insurance set forth above will be a combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage for the policy coverage**.** The insurance must be on an "occurrence" not a "claims-made" basis. Defense costs must be paid in addition to limits. There must be no cross-liability exclusion for claims or suits by one insured against another. Limits may be no less than $1,000,000 per occurrence for all covered losses, and no less than $2,000,000 general aggregate.

   Liability policies must be endorsed to name **City, its officials, employees and agents** as "**additional insureds**" under the insurance coverage.

   The policy must state that such insurance will be deemed "primary" such that any other insurance that may be carried by City will be deemed "excess" to that of Contractor. This endorsement must be reflected on ISO Form No. CG 20 01, or equivalent form as determined by City.

   Coverage must be applicable to City for injury to employees of Contractor, subcontractors, agents or others performing any part of the Work required under this Contract. Each policy must be endorsed to provide a separate limit applicable to this Project.

   The Commercial General Liability policy must not contain any endorsements limiting coverage beyond the basic policy coverage for any of the following:

   1. Explosion, collapse or underground hazard (XCU);
   2. Products and completed operation;
   3. Pollution liability; or
   4. Contractual liability.

3. **Business Auto Coverage.** This policy must be on ISO Business Auto Coverage Form CA 00 01 including symbol 1 (Any Auto) and Endorsement CA 0025, or equivalent forms approved in writing by City. Limits must not be less than $1,000,000 per accident, combined single limit, or if Contractor neither leases nor owns vehicles, this requirement may be satisfied by a non-owned auto endorsement to the general liability policy described above. If Contractor or Contractor's employees will use personal autos in any way on this Project, Contractor must provide evidence of personal auto liability coverage for each such person.

4. **Workers Compensation.** Contractor must have a State of California approved policy form providing the statutory benefits required by law with employer's liability limits of no

less than $1,000,000 per accident for all covered losses, or Contractor must provide evidence of an approved self-insurance program.

5. **Other Insurance; Revisions to Insurance.** Contractor may be required to obtain such other insurance coverage as may be required by applicable law or by City. City reserves the right at any time during the term of the Agreement to change the amounts and types of insurance required by giving Contractor 60 days advance written notice of such change. If such change results in substantial additional cost to Contractor, City and Contractor may renegotiate Contractor's compensation.

6. **Acceptable Insurers.** All required insurance policies must be issued by an insurance company currently authorized by the California Insurance Commissioner to transact the business of insurance in the State of California, with an assigned policyholders' Rating of A- (or higher) and Financial Size Category Class VII (or larger) in accordance with the latest edition of Best's Key Rating Guide, unless otherwise approved by the City's Risk Manager.

7, **Excess or Umbrella Liability Insurance (Over Primary).** If an excess or umbrella liability policy is used to meet limit requirements, the insurance must provide coverage at least as broad as specified for the underlying coverages. Any such coverage provided under an excess or umbrella liability policy must include a "drop-down provision" providing primary coverage above a maximum $25,000 self-insured retention for liability not covered by primary but covered by the umbrella. Coverage must be provided on a "pay-on-behalf" basis, with defense costs payable in addition to policy limits. There may be no cross-liability exclusion precluding coverage for claims or suits by one insured against another. Coverage must be applicable to City for injury to employees of Contractor, its subcontractors or others performing work to satisfy Contractor's obligations under this Contract. The scope of coverage provided is subject to approval of City following receipt of proof of insurance as required herein. Limits are subject to review, but in no event may be less than $2,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate.

8. **Certificates of Insurance and Endorsements**. Prior to commencing any Work under this Contract, Contractor must file with the City Certificates of Insurance and Endorsements evidencing the existence of all insurance required by this Contract, along with such other evidence of insurance or copies of policies as may reasonably be required by City. Such Certificates of Insurance and Endorsements must be in a form approved by City's Attorney/Legal Counsel. Contractor must maintain current certificates and endorsements on file with City during the term of this Agreement reflecting the existence of all required insurance. Each of the certificates must expressly provide that no material change in the policy, or termination thereof, will be effective except upon 30 days' prior written notice to City.

9. **Failure to Maintain Required Insurance**. If Contractor, for any reason, fails to have in place at all times during the term of this Agreement all of the required insurance coverage, City may, in addition to any other available remedies, (a) obtain such coverage at Contractor's expense and deduct the cost from the sums due Contractor, (b) make a claim against the Contractor's surety, or (c) terminate the Contract.

10. **Effect of Coverage**. The existence of the required insurance coverage under this Agreement will not be deemed to satisfy or limit Contractor's indemnity obligations under this Contract.

11. **Higher Limits of Insurance**. If Contractor maintains higher limits of insurance than the required amounts shown in Section 1 above, then such amounts will be the minimum required under this Agreement.

VERIFICATION OF CALIFORNIA CONTRACTOR'S LICENSE

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that I have a valid California Contractor's license issued pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 7000 and following, and was so licensed at the time that the bid was awarded:

California Contractor's License:

License Number	Class	Expiration Date

CONTRACTOR (PRINT OR TYPE)

Date

Signature

(Public Contract Code § 6100)

CERTIFICATE REGARDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION

I am aware of the provisions of Section 3700 of the Labor Code which require every employer to be insured against liability for workers' compensation or to undertake self-insurance in accordance with the provisions of that code, and I will comply with such provisions before commencing the performance of the work of this contract.

_____
Name (print or type)

_____ _____
Date Signature

CERTIFICATE REGARDING DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION

I certify, under penalty of perjury, that Contractor is registered with the Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Labor Code section 1725.5.

Contractor's Department of Industrial Relations registration number is _____.

_____
Name & Title (print or type)

_____ _____
Date Signature

(Labor Code section 1725.5)

ATTACHMENT B

Fiscal Year 25/26

Contractor Task Orders

Number	Vendor	Amount	Total/vendor	Description	Date Prepared
2025-TO-6	Falcon Roofing	$ 3,643.00		Police station parking structure	10/3/2025
2025-TO-9	Falcon Roofing	$ 4,625.00	**$ 8,268.00**	Oak Tree House repairs	11/4/2025
2025-TO-10	Green Globe HVAC	$ 1,477.00		Police Department	11/18/2025
2025-TO-11	Green Globe HVAC	$ 4,050.00		Kent Hall	11/19/2025
2026-TO-14	Green Globe HVAC	$ 16,223.00		Ojai Police Station	1/15/2026
2026-TO-19	Green Globe HVAC	$ 20,504.70	**$ 42,254.70**	Multi Purpose Room	4/2/2026
2025-TO-7	Mark Crane's	$ 24,999.57		Street tree planting	10/3/2025
2025-TO-8	Mark Crane's	$ 5,950.00		Sarzotti Park - White Oak retrenchment prune	10/13/2025
2025-TO-12	Mark Crane's	$ 1,800.00		Kent Hall parking lot	12/4/2025
2025-TO-13	Mark Crane's	$ 10,500.00		White Oak Pruned at Pickleball Court	12/15/2025
2026-TO-15	Mark Crane's	$ 8,475.00		Storm event - Rotary park	1/21/2026
2026-TO-16	Mark Crane's	$ 2,000.00		Oak Prune at City hall	1/22/2026
2026-TO-17	Mark Crane's	$ 8,600.00		Sarzotti Park stump	3/24/2026
2026-TO-18	Mark Crane's	$ 4,500.00		Andrew Dr. Oak pruning	3/24/2026
2026-TO-20	Mark Crane's	$ 4,000.00		708 Cuyama Rd	6/25/2026
2026-TO-21	Mark Crane's	$ 675.00		206 Fox St	6/25/2026
2026-TO-22	Mark Crane's	$ 2,000.00	**$ 73,499.57**	414 Drown St	6/25/2026
			$ 124,022.27		

Consultant Task Orders

Number	Vendor	Amount	Total/Vendor	Description	Date Prepared
2025-CTO-13	WM Surveys	$ 3,250.00	**$ 3,250.00**	Cuyama Rd property line boundary	9/25/2025
2025-CTO-7	PAX Environmental	$ 841.50		1206 Ayers Rd Aborist Consultation	7/16/2025
2025-CTO-8	PAX Environmental	$ 565.20		City Hall Pickle Ball Court	7/24/2025
2025-CTO-12	PAX Environmental	$ 489.50		Arborist Monitoring - City Hall Pickleball Court	8/29/2025
2025-CTO-16	PAX Environmental	$ 3,849.25		Sarzotti White Oak	10/14/2025
2026-CTO-27	PAX Environmental	$ 869.00		610 Shady Lane Arborist report	1/16/2026
2026-CTO-36	PAX Environmental	$ 919.50		206 Fox St	5/21/2026
2026-CTO-37	PAX Environmental	$ 567.00		708 Cuyama Rd	5/21/2026
2026-CTO-38	PAX Environmental	$ 946.00		510 Shady Lane	6/18/2026
2026-CTO-39	PAX Environmental	$ 946.00	**$ 9,992.95**	905 Park Rd	6/17/2026
2025-CTO-9	Jan Scow	$ 175.00		522 Pleasant Ave	8/7/2025
2025-CTO-11	Jan Scow	$ 1,000.00		2025 Street Tree Planting Project	8/26/2025
2025-CTO-15	Jan Scow	$ 425.25		Matilija Parking Lot / Plaza Parking Lot	10/9/2025
2025-CTO-18	Jan Scow	$ 127.75		Libbey Park Site evaluation	11/4/2025
2025-CTO-19	Jan Scow	$ 175.00		426 Descanso	11/4/2025
2025-CTO-20	Jan Scow	$ 332.50		City Hall Oak Trees	11/4/2025
2025-CTO-23	Jan Scow	$ 131.25		Cuyama x Del Norte	12/8/2025
2025-CTO-24	Jan Scow	$ 1,034.25		Arcade Parking Lot ST-3031	12/8/2025
2025-CTO-26	Jan Scow	$ 5,000.00		Monitor Tree Impact for 2025 street paving	12/19/2025
2026-CTO-30	Jan Scow	$ 1,200.00		Planting Assistance Quote	1/29/2026
2026-CTO-31	Jan Scow	$ 175.00		1409 Drown Ave	2/5/2026
2026-CTO-33	Jan Scow	$ 350.00	**$ 10,126.00**	420 Andrew Dr	3/3/2026
2025-CTO-10	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 10,000.00		Citywide Engineering and Traffic Survey	8/11/2025
2025-CTO-14	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 4,960.00		Gym Building Structural Review	10/1/2025
2025-CTO-17	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 41,419.50		Citywide Engineering and Traffic Survey	10/31/2025
2025-CTO-21	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 12,388.00		Ramp Modification Project	10/24/2025
2025-CTO-22	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 15,000.00		Cottage Among the Flowers	11/14/2025
2026-CTO-28	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 10,646.00		Gym Building Structural Retrofit Design	1/6/2026
2026-CTO-29	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 15,700.00		Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon Design	1/27/2026
2026-CTO-35	Phoenix Civil Engineering	$ 16,522.00	**$ 126,635.50**	Trapezoidal Channel Preliminary Design Report	2/19/2026
			$ 150,004.45		

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**
Lindy Palmer, Director of Public Works

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Introduce Ordinance No. 973 Suspending Certain Requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code ("Well Construction, Modification, and Demolition Standards"), Subject to Biennial Review by City Council, and Creating a New Section 224 of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code (O*perational Need*)**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Introduce, for first reading by title only with further reading waived, Ordinance No. 973, an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Ojai, Suspending Certain Requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code ("Well Construction, Modification, and Demolition Standards"), Subject to Biennial Review by City Council, and Creating a New Section 224 of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code; and

2. Direct staff to return to the City Council for second reading and adoption of the Ordinance at the August 11, 2026, City Council meeting.

DISCUSSION

Background

In March 1990, the Council adopted Ordinance No. 671, establishing standards for well construction, modification, and demolition. The primary objective of this ordinance is to prevent contamination or pollution of the groundwater underlying the City and ensure that water drawn from wells within municipal boundaries is suitable for public use, thereby protecting the health, safety, and welfare of residents. The ordinance also aligns with the standards established by Ventura County in 1965. Under this ordinance, applicants seeking to construct, repair, modify, demolish, or destroy wells are required to obtain a permit. This process includes a public hearing before the Council, at which time the permit may be approved or denied.

In 1991, the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency (OBGMA) was established. The OBGMA is listed as one of the exclusive local agencies under California Water Code

Section 10723 with statutory authority to manage groundwater within its boundaries. OBGMA is authorized to monitor and track groundwater well use and requires an application procedure when anyone wants to construct a new well.

Since these procedures are redundant for well applicants, staff is asking Council to consider whether to repeal Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7, of the Ojai Municipal Code establishing "Well Construction, Modification, and Demolition Standards" for the City of Ojai.

Recommendation No. 1 and 2

The City currently requires a separate permitting process for well construction, modification, and demolition, in addition to the review and approval required by the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency (OBGMA). While OBGMA is the authority responsible for overseeing groundwater management for the Ojai Basin, including well permits, the City has maintained an additional permitting and public hearing requirement for wells within City limits. Though the City currently has the authority to regulate and permit wells, this duplicative process results in redundancy in regulatory oversight, unnecessary delays for applicants, and potential conflicting regulatory requirements.

To eliminate this duplicative process, Public Works staff recommends that the Council suspend the City's role in permitting activities related to groundwater wells. The proposed ordinance will also include language, allowing the Council to lift the suspension at any time that body chooses and also expressly requires review of the suspension every two years based on information provided by staff. If the propsed ordinance is adopted, the City would defer to the OBGMA for permitting, monitoring, and inspecting all well-related activities. Furthermore, the City staff may provide a report to Council on OBGMA approved well permits periodically. The proposed ordinance also expressly retains the right of the City to take enforcement action in the event an existing permit-holder fails to comply with the terms of a permit issued under the City's well permit standards.

By removing the City's additional permitting requirements, applicants would be subject only to OBGMA oversight, simplifying the process for applicants. Public Works staff would no longer be required to process well permit applications, freeing up resources for other priority work. Since the OBGMA is already tasked with managing groundwater resources, this option ensures that well permitting is managed under a uniform framework without overlapping jurisdictional requirements.

Therefore, staff recommend introducing, for first reading by title only with further reading waived, Ordinance No. 973, An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Ojai, California, Suspending Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code ("Well Construction, Modification, And Demolition Standards"), and; direct staff to return to the City Council for second reading and adoption of the Ordinance at the August 11, 2026, City Council meeting.

CEQA Determination

Staff recommends that Council determine that the proposed amendment to the Ojai Municipal Code is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") for the

following reasons. Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, CEQA review is not required if an activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378 of the CEQA Guidelines. In accordance with Section 15378(b)(5), a "project" for purposes of CEQA does not include organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. This ordinance is administrative in nature, and will not result in any direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. The adoption of this ordinance is therefore exempt from CEQA review pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15060 and 15378, subdivision (b)(5) of the CEQA Guidelines.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

Goal No. 9 - Communication and Relationships

OPTIONS

1. Take no action, which would result in the City maintaining a permit program for construction, demolition, or modification of wells in the City; or
2. Provide direction to return with alternate recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT

Adoption of the proposed ordinance is expected to reduce the City's administrative burden and associated costs of processing well permits, resulting in savings related to permit processing, staff time, and hearings. Though these costs are offset by the permit fees collected by the City, elimination of these requirements will allow staff to handle other, higher priority responsibilities.

Prepared by: Lindy Palmer, Public Works Director

ATTACHMENT(S)

A. Ordinance No. 973 Suspending Certain Requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code ("Well Construction, Modification, and Demolition Standards"), Subject to Biennial Review by City Council, and Creating a New Section 224 of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code

ATTACHMENT A

CITY OF OJAI

ORDINANCE NO. 973

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OJAI, CALIFORNIA, SUSPENDING CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 3 OF TITLE 7 OF THE OJAI MUNICIPAL CODE ("WELL CONSTRUCTION, MODIFICATION, AND DEMOLITION STANDARDS"), SUBJECT TO BIENNIAL REVIEW BY CITY COUNCIL, AND CREATING A NEW SECTION 224 OF ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 3 OF TITLE 7 OF THE OJAI MUNICIPAL CODE.

WHEREAS, the City currently regulates well construction, modification, and demolition activities pursuant to Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code (the "Well Permit Ordinance"); and

WHEREAS, the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency ("OBGMA") was designated by the California legislature as the agency responsible for overseeing groundwater management within the Ojai Basin, including the review and permitting of wells; and

WHEREAS, the City's existing permitting requirements for wells included in the Well Permit Ordinance overlap the groundwater well permitting and review processes administered by OBGMA; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that maintaining a separate City permitting and public hearing process for wells results in duplicative regulatory oversight, unnecessary administrative burdens, and delays for applicants; and

WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that OBGMA possesses the technical expertise and regulatory authority necessary to oversee the permitting, monitoring, and inspection of wells within the Ojai Valley; and

WHEREAS, the City Council also finds that suspension of the Well Permit Ordinance will allow the City to avoid duplicative regulation while preserving its authority to reinstate local permitting requirements if warranted by future circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the suspension of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code will allow the City to redirect administrative resources toward other municipal priorities while continuing to rely on the expertise and oversight of OBGMA and Ventura County for groundwater and well regulation; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that suspending the City's well permitting requirements is in the interest of efficient governance and regulatory consistency; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to periodically evaluate whether the suspension remains in the public interest.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OJAI, CALIFORNIA, DOES ORDAIN, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Recitals. The above set forth recitals and findings are true and correct and incorporated herein by reference, as if set forth in full.

SECTION 2. Suspension of Well Permit Ordinance. Commencing on the effective date of this Ordinance, and except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance, the City's administration and enforcement of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code is hereby suspended. During the suspension period, no new permit shall be required pursuant solely to Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 of the Ojai Municipal Code. Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to alter, limit, waive, or impair any requirement imposed by state law, federal law, the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency, or any other governmental agency having jurisdiction.

SECTION 3. Duration of Suspension. The suspension established by this Ordinance shall remain in effect unless and until such time as this ordinance and the Ojai Municipal Code amendments contemplated herein are rescinded or repealed by subsequent ordinance adopted by the City Council.

SECTION 4. Biennial Review. At least once every two years following the effective date of this Ordinance, City staff shall prepare a report to the City Council regarding:

1. The regulatory activities of the Ojai Basin Groundwater Management Agency and other agencies exercising jurisdiction over wells within the City;

2. Whether duplication of regulatory oversight continues to exist;

3. Whether reinstatement, amendment, or permanent repeal of the Well Permit Ordinance should be considered; and

4. Any public health, safety, environmental, or administrative concerns associated with continuation of the suspension.

Following receipt of the report, the City Council shall consider whether continuation of the suspension remains in the public interest. Failure to conduct a review by any particular date shall not automatically terminate the suspension established by this Ordinance.

SECTION 5. Reservation of Municipal Authority. Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed as relinquishing the City's police powers or authority to regulate wells,

groundwater-related activities, or land uses to the extent authorized by law. The City Council expressly reserves the right to amend, resume application of, replace, or repeal the Well Permit Ordinance at any time. Furthermore, notwithstanding anything in this Ordinance, the City Council reserves the right to take enforcement action regarding any violation of any requirement under a permit issued by the City prior to the effective date of this Ordinance.

SECTION 6. Code Amendment. The Ojai Municipal Code is hereby amended to add a new Section 224 to Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 to read as follows:

§ 7-3.224 Suspension of Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7

> Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article, the permitting and other administrative requirements established in this Article 2 of Chapter 3 of Title 7 ("Well Construction, Modification and Demolition Standards") are suspended until such time as the City Council repeals such suspension by ordinance. Furthermore, notwithstanding the suspension contemplated by this Section 7-3.224, the City retains all of its authority to enforce the requirements and conditions of any permit issued under this Article in its sole and absolute discretion.

SECTION 7. Environmental Determination. The City Council determines that based on the entire administrative record, the foregoing amendment to the Ojai Municipal Code is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") for the following reasons. Pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, CEQA review is not required if an activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378 of the CEQA Guidelines. In accordance with Section 15378(b)(5), a "project" for purposes of CEQA does not include organizational or administrative activities of governments that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. This ordinance is administrative in nature, and will not result in any direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. The adoption of this ordinance is therefore exempt from CEQA review pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15060 and 15378, subdivision (b)(5) of the CEQA Guidelines.

SECTION 8. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the final decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance, and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, phrases or portions might be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 9. Certification. The City Clerk shall cause this Ordinance to be published as required by law and shall cause a copy of this Ordinance and its certification, together with proof of publication, to be entered in the Book of Ordinances of the City.

SECTION 10. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect 30 days after its passage.

ATTACHMENT A

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED this ____ day of ___, 2026.

CITY OF OJAI, CALIFORNIA

_____
Andy Gilman, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Steve Quilici, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Bethany A. Burgess, City Attorney

I, Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk of the City of Ojai, certify that the foregoing Ordinance was introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Ojai held on ___, 2026, and adopted at a regular meeting held on _____, 2026 by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the City of Ojai on this ___ day of _____ 2026.

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Approval of Resolution Adopting the 2026 City of Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan *(City Council Direction)***

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Resolution adopting the 2026 City of Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan ("Master Plan") as presented, thereby establishing a comprehensive vision for the revitalization, stewardship, and long-term management of the City Hall campus.

DISCUSSION

The proposed Master Plan, developed through extensive community engagement and collaboration with the Ojai Valley Green Coalition, outlines a transformative vision for the City Hall campus. The plan advances seven of the City's nine 2025–2026 policy goals and aligns with eight of the Green Coalition's twelve ecological focus areas. It emphasizes ecological restoration, nature-based education, passive recreation, and preservation of historic and cultural resources.

Key features include:

- Restoration of native oak woodlands and riparian corridors
- Revitalization of demonstration gardens and historic estate gardens
- Creation of new educational and gathering spaces, including a workshop building and children's nature center
- Improved accessibility, circulation, and connectivity, including ADA-accessible paths and a pedestrian bridge
- Integration of sustainable landscape practices, stormwater management, and fire-wise design
- Preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures and landscape elements

The Master Plan was shaped by robust community input, including workshops, surveys, site tours, and stakeholder meetings. It provides a flexible framework for phased implementation, allowing adaptation to evolving community needs and funding opportunities. The plan also supports ongoing partnerships with local organizations and encourages community stewardship.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

Goal No. 2 - Wildfire Safety and Risk Mitigation

OPTIONS

1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

Adoption of the Master Plan does not commit the City to immediate expenditures but provides a strategic framework for future improvements. Implementation will occur in phases as funding becomes available, utilizing a mix of City funds, grants, private donations, and partnerships. Preliminary cost analysis is included in the plan, and future projects will be brought to Council for approval with detailed budgets and funding sources. The plan's emphasis on sustainable practices and community involvement is expected to support cost-effective operations and maintenance over time.

Prepared by: Norma Cervantes, Assistant to the City Manager

ATTACHMENT(S)

A. Resolution – Adoption of the City of Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan
B. Exhibit A to Resolution – 2026 Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan

CITY OF OJAI

RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OJAI, ADOPTING THE 2026 CITY OF OJAI CITY HALL CAMPUS LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Ojai recognizes the importance of preserving and enhancing its civic campus as a vital ecological, cultural, and community resource; and

WHEREAS, the 2026 Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan ("Master Plan") attached hereto as Exhibit "A" was developed through extensive community engagement and collaboration with local partners, reflecting the values and aspirations of the Ojai community; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan advances City policy goals, supports ecological restoration, nature-based education, passive recreation, and the preservation of historic resources, and provides a flexible framework for phased implementation; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the Master Plan is in the best interests of the City of Ojai and its residents inasmuch as it will ensure the orderly and efficient improvement of the City Hall campus.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OJAI, CALIFORNIA, DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The recitals set forth above are true and correct and are hereby incorporated by reference to the same extent as if restated herein.

SECTION 2. The City Council hereby adopts the 2026 Ojai City Hall Campus Landscape Master Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein by reference, as the guiding document for the revitalization, stewardship, and long-term management of the City Hall campus.

SECTION 3. City staff are directed to utilize the Master Plan in planning, funding, and implementing future improvements to the campus, and to pursue partnerships and funding opportunities consistent with the Master Plan's vision.

SECTION 4. Future projects and expenditures related to the implementation of the Master Plan shall be brought to Council for approval in accordance with the City's purchasing ordinance.

SECTION 5. The City Clerk shall certify the adoption of this Resolution.

SECTION 6. This Resolution shall take effect upon its adoption.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 2026.

CITY OF OJAI, CALIFORNIA

_____
Andy Gilman, Mayor

Date: _____

ATTEST:

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Bethany A. Burgess, City Attorney

I, Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk of the City of Ojai, certify that Resolution No. 2026-___ was adopted at a regular meeting held June 23, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

_____
Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk

An Ecological Hub in the Heart of Ojai

2026 Ojai City Hall Campus

Landscape Master Plan

In Ojai, we believe anything is possible.
We believe in the future.
We believe in community.

We believe in the healing power of nature.

We believe that we can restore a neglected green space in the heart of our City.
Where people from all walks of life can come to learn, relax, educate, play and create.

We believe we can preserve an important piece of our city's heritage, and continue to restore and protect native plant communities and a natural creek.

We believe we can create a center where nonprofit partners from around our valley can offer world-class environmental programming to all residents.

IMAGINE...

Paths and trails to access nature
Children's nature-based play areas and programs with local educators.
Nature-inspired offerings including talks, workshops, classes, and more.
Revitalized estate and demonstration gardens, creekside habitat, and other open spaces.

Preservation of a vital urban-wildland threshold.

Rehabilitation of a historic landmark building.

CONTENTS

01 INTRODUCTION
05 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
06 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
08 GOALS & OBJECTIVES
10 THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS
12 OUTREACH SUMMARY

02 PLANNING BACKGROUND
19 SITE OVERVIEW
20 PREVIOUS PLANS
22 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

03 EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS
25 SITE HISTORY & ADJACENT USES
30 SITE ANALYSIS

04 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS
36 CONSIDERATIONS
38 CONSTRAINTS
40 OPPORTUNITIES

05 DESIGN BASIS
43 OVERVIEW
44 REGENERATIVE DESIGN
46 PUBLIC USE
47 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

06 THE MASTER PLAN
50 THE MASTER PLAN
54 1993 LIBBEY PARK MASTER PLAN: AREA G
55 HISTORIC GARDENS
60 THE WORKSHOP HUB
61 THE DISCOVERY CORNER
62 RESTORATION AREA
63 PASSIVE USE & CIRCULATION
65 PARK ENTRANCES & PARKING
68 RAIN GARDENS & BIOSWALES
69 SIGNAGE PLAN

07 OPERATIONS
71 MAINTENANCE
73 FIRE PREVENTION
74 PROGRAMMING
75 FUNDING
76 NEXT STEPS

08 PRELIMINARY COST ANALYSIS
78 PRELIMINARY COST ANALYSIS

09 APPENDICES
82 APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE PRESENTATION
95 APPENDIX B: CITY COUNCIL PRESENTATION
101 APPENDIX C: REFERENCES, SOURCE MATERIALS & DOCUMENTS REVIEWED



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Project Team

Project Manager: Studio Landscape, Kathy Nolan
Design Team: Aiko Strasser and Kathy Nolan
Program Strategists/Technical Reports: Betsy Van Leit, Janet Sager Knott, Chris Anacker Ray Powers, Caryn Bosson, Sophie McLean, Mark Silbernagel
Ojai Valley Green Coalition Staff: Marketing, coordination, administration: Lauren Nilsson, Dass Richardson
Ojai Valley Green Coalition: Administration, contract assistance, project sound board: Betsy van Leit, Caryn Bosson, Richard Wegman
It's been an honor and privilege to work with the City of Ojai City Council, staff and commissions, associated non-profits, the community at large, the board and staff of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition and the land that constitutes the City Hall Campus. From the historic buildings, structures and gardens, to the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration area and the return of water to the creek, to the Demonstration Garden tired around the edges but so loved by the community, and the natural oak woodland, Thank you.

Community Leadership

City Manger, Ben Harvey - for seeing the value of the oak woodland and the property as a whole, for your guidance through the process.
City of Ojai staff - for your willingness to meet, support and provide data.
Aiko Strasser - for being more than an equal creative partner in the Master Plan process. I couldn't have done this without you.
Historic Preservation Commission and liaison Brian Aikens - for sharing your enthusiasm, historical data and opening up the Hobson Barn for tours and possibilities.
Ojai Valley Green Coalition Board of Directors and Staff- for believing in the project, creating bonds with partners and the community and supporting our vision and mission through this project.
Community of Ojai - for showing up, caring, and sharing what could be possible and why.
Betsy Vanleit- to you, your buy in and understanding, and sticking through the process through thick and thin.
PAX Environmental, Inc., Scott, Andy and Brian - from site tour and workshop sharings to your overall knowledge and dedication to the restoration area ecology.
The C.R.E.W., Derek Poultney and staff - for your consistent support and willingness to partner.
David White, Once Upon a Watershed - for continuing to compost, the original intent of the Demonstration Garden, for being there for many of the site tours to share why compost and soil matter.
Julie Tumamait Stenslie - for being our favorite story teller, by sharing your love and knowledge of the ancestors and the sacred land of the Ojai Valley.
Wendy Barker, Executive Director Ojai Valley Museum: for historic site photos.
Craig Walker, Historic Preservation Commission: historic process guidance and historic site photos.
Gina McHatton - Historic Preservation Commission Chair: process guidance and sharing, The California Historical Building Code.

City Council Members

City of Ojai City Council - for your leadership and commitment to the community and the environment.
Randy Haney - for reaching out and getting this whole thing started with City Manager James Vega, and your trust in us to create and see the project though.
Suza Francina - for your positivity and always being on the side of the environment.
Bill Weirick - for acknowledging the value of the project and your vote of confidence.
Rachel Lang - for your enthusiasm, caring and compassion.
Mayor Betsy Stix - for your insight into what programming could occur and benefit the community.
Mayor Andy Gilman - for your steady and sound commitment.
Leslie Rule - for being our advocate, standing up for us and the project.
Andrew Whitman - your dedication to the restoration of Middle Stewart Canyon Creek and its future.
Kim Mang - for asking the important questions

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VISION

Since 2022, the Ojai Valley Green Coalition, along with the City of Ojai and the Ojai Valley community, has led planning efforts to reimagine the City Hall campus and update the 1993 Libbey Park Master Plan: Area G in a manner that reflects current needs and allows for flexibility to adapt to future changes. The Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan evolves from the 1993 Master Plan for Libbey Park and will replace the Area G: City Hall section of the plan.

Starting in July 2020, PAX Environmental, the C.R.E.W., and the City of Ojai began a comprehensive restoration of Middle Stewart Canyon Creek—the four acres of riparian wildlands adjoining city hall. The Ojai Valley Green Coalition and members of the community were inspired by this work. Supported by a City grant, the Ojai Valley Green Coalition led community sessions beginning in 2022 to develop the Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan. It became clear that Ojai lacks community spaces suited for ecology-based events or recreation and passive places to gather, as most of the existing public parks are reserved for sports or active uses.

Additional sessions identified a need for shared nature-based education, native gardens, and a strategy for long-term stewardship and ongoing maintenance. It is our vision that together these objectives will put forth the idea of "conditions of care"—an ongoing relationship between people and place, where intentional support will ensure a thriving, healthy, evolving landscape for years to come.

THE MISSION OF THE OVGC

The Ojai Valley Green Coalition (OVGC) partners with Ojai community members and organizations to build and strengthen life-sustaining and regenerative ways of being. We believe in the power and importance of working together to strengthen and sustain our community as we move intentionally into the future.



KEY GOALS

This master plan update advances 7 of the 9 stated 2025–2026 policy goals for the City of Ojai and aligns with 8 of the Ojai Valley Green Coalition's 12 ecological areas of focus:

City 2025–2026 Policy Goals (7 of 9)

1. Wildfire Safety and Risk Mitigation
2. Arts, Culture and Recreation Funding
3. Infrastructure Maintenance and Improvement
4. Public Safety
5. Diversifying Economy/Tourism Management
6. Climate Resiliency
7. Communication and Relationships

Green Coalition Ecological Areas of Focus (8 of 12)

1. Food and agriculture (awareness of the environmental impact)
2. Zero waste (refuse, reduce, repair, reuse, recycle, rot)
3. Gardens and parks (creating healthy, vibrant spaces)
4. Factors associated with ecological health
5. Biodiversity coupled with regenerative habitats
6. Water (healthy sustainable watershed and land use planning)
7. Mutual relationships, partnerships, and connections
8. Healthy soil

The vision described in this Master Plan Update is to transform the city hall campus into a vibrant, nature-based educational resource that supports workshops, events, and community gatherings rooted in the demonstration gardens, while celebrating the unique riparian landscape of Middle Stewart Canyon Creek and remnants of the historic Smith Hobson estate. Through expanded programming—such as talks, classes and creative events—the campus will foster communication, relationships, and shared stewardship, while supporting nature-based education, relaxation and recreation opportunities for visitors.

The plan also contributes to diversifying the local economy and tourism experience by creating a distinctive destination centered on ecology, learning and community engagement. There will be opportunities to enhance and protect the existing Smith-Hobson estate gardens. The Master Plan also introduces design strategies that enhance infrastructure, improve public safety, and increase accessibility, including new trails and a pedestrian bridge that will, for the first time, provide a path across the creek. Ecological improvements—such as pollinator gardens, rain gardens, orchards, and restored landscapes—support climate resiliency, water quality, healthy soil, and biodiversity through regenerative habitat design. Fire-wise and drought-tolerant planting strategies contribute to wildfire safety and long-term sustainability, while garden spaces promote food systems and community-based agriculture.

Together, these elements reinforce a zero-waste, resource-conscious approach and strengthen partnerships between the city, the Ojai Valley Green Coalition, and the broader community, ensuring the campus evolves as a resilient, inclusive and ecologically rich public space.

PATH FORWARD

The OVGC seeks to continue to provide project leadership so that the momentum generated by recent programming and restoration initiatives will continue to grow and evolve, engaging community members and organizations in a shared and unified effort—one that sows together the seeds of ideas, aspirations, and collective vision into a rich mosaic of inspired possibilities. The City Hall Master Plan Update serves as both a roadmap and a catalyst for thoughtful decision-making, guiding the long-term preservation, enhancement, and enjoyment of the campus while supporting its continued transformation into a vibrant, resilient, and deeply valued community resource for the Ojai community.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Ojai City Hall campus is located on an 8.79 acre, historic site of mostly undeveloped land. In 2022, the Ojai Valley Green Coalition (OVGC) began to engage the community for input as part of the Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan Update process. The intention of this Master Plan Update is to set forth a clear vision for a vibrant, ecologically centered community hub and renewed civic campus which provides new opportunities for the community to connect with and be inspired by the natural surroundings of the site characterized by beautiful, large native oak trees and a wild creekside habitat. The campus has the potential to serve as an essential ecological hub and vital community asset for Ojai.

A Layered History

The objectives of this master plan include honoring the Chumash heritage by acknowledging their historical connection to this land and ensuring that future developments are sensitive to this legacy. Educational elements or design features should reflect the Chumash's respect for the natural environment. In doing so, the plan will celebrate both the indigenous and more recent histories, fostering a holistic appreciation of the site's layered past.

The site is also home to the original, historic Smith-Hobson Estate which includes two locally registered historic buildings, a historic garden, and other historic features and remnants in the landscape. It is situated within a native oak woodland and is adjacent to a creek restoration area and riparian corridor. The site currently includes an untended demonstration garden, open areas for walking, wandering and playing, and some larger, long neglected open spaces that many envision as having the potential to become a beautiful and valuable community resource.

Future Generations

Over the past four years, members of the community have envisioned that this renewed, civic nature park could be restored and enhanced as a natural sanctuary, a nature-based playscape and an educational resource to benefit people of all ages and future generations. There is a general lack of open space within the city that are primarily nature-based and ecologically oriented, with most open space designated or built for sports, concerts, large active events or conventional children's playgrounds. A welcoming opportunity exists to renew and expand the existing historic Smith-Hobson estate garden, the natural Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration area and demonstration garden, revitalize the existing landscape and provide vibrant spaces for outdoor gatherings. In addition to renewed gardens and gathering areas, a part of this vision also includes the desire for a new demonstration "workshop building" which emerged out of a lack of suitable meeting venues in the city to host community workshops, classes, talks, events, etc. which are centered around ecological awareness and appreciation. The new building would showcase sustainable methods and materials that could serve to educate the community about the local ecology and sustainability and inspire visitors to bring this knowledge and inspiration home. The result could be a more resilient, connected and healthy Ojai Valley for all.

Master Plan Goals & Objectives

- **Valuable Resources:** Protect, enhance and steward the unique natural and cultural resources of the site
- **Community Activity:** Provide opportunities for passive recreation, biophilic connection, education, community activity and exploration
- **Park Management:** Manage the park as a viable ecological resource for the city
- **Stewardship:** Provide opportunities for both stakeholder and stewardship engagement for on-going, long term park maintenance

Identity

An Ecological Hub

A unique opportunity exists for the collaborative development of the Ojai community to co-create a community-based nature park that can serve as an "ecology center in the heart of the city".

The "Ojai Ecology Center" emerged out of a vision to rebuild a collection of native and climate appropriate demonstration gardens along with a new workshop/ meeting building, multi-use outdoor spaces for learning & gathering, a small-scale amphitheatre, intentional spaces, wilderness areas, paths and trails.

The city hall campus has a long and rich history with a story that can be expressed through the revitalization of the historic gardens and the potential repurposing of the existing historic barn for new educational uses. Interpretive signage, educational displays, and interactive elements integrated throughout the site will further support environmental learning, offering opportunities for visitors to engage with the site's history, ecology, and cultural significance in meaningful and inspiring ways.

Interaction

Inviting Community

The native oak woodland welcomes visitors to the campus and becomes a wellspring of inspiration for the community. The campus is an inclusionary place for social engagement and celebration all within a beautiful, outdoor setting.

A new "Garden House" is envisioned as a demonstration workshop building which can showcase sustainable construction practices and serve as a place for creative events, workshops, classes & talks.

The natural surroundings serve as a sacred framework for thoughtfully managed events such as weddings and garden events which can take place throughout the site in various backdrops and settings, all of which invite the users to connect with nature.

Outdoor Experience

Education and Wellness

Central to this Master Plan are the ecologically-focused experiences which await the visitor from nature walks to native gardening to childrens' nature play. Educational gardens inspire the user to apply learned principles in local ecology to their own home.

Peace and relaxation can be found throughout the site whether pausing beneath an oak tree canopy, exploring the riparian corridor or bird watching, all of which offer an opportunity for renewal from daily life.

The site has the potential to support wellness and help heal our physical, mental and spiritual health by embracing the concept of biophilia and fostering a deep sense of wholeness as we sync in with the natural world around us.



THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The Master Plan Process

Master planning in landscape architecture is the process of creating a comprehensive plan for the development of outdoor spaces. It involves analyzing the site, understanding the needs of the client and the community, and designing a strategic framework that addresses these requirements. Master planning considers various elements such as land use, circulation, infrastructure, and environmental considerations. It provides a roadmap for the development of a site, ensuring that it is well-designed, functional and sustainable.

Efficient Land Use: Carefully considering the layout and organization of outdoor spaces enables efficient land use ensuring that each area is utilized for its optimal potential and functionality.

Improved Connectivity: Master planning takes into account the circulation and connectivity of outdoor spaces. It aims to create a seamless flow between different areas, promoting ease of movement and accessibility for all users.

Enhanced Aesthetics: A well-designed master plan creates visually appealing spaces. It considers elements such as landscaping, materials, and architectural features to ensure that the site is aesthetically pleasing and harmonious with its surroundings.

Sustainability: Sustainability is a key consideration to creating environmentally friendly designs that minimize the impact on the natural environment by incorporating green infrastructure, using sustainable materials, and promoting biodiversity.

Long-Term Vision: Master planning provides a long-term vision for the development of a site. It considers the future needs of the community and ensures that the design is flexible and adaptable to changes over time resulting in durable and resilient outdoor spaces.

Key Stages

Site Analysis: The first step is to conduct a thorough analysis of the site including studying the physical characteristics, such as topography and existing vegetation, as well as assessing any constraints or opportunities.

Stakeholder Engagement: Emphasis is placed on collaboration and stakeholder engagement throughout the process which involves the client, community members, and other relevant parties to gather insights and to incorporate their feedback into the design.

Concept Development: Based on the site analysis and stakeholder input, a concept design is developed for the master plan. This concept outlines the overall vision and key features of the outdoor space.

Master Plan: Once the concept is finalized a detailed design stage follows to produce the master plan.

Planning Considerations

Contextual Analysis: Understanding the context is crucial by carefully assessing the natural and built environment, as well as the social and cultural context of the site. The analysis helps create designs that are responsive to the sites unique characteristics.

User Needs: Address the needs of the users by conducting extensive research to understand the requirements and preferences of the client and the community ensuring that the design is tailored to meet their specific needs.

Environmental Sustainability: Sustainability is a core principle. Integrating sustainable practices into the design, such as rainwater harvesting, and native plantings help reduce the environmental impact and promote ecological resilience.

Flexibility and Adaptability: Master plans should be flexible and adaptable to changes over time by designing outdoor spaces that can accommodate future development and evolving needs. This approach ensures that the master plan remains relevant and functional into the future.

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Future Benefits

Following the master plan methodology, a holistic all-encompassing approach, is essential because it provides a strategic, long-term roadmap that aligns development with community needs, optimizes resource allocation, and ensures sustainable growth. It transforms fragmented projects into cohesive environments by integrating land use, infrastructure and public services into a unified vision that guides decision-making for the next 15–25 years.

Risk Mitigation and Cost Efficiency: By outlining goals and constraints early, master planning reduces expensive mid-project changes and helps secure funding by demonstrating clear feasibility and stakeholder alignment.

Community Cohesion and Sustainability: It fosters inclusive development by incorporating diverse stakeholder input, ensuring that new construction respects environmental limits, preserves heritage and enhances quality of life.

Regulatory Clarity and Consistency: A master plan legally guides zoning, permitting, and infrastructure investment, ensuring that individual projects adhere to a broader strategic framework rather than developing haphazardly.



OUTREACH SUMMARY

Since 2022, OVGC has led a series of workshops, surveys, site tours and presentations as part of the initial phase of brainstorming and gathering community input for the future vision of the City Hall Campus. OVGC facilitated the public process through data collection, community input, input from city staff, city council, the historic preservation commission, planning commission and various stakeholder meetings.

Matthew Vestuto the tribal chairman of the Barbareño/ Ventureño Band of Mission Indians (Chumash), a 150-member tribe whose ancestors are from the Santa Barbara and San Buenaventura missions, was contacted to inform him about the project and invite his input.

There were two initial stages in the community outreach and data collection process:

Stage 1: In September 2022, OVGC was awarded a community service grant (CSG) by the City of Ojai for the initial stage of community engagement. Under this separate funding source, during October through December 2022, OVGC began by offering pilot training in Effective Collaboration Training (ECT) for individuals and organizations which is based on best practices in communication, group discussion and decision-making, and inclusive methods of group facilitation. Data collection began in September 2022 and concluded on October 30, 2023. The outreach process included (1) online survey, (3) workshops, (2) official site tours and (4) City Council presentations. News blogs were posted on the OVGC website, OVGC Facebook page, Ojai city website and on Next Door. Advertisements were ran in the Ojai Valley News. A Spanish interpreter was hired to translate announcement flyers and was available for interpretation at workshops. Additionally, childcare was offered at workshops as well.

Stage 2: The second stage was awarded a contract by the City for the completion of the Master Plan Update. This stage began in December 2025 and concluded on May 31, 2026. The outreach process included (2) online surveys, (1) in-person survey (1) workshop, (1) open house day, (6) guided site tours, and a future celebration/kick-off party. There were also (3) City Council presentations, (2) historic preservation commission site tours and concept review and (1) planning commission concept review. In addition 3 volunteer site work days were conducted outside of the contract. Several news blogs were posted on the OVGC website, monthly alerts in the OVGC newsletter, email blasts and two articles in the Ojai Valley News.

Data Collection

Our approach to working with community members was informed by the ECT training. A community survey combined with site tours, workshops, and meetings with individual City Council members were used to provide a window into perceptions, excitement, concerns, and ideas for the site.

We worked in close collaboration with city staff, meeting regularly with the assistant city manager and/or city manager, and completing quarterly reports of our work throughout the year. In addition, we interviewed Johnny Johnston as he was in Ojai city government when the Smith-Hobson property was deeded to the city several decades ago. He stated that the overall intent for the grounds was generally to keep them beautiful with natural areas as well as cultivated gardens around the buildings. We also met with Brian Aiken from the historic preservation commission to tour the old Hobson Barn on the property.



Emergent Themes

Consensus was generally formed around the intent of the campus to serve as an exciting, educational resource with restored historic gardens, demonstration gardens, a nature park including maintenance and expansion of the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek restoration project, a natural sanctuary and a place for workshops, events and gatherings for all ages. Three main themes emerged during the community input phase:

- Nature-based education is the overwhelming priority, with 77% of respondents indicating they would like to participate in educational activities on the site.

- Water resilience and ecological gardening are nearly as strong (70%+). Fire-safe landscaping (58%) is a secondary interest—which reflects Ojai's heightened historic risk and our real-world needs.

- Children's programming and nature-based play spaces were in favor by nearly 2 out of 3 respondents. Families are a key part of our community and our future depends on raising children with a strong connection to our planet.

Stage 1 Community Outreach

Site Tours

Sixty five individuals participated in two official site tours in January 2023. Several informal site tours were also offered to individuals who were unable to attend the scheduled site tour dates. The site tours ran approximately an hour and a half and the intent was to discuss the history of the site and to show people the existing buildings and amenities, site conditions, site features, trees, grounds and general boundaries.

Julie Tumamait-Stenslie shared local Chumash history of the area. Scott Tomkinson (senior botanist, GIS analyst & arborist) and Andy Fredell (senior project manager, senior biologist and safety officer representing PAX Environmental, Inc.) along with Derek Poultney, executive director of The C.R.E.W. (Conservation, Restoration, Education, and Work), an Ojai-based nonprofit organization that provides environmental work opportunities for teens and young adults, shared about the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration area. David White president of the Center for Regenerative Agriculture and founder of Once Upon a Watershed discussed the compost area in the demonstration garden. Maps and the 1993 Libbey Park Master Plan drawing were on display to add context to the project. There was genuine interest and engaged discussion, questions and answers as participants toured through the property and met in Kent Hall.

Community Survey

An online survey was conducted in both English and Spanish. The survey was hosted on the OVGC website along with uploaded maps and relevant documents to help survey-takers better understand the city property. The survey included questions about respondents (age, location, and any association to the site), followed by questions about activities and amenities that respondents wanted to see occurring at the campus. Comments were encouraged to obtain more detailed thoughts.

There were a range of comments from survey respondents. We received 42 requests to increase the number of pickleball courts on the site. Other survey comments were very similar to, and consistent with a wide variety of topics that emerged during the workshops.

Community Workshops

As part of the community outreach strategy, three community workshops were conducted. These workshops were led in a world cafe style where round-table discussions were used to encourage active conversation that helped participants listen, discuss and dream together in collaborative, reflective ways.

Workshop 1: March 22, 2023
Workshop 2: April 08, 2023
Workshop 3: June 03, 2023

A combined total of 72 individuals participated in these three workshops. Food and childcare was provided to create a relaxed environment and make it easy for people to attend. In addition, 10 youth from the Green Valley Project participated in an abbreviated world cafe discussion in March 2023 to offer their own perspective on the site.

During the March and April world cafe workshops, we used the following questions to stimulate dialogue:

- What interests or excites you about the campus site?
- How can we create a community place that feels comfortable and inviting to everyone?
- How do we co-create a healthy ecosystem that includes our human and more-than-human kin?
- How shall we care for and steward this place?

In addition to multiple small group discussions, participants were also encouraged to write, doodle and draw on large pieces of paper to accompany discussion and capture topics and ideas. We collected all of the sheets of paper, photographed them, and transcribed all of the hundreds of comments onto a summary list of notes.

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At the final world cafe workshop on June 3, 2023, participants sat at tables covered with large maps of the site, and were reminded of the themes that had emerged during the first two workshops. Three of the participants were men living in the tent encampment on the property. Groups were given the following instructions:

- Describe the story of this place a couple of years from now: Use pictures and words, and play with ideas!
- What do you see? What do you hear? What do you imagine doing?
- How can the themes work together in a coherent way?

After working together for 30 minutes, each group posted their completed map on the wall and gave summaries of their discussions. Main ideas that emerged from each group were harvested and discussed briefly. Findings were consistent with the categories that had emerged in the earlier World Cafe Style workshops, and no additional themes were identified.

After compiling all of the ideas and notes from the three workshops, we categorized them into emergent themes and topics. The data fell naturally into a number of categories although there is some overlap.

Emergent Themes

General consensus gathered from the survey and workshops centered around the idea that the campus has the potential to serve as an essential ecological hub for Ojai. The site has the potential to provide a place for children and adults to gain appreciation for the ecosystem, and to learn how to steward and tend the site in a sustainable and regenerative manner. Users can walk the trails, garden together, gather and meet, recreate with friends and family, and then take the experience and knowledge gained back to our own homes and communities. This site can serve as an inviting place for local residents and out-of-town visitors to join us in harmonious ways. Some respondents commented on perhaps finding a way to serve those in our community who need an extra hand.

One major theme expressed support of and connection to the natural world with many comments about protecting and maintaining the native ecosystem including plants, birds, pollinators and animals, appreciation for natural beauty, letting nature take care of itself, and protecting the site as a place for serenity and inspiration. One repeated comment was to keep at least 50% of the campus natural, unbuilt space, and maintain a balance between undeveloped and developed parts of the site. Several individuals and groups emphasized that the land offered opportunities to become more attuned to the natural world.

Since the 1990's, the City Hall Campus included an active demonstration garden developed to offer education about composting and water conservation. This history is discussed in more detail in Section 03 Existing Site of this document. Many community members talked about the importance of renovating and using the demonstration garden for education and community building. They expressed ideas that gardens reflect shared labor, beauty, culture, food, and an opportunity to bring people of all ages together in ways that feel real and nourishing.

The existing historic carriage house or barn stable generated excitement amongst the community with a tour by an Ojai arts commissioner (overseeing education for the commission). The commissioner became enthusiastic about opportunities for children to learn about and develop an appreciation for nature through activities and interactive experiences. She wrote and shared with us a Proposal for a Children's Nature Gallery and Classroom: Fostering Nature Appreciation and Community Engagement.

The online survey included 42 comments in favor of expanding pickleball courts while there was rarely any mention at all during the workshops except for concerns that the sound would be at odds with many nature-focused suggestions for the property.

The existing situation with the tent encampment is a critical issue that is being addressed by the city. The city of Ojai received state funding to address the unhoused. The Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project is funded by a $12.7 million state grant from California's Encampment Resolution Fund (ERF), awarded in April 2024. This grant supports the development of 30 permanent supportive housing units to replace the existing tent encampment at the Kent Hall parking lot, now relocated to 611 S. Montgomery Street, adjacent to the city's public works yard.

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Stage 2 Community Outreach

Site Tours

A total of six site tours were led between October 2025 and March 2026. The site tours offered the community a brief local history about the landmark status of the site and buildings which include the city hall building, the Hobson Barn, and the tennis courts, re-purposed as the present pickle ball courts. Historic site elements on the tour included the picnic pergola or arbor, the remaining miniature golf course section, the perimeter walls and pedestrian entry, the tennis court pavilion, the pond, the wedding arbor, and plant material such as the oak woodland, Canary island date palm, Cecile Brunner roses, boxwood hedging, and remnants of the rose garden.

Buildings and structures excluded from the master plan project were pointed out, such as the city hall building, the tennis/pickle ball courts, Kent Hall, Little House and Oak Tree House.

A walk down the mulched path to the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek restoration area included siting and listening to the creek flow, identifying restoration plant material and invasive weeds, and pointing out the upper slope on the west side of the creek which includes an endemic grass species. Partners in the restoration project were noted as well as acknowledging the existing signage.

Next on the tour was the Demonstration Garden area which included a history of that project and past uses including the present compost area.

We were fortunate on most of the tours to have one or more community members present who had or were actively working on the site in some capacity. Brian Aikens, the project liaison from the Historic Preservation Commission provided historic landmark information along with opening up the Hobson Barn for inside site tours. Scott Tompkinson of PAX Environmental, Inc. shared information about the restoration project including its success, and David White with Once Upon a Watershed, a project of the C.R.E.W. , was often actively working in the Demonstration Compost area and shared information on past and existing compost programs and the benefits of compost and soil biology.

Tour attendees were allowed to ask questions during and after the tours in addition to be offered opportunities to stay informed though our website, newsletter and future volunteer workdays.

Community Surveys

Three community surveys were conducted from August 2025 thru March 2026.

Survey 1: City Hall Campus Master Plan Public Comment

There were 39 respondents and community feedback emphasized preserving the site as a quiet, nature-focused space that respects Ojai's historic character, native landscape, and wildlife habitat. Many respondents support accessible community uses such as demonstration gardens, educational programs (gardening, composting, water-wise planting, and irrigation), contemplation gardens, and spaces for learning, healing, and creativity.

There is strong interest in maintaining a peaceful environment for activities like meditation, nature immersion, and birding, with concerns about noise from pickleball and large events. Some suggest limiting the campus to public community events only and avoiding loud activities, competitive games, bicycles, or wheeled vehicles except for accessibility needs.

Residents also raised specific concerns, including relocating the compost area farther from homes due to odor, replacing lost native oak trees, and protecting existing native habitat. Several commenters emphasized the importance of involving the local Chumash community and including land acknowledgment and dedicated cultural space.

Overall, feedback reflects appreciation for the planning effort but urges the city to prioritize habitat protection, quiet, passive recreational use, educational gardens, and thoughtful improvements rather than extensive design or development.

Although several comments requested more pickle ball courts on the site, the existing pickle ball courts area was excluded from the project contract and scope. The City of Ojai along with the County of Ventura opened a new pickle ball facility at Soule Park in September 2024 and simultaneously closed the existing four courts on site. In November of 2024 Ojai voters voted in favor of Measure O, which required the city to reopen the four courts at city hall year-round.

Survey 2: Eco Center Park Public Survey- Open House in-Person version

This survey was available for in-person participation during the October 25, 2025 Open House & Site Tour. Approximately 55 community members attended with 30 participating in the survey.

The community survey identified nature-based activities and environmental education as the highest priorities for the Eco-Center Park. Respondents overwhelmingly valued bird watching, walking, and quietly enjoying gardens and natural landscapes, with 87% rating these activities as very important. Educational workshops and classes on ecological gardening, water conservation, fire-safe landscaping, and wildlife care were also highly rated, reflecting strong interest in hands-on, sustainability-focused learning opportunities. Infrastructure such as trails, signage, play areas, and restrooms was seen as supportive but not the primary focus, emphasizing that the park's core mission is immersive nature experiences and learning.

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Respondents highlighted children, families, bird watchers, and seniors as the community sectors that would benefit most, while volunteers indicated a strong willingness to participate in activities such as program planning, community involvement, planting, and site stewardship. Preferred park visitation is weekly, with community members also favoring weekly or monthly educational programming, suggesting a need for regular but manageable engagement opportunities.

Survey results further indicate that the park should support both active and contemplative experiences. Nature appreciation, local ecology, and children's exploration are top priorities, while secondary programming can include art, citizen science, and meditation or peace spaces. Overall, the findings support a park that blends environmental education, family-friendly exploration, and immersive, quiet engagement with nature, underpinned by strong community involvement and volunteer support.

Survey 3: Eco Center Park Public Survey
This survey ran from October 28, 2025 to March 15, 2026. There were 67 respondents. Most showed a strong interest in nature-based education and environmental programming. The highest priorities are learning about local ecology, plants, and wildlife, as well as nature appreciation (77%), followed by water conservation and rainwater harvesting (73%) and ecological gardening and landscaping (69%). These topics suggest strong support for programming focused on environmental stewardship, sustainability, and hands-on learning that could align well with school partnerships, grant opportunities, and adult education.

There is also significant interest in children-focused programming, with about two-thirds of respondents supporting both children's programs and natural play spaces. Secondary areas of interest include fire-safe landscaping (58%), reflecting local wildfire awareness, as well as art and citizen science (around 50%), which could serve as complementary or seasonal programming. Interest in green building and construction (42%) is more specialized but could still support targeted workshops or partner-led educational events.

Community Workshops

Workshop 1: On March 20, 2025 a workshop was conducted to re-introduce the community to the Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan Update visioning process. OVGC began with a recap of the recent history including past OVGC surveys, community engagement, stakeholder interviews, the Pickleball Ordinance and an update on Tent Town. OVGC also reviewed the overall vision, mission, goals and objectives of project. The intention of the workshop was to facilitate community engagement and participation in discussing five key categories:

- gardens
- overall feel of site
- programming
- partnerships
- stewardship

Approximately 40 community members were in attendance. Site analysis maps were displayed around the room for the community to review and comment in a lively and vibrant discussion that generated passion for the project and the site.

Emergent Themes

Community feedback centered around nature-based education, community-led gardening spaces, cultural storytelling, sustainability and intentionality. Participants emphasized using the garden spaces as both a learning tool and a gathering place. There was focus on fostering a vibrant community space to host wellness activities, art programming and long-term stewardship. Participants engaged in discussions on demonstration gardens, outdoor classrooms, and cultural storytelling, especially centered on indigenous perspectives, all with a shared passion for the site's future as a thriving community and nature hub.



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Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings and site visits were held consistently outside of organized workshops and site tours and agendized city meetings. Meetings were held with individual city council members, excluding one, the City Manager, Community Development Department staff, the Public Works Department Director, Historic Preservation Commission Chair and Commissioners, Jan Scow, consulting arborist, Mathew Vestuto chairman of the Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians (Chumash), PAX Environmental Inc. CEO and staff, The C.R.E.W. executive director, (Derek Poultney), Once Upon a Watershed staff (David White), various community members with a history of past involvement or interest in the site, and a local alternative builder.

Site Tours

Attendance varied between 5 and 35 participants. A total of six site tours offered the community a brief local history about the landmark status of the site and buildings which include the City Hall building, the Hobson barn, and the tennis courts, re-purposed as the present pickle ball courts. Historic site elements on the tour included the picnic pergola or arbor, the remaining miniature golf course section, the perimeter walls and pedestrian entry, the tennis court pavilion, the pond, the wedding arbor, and plant material such as the oak woodland, Canary island date palm, Cecile Brunner roses, boxwood hedging, and remnants of the rose garden.

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SITE OVERVIEW

A Civic Campus

The Ojai City Hall campus is located within a landscape shaped by the long-standing environmental and cultural history of the Ojai Valley, where natural systems have historically guided patterns of settlement and land use. The presence of oak woodlands, barranca landforms, and seasonal drainage corridors reflects the valley's ecological framework, which has remained a defining feature of the area over time. Early development in Ojai generally occurred in a manner that responded to these natural conditions, resulting in a community pattern that retained significant portions of native landscape and emphasized a close relationship between the built environment and surrounding open space.

Long before European settlement, the Ojai Valley was home to the Chumash people, who lived in close relationship with these same natural systems. The oak woodlands, waterways, and native plant communities provided food, materials, and cultural significance, shaping patterns of movement, gathering, and stewardship across the landscape. Chumash land management practices, including the careful use of fire and seasonal harvesting, helped sustain ecological balance and biodiversity. Acknowledging this history offers an opportunity to recognize the deep cultural roots of the site and to incorporate interpretive and design elements that honor Indigenous knowledge, presence, and enduring connections to the land.

As the City of Ojai evolved, civic uses were established within this context, with the city hall site remaining relatively low in intensity and partially undeveloped, allowing many of its natural features to persist. Unlike more urbanized civic centers, the campus has retained a landscape-dominant character, where mature oaks and drainage features continue to influence the spatial organization of the site. This continuity reflects a broader community value placed on environmental preservation and the maintenance of Ojai's distinctive natural setting.

Today, the site represents an opportunity to build upon this legacy by reinforcing its role as a civic space embedded within a natural landscape. The preservation of existing oak woodlands and barranca, combined with thoughtful integration of public uses, can continue the historical pattern of development that respects and responds to the valley's environmental systems, ensuring that the site remains both culturally meaningful and ecologically functional over time.



PREVIOUS PLANS

The City of Ojai General Plan serves as the city's primary policy document guiding long-term growth, land use, and development. It establishes goals, policies, and programs to balance community needs with the preservation of natural, cultural, and scenic character. Together, its elements provide a comprehensive framework for decision-making to ensure orderly development and protection of the city's quality of life.

The city formally adopted its comprehensive General Plan in 1997 which includes nine elements, three of which are relevant to this Master Plan: conservation, recreation and open space. The city began its General Plan Master Plan update in 2020 and it is currently underway.

The city hall campus is officially a part of Libbey Park and the 1993 Libbey Park Master Plan. The 2026 Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan evolves from the 1993 Libbey Park Master Plan Update and will replace the Area G: City Hall section of the plan.

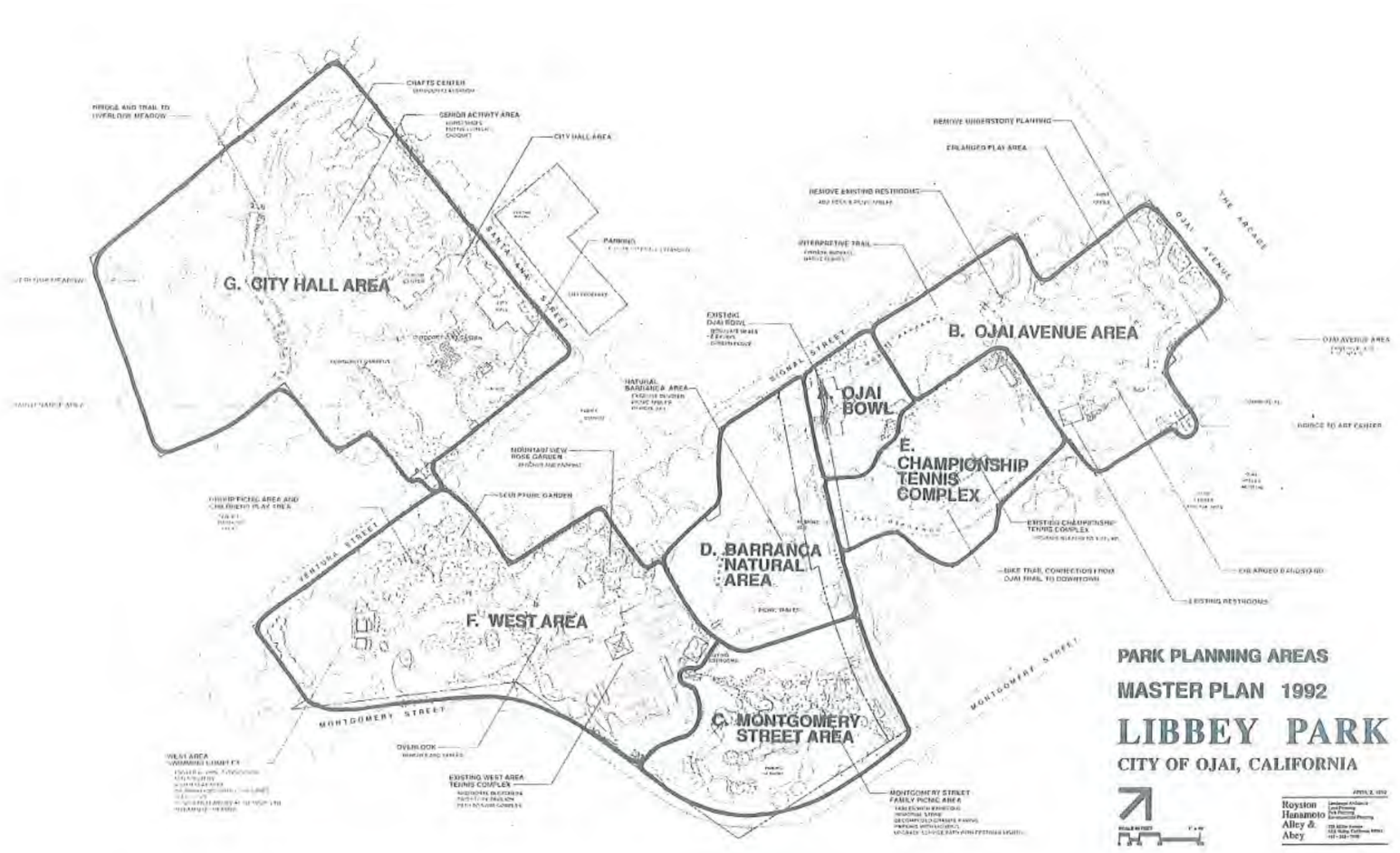
1973 Libbey Park Master Plan

1987 The Open Space, Conservation & Recreation Elements

1993 Libbey Park Master Plan Update

1997 General Plan - City of Ojai

2020 General Plan Master Plan Update - City of Ojai (in progress)



The **Open Space Element** establishes a comprehensive framework for the long-term preservation, integration, and management of open space resources throughout the city, emphasizing the protection of natural, scenic, and environmentally sensitive areas as essential components of community identity and environmental quality. Within this framework, the city hall campus can be understood as part of a broader open space network, where biologically significant lands, creek corridors, and native landscapes are retained and incorporated into a coordinated system of open space designations. The Element supports the use of planning tools such as buffer zones, clustering of development, and open space easements to protect sensitive areas while allowing for compatible public use, and encourages the integration of open space into project design to maintain ecological function, scenic character, and public benefit. This approach reinforces the role of the campus as a naturalized civic landscape, contributing to the preservation of Ojai's environmental setting while accommodating low-impact public access and enjoyment.

The **Conservation Element** establishes a comprehensive framework to guide the long-term preservation and enhancement of the City's biological resources, with particular emphasis on riparian corridors and oak woodland ecosystems. The Plan promotes a resource management approach that prioritizes the protection of existing habitat value, limiting development within and adjacent to sensitive areas while requiring site-specific biological evaluation for proposed projects. Key strategies include the designation of significant habitats as permanent open space, the preparation of habitat preservation and management plans, and the implementation of measures such as setbacks, buffer zones, and hydrological protection to maintain ecological function. Restoration and stewardship of degraded habitats are encouraged through coordinated planning and regulatory tools, ensuring that future land use decisions support the continued health, diversity, and resilience of the Ojai Valley's natural systems.

The **Recreation Element** generally describes a framework for providing a balanced system of parks, open space, and recreational opportunities that support both active and passive use while preserving the natural character of the Ojai Valley. Within this framework, the city all campus can be envisioned as a passive recreational open space with preserve-like qualities, maintaining significant portions of the site in an undisturbed condition while allowing for limited, low-impact improvements. The Element supports opportunities for walking, informal use, and quiet enjoyment, facilitated by sensitively designed pathways and seating areas that enable public access without intensifying development. Additionally, the incorporation of interpretive features may promote public awareness and appreciation of natural systems, reinforcing the role of open space as both a recreational and educational resource within the community.

The **1993 Libbey Park Master Plan Update** has been a continuing guide for the city for developments within 28.7 acres of land which includes the city hall campus, Libbey Park, Libbey Bowl and other areas. The plan emphasizes the preservation of existing historic and natural landscape features as fundamental to the identity of the site. Mature oak woodlands and barranca landforms are recognized as primary structuring elements, to be retained and protected as integral components of the landscape character. Future improvements are intended to be carefully integrated to respect and reinforce these features, ensuring the long-term continuity of the site's natural systems and historic setting.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The California Environmental Quality Act

The proposed Master Plan does not involve or cause any substantial new construction or directly impose other changes that would create significant environmental impacts. When individual recommended improvements are defined in detail and implemented in the future when funding becomes available, each improvement will be evaluated for significant impacts under CEQA as part of the City's routine project review and permitting process.

Preliminary Archaeological Assessment

The Ojai Valley has significant cultural importance to the Chumash people, with evidence of human activity dating back thousands of years. While specific sites are not listed in available documents, the city's cultural resource policies aim to protect such heritage, especially within 300 feet of mapped archaeological locations.

The City of Ojai's Preliminary Archaeological Assessment, which was adopted in December 2015 through Resolution 15-48, established a framework for identifying and protecting cultural resources, particularly in areas near known archaeological sites. The resolution emphasizes consultation with the Chumash Tribe and requires a Preliminary Archaeological Assessment (PAA) for development projects involving earth-disturbing activities.

The Restoration Area

The Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration Project transformed a 10.8 acre riparian corridor from its past state of near-total coverage by non-native, highly flammable plant species and water-intensive trees and vegetation, to a robust native southern California live oak riparian habitat. It was funded through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Proposition 1 Watershed Grant Program. The project date started in July 2020 and was completed in January 2024.

The project focused on removal of invasive, non-native species including river red gum (Eucalyptus camaldulensis), Mexican fan palm (Washingtonia robusta), and Canary Island date palm (Phoenix canariensis) followed by the planting of California native species. The goal was to enhance critical habitat for special-status species including the southern California steelhead trout (Oncorhychus mykiss irideus DPS 10), the California red-legged frog (Rana draytonii) and the southwestern pond turtle (Actinemys pallida), while providing workforce development for young adults ages 18-24 years at the C.R.E.W. and the California Conservation Corps (CCC).

In collaboration with the C.R.E.W. as project lead and the City of Ojai, was PAX Environmental, Inc. which provided environmental permitting and regulatory compliance services, inter-agency coordination, stakeholder outreach, biological surveying and monitoring, and long-term maintenance/analysis.

All plants and seeds were sourced from within the Ventura River Watershed and grown by Growing Works and Ojai Valley Land Conservancy.

Key financial and project details include:

- Primary Funding Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Proposition 1 Watershed Grant. $864,000 grant received in 2019. Matching funds made it a $1million project.
- Project Scope: The grant covered tasks such as removing 650+ invasive plants, planting over 4,700 native seeds, containers, and cuttings, and providing workforce development for local youth.
- Status: The project is described as completed with annual reports available for the periods 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and a final report for 2023-2024.
- Future Funding Strategy: The project team aims to develop outreach and networking strategies to secure continued funding from various community-based sources for ongoing stewardship.





Ojai Valley News photo by Perry Van Houten. Two crews from the California Conservation Corps worked to remove invasive trees and brush in Stewart Canyon, in the southwest part of the city of Ojai.

The Ojai Valley News Article

A project to restore natural habitat, while lessening the risk of wildfire, is well underway in an oak woodland just south of Ojai City Hall. Work on the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration Project began in mid-November, but the idea for the project began in December of 2017, when a warming fire, unrelated to the Thomas Fire, spread to palm trees in Stewart Canyon and burned about three-quarters of an acre. With wildfire mitigation a top priority, city officials began to look at trees such as eucalyptus and fan palm growing in the canyon that are not only non-native, but pose a high fire risk and harm the natural environment by taking over the water supply. "We realized the risk that was developing down here," Ojai Public Works Director Greg Grant told the Ojai Valley News at the project site. Over the next few years, city officials focused on obtaining grants, and with the help of Ojai-based PAX Environmental, Inc. and The C.R.E.W., the city obtained a $864,000 grant last year from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Matching funds made it a $1 million project, Grant said, "to take this whole reach of Stewart Canyon Creek, to remove the invasive vegetation and restore it with native vegetation." On Nov. 24, the whir of chainsaws could be heard coming from the canyon as two crews from the California Conservation Corps worked to remove some of the smaller invasive trees. The larger trees will be taken out by certified arborist Mark Crane starting Dec. 7. It can be a tricky operation, since you don't want to damage existing, native trees by felling the invasive ones. "Telescopic booms will go up 120 feet, grasp the limb with a remote chainsaw and take it down," Grant said. In total, the city plans to remove several hundred non-native trees, the largest 3 to 4 feet in diameter and over 100 feet tall. The southern half of the project currently underway covers approximately 10 acres along a less than 1-mile stretch of Stewart Creek. Much of the work so far has been done by The C.R.E.W., with PAX Environmental doing the state-mandated environmental monitoring. Removing the invasive trees, which compete with the natives for water and sunlight, will help restore the habitat for native coast live oak and valley oak, according to Andy Fredell, terrestrial and marine biologist with PAX Environmental. "Once these trees are removed, the smaller oaks that are already established will be able to grow a lot faster," Fredell said. Restoration work after removal will involve planting not only new oaks where there are none now, but planting other riparian trees such as arroyo willow, elderberry and black walnut. As part of the grant, the work area will be monitored for five years afterward to keep invasive vegetation from re-sprouting and to make sure the new plantings are successful. Other project partners include Ojai Valley Land Conservancy and Once Upon a Watershed. A healthier watershed is another goal of the project, and water quality monitoring is already being done, according to Fredell. "It's not a good, functioning, flowing stream, even though it probably isn't year-round anyway. But it would probably be running later in the year if you didn't have all these trees sucking water," Fredell said. Bringing back some of the flow in the creek will also benefit fish and animals. "You'd have more of our aquatic wildlife living up in this area," said Fredell, an area that's considered habitat for the endangered Southern California steelhead trout. The first phase of tree removal should be complete before the end of the year, with the planting of approximately 3,000 new plants to follow this winter and spring. The northern half of the project is slated to begin next winter, November 2021 through April 2022, according to Ojai City Manager James Vega.


OJAI
CITY HALL
ENTRANCE

SITE HISTORY AND ADJACENT USES

Chumash History

Anthropologists do not know precisely when the ancestors of the Chumash first arrived in the region, though theories suggest they may have settled here between 12,000 and 27,000 years ago. The area now known as Ojai is derived from the Ventureño Chumash word 'awha'y, meaning "Moon," and refers to a historic Chumash village located in the Upper Ojai Valley. For thousands of years, the Chumash people considered the valley sacred — a fertile and sheltered landscape that provided food, safety, and spiritual grounding.

A leap to present time bring the stories and sharing of local Chumash elder Julie Tumamait-Stenslie who has walked this sacred ground with us. She has shared stories about creation and life, traditions, and growing up in the Ojai Valley and experiencing the natural wonders and beauty. With honor and respect for the land and all of its inhabitants so sacred to the Chumash culture this is what resonates and we intend to carry through into the future for this project and valley.

The Smith-Hobson Site

The Ojai city hall campus, formerly known as the Smith-Hobson site, is rooted in the early development of the Ojai Valley and the establishment of civic uses on lands that were originally part of a larger rural and residential landscape. Central to this history is the Smith-Hobson property, which was conveyed to the city through the Smith-Hobson Deed in the early 20th century (commonly cited as 1917). The deed transferred ownership of the property for public purposes, establishing the site as a permanent civic asset and setting expectations that it would remain accessible and beneficial to the community. This foundational act shaped the long-term use and stewardship of the campus, distinguishing it from surrounding privately developed lands.

The city hall building was originally built as the Smith-Hobson House, one of the earliest residential structures on the site along with the Hobson Barn or sometimes referred to as the Carriage House, the Stable or the Barn. The building has been retained as a historic resource and remains a defining feature of the campus. Over time, additional buildings were constructed to support municipal functions, including the Oak Tree House, the Little House and Kent Hall. These structures reflect different phases of Ojai's growth, illustrating the transition from a small rural community to an incorporated city with an established civic presence. Despite these additions, development occurred incrementally and with a relatively light footprint, allowing the site's natural features to persist.

Throughout its evolution, the campus has maintained a strong connection to its oak woodland setting and barranca systems, which continue to influence site organization and character. The historic buildings are dispersed within this landscape, reinforcing a pattern of development that responds to natural conditions rather than overriding them. This integration of cultural and environmental resources reflects both the intent of the original deed and the broader values of the Ojai community.

Today, the City Hall campus represents a convergence of its legal, cultural, and environmental history. The legacy of the Smith-Hobson Deed, the preservation of historic structures, and the retention of significant natural features together define the site as a civic landscape of enduring public value, providing a foundation for future planning efforts that balance historic preservation with ecological stewardship.

The Smith-Hobson House

The Smith-Hobson House, also known as the "Old Smith-Hobson Ranch," is a recognized historical landmark in Ojai. In 2017 it was listed on the City of Ojai Historic Landmark properties for its significant example of early California ranch architecture. The property reflects the history of ranching and settlement in the Ojai Valley and is closely associated with the influential Smith and Hobson families.

Built in 1907 in the small town of Nordhoff, California, the Craftsman-style residence of Abram and Helen Hobson featured finely crafted interior elements, including a handmade ceramic tile fireplace and built-in woodwork, which remain visible today within the Council Chambers. In 1917, under the influence of Edward Drummond Libbey, the town of Nordhoff was transformed and renamed Ojai, accompanied by a broader shift toward Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. In keeping with this vision, the Hobson residence was redesigned in 1925 by designer-builder Robert Winfield who had constructed many buildings in Ojai including the downtown redevelopment designed by architects Mead and Requa into the Spanish style, with the addition of a guest house, pergola, gardens, and recreational amenities that expanded the property into a prominent estate.





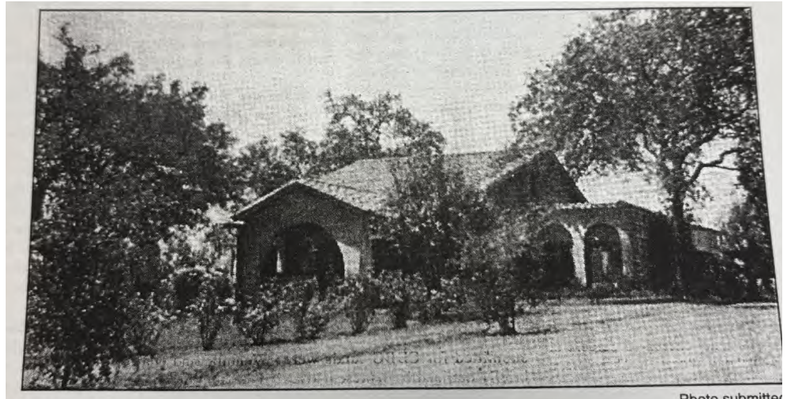


Photo submitte

THE HOBSON HOUSE remodeled to the Spanish Style, now Ojai's City Hall — 1927.





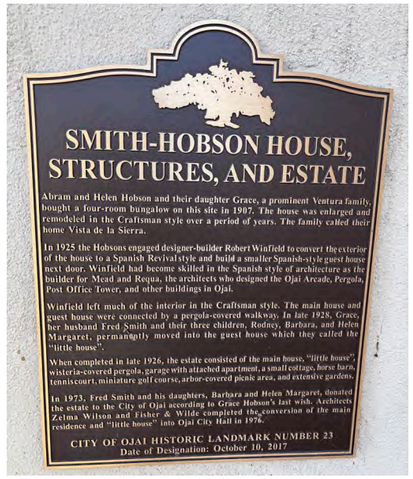











SMITH-HOBSON HOUSE,
STRUCTURES, AND ESTATE
Abram and Helen Hobson and their daughter Grace, a prominent Ventura family, bought a four-room bungalow on this site in 1907. The house was enlarged and remodeled in the Craftsman style over a period of years. The family called their home Vista de la Sierra.
In 1925 the Hobsons engaged designer-builder Robert Winfield to convert the exterior of the house to a Spanish Revival style and build a smaller Spanish-style guest house next door. Winfield had become skilled in the Spanish style of architecture as the builder for Mead and Requa, the architects who designed the Ojai Arcade, Pergola, Post Office Tower, and other buildings in Ojai.
Winfield left much of the interior in the Craftsman style. The main house and guest house were connected by a pergola-covered walkway. In late 1928, Grace, her husband Fred Smith and their three children, Rodney, Barbara, and Helen Margaret, permanently moved into the guest house which they called the "little house".
When completed in late 1926, the estate consisted of the main house, "little house", wisteria-covered pergola, garage with attached apartment, a small cottage, horse barn, tennis court, miniature golf course, arbor-covered picnic area, and extensive gardens.
In 1973, Fred Smith and his daughters, Barbara and Helen Margaret, donated the estate to the City of Ojai according to Grace Hobson's last wish. Architects Zelma Wilson and Fisher & Wilde completed the conversion of the main residence and "little house" into Ojai City Hall in 1976.
CITY OF OJAI HISTORIC LANDMARK NUMBER 23
Date of Designation: October 10, 2017


OJAI
CITY HALL

The Estate Gardens

During the Smith–Hobson era, the grounds reflected a blend of early California ranch character and emerging estate-style garden design. The property retained its native oak woodland, with mature coast live oaks providing shade, structure, and a strong connection to the valley's natural landscape. These trees likely predated the house and were intentionally preserved, creating a canopy that framed views and anchored the site in its regional ecology. New oaks were also planted throughout the gardens.

Layered within this natural setting were more formal garden elements, including open lawns, rose borders, and clipped boxwood hedges. These features introduced a sense of order and refinement typical of early 20th-century California estates, where owners balanced picturesque, pastoral surroundings with European-inspired garden structure. The contrast between the informal oak landscape and the geometric planting beds created a transitional landscape reflecting both the lifestyle and aesthetic aspirations of the property's owners.

The City Hall Building

Following Abram Hobson's passing, the estate remained in the family until the early 1970s, when it was donated to the City of Ojai by Fred Smith. The property was subsequently adapted for civic use, with architect Zelma Wilson integrating the main house and guest house into a unified municipal facility. In 1976, the site officially became the city hall campus and the Smith-Hobson house became the City Hall building, marking its transition from a private estate to a public campus. Today, the property retains its historic architectural character and estate-like setting, reflecting both its residential origins and its continued role as a civic landmark.

Demonstration Gardens

The demonstration garden has a long history and has had a number of different chapters of attention and neglect over several decades. In the 1990s the garden was developed by the Ventura County Integrated Waste Management and the City of Ojai to offer education about composting and water conservation, and there is still an old fading kiosk that describes how to make compost. That focus has continued, and until recently the Center for Regenerative Agriculture had a contract with the city to offer composting services onsite. The composting endeavor continues today through Once Upon A Watershed, a project of the C.R.E.W., various grant funding and the efforts of volunteers.

In addition, over the decades, different volunteers (individuals and groups) have created various garden beds and paths; dug ponds, planted perennial and annual flowers, vegetables, and shrubs; and sometimes offered classes to the public. More recently, the Ojai Valley Green Coalition had a contract with the city from 2017-2019 to offer gardening education and volunteer opportunities. But since then, the garden area has become increasingly neglected.

Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration

The Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration Project Design Plan outlines a comprehensive effort to restore a degraded riparian corridor within the Ojai Valley by removing invasive plant species and reestablishing native habitat conditions. The project builds upon a series of earlier restoration efforts initiated between 2012 and 2019, including multiple barranca and creek restoration projects throughout the Ventura River watershed, and was formalized in this design plan prepared in Fall 2019. These prior and ongoing efforts establish a coordinated, phased approach to watershed restoration, positioning the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek segment as a critical remaining reach.

The plan focused on improving ecological function through targeted removal of non-native vegetation—particularly eucalyptus and palm trees—followed by phased replanting with native species to support wildlife habitat, hydrological function, and long-term ecosystem resilience. Implementation included collaboration between the City of Ojai, environmental consultants, and community partners, with a multi-year schedule for removal, planting, and maintenance extending several years beyond initial implementation. Overall, this successful project has enhanced habitat connectivity, improved water flow conditions, and contributed to broader watershed restoration goals within the Ventura River Watershed system.



Adjacent Uses

The Ojai City Hall campus is situated within a mixed civic and residential context, characterized by a blend of public-serving facilities, neighborhood-scale development, and natural open space. Surrounding uses include established residential neighborhoods that contribute to the small-town character of the area, along with the police department, the city public works yard and multi-family housing. These adjacent uses are generally low in intensity and scale, reinforcing a setting that is compatible with the preservation of the site's natural features and informal open space character.

In addition, the campus is influenced by its proximity to natural drainage corridors and vegetated open space areas, including barrancas and native woodland landscapes that extend beyond the site boundaries. These features contribute to a broader network of ecological and visual continuity within the Ojai Valley, creating a transition between built and natural environments. The relationship between the campus and its surroundings presents an opportunity to strengthen connections between civic uses, neighborhood context, and natural systems, while maintaining compatibility with the area's environmental character.



SITE ANALYSIS

City Hall Campus

Overview

The Ojai city hall campus, comprises 8.79 acres of land characterized as a naturalized civic landscape and defined mostly by its existing oak woodland canopy, native understory, and adjacent barranca and creek features that traverse the site. The campus is largely undeveloped, with gently varied topography and drainage corridors that contribute to its ecological function. These natural systems establish a framework of biological, hydrological, and visual continuity, shaping both the character and potential use of the site. Existing civic facilities are situated within this landscape context, creating an opportunity to integrate public use with the preservation of environmental resources, and to reinforce the campus as a setting that reflects the broader natural character of the Ojai Valley.

The site is bordered by Santa Ana Street to the north and Ventura Street to the east with single family residential zoning to the north, west and south, and multi-family residential zoning to the east. The campus is bisected by the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek watershed and is largely undeveloped with approximately 6 acres of hillside meadows, the creek and large, mature oak trees which provide canopy shade.

There are four buildings on site - the historic Ojai City Hall, the historic Hobson Barn, the Oak Tree House and Little House/Kent Hall. The existing Kent Hall was previously an available space for public meetings, however it has now become home to the City Council chamber and no longer open for public use. A large easement (2.11 acres) owned by the Ventura County Flood Control District exists over the creek. The site includes walkable trails, demonstration gardens, a pickleball court, a habitat restoration area and a small parking lot. The pickleball courts and the parking lot currently occupied by Ojai Tent Town are separate from, and will coexist with, the Eco Center.

Cultural, Tribal, Paleontological & Archaeological Resources

The City Hall campus is located within a region historically occupied by the Chumash people whose presence in the Ojai Valley extends back thousands of years. Archaeological evidence indicates that the valley supported long-standing indigenous settlements due to its access to water, oak woodland resources, and diverse ecological systems. The name “Ojai” itself is derived from the Ventureño Chumash word awha’y, meaning “moon,” reflecting the deep cultural connection of the indigenous population to this landscape. Given the presence of Middle Stewart Canyon Creek, a barranca and the native oak habitat on and adjacent to the site, the campus is situated within a landform type commonly associated with prehistoric resource use, travel corridors, and potential archaeological deposits.

Although no formally recorded archaeological sites have been identified within the campus based on currently available information, the environmental characteristics of the property suggest a moderate to high sensitivity for subsurface cultural resources, particularly in undisturbed areas near drainage corridors. Similar creek-adjacent locations throughout Ventura County have yielded evidence of Chumash habitation, including tools, food processing areas, and burial sites. As such, future ground-disturbing activities on the site should consider the potential for unanticipated discovery of archaeological or tribal cultural resources, warranting appropriate monitoring and consultation with Native American representatives.

In addition to archaeological considerations, the site’s natural systems may also support paleontological sensitivity, particularly within alluvial soils associated with creek and barranca formations. While no known paleontological resources have been documented specifically on the property, similar geologic contexts in the region have the potential to contain fossil-bearing deposits. Overall, the City Hall campus should be understood as a landscape with cultural and environmental significance, where preservation of existing natural features not only supports ecological function but also helps protect potential subsurface cultural and scientific resources.



Historic Landscape Elements

Site analysis of historic landscape elements included exploring city documents regarding the deed and landmark status of specific buildings including city hall, the property proper including various site structures.

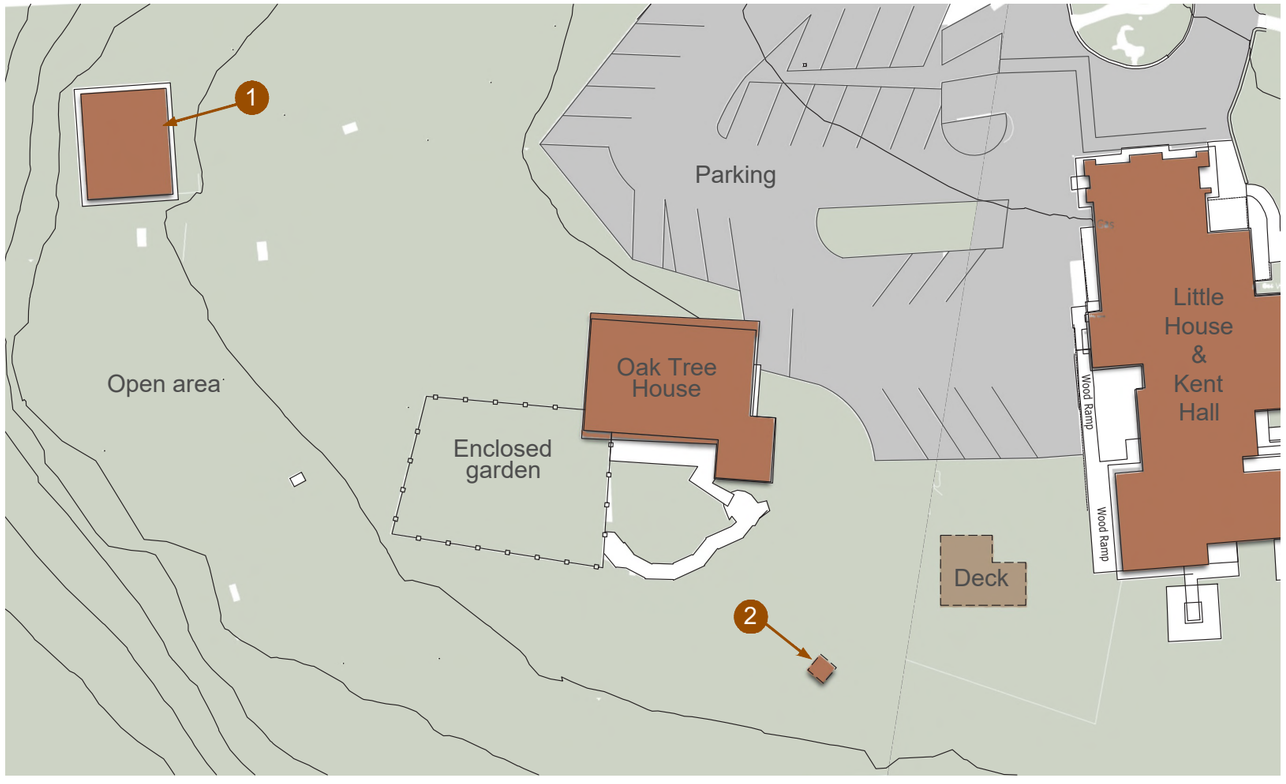
Existing historical site structures are not referenced consistently nor in detail in the Smith-Hobson Deed of 1973, Resolution no. 17-44 which dedicated the site as Landmark 23 described as City Hall structure and grounds known as the Smith-Hobson House, Structures and Estate, and the Addendum to Phase 1 Historic Resource Inventory Report by Provenience Group.

Site structures referenced in the above documents and items known or presumed historic due to site context, period photos and the appearance of period materials and finishes were included in the analysis. Site walks with the Historic Preservation Commissioners further provided and confirmed information.

Site structures were located and addressed preliminarily for safety, material wear, rehabilitation possibilities including potential functionality and for adaptive reuse.

Historic site structures identified were the Hobson Barn once used as a stable for horses, a wood picnic pergola, a concrete badminton court, a portion of a concrete miniature golf course with moat, a concrete and wood wedding arbor with climbing roses, the property perimeter wall and pedestrian access, the tennis pavilion, an active pond, stone site walls and steps, plinths with planters, remnant gardens and plant material.

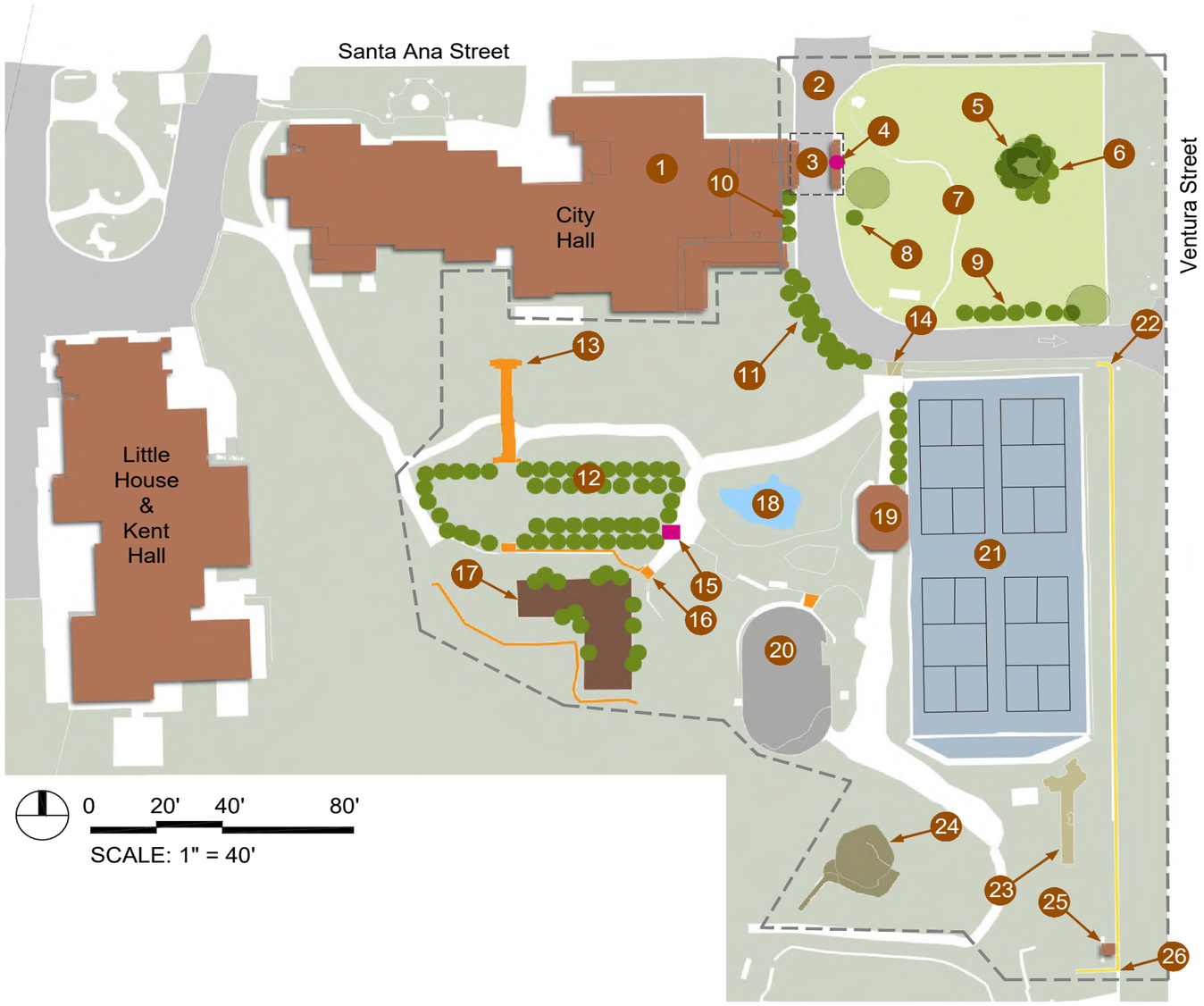
City Hall and the current pickle ball courts. previously the tennis court were excluded from the project. City Hall and the tennis court are landmarked along with the Hobson Barn. Generally, analysis concluded that site structures identified have been neglected and not maintained.



EXISTING HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

1. Hobson Barn
2. Wedding Arbor





EXISTING HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

1. City Hall landmark building
2. Gravel driveway
3. Porte cochere
4. Ornamental urn
5. Canary Island Palm *Phoenix canariensis*, double trunk
6. Shrubs (*Viburnum, Spirea, Cotoneaster, Pyracantha*)
7. Event lawn
8. Ponytail Palm *Beucarnea recurvata*
9. Rose varieties & remnants of rose garden (8)
10. Forest Lily *Veltheimia bracteata*
11. True Myrtle *Myrtus communis*, hedge
12. Boxwood *Buxus microphylla*
13. Ornamental plinths with vases (4)
14. Concrete steps
15. Recent plaque for Children's Garden
16. Stacked stone walls, steps and rock borders
17. Wood structure picnic area w/ Cecile Brunner climbing roses
18. Small pond
19. Tennis pavillion
20. Badminton court
21. Landmark tennis courts & current pickle ball courts
22. North end of perimeter wall
23. Remnant of concrete walk
24. Remnant of concrete miniature golf course
25. Pedestrian arch and seating
26. South end of perimeter wall

Site Drainage & Hydrology

The City Hall campus is organized around an existing barranca and the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek, which together function as the primary drainage network for the site. Stormwater runoff generally flows from surrounding higher ground and adjacent developed areas toward these natural low points, where it is conveyed through incised channels that traverse the property. The Middle Stewart Canyon Creek serves as the dominant hydrological feature, collecting flows from smaller tributary barrancas and establishing a clear drainage hierarchy across the site. This system strongly influences site organization, circulation, and the placement of existing and future improvements.

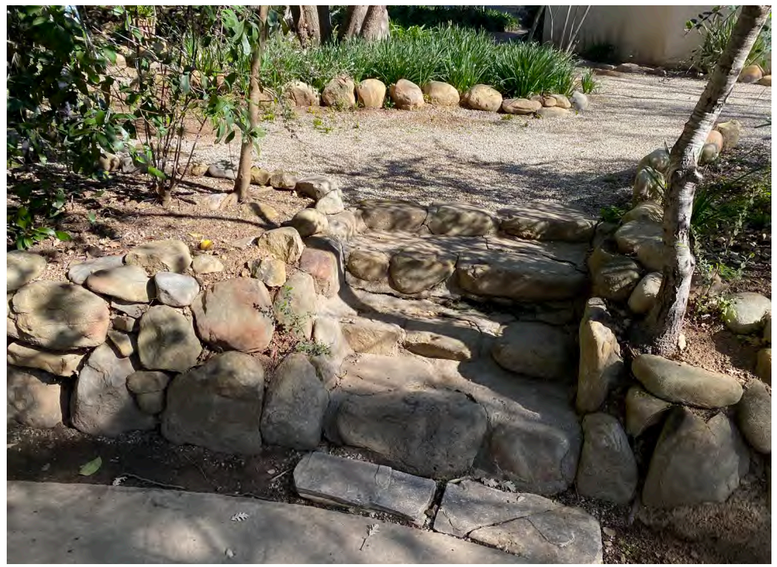


Site Features

In addition to the historic buildings and structures, a variety of site elements have been introduced to the campus over time to support changing needs and uses. As part of the Master Plan process, these features were inventoried and evaluated for their condition, safety, functionality, and continued relevance. Where appropriate, opportunities to preserve, restore, relocate, or repurpose existing elements were considered. While some features remain functional and continue to serve the campus well, others have reached the end of their useful life or no longer support the long-term vision for the site, making repair, replacement, or removal appropriate. The history and original purpose of several site elements remain uncertain; these features may warrant additional research and evaluation by the City as future improvements are undertaken.

Existing Site Elements Identified:

1. Metal shed on the south side of Kent Hall recommend removal
2. Wood deck is in good shape. Recommend retaining.
3. Oak Tree House/staff and commissions did not respond, recommend to address in the future. walkway/uneven pavers, fencing/private patio for Oak Tree House, memorial garden and signage/staff not aware of any documentation, memorial wooden sign/staff not aware of any documentation



4. Existing foot paths to remain/recommend widening and re-surfacing where needed for safety and accessible requirements
5. Planter on west side of city hall at parking lot ingress/egress: to remain or redesign?/ staff and commissions did not respond, recommend to address in the future.
6. Demonstration Garden including operating compost area: wood benches/rotted, compost information posts/missing information, compost kiosk/peeling paint, bulletin board/ in use/consider relocation, tool shed/rot at base/relocate, random raised wood beds/replace, stone edged planters/reuse stone, bench, pond/remove. Due to neglect, age or non functionality, re-purpose or remove and replace per new master plan.

Integral to community use, whether solitary or through programming opportunities, future planning for site features and elements should prioritize thoughtful selection, placement, functionality, and on going maintenance to ensure continuous use and cost effective management.

Biological Resources

The City Hall campus supports a range of native biological resources associated with its oak woodland canopy, riparian corridor, and understory vegetation. Mature coast live oaks provide critical habitat structure, supporting bird species, small mammals, and invertebrates, while also contributing to soil stability and microclimate regulation. The presence of Middle Stewart Canyon Creek and associated barrancas enhances habitat diversity, creating riparian conditions that support increased species richness relative to upland areas and function as wildlife movement corridors within the broader Ojai Valley.

The site's relatively undeveloped condition allows these systems to function with a high degree of ecological integrity; however, some areas may be affected by invasive plant

species, habitat fragmentation, and localized disturbance. The interface between developed and natural areas presents both constraints and opportunities, particularly in maintaining habitat continuity and minimizing edge effects. Sensitive areas are generally concentrated along the creek corridor and within dense oak stands, where root zones and understory vegetation are critical to long-term ecosystem health.

Future planning should prioritize the protection and enhancement of existing biological resources, including preservation of mature trees, restoration of native understory, and removal of invasive species. Establishing buffer zones adjacent to the creek and barrancas, along with limiting disturbance within sensitive habitat areas, will support long-term ecological function. Through careful integration of low-impact design and habitat restoration strategies, the campus can continue to serve as a biologically functional landscape within a civic setting, reinforcing both environmental resilience and the natural character of the site.

Utilities and Easements

The City of Ojai Public Works Department presently does not have a utility plan for the City Hall Campus. Utilities identified on the site survey include one sewer access on the east side and two on the west side of Kent Hall, electric to the existing irrigation controller at the demonstration garden, irrigation boxes, three water meters located separately on Santa Ana Street and one located on the corner of Ventura Street and Santa Ana Street and site hose bibbs throughout. On the south eastern corner of the property are an electric meter, a backflow device and a communication box. Fire hydrants include one at the southeast corner of Ventura Street and Santa Ana and one at the southern boundary of the city owned multi -family residential zoned vacant lot on Ventura Street.

Utilities for the proposed project would most likely be accessed from Kent Hall, the closest and most centrally located existing building to the proposed restroom/s and garden house. Kent Hall has sewer access on the east side, potable water, and electrical. An electric meter and communication box are located on the south eastern portion of the property that could be assessed for use as well.

Known easements include Ventura County's Watershed Protection District which maintains flood control facilities and debris basins within the Middle Stewart Canyon area of Ojai as part of the Ventura River Watershed management. Watershed management includes routine maintenance by sediment removal to restore flow capacity and is conducted by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District to protect downstream residential and commercial areas.
OVGC requested further information about any other easements or encroachments on the property. The results of the request were still in process during the completion of the master plan.



CONSIDERATIONS

Master Plan Goals and Objectives

The Ojai City Hall Campus is an important cultural and natural resource for the community of Ojai. It is also a culturally and ecologically valuable asset for the city. It is home to a historic landmarked site, structures and two buildings as well as an existing demonstration garden and is situated within a native oak woodland and riparian corridor which serve as a natural resource for visitors. This Master Plan presents an opportunity to play an important part in telling the greater story of this eight acre campus and habitat area.

Revitalizing and improving the campus as an ecological resource for study, interpretation, and education as well as passive recreation is a meaningful goal in alignment with the project goals and objectives outlined in Chapter 01 Goals and Objectives:

Valuable Resources: Protect, revitalize and enhance the unique natural and cultural resources of the site.

Community Activity: Provide opportunities for passive recreation, biophilic connection, education, community activity and exploration.

Park Management: Manage the park as a viable ecological resource for the city.

Stewardship: Provide opportunities for both stakeholder and stewardship engagement for on-going, long term park maintenance.

Balancing Culture and Nature - First Principles in Landscape Architecture

Balancing culture and nature begins with a deep understanding of place. Each landscape carries its own ecological rhythms—soil, water, biodiversity—and its cultural heritage—traditions, uses, memories. The first principle is to design in harmony with both. Contextual design respects the "genius loci," weaving local materials, landforms, and native species into the design. Nature isn't just scenery; it's the foundation. Ecological function—like managing stormwater, supporting habitat, and regenerating soil—should be the bedrock upon which cultural layers rest.

Cultural meaning arises when spaces foster human connection. Design must create places for gathering, contemplation, and shared rituals. By embedding cultural references—whether through art, symbolism, or honoring historical traces—landscapes resonate with identity. Equally important is designing for comfort and accessibility—offering shade, seating, and walkability—so people feel at home. These cultural layers thrive when they emerge from an underlying healthy ecosystem, not at its expense.

Finally, achieving balance means thinking over time. Nature changes—plants mature, seasons shift—and cultural life evolves, too. Good design allows for this unfolding: materials gain patina, landscapes invite stewardship, and places reveal new layers over generations. Integration is key: architecture and landscape should merge, and the boundary between built and natural should blur. A balanced landscape is a living, evolving collaboration between the cultural and natural worlds, cared for by the community it serves.

A Historic Site

The Ojai City Hall campus is steeped in a rich history that extends far beyond its time as the Smith-Hobson estate. Long before the ranch era, this land was part of the ancestral territory of the Chumash people, who cherished the Ojai Valley's natural resources, creeks, and oak woodlands. Their presence, culture, and respect for the land form an essential layer of the site's heritage. Any future planning honors this deeper history—recognizing that the land's story began long before European settlement, and that the Chumash heritage is an integral part of the land's identity.

In parallel, the Smith-Hobson era brought its own historical significance, with the estate reflecting early 20th-century ranch life and evolving into today's civic hub. The master plan must respect both these historical layers—ensuring that any landscape or structural interventions reflect the site's past, from the enduring oak woodlands valued by the Chumash, to the historic gardens and structures of the estate era.

Historic Landscape Elements

The site contains several historic landscape features that deserve careful consideration in the master plan. Among them are existing plantings such as boxwoods and roses, which reflect a formal garden tradition that may be adapted to suit contemporary needs. Stone steps, borders, and pottery offer a tangible connection to the site's past, while a deteriorated pergola stands as a structural relic that could be rehabilitated or reimagined. Additionally, an unused badminton court offers the potential for revitalization into a functional community space, while a mini-golf area, less aligned with the site's vision, may be considered for removal.

Our approach will begin with a detailed assessment of each feature. Elements that hold historic or aesthetic value and can be adapted to meet community needs—like the badminton court—may be rehabilitated. Features that no longer serve the site's long-term vision, such as the mini-golf area, may be respectfully removed and archived. Ultimately, each feature will be thoughtfully evaluated for preservation, relocation, or reimagining, ensuring that the landscape's historical character is respected while serving the future needs of the community. Final determination of the historic landscape elements will be made by the City of Ojai.

A New Workshop Building

When considering the addition of a new workshop building on the Ojai City Hall campus, the design must honor both the community's needs and the site's natural and historic character. The building will serve as a flexible space for public meetings, creative workshops, and community classes - it needs to be welcoming, adaptable and accessible. The placement and design of the structure must harmonize with the existing oak trees and topography. The building footprint will be carefully located on a previously identified, gently sloped area outside the protected oak zones, ensuring no disturbance to root systems or canopy.

In terms of design, the building should take cues from the natural surroundings and the historic architecture of the city hall building, using materials that reflect the local environment and keeping a low visual profile. Large windows or open-air features can enhance the connection between indoor activities and the surrounding oak woodland, fostering a sense of place. Additionally, we'll ensure that the building's orientation and access points follow the natural grade and solar orientation, allowing for easy, accessible paths from other parts of the campus, seamlessly blending function with nature.

The Demonstration Gardens

Over the years, the Ojai City Hall Campus has featured the beloved demonstration gardens—spaces where the community has come together to learn, steward, and celebrate local plants and sustainable practices. These gardens have long reflected a collaborative spirit, with residents and local groups contributing to the educational and aesthetic value of the site. However, over time, these cherished spaces have faced neglect, with plantings aging and the vibrancy of the original vision fading.

The new Master Plan Update for the campus seeks to breathe fresh life into the demonstration garden, restoring it as a vibrant educational and community resource. Further developed plans will introduce updated plant material, focusing on native species, climate-appropriate selections, pollinator-friendly plantings, Chumash cultural inspiration, and fire-wise landscaping specific to Ojai's climate. The revitalization will ensure the gardens are not only more resilient but once again serve as a living testament to both the natural beauty of the region and the cooperative spirit of the community.



The Restoration Area

The Ojai City Hall Campus is also home to a significant native habitat area, highlighted by the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek and a native southern California live oak riparian habitat. This area has been carefully monitored and restored under the City of Ojai and The Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration Project with C.R.E.W. and PAX Environmental, Inc. which secured grant funding to manage invasive species and support the native ecosystem. Their efforts have been pivotal in restoring the watershed's natural balance and enhancing biodiversity.

The Master Plan Update will build on this partnership by improving access and appreciation. A new pedestrian bridge will span the creek, offering a long awaited and meaningful connection across the water. Connecting from the bridge, a clear trail will lead visitors through the native habitat up to a proposed meadow and hillside overlook, offering expansive views. By enhancing access, the Master Plan ensures the community can fully experience and appreciate the richness of this native public landscape.

CONSTRAINTS

Analysis of the overall natural setting and civic context reveals many opportunities and constraints upon the future planning of the campus and proposed uses. Many features considered are constraints to one form of improvement and opportunities for another and therefore are listed as both opportunities and constraints.

Protecting Native Trees and Shrubs

A primary constraint on the site is the presence of mature native oak trees, which form a significant and sensitive oak woodland resource. These trees require careful protection, as their root systems extend well beyond the visible canopy and are highly susceptible to disturbance. Development must avoid encroachment within the drip line, with no grading, trenching, compaction, or structural improvements permitted in these areas. Even minor changes to soil conditions or drainage can adversely affect tree health, making it essential to maintain existing grade and permeability.

Protect existing native shrub species, such as Heteromeles arbutifolia, wherever feasible. Site planning should respond to these established trees and shrubs by carefully shaping circulation, gathering spaces, and infrastructure to fit within natural clearings rather than displacing vegetation. Clearly define and enforce tree protection zones throughout both design and construction, incorporating appropriate fencing, monitoring, and best management practices. While these constraints may limit the available buildable area, they also present a valuable opportunity to preserve the site's ecological integrity and strengthen its identity within the native Ojai landscape.

In addition to protecting the existing oak woodland, a recent concern has emerged regarding the loss of several oak trees due to an undetermined disease. At present, the specific cause has not been fully identified, and further investigation is required to guide next steps. It is recommended that tissue and soil sampling be conducted to test for pathogens and assess the potential for disease spread. These findings will inform whether replanting native oaks is appropriate or if alternative native species should be considered to ensure long-term ecological health. In the interim, the remaining oaks should be carefully monitored, and the master plan will remain adaptable - allowing for either restoration of the oak woodland or the introduction of compatible species based on future findings. In all cases, the approach will prioritize a healthy, resilient landscape aligned with the ecological and community vision for the site.



Existing Topography

The natural topography of the northeastern portion of the campus is characterized by gentle slopes, offering both a constraint and a design opportunity. We prioritize working with these existing contours to minimize grading and earthwork. Pathways, gardens and outdoor spaces will follow the natural flow of the land, ensuring minimal disruption and a harmonious connection to the site. This approach helps preserve soil stability, supports natural drainage patterns, and reduces the need for retaining structures. By thoughtfully integrating built elements with the land's natural slope, we aim to foster a seamless, organic relationship between the architecture, gardens, and the natural environment.

The Restoration Area

The site's Middle Stewart Canyon Creek restoration area and riparian corridor represents a sensitive ecological habitat that must be respected in all future planning. This area is critical for habitat, water quality, and erosion control. Any development or landscape modification needs to comply with jurisdictional regulations and permitting requirements, ensuring no negative impact on the riparian habitat or hydrology.

The Smith-Hobson Estate Garden

Historical site elements we have identified that may need addressing due to lack of maintenance, safety issues, or functionality requiring city approval to preserve, rehabilitate, restore, reconstruct or demolish:

- Hobson Barn/Carriage House (rehabilitate)
- wood picnic pergola
- concrete miniature golf section
- wedding arbor
- badminton court - concrete deck and poles (rehabilitate)
- perimeter wall (rehabilitate)
- concrete walk segment (south of tennis/pickleball courts

Plant material identified in period photos, on site, considering availability in the nursery trade and popularity during the late 1800's through 1950's:

- Quercus agrifolia/Coast Live Oak (native)
- Phoenix canariensis/Canary Island Date Palm
- Heteromeles arbutifolia/Toyon (native shrub)
- Buxus microphylla/Boxwood (trimmed hedging)
- Myrtus communis/ Myrtle (tall hedging)
- Spirea species
- Cotoneaster species
- Pyracantha/Firethorn
- Rosa species/Roses (rose garden)
- Iris germanica/German Iris
- Beaucarnea recurvata/Ponytail Palm
- CL. Rosa Cecile Brunner/Cecile Brunner Climbing Rose
- Veltheimia capensis/Sand Lily
- Assorted Bulbs/Rhizomes



OPPORTUNITIES

Renewed Demonstration Gardens

The revitalization and stewardship of the long-neglected demonstration garden is a primary objective of the future of the campus. By removing non-native, invasive plants and replanting with regionally appropriate native species, soil health can be restored and the garden habitat can attract new wildlife and pollinators. The new plantings will emphasize pollinators, wildlife, drought tolerance and firewise landscaping, all showcasing resiliency. The Master Plan also envisions Chumash inspiration, showcasing native plants that were traditionally used and valued by the Chumash people.

Accessible paths will guide visitors through the garden, inviting the community to explore. Along these paths, interpretive signage will offer insight into the significance of the plants, both ecologically and culturally. This garden will not only be a place of beauty but also of learning, fostering a deeper connection between visitors, native flora and fauna, and the cultural heritage that shaped the valley. By restoring these gardens, we create a living, evolving space where history, ecology, and community engagement flourish together.

Restored Historic Gardens

Although site uses and conditions have evolved—resulting in shifts in sun and shade patterns, plant loss, and the introduction of new material—there remains a meaningful opportunity to restore portions of the historic Smith-Hobson Estate gardens. By referencing archival photographs and evaluating existing plant material, the gardens can be thoughtfully adapted to reflect their historic character while accommodating present needs and future use.

Suitable Buildable Areas

To identify potential suitable building areas for a workshop structure, we carefully overlaid two key layers: the protected native oak trees and the gentle, natural topography. First, we mapped out the drip lines of each mature oak, establishing protective zones that are entirely off-limits for construction. These zones not only safeguard the root systems but also define where open spaces—such as shaded gathering areas, outdoor rooms or pathways—can thrive under the oak canopy.

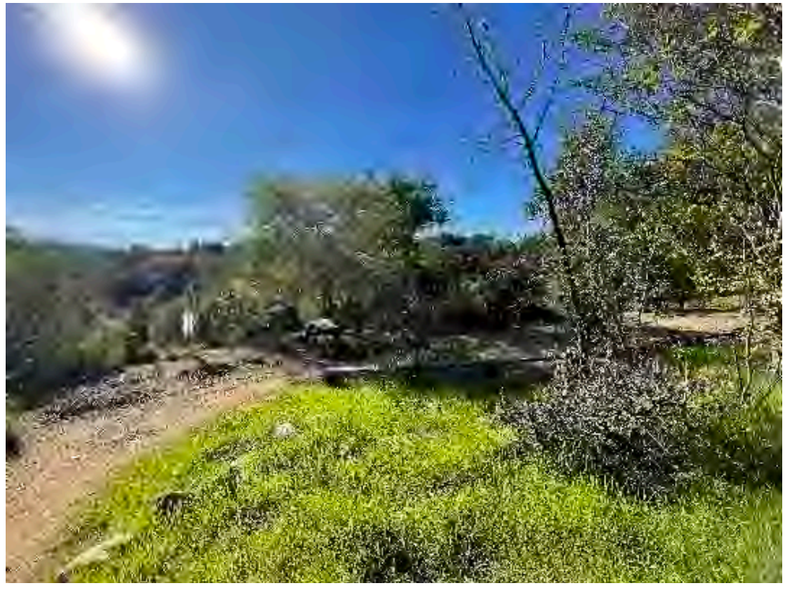
Next, we assessed the topography, focusing on flatter portions of the site or areas with gentle slopes that require minimal grading. By overlaying these contours alongside the oak protection zones, we pinpointed areas that are both clear of tree constraints and gently sloped. In these chosen spots, the workshop structure can be nestled into the landscape, preserving the natural character while minimizing site disturbance.

Sustainable Food Production

The removal of some large, invasive Eucalyptus trees will provide the space needed for a desired fruit tree orchard and community food garden that can serve as opportunities for engagement and education. The orchard will feature climate-appropriate fruit trees and the food garden will add a connection to the land's agricultural roots, inviting the community to participate in cultivating their own food, fostering a sense of ownership, healthy living, and sustainability.

Both the orchard and the food garden will be thoughtfully integrated into the overall landscape, with access paths, picnic tables and opportunities for workshops or community gatherings. The principles of hügelkultur can be implemented and highlighted as a demonstration feature for the orchard. Applying this sustainable method of building raised beds with decaying wood and organic matter will enhance soil fertility and water retention. The orchard will be a place for community members to learn about sustainable practices and experience the joys of tending to the land, while the vegetable garden will foster community involvement and sustainable food cultivation.

These spaces will support intergenerational learning, inviting people to come together, share knowledge about sustainable growing, and enjoy the fruits—both literal and metaphorical—of their collective efforts.



Repurposing Site Materials

Salvage and repurpose on-site materials to support sustainable design and reinforce the site's character. Utilize soil for cob plastering, eucalyptus for structural or architectural elements, and oak branches for hügelkultur and other regenerative landscape strategies. Incorporate reclaimed materials into primitive or site-responsive furnishings, and reuse organic matter as mulch where appropriate. Evaluate existing estate gardens for opportunities to transplant viable plant material as conditions evolve. Retain and repurpose rock borders and salvageable lumber from existing structures, particularly where modifications or removals occur, to extend the life and story of site materials.

A Creekside Habitat

An important opportunity in the Master Plan is to continue the restoration of the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek riparian corridor and adjacent areas. The recent removal of invasive species and the reintroduction of native plants has directly improved the creek's ecological balance and water flow in the creek has since returned. Native hillside grasses currently exist on the southwestern portion of the site adjacent to the creek and the potential to enhance these species should be considered.

A Pedestrian Bridge

By building a pedestrian bridge and designating clearly marked trails, the entire campus will be united, bridging the natural divide that the creek currently creates. The creek has long been a defining feature, bisecting the site, but with the bridge, visitors can experience both areas seamlessly. The new trail will invite people to wander across the creek and up the adjacent hillside to an overlook, connecting previously isolated spaces, and providing a continuous loop that allows the community to fully appreciate and engage with the entire site.



Pedestrian Connectivity

An important opportunity in the master plan is to significantly improve pedestrian connectivity across the site, creating a more unified and accessible campus. By enhancing and formalizing pathways, the design will establish clear, intuitive routes that link key destinations—such as gardens, gathering spaces, and civic buildings—into a cohesive network. These improvements will reduce fragmentation and make it easier for visitors to navigate and experience the site as a whole.

The Master Plan also seeks to establish ADA-accessible pathways that respond to site topography, enabling users to navigate a significant portion of the main campus comfortably and safely. Routes will be designed to follow gentle grades, minimize barriers, and integrate seamlessly with the existing topography. Through these enhancements, the site will become more inclusive, legible, and connected—supporting both everyday use and community events while reinforcing a strong sense of place.

Improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to the site from downtown Ojai, Libbey Park and the Ojai Valley Trail include a 4-way cross walk at the intersection of Santa Ana and Ventura Streets, maintaining the mulched path along Ventura Street to the existing historic pedestrian entry at the eastern wall, and strategic locations at points of entry to accommodate bicycle parking, contributing to safer routes and functionality.

Stormwater Capture

A key opportunity in the master plan is to implement a robust stormwater capture system, specifically targeting roof runoff from the existing buildings, the new workshop building and street runoff from Ventura Street. By channeling rainwater into newly designed rain gardens, runoff is slowed allowing water to infiltrate the soil. The rain gardens will be thoughtfully planted with native species that not only beautify the site but also help filter pollutants and support habitat.

In addition to improving water quality, the rain gardens will help mitigate erosion during heavy rain events by capturing and slowing the water before it reaches the creek or surrounding areas. This approach also aligns with the site's broader sustainability goals, enhancing soil health by increasing infiltration. As a result, the rain gardens will be a visible and functional testament to the campus's commitment to water stewardship and environmental resilience.



OVERVIEW

Basis of Design: Key Concepts

- **Regenerative Design**
- **Public Use**
- **Historic Landscape Elements**

Regenerative Design

Regenerative Design is a systems-based approach that goes beyond sustainability by actively restoring and improving the ecological and cultural health of a site. It emphasizes working with natural processes—such as hydrology, soil systems, and plant communities—to increase biodiversity, strengthen resilience, and create landscapes that evolve positively over time while supporting human use and connection.

This Master Plan is grounded in regenerative design principles that aim not only to sustain but to actively restore and enhance the ecological health of the site. The design works with the existing landform by minimizing grading and responding to natural contours, reducing disturbance and preserving the integrity of the landscape. Key ecological resources, including the native oak woodland, are protected and reinforced as vital habitat systems. Site planning also considers solar orientation and shade to optimize microclimates, improve user comfort, and support appropriate plant selection. Existing materials are repurposed where feasible to reduce waste and maintain continuity with the site's character.

In addition, the plan prioritizes water-sensitive design strategies, including stormwater capture and infiltration, to support groundwater recharge and reduce runoff. Native and climate-appropriate plant palettes, along with drought-tolerant and fire-wise landscaping, further enhance resilience. By integrating these strategies, the design supports soil health, biodiversity, and long-term ecological function, creating a landscape that is both adaptive and regenerative over time.

Public Use

The campus is envisioned as an accessible and welcoming civic landscape that encourages community engagement, education, and passive recreation. The master plan introduces improved circulation, including accessible pathways, defined trails, and a pedestrian bridge that connects the hillside meadow to the rest of the site. A new workshop building is carefully sited to respond to existing oak tree canopy and slope conditions, minimizing grading while preserving the natural character of the landscape. Nature-based play areas are incorporated to provide informal, exploratory spaces that foster interaction with the environment, particularly for younger users. Gathering spaces, demonstration gardens, and interpretive opportunities support learning and community connection, while strategically placed viewpoints and trails are designed to capture and highlight scenic vistas across the site.

Enhancing usability and accessibility ensures the campus can serve a broad range of users while maintaining a strong connection to the natural environment. The design promotes a balance between active and passive use, encouraging stewardship and daily engagement while respecting the ecological systems that define the site.

Historic Landscape Elements

This Master Plan acknowledges the historical context of the Chumash heritage and the Smith-Hobson Estate and responds in a manner that is consistent with applicable preservation guidelines, while allowing the site to evolve to meet current and future needs. Existing historic elements within the landscape are evaluated and selectively retained or adapted where appropriate. The approach is not to fully restore the site to a single historical period, but rather to respect its legacy while supporting a more functional and resilient landscape.

Design interventions are intentionally subtle, with an emphasis on compatibility rather than replication. Materials, spatial organization, and landscape elements are considered in relation to the site's history without allowing them to constrain the overall vision. This balanced approach ensures that historic character is acknowledged and preserved where necessary, while enabling a forward-looking design that prioritizes usability, ecological performance, and community benefit.

REGENERATIVE DESIGN

1. Design site features and landscape areas to be compatible with existing native habitat and restoration areas, while protecting and preserving the integrity of the native oak woodland and tree canopy.

• Establish a balanced approach that supports community use and civic programming while prioritizing habitat protection and ecological health across the campus.

• Protect existing native oak woodland and tree canopy by siting improvements outside of tree protection zones and sensitive root areas, and by implementing appropriate tree protection measure.

• Site the new workshop building and restroom to avoid impacts to existing oak trees and sensitive root zones.

• Build upon existing restoration efforts by coordinating with established restoration areas, removing invasive species, and reestablishing native plant communities.

• Repurpose existing eucalyptus trees and removed materials for sustainable on-site uses such as nature play elements, hügelkultur, site furnishings, mulch, and building materials.

2. Minimize site grading by working with existing landforms and contours when designing pathways, gathering areas and site structures.

• Minimize site grading by utilizing existing contours in the design of pathways, gathering areas, play spaces and gardens.

• Site the new workshop building and restroom in areas with gentle slopes to reduce grading and site disturbance.

• Utilize and enhance existing pathways and open spaces wherever feasible to minimize disruption to established habitats.

3. Design site features and landscape areas to complement and enhance the natural landscape, while responding appropriately to the surrounding context and ecological conditions.

• Organize site zoning and program areas based on compatibility with existing site geography, natural features, and surrounding landscape—locating more active uses in already developed areas and preserving quieter, more natural zones for passive use.

• Locate restroom facilities in strategic, centralized locations that maximize accessibility, meet ADA requirements, and connect efficiently to existing sewer infrastructure.

• Improve on-site water quality and ecological performance by incorporating rain gardens and bioswales in key locations to capture, filter, and infiltrate stormwater from existing site and roof runoff.

• Respond to existing sun and shade patterns when siting site features and outdoor use areas to enhance user comfort, support plant health, and optimize seasonal use.

• Preserve and frame existing views as opportunities for quiet respite, reflection, and connection to the surrounding landscape.

• Respect and integrate existing site features where appropriate, allowing the design to build upon the site's established character and ecological function.

• Provide bicycle parking and clear wayfinding signage in key locations to support accessibility, orientation, and ease of movement throughout the campus.

4. Methods and Materials: Design and material selection should prioritize sustainability, resource efficiency, and responsiveness to the site's ecological and climatic conditions.

• Repurpose site elements typically slated for demolition for reuse on-site, including wood and trimmings from removed trees, stone borders, and other natural materials, incorporating them into landscape features, site furnishings, and garden elements.

• Utilize thoughtful plant selection strategies that respond to the local climate, site conditions, and specific program areas across the campus.

• In the Historic Estate Gardens, draw from the existing garden palette and incorporate era-appropriate or compatible plant species that reflect the character of the original landscape while supporting long-term sustainability.

• Within the Restoration Area, prioritize the use of indigenous and endemic plant species that align with existing native plant communities and support habitat restoration goals.

• In the Discovery Corner, incorporate child-friendly and pollinator-supportive plant selections that encourage interaction, learning, and habitat awareness.

• Within the Workshop Hub, utilize plant species that reflect Chumash uses while also being climate-appropriate and fire-wise, serving as an educational model for sustainable residential and community landscapes.

• Implement smart irrigation systems, including weather-based controllers and low volume emitters to optimize water use efficiency and respond to seasonal and climatic conditions.

• Support soil health through on-site composting of green waste and the reapplication of organic material to build soil structure, increase water retention, and enhance soil biology, while reducing overall waste streams.



PUBLIC USE

1. Provide opportunities for visitors to experience solitude, respite, and meaningful connection within the natural landscape.

• Ensure that all site improvements reinforce and enhance the natural character of the landscape, strengthening visitors' connection to the surrounding environment.

• Provide opportunities for walking, resting, and informal gathering—such as quiet seating and picnicking—throughout the gardens and natural open areas.

• Design site features and structures to be subtle, low-impact, and thoughtfully integrated, so as not to detract from the natural setting.

• Preserve and highlight scenic viewpoints and trail experiences that encourage reflection, contemplation, and appreciation of the surrounding habitat.

2. Provide opportunities for passive use and low-impact activities that are compatible with the site's natural character.

•Design harmonious spaces and pathways that support passive recreation, such as walking, birdwatching, and quiet reflection, while maintaining a strong connection to the surrounding landscape.

• Provide low-impact gathering spaces that accommodate small groups and informal use, carefully balanced with the surrounding habitat and respectful of the site's natural ecological rhythms.

• Incorporate multi-use areas designed for all ages, including an orchard, community edible gardens, nature-based play areas, and a new small-scale stone amphitheater, to support flexible and inclusive programming.

• Enhance existing picnic areas and introduce additional picnic seating in key locations to support informal gathering and day-to-day use.

• Support increased public use by improving the functionality and character of existing amenities, including the event lawn and the historic badminton court.

• Maintain and support the continuation of existing uses that have historically occurred on the site, including the demonstration gardens, while acknowledging that the existing pickleball courts are excluded from this Master Plan and will remain in operation.

3. Educate and inspire through interactive, place-based learning and demonstration of sustainable landscape practices.

•Design educational gardens that showcase resilient landscape strategies, including native and drought-tolerant planting, as well as fire-wise design, to demonstrate best practices for the region.

• Increase public awareness of stormwater management and water quality by integrating visible and functional features such as native rain gardens and bioswales.

• Provide opportunities for children and families to engage directly with nature through pollinator gardens and nature-based play elements, including features constructed from repurposed tree materials.
• Enhance and rehabilitate existing estate gardens while creating opportunities to interpret and share the rich cultural and historical context of the site.

• Promote understanding of local ecology through the integration of interpretive and interactive signage throughout the demonstration gardens, restoration areas, and at key destinations such as the new workshop building.

4. Promote public safety through accessible, well-connected, and thoughtfully designed circulation and site amenities.

• Improve ADA accessibility by providing continuous, universally accessible pathways along primary circulation routes, ensuring equitable access across the site.

• Provide clearly defined paths and trails that are sensitively integrated into the natural landscape, guiding movement while minimizing environmental impact.

• Strengthen connectivity within the circulation network by linking existing paths and trails, eliminating gaps, and improving overall site navigation and flow.

• Provide accessible parking, bicycle parking, restrooms, and wayfinding signage in key locations to support safe, convenient, and intuitive use of the site.

• Ensure site design maintains appropriate visibility, clear sightlines, and access for emergency and maintenance vehicles where needed.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

1. Respect and thoughtfully integrate historic landscape features, ensuring their preservation, adaptation, or reimagining in a manner that honors the site's heritage while supporting future community needs.

• Enhance and rehabilitate existing estate garden elements, including boxwood hedges and rose plantings, to maintain their historic character while improving overall health and appearance.

• Preserve existing stone features—such as steps, borders, and garden walls—in place where feasible, or carefully relocate and reconstruct them if necessary to accommodate site improvements.

• Evaluate the future of the existing pergola in coordination with the City of Ojai. Due to its deteriorated condition, the structure may require rehabilitation or replacement while the existing site may be reimagined to better align with the long-term vision for the campus.

• Rehabilitate the unused historic badminton court by resurfacing for adaptive reuse for alternative uses to improve functionality, safety, and user comfort.

• Consider rehabilitation or removal of the existing mini-golf installation, as it no longer aligns with the overall vision and future use of the site in it's existing condition.

2. Respect and integrate existing historic site elements by incorporating compatible materials and designing new landscape features and structures in a way that reflects, reinforces, or enhances the character and integrity of those historic resources.

• Select materials, colors and textures for new elements that are sympathetic to the historic context and do not visually compete with or diminish existing features.

• Design new landscape and built interventions to complement established spatial patterns, circulation systems, and the historic organization of the site, enhancing the site's character through a balanced integration of contemporary design and the overarching site vision.

• Use contemporary design approaches that interpret and highlight historic features rather than replicate them, ensuring clarity between old and new.

• Enhance the visibility and understanding of historic elements through thoughtful placement, framing views, and subtle integration of site improvements.

3. Create meaningful opportunities to educate and inspire visitors by highlighting the rich cultural and historical layers of the site, including its origins as part of the ancestral lands of the Chumash people and its legacy as the Smith-Hobson Estate.

• Integrate interpretive elements—such as signage, exhibits, and storytelling features—that communicate the cultural, historical and ecological significance of the site.

• Collaborate with local partners and cultural representatives to ensure that the history of the Chumash people is respectfully and accurately represented.

• Incorporate historic landscape elements, materials, and spatial patterns that reflect the character and legacy of the Smith-Hobson Estate.

• Provide opportunities for educational programming, guided tours, and community events that deepen public understanding of the site's history and its ongoing evolution.



California Historical Building Code (CHBC)

One of California's most valuable tools for the preservation of historic resources is the California Historical Building Code (CHBC), which is defined in Sections 18950 to 18961 of Division 13, Part 2.7 of Health and Safety Code (H&SC). The CHBC is intended to save California's architectural heritage by recognizing the unique construction issues inherent in maintaining and adaptively reusing historic buildings. The CHBC provides alternative building regulations for permitting repairs, alterations and additions necessary for the preservation, rehabilitation, relocation, related construction, change of use, or continued use of a "qualified historical building or structure."

The California Historical Building Code (CHBC) plays a critical role in balancing two important objectives: preserving the historical integrity of California's treasured buildings and structures while ensuring that they are safe and accessible for all, including individuals with disabilities. Unlike standard building codes, which may require substantial alterations that compromise a building's historical value, the CHBC offers flexibility to ensure that these buildings meet modern safety and accessibility requirements without losing their unique character making them usable for current and future generations.

Section 18955 of the Health and Safety Code defines a "qualified historical building or structure" as "any structure or property, collection of structures, and their associated sites deemed of importance to the history, architecture, or culture of an area by an appropriate local or state governmental jurisdiction. This shall include structures on existing or future national, state or local historical registers or official inventories, such as the National Register of Historic Places, State Historical Landmarks, State Points of Historical Interest, and city or county registers or inventories of historical or architecturally significant sites, places, historic districts, or landmarks. This shall also include places, locations, or sites identified on these historical registers or official inventories and deemed of importance to the history, architecture, or culture of an area by an appropriate local or state governmental jurisdiction."





THE MASTER PLAN

The Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan presents a vision for a civic landscape that supports a range of passive recreational uses while enhancing the site's unique ecological and cultural features. The campus is designed to provide opportunities for community gathering, nature-based education, and everyday enjoyment, while preserving and restoring its native habitat, including the oak woodland and the riparian corridor of Middle Stewart Canyon Creek. A variety of landscape spaces are integrated throughout the site, including demonstration gardens, pollinator gardens, rain gardens, orchards, and open gathering areas that support informal recreation, picnicking, and community events.

The Master Plan includes a network of circulation routes that provide access throughout the campus and connect key destinations, including a pedestrian bridge that extends access across the creek for the first time. A primary circulation path is designed to be ADA accessible, ensuring inclusive access to key areas of the site. Secondary paths take the form of more naturalistic trails, offering opportunities for exploration and a closer connection to the landscape, while remaining intentionally low-impact and responsive to existing site conditions. Educational and interpretive opportunities are thoughtfully incorporated throughout the site—within gardens, along paths, and at key nodes such as the proposed workshop building and children's nature center—to promote awareness of local ecology, water systems, and the cultural history of the site.

The plan identifies areas for low-impact community use, including an outdoor amphitheater, nature-based play areas, and enhanced picnic and gathering spaces. Existing features, such as estate gardens and the historic badminton court, are rehabilitated and integrated into the overall design, while underutilized elements are reimagined to better align with the long-term vision. Site improvements are guided by principles of regenerative design, emphasizing minimal grading, stormwater capture, native planting, and long-term stewardship.

Implementation of the Master Plan is anticipated to occur in phases and will provide a flexible framework that can adapt to evolving community needs over time. While specific uses may continue to evolve, the overall direction of the plan prioritizes ecological restoration, passive recreation, and meaningful public engagement. The Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan establishes a cohesive and forward-looking approach to creating a resilient, accessible, and inspiring civic landscape that will serve the Ojai community for generations to come.



Four Program Areas

The campus is organized around four primary program areas that structure the overall experience of the site.

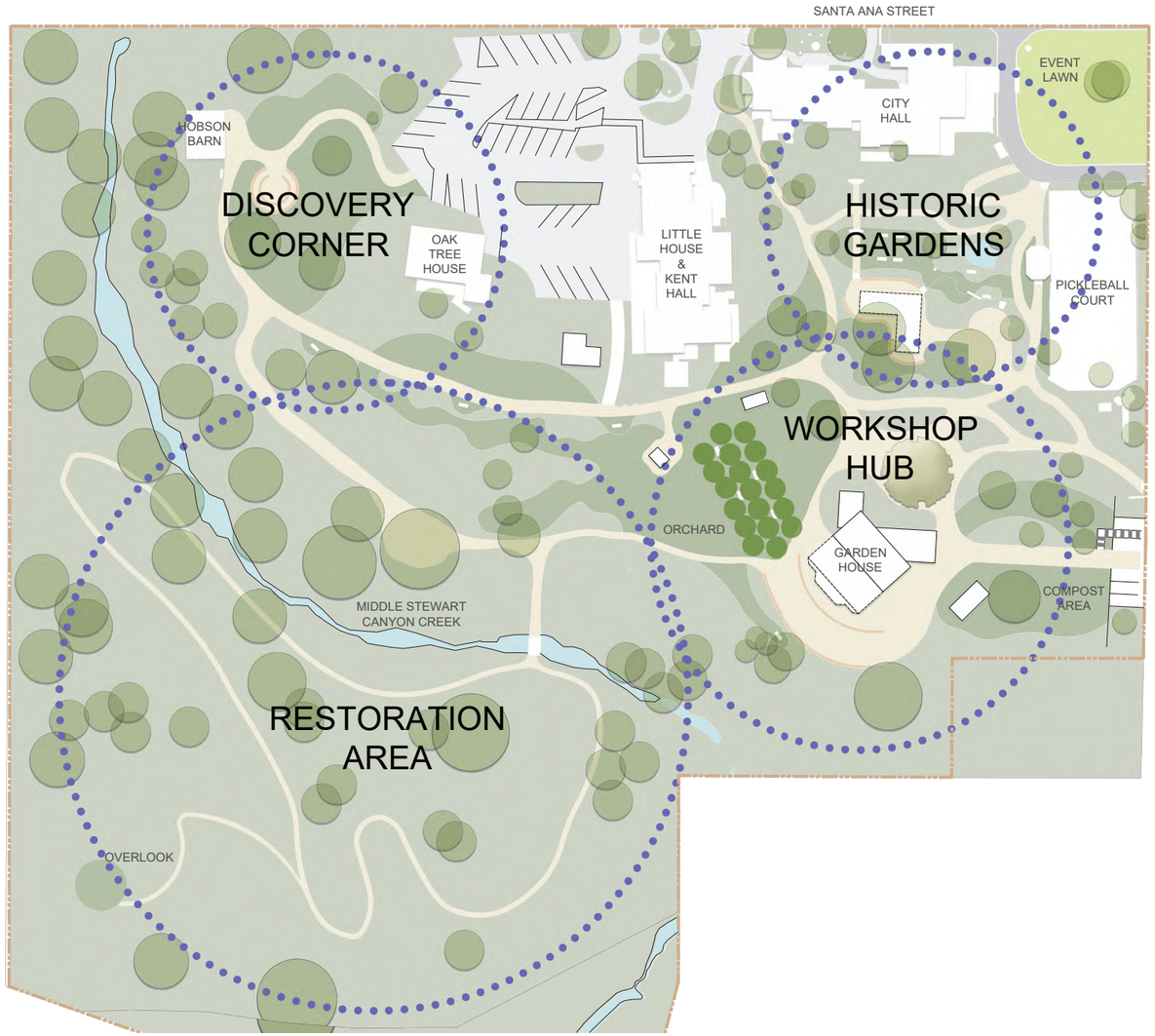
•The Historic Gardens: centered around the existing City Hall building and include the legacy Smith-Hobson Estate gardens, which are preserved and enhanced to reflect the site's historic character.

•The Workshop Hub: focuses on renewed demonstration gardens, a new orchard, community garden beds, and the proposed workshop building, creating a central area for learning, gathering, and hands-on engagement.

•The Discovery Corner: located around the existing Hobson Barn which will be restored and adapted as a discovery library or children's nature gallery, and will include nature-based play areas and pollinator gardens.

•The Restoration Area : encompasses the riparian corridor and habitat restoration zones, featuring a new pedestrian bridge and trail system that leads to a hillside overlook, offering expanded access and views into the natural landscape.

The following pages provide details to the Master Plan organized by these four program areas of the campus.





OJAI CITY HALL CAMPUS
LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN

1. Play Area
2. Amphitheatre
3. Pollinator Gardens
4. Restroom
5. View Point
6. Shed
7. Raingarden
8. Pergola
9. Formal Garden
10. Picnic Area
11. Multi-Use Area
12. Oak Tree Seating
13. View Terrace
14. Bioswale
15. Parking
16. Shaded Area
17. Bridge Crossing
18. Restoration Trail
19. Meadow Overlook
20. Badminton Court
21. Mini Golf Remnants
22. Wedding Arbor

Planted Landscape Area

Mulched Area

NORTH

0 15' 30' 60' 90' 120'

Public Art

The City of Ojai is widely recognized as a vibrant and thriving arts enclave. The City's commitment to the arts is institutionalized through the City of Ojai Arts Commission which exists to nurture both arts and artists. The Arts Commission encourages the flow of art into the valley and stimulates art and cultural activities. The Arts Commission also makes recommendations for art acquisitions and proposals for public artworks to the City Council and acts as an adviser on all matters pertaining to the arts for the community.



The campus offers an opportunity for expanded public access through art tours, art events and the possibility of expanding the City's art collections to the outdoors with sculptures and other relevant art.

Excluded Areas

Note the following buildings and site elements and landscaped areas north of City Hall are not included within the scope of this Master Plan:

City Hall building (landmarked)
Little House
Kent Hall
Oak Tree House
Pickle ball courts/Estate tennis courts (landmarked)
landscape on north side of City Hall buildings

Material Reuse and Regenerative Design: From Removal to Renewal

As part of the site's regenerative strategy, select invasive and fire-prone trees will be removed and repurposed for on-site use. Reclaimed wood will be incorporated into nature-based play elements, rustic site furnishings, and interior finishes within the new workshop building—reducing waste while reinforcing a strong connection to the site's natural character.

Landscape Design and Fire Prevention

The Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan proposes an educational and site-specific approach to fire prevention and risk reduction across the 8.79-acre site. Due to the nature of the site including historic and landmarked buildings and structures, historic estate gardens, the restoration area, and the educational demonstration garden, site design emphasizes rather than follows specifics for the defensible space, fuel management, and the use of fire-wise landscape strategies to reduce wildfire risk while maintaining the ecological integrity of the campus through a specified maintenance program and informational signage. Circulation routes, including the primary accessible vehicle rated entrance pathway on Ventura Street and designated service access points, are designed to provide appropriate access for emergency response where required.

1993 Libbey Park Master Plan Area G Recommendations

The proposed master plan for the city hall campus is consistent or partially consistent with the 1993 Libbey Park Master Plan Area G recommendations in seven out of ten areas. Non consistency in three areas was mainly due to changes in existing site uses or wants in the community making the recommendations no longer relevant. The particular not consistent areas included the tennis court now functioning as pickle ball courts, senior services provided by Help of Ojai have generally moved off site and parking although an ongoing discussion item asking is there enough, minor parking is proposed in the master plan to the primary entrance on Ventura Street.

Item #	1993 Recommendations	2026 Recommendations and Comments
1	Provide a parking area on the site of the old tennis court, which may also be used for the future expansion of city hall.	Not consistent.The tennis court has been rehabilitated for adaptive reuse as pickle ball courts and no immediate plans call for expansion of city hall. Kent Hall and Oak Tree House are now operating as a chamber for city council, and as offices for city business.
2	Renovate the garden area behind city hall and expand its outdoor use for weddings and other functions.	The new master plan is consistent with the 1993 recommendation.
3	Continue the trail system connection across Ventura St from Libbey Park, through the compost demonstration garden to city hall, the senior center and across the barranca to the westerly knoll.	With slight modifications the new master plan is consistent with the 1993 recommendation to continue trail system from compost demonstration garden to city hall, restroom, across barranca to westerly knoll, and to Hobson barn.
4	Provide a plaza adjacent to the senior center of interlocking pavers & an expanded wood deck to provide an attractive outdoor space while permitting truck access to the lower part of the senior center building.	Partially consistent. The senior center has been relocated off site. The expanded wood deck has been installed. Truck access into the site is addressed with the new master plan.
5	Reorganize the vehicular circulation at the senior center to provide a drop-off and safe pedestrian access from Santa Ana St.	Partially consistent.The senior center has been moved off site. A safe pedestrian path has been installed across Santa Ana St. Proposed access into the site has been identified as entry points from the parking area.
6	Provide additional parking on the dead end portion of Santa Ana St.	Not consistent. Additional parking is not addressed on the dead end portion of Santa Ana St.
7	In the meadow south of the senior center provide horseshoes, bacci ball, croquet and a putting green.	Not consistent.The senior center has moved off site and community needs for the area have changed to nature based activities.
8	South of the city hall garden an area is designated for community garden plots & a park maintenance yard. In conjunction with this, a compost demonstration garden is presently being constructed.	Partially Consistent. The new master plan proposes a rejuvenation of the existing demonstration garden and compost areas. A park maintenance yard is not proposed.
9	Establish the stable building as a craft center and outdoor classroom patio.	The new master plan is consistent with rehabilitating the Hobson Barn for adaptive reuse as a children's nature center and workshop area and outdoor classroom.
10	The area across the creek remains as open space with a trail & bridge providing access to an overlook meadow on the knoll.	The new master plan is consistent with the 1993 recommendation.

HISTORIC GARDENS

Overview

Located at the northeastern edge of the campus along Santa Ana Street and Ventura Avenue, the Historic Gardens form a central civic, cultural, and social core for the Ojai City Hall Campus. This area includes the City Hall building, the historic event lawn, and a collection of legacy landscape features associated with the Smith-Hobson Estate. The Master Plan recognizes the importance of preserving the character and identity of this landscape while making targeted improvements to enhance usability, accessibility, and long-term stewardship.

The historic gardens are envisioned as a flexible and welcoming setting that supports both everyday use and more intimate gatherings. The space is designed to accommodate weddings, small events, and community celebrations, anchored by the expanded event lawn and complemented by smaller, more intimate gathering areas throughout the gardens. The landscape will be enhanced with a thoughtful mix of native plantings and existing ornamental species—such as boxwood hedges, roses, and assorted bulbs—reflecting the historic garden character while aligning with broader ecological goals. New rain gardens will be integrated into the design to capture and filter stormwater, contributing to both site function and educational value.

Several existing features within the historic gardens will be preserved and enhanced as part of the plan. The Children's Memorial Garden, enclosed by its distinctive boxwood hedges, will be enhanced by adjacent renovations while maintaining its intimate and contemplative character. The existing pond will remain as a defining landscape element. Historic stone features - including steps, borders, and garden walls - will be protected in place or carefully re-aligned to integrate with the renewed design. The historic badminton court will be resurfaced with decomposed granite to allow for continued use in a more accessible and comfortable manner. In addition, several mature native oak trees will be carefully protected in place, preserving their significant canopy and providing valuable shade for adjacent gathering areas, including picnic spaces.

Other elements will be selectively rehabilitated or reconfigured to improve the overall cohesion and functionality of the space. The deteriorated wood picnic arbor is proposed for rehabilitation or reconstruction to be determined by the city. The area formerly occupied by the arbor, along with the adjacent badminton court, will be reimagined as a more unified and flexible gathering space, likely incorporating a decomposed granite surface with picnic tables and shaded seating beneath the existing oak canopy. Remnants of the former mini-golf installation will be rehabilitated or removed, including underlying concrete, to restore the landscape and allow for more appropriate use of the area.

Circulation

Accessibility and connectivity are key components of the Historic Gardens improvements. A new ADA-accessible pathway and gentle slope will be introduced to connect the event lawn to the areas behind City Hall, creating a seamless transition into the demonstration garden and linking to the primary campus circulation path. This connection strengthens the relationship between the Historic Gardens and the broader campus, allowing visitors to move easily between formal garden spaces and more naturalistic areas.

Plant Palette

Replacement planting will draw inspiration from plant material identified in period photographs and observed on-site, with consideration given to availability in the nursery trade and species commonly used from the late 1800s through the 1950s. This reference palette may include Coast Live Oak (Quercus agrifolia), Canary Island Date Palm (Phoenix canariensis), Toyon (Heteromeles arbutifolia), Boxwood (Buxus microphylla) for trimmed hedging, and Myrtle (Myrtus communis) for taller hedges, along with species such as Spirea, Cotoneaster, Pyracantha, and a variety of roses—including the climbing Cecile Brunner. Additional plantings such as German Iris (Iris germanica), Ponytail Palm (Beaucarnea recurvata), Sand Lily (Veltheimia capensis), and assorted bulbs and rhizomes may also inform the planting approach.

While these species serve as a valuable historical reference, final plant selection will be carefully evaluated to ensure compatibility with current environmental conditions, water-use efficiency and the surrounding native landscape. The resulting palette will balance historic character with long-term sustainability, resilience, and ecological appropriateness.

Together, these improvements create a cohesive, functional, and resilient landscape that honors the historical significance of the site while supporting its evolving role as a vibrant civic and social gathering space. The historic gardens will continue to serve as a place of connection, reflection, and celebration - grounded in history and thoughtfully adapted for the future.

Historic Landmarked Structures and Elements

Existing historical site structures are not referenced consistently nor in detail in the Smith-Hobson Deed of 1973, Resolution no. 17-44 which dedicated the site as Landmark 23 described as City Hall structure and grounds known as the Smith-Hobson House, Structures and Estate, and the Addendum to Phase 1 Historic Resource Inventory Report by Provenience Group.

Site structures referenced above were addressed during site analysis preliminarily for safety, material wear, rehabilitation possibilities including potential functionality and for adaptive reuse. Note, not all items listed in the Consideration Tiers below were listed in the above documents. We included site structures referenced and items known or presumed historic due to site context and appearance of period materials and finishes.

The Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties chart was used as a reference along with the consideration to use the California State Historical Building Code where site structures do not or will not meet current building code standards.

Site elements were itemized and assessed with a tier one and tier two recommendation with tier one being the priority recommendation. Recommendations were made based on feedback received by both the Planning and Historic Preservation Commissions to generally keep and rehabilitate the site structures. Feasibility of the site structures should be determined during the design development phase, and after a thorough assessment by outside consultants prior to public use for safety reasons.

We recommend further analysis for the structures depending on future function by either a structural engineer and or a general contractor.





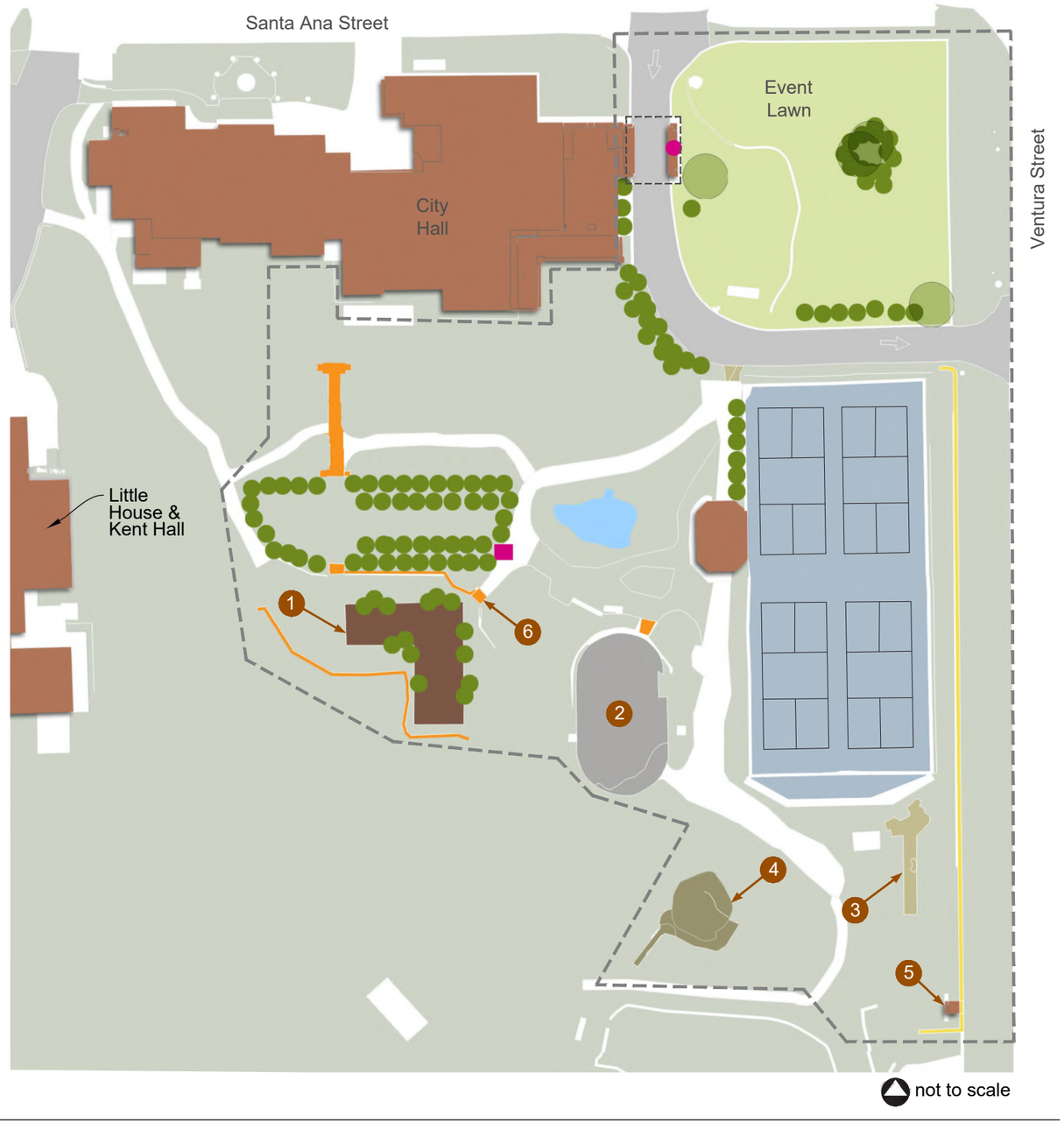
Historic Landmarked Structures and Elements - Proposed Recommendation Tiers

Item #	Description	Tier 1 Recommendation	Tier 2 Recommendation
A	Miniature golf remnant	Rehabilitate by replacing missing rock, add drainage outlets to surrounding moat, consider planting moat rather than reestablishing a water feed line, pump and filtration for ease of maintenance. Remove Pinus spp. sapling and seedlings and Pistacia atlantica (invasive species).	Photo/digital documentation and remove.
B	Wedding arbor	Relocate to event lawn area (rehabilitated rose garden). Rehabilitate by repairing concrete pad, support posts, replacing members as needed. Consider repainting to period color palette, for example door and window trim treatment at City Hall. Replant with period climbing roses.	Photo/digital documentation and remove.
C	Wood pergola & picnic area	Analysis and report per structural engineer to determine feasibility of structure. Replace wood members with rotted wood. Raise height and widen footprint for safer and better function. Realign entrance to structure from existing stone steps . Considerations: Existing oak and east leaning limb, Historic Building Code.	If not feasible per structural engineer report, demolish and rebuild maintaining original structural elements where feasible. Allow for height and width adjustment.
D	Hobson Barn	Rehabilitation/adaptive reuse.	Analysis and report per structural engineer for building and adjacent slope on west side of building.
E	Badminton court	Rehabilitate by replacing cracked and lifted concrete surface with stabilized decomposed granite, reuse for events, workshops.	
F	Perimeter wall & pedestrian entry (east side of property)	Repair cracked wing south side of pedestrian entry.	
G	Concrete walk remnant (from pedestrian entry at east wall to tennis court/ pickle ball court)	No longer functional, impeding on adjacent coast live oak. Recommend removal or re-purpose concrete depending on reinforcement.	
H	Stone steps, stacked stone walls and rock borders	All to remain unless repair is needed or modifications to paths for accessibility purposes.	

HISTORIC LANDMARKED
STRUCTURES AND ELEMENTS

1. Wood structure and picnic area
2. Badminton court
3. Concrete walk remnant
4. miniature golf course remnant
5. Perimeter wall wing & pedestrian entry
6. Stacked stone walls, steps and rock borders

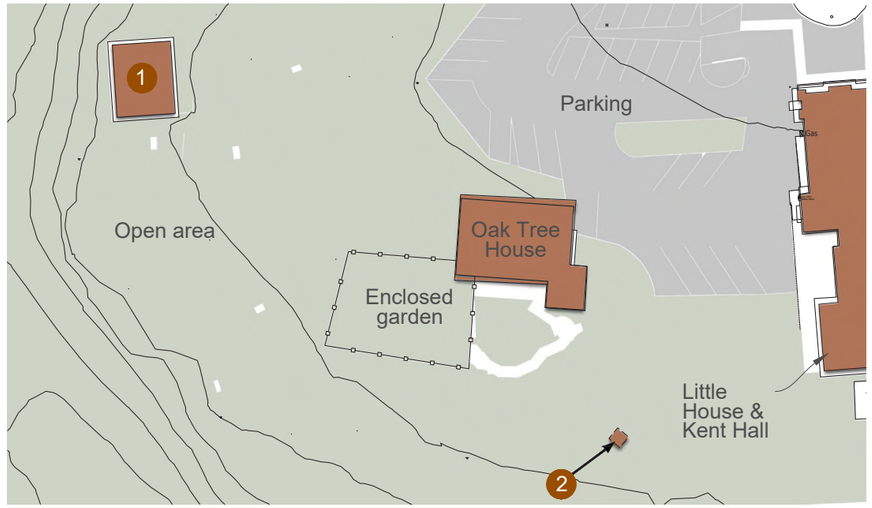




HISTORIC LANDMARKED
STRUCTURES AND ELEMENTS

1. Hobson Barn
2. Wedding arbor





not to scale

THE WORKSHOP HUB

Located south of the city hall building and accessible from Ventura Avenue, the Workshop Hub serves as a central destination for learning, gathering, and hands-on engagement with the landscape. This area builds upon the existing demonstration garden and expands its role as a living laboratory for sustainable design, ecological stewardship, and community-based programming. The organization of the Workshop Hub is guided by existing site conditions, including the preservation of the native oak tree canopy and the natural topography, to minimize grading and maintain the integrity of the landscape. The proposed location of the Garden House (workshop building) has been carefully evaluated through slope and tree canopy analysis to identify an optimal siting that balances accessibility, constructibility, and environmental sensitivity.

The demonstration gardens within the Workshop Hub will be renovated and expanded to showcase a range of sustainable landscape practices, including native planting design, climate appropriate and low-water landscaping, pollinator-friendly habitat, and low-maintenance garden strategies. Interpretive and educational signage will be integrated throughout, providing opportunities to communicate topics such as fire-wise landscape design - particularly relevant to high fire-risk areas - as well as broader ecological principles and Chumash-inspired relationships to the land. These gardens are intended to function as both an educational resource and an inspiring model for residents to implement similar practices at home.

The Garden House

At the center of the Workshop Hub is the proposed Garden House, a multi-use facility designed to support workshops, classes, and community events. The building is envisioned as a modestly scaled structure, approximately 1,200 to 1,500 square feet, and constructed using sustainable building methods such as straw bale or cob construction. The program may include a commercial kitchen, a primary meeting space, and a potential ADA-compliant restroom. The building is complemented by an entry pergola and includes two terraced levels of gathering space that can accommodate garden events, workshops, and small celebrations. These terraces are designed to take advantage of expansive views across the grassy hillside, Middle Stewart Canyon Creek, and the surrounding mountains, reinforcing a strong visual connection to the broader landscape.

To the west of the Garden House, the landscape transitions into a small orchard and an enclosed community garden area. This space is intended to support a city-coordinated program for growing fruits and vegetables, with plots available for annual rental by community members. Additional supporting elements within the Workshop Hub includes two new sheds, one for the composting area and one for the community plots and orchard area. A replacement kiosk that supports programming and information sharing will be installed in the compost area. A centrally located, ADA-compliant restroom is also proposed west of the orchard and south of Kent Hall, positioned along the primary ADA-accessible path to ensure convenient and equitable access for all visitors. This location takes advantage of proximity to the existing sewer line, minimizing infrastructure impacts while providing an essential amenity for both daily use and programmed activities.

Circulation

Circulation within this area is designed to be clear, functional, and accessible, with a hierarchy of paths that accommodate both pedestrian use and limited service access. A primary ADA-accessible path, approximately 6 feet in width and constructed of stabilized decomposed granite, provides the main pedestrian route through the gardens. Secondary ADA-accessible paths, approximately 4 feet in width, extend to connect key features and gathering areas. A wider, approximately 12-foot decomposed granite access route is incorporated from Ventura Avenue, allowing small maintenance vehicles to enter the site, pass the compost area, and reach the Garden House in a manner that remains compatible with the overall pedestrian-focused design.

Together, these elements establish the Workshop Hub as an active, educational, and community-oriented center within the campus - integrating sustainable design, food production, and environmental learning in a setting that is both functional and inspiring.

Vegetation

The Workshop Hub, as the central location for learning and education, will include the Demonstration Garden featuring California native and culturally significant plants associated with the Chumash, as well as fire-wise plant selections. As an educational garden, interpretive signage will provide information on fire-wise landscape strategies, including appropriate plant selections. Individual plant labels will identify botanical and common names, along with Chumash names and traditional uses such as medicinal, food, fiber and tool applications.

THE DISCOVERY CORNER

Continuing west along the primary ADA-accessible path, the campus transitions into the Discovery Corner, a space centered around the historic Hobson Barn and its surrounding landscape. This area is envisioned as a dedicated zone for children's learning, exploration, and nature-based play, building upon the site's history while introducing new opportunities for education and engagement. The Master Plan proposes the restoration of the Hobson Barn through structural and historic improvements, preserving its character while adapting it for use as a Children's Learning Lab.

The Children's Learning Lab

The proposed Children's Learning Lab is intended to serve as a flexible, indoor-outdoor educational environment supporting workshops, classes, interpretive programming, and hands-on activities focused on ecology, stewardship, and creative exploration. The building will provide a welcoming and accessible space for children and families, reinforcing the campus's role as a place of learning and community connection. Interpretive and educational elements may be integrated both within and around the building to support programming and self-guided discovery.

The landscape surrounding the Hobson Barn is designed to extend the learning experience into an outdoor setting. A nature-based play area will provide informal, exploratory opportunities for children to engage directly with the environment through natural materials and low-impact play features. Adjacent pollinator gardens will introduce visitors to habitat-friendly planting and support local biodiversity, while also serving as an educational resource. A small-scale amphitheater is proposed to accommodate outdoor classes, storytelling, and small group gatherings, creating a flexible space for programming within a natural setting.

Circulation

Circulation through the Discovery Corner is anchored by the primary ADA-accessible path, which provides direct and inclusive access to the Hobson Barn and surrounding features. Secondary paths and trails may branch from this main connection, allowing for a more immersive experience of the landscape while maintaining clear organization and accessibility. Together, these elements establish the Discovery Corner as a vibrant, family-oriented destination within the campus - where history, learning, and play come together in a setting that encourages curiosity, creativity, and connection to the natural world.

Vegetation

Vegetation at the Discovery Corner takes the Learning Lab outdoors, includes protecting the existing coast live oaks and adding interesting kid friendly California native plants with characteristics worthy of attracting and exploring for their color, textures, scents, and attraction to pollinators.

The canopies of the oaks provide shade for cooling the area during outdoor activities and opportunities for learning and hands on crafts - for example collecting acorns, growing new trees, grinding meal, making dyes from the oak galls and learning about the wasps that create the galls.

The flowers of compatible native annuals, perennials, and shrubs will attract pollinators of various species providing another opportunity to learn about field biology, botany, and entomology, the study of insects.



RESTORATION AREA

The restoration area occupies the southwestern portion of the 8.79-acre campus and is defined by the Middle Stewart Canyon Creek corridor and its surrounding riparian landscape. This area represents the ecological heart of the site, where ongoing restoration efforts - led in partnership with the City of Ojai, PAX Environmental, Inc. and the C.R.E.W. - aim to enhance native habitat, improve ecological function, and support long-term environmental resilience. The Master Plan builds upon these efforts by reinforcing the area as a place of stewardship, passive use, and quiet connection to nature.

The landscape is characterized by native vegetation, restored habitat zones, and the presence of the creek, creating a setting that supports biodiversity and provides opportunities for observation and learning. Visitor use in this area is intentionally low-impact, focused on activities such as walking, bird watching, and quiet reflection.

Circulation

Access to the restoration area is provided via a new pedestrian bridge crossing Middle Stewart Canyon Creek, which connects to the primary campus circulation system. From the bridge, a 4-foot-wide dirt trail extends up the grassy hillside to a proposed overlook, offering expansive views of the surrounding landscape, while a loop trail provides an alternative return route and allows visitors to experience a variety of terrain and perspectives. Due to existing terrain and slope conditions, this portion of the site is not feasible for ADA-accessible paths; therefore, circulation is limited to natural surface trails designed to be minimally invasive and responsive to the landscape. These trails are carefully aligned to balance access with habitat preservation, providing opportunities for exploration while minimizing disturbance to sensitive ecological areas.

Vegetation

Plant material specified in the expanded restoration area will be California native species sourced from local seed or stock and specific to the existing site plant communities to maintain genetic integrity. To further maintain the integrity of the existing restoration area, partnering with past consultants and organizations with biological and maintenance knowledge and experience for this specific habitat is highly recommended.

A long-term invasive plant management strategy will be implemented as part of the restoration effort, focusing on the removal of non-native and fire-prone species and the ongoing maintenance of restored habitat areas. This approach will support the establishment of resilient native plant communities, improve habitat quality, and reduce long-term maintenance needs while reinforcing the ecological goals of the site.



Passive Use

In addition to trails and viewpoints, the restoration area will include opportunities for quiet, contemplative use. A small, intimate gathering space is envisioned beneath one of the existing large oak trees, providing a shaded setting for activities such as yoga, meditation, or small group gatherings. This space, along with the broader landscape, is designed to foster a sense of calm and connection to the natural environment.

Together, these elements establish the restoration area as a place of ecological significance and personal reflection. By balancing habitat restoration with carefully managed public access, the Master Plan supports a landscape that is both environmentally resilient and deeply meaningful to the community.

PASSIVE USE AND CIRCULATION

The Ojai City Hall Campus is designed to support passive, low-impact uses that encourage visitors to engage with the landscape in a relaxed and meaningful way. Primary activities include walking, quiet exploration, informal gathering, and opportunities for rest and reflection within a natural setting. The campus prioritizes a calm and accessible environment, where visitors can move at their own pace while experiencing the gardens, restored habitats, and scenic qualities of the site. In addition to everyday passive use, select areas - such as the historic estate gardens surrounding city hall and the terrace at the workshop building - are designed to accommodate small, more formal gatherings, including weddings, celebrations, and community events in a serene, nature-based setting.

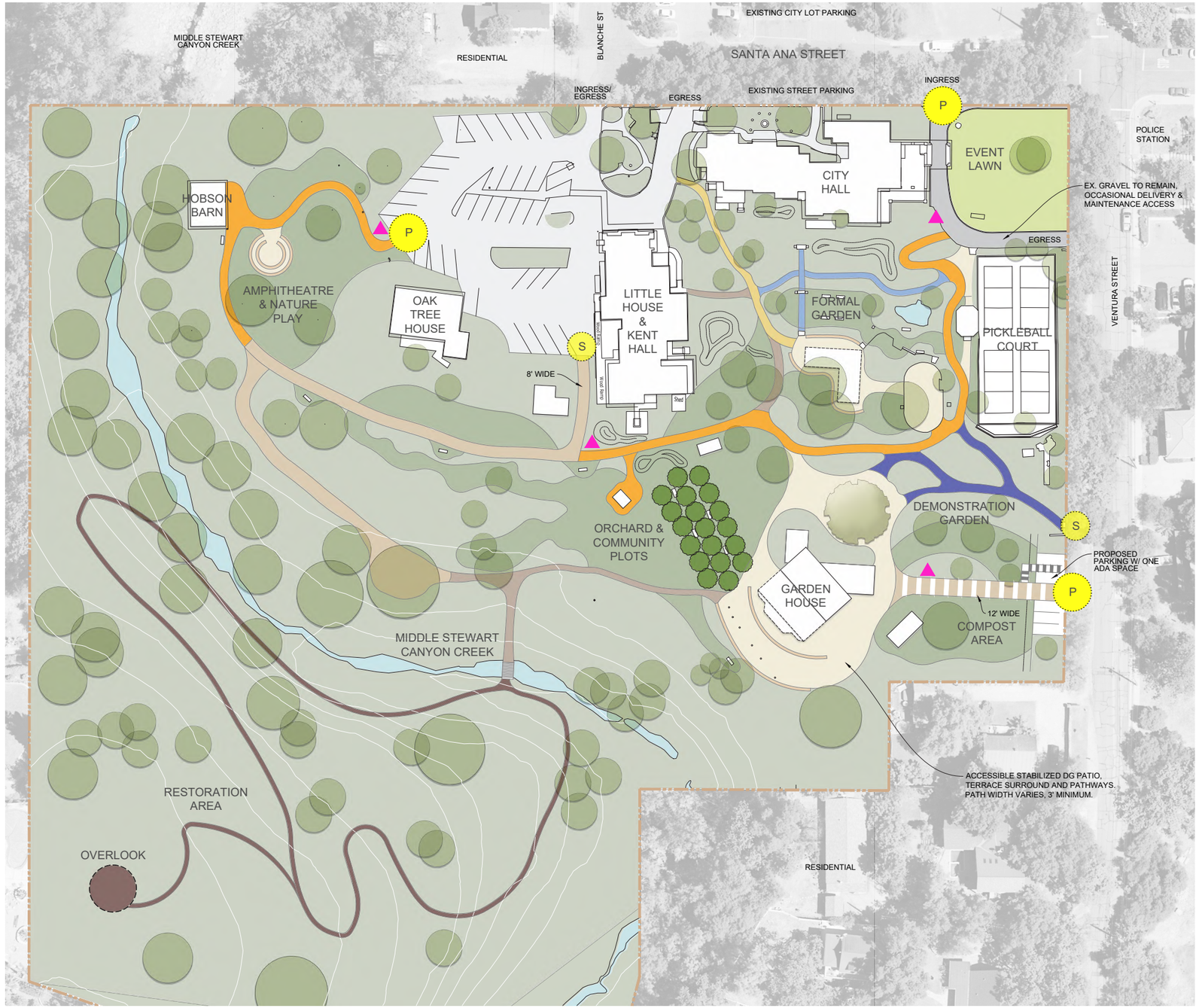
The existing circulation network is currently fragmented, with limited connectivity between key areas of the campus and a lack of clearly defined accessible routes. The Master Plan responds to this condition by establishing a simple and cohesive circulation framework that improves connectivity, enhances accessibility, and supports intuitive wayfinding throughout the site. The primary goals of the circulation plan are to connect major destinations, provide accessible routes where appropriate, reinforce the organization of the campus, and create a comfortable and engaging walkable experience.

The circulation system is organized into a clear hierarchy of paths. A primary accessible path provides the main route through the campus, connecting key destinations such as city hall, the workshop building, the Hobson Barn, and major program areas. Secondary accessible paths extend from this primary route to provide additional access to key nodes, demonstration gardens and gathering areas. Beyond these routes, a network of narrower, naturalistic trails—constructed of materials such as gravel or mulch—meanders into the restoration area, allowing for a more immersive and informal exploration of the landscape.

A new pedestrian bridge will provide an important connection across Middle Stewart Canyon Creek, expanding access to the restoration area and linking the campus to a trail that leads to a hillside overlook. Small vehicle access routes are incorporated where necessary to accommodate maintenance and service needs, while remaining unobtrusive and compatible with the natural character of the site. Key entry nodes are clearly defined to provide points of arrival and orientation, often paired with wayfinding signage and campus maps to support navigation.

Along the primary circulation route, a series of thoughtfully located viewpoints create opportunities for pause and reflection, framing scenic views. Together, the circulation system balances accessibility, clarity, and immersion in the landscape—supporting a cohesive and intuitive experience for visitors while reinforcing the campus's emphasis on passive use, education, and environmental stewardship.





OJAI CITY HALL CAMPUS
CIRCULATION PLAN

- PRIMARY 4' TO 6' WIDE PEDESTRIAN PATH & ADA ACCESS (STABILIZED DECOMPOSED GRANITE)
- SECONDARY 4' WIDE PEDESTRIAN PATH & ADA ACCESS (STABILIZED DECOMPOSED GRANITE)
- NATURE TRAIL 3-5' WIDE (BARK MULCH)
- RESTORATION TRAIL 18-36" WIDE (COMPACTED EARTH, BARK MULCH OR DECOMPOSED GRANITE)
- PRIMARY 12' WIDE ACCESSIBLE PEDESTRIAN PATH & MAINTENANCE/VEHICULAR ACCESS (STABILIZED DECOMPOSED GRANITE)
- SECONDARY 8' WIDE ACCESSIBLE PEDESTRIAN PATH & MAINTENANCE/VEHICULAR ACCESS (STABILIZED DECOMPOSED GRANITE)
- EXISTING GRAVEL PATH, REINSTALL 4' WIDTH MINIMUM
- EXISTING DECOMPOSED GRANITE PATH TO REMAIN
- P — PRIMARY ENTRY NODE
- S — SECONDARY ENTRY NODE
- PROPOSED BIKE RACKS

NORTH
0 15' 30' 60' 90' 120'

PARK ENTRANCES AND PARKING

Entrances, Parking & External Circulation

Stakeholders during community engagement discussions asked the questions - What about parking? Where are people going to park? We asked the same questions and headed out to the streets during our site analysis process. Observation of uses and data collecting were used to count existing parking spaces in the city lots, adjacent street parking, and bicycle parking, during the week and on weekends.

Due to proximity to the Ojai Valley Trail, would the need for vehicle parking spaces be reduced as alternative access for walking and riding bicycles is only a long block away? Would children in addition to adults be able to walk, ride a bicycle or take the trolley to a nearby stop, safely to the campus? Where could a school bus park, especially during the week when city hall was conducting business?

These were questions we pondered considering the proposed development of the campus would be for public park use with an emphasis on nature-based play and education for children, in addition to a multitude of possible programming for all ages including workshops, events, films, lectures, site tours, classes and weddings.

Site opportunities observed include existing adjacent city lot parking, street parking and obvious existing points of entry for pedestrians. The lower portion of the property on Ventura Street currently provides unstructured parking for several vehicles and occasional drops of green waste for the compost program from the City of Ojai Public Works Department. Site constraints including the terrain, oak woodland, and features to remain, limit the addition of parking.

The Ventura Street location became the obvious location to formalize and add parking. Although the quantity of new parking would be minimal, two CBC accessible compliant spaces and a primary pedestrian entry into the campus became evident during the design process, centered on the entry and near the new Garden House, the focal of the Workshop Hub. Occasionally, scheduled deliveries and maintenance vehicles can access the entry for a short distance on the vehicle rated path to service the compost area and events at the Garden House and the Workshop Hub. In addition, emergency vehicles could enter on an as needed basis.

Further analysis revealed that on a weekday a single school bus or two could park on Blanche Street and that street parking was adequate for single users or small groups in individual vehicles. The Ojai Valley Trail, and local streets could accommodate pedestrians and bicycle riders along with access to the trolley stops on Ojai Avenue. Note that only the west side of Blanche Street has a continuous paved sidewalk to the campus from Ojai Avenue and that Blanche dead ends at the intersection of Santa Ana Street. Both Ventura Street and Signal Street do not have contiguous sidewalks from Ojai Avenue to the campus.

The city lots and adjacent street parking are used primarily from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday for typical city hall business which includes parking for staff and visitors. The Ojai City Council and Commissions meet Monday through Thursday evenings on a regular basis, typically from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm and often later.

Traffic is generally low in this area as Blanche dead ends at Santa Ana and conversely Santa Ana dead ends at the intersection of Blanche. Destinations include the Ojai Police Department, Ojai City Hall, and through access to Creek Road heading south from Ventura Street. Peak hours generally are during the morning between 7:00 am and 9:00 am, at the end of the workday 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, and at the beginning or end of council, commission and special meetings.

Pickleball court use time by players varies day to day. Parking includes use of the city lot and street parking spaces and a bicycle rack. Most players enter the courts on Santa Ana Street to the east of the city hall building.

Pickleball court hours are open 7 days a week:

Winter Hours (October - March)
8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Summer Hours (April - September)
8:30 a.m. - 12:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.



Parking Locations

Much of the city lot and street parking is on or adjacent to Santa Ana Street. The city lots on Santa Ana Street include a small parking area with perpendicular parking, one on the corner of Santa Ana and Blanche Street with a solar array, and the Kent Hall parking lot at the intersection of Santa Ana and Blanche Streets.

Presently, the Kent Hall parking lot accessed at the northwest corner of the property on Santa Ana Street is fenced off and not available for parking as the City of Ojai is providing temporary living and storage for the unhoused members of the community. The temporary housing area is known as Ojai Tent Town. In July of 2027 the occupants will be moved to a newly built permanent supportive housing complex provided by the City of Ojai with state funding.

Existing Vehicular Parking

Kent Hall Parking Lot

Located at the southwest corner of Santa Ana and Blanche Streets, the Kent Hall Parking Lot serves as a primary visitor parking area for the campus. Pedestrian access is provided from the adjacent streets, nearby city buildings, and the broader campus circulation network. This area also contains the existing ballot drop box and dumpster enclosure. The lot provides the closest pedestrian access to the Discovery Corner, Restoration Area, community garden plots, orchard area, and proposed restroom facilities. In addition to visitor parking, the lot accommodates delivery and limited maintenance vehicle access, including access routes to the Restoration Area.

- Ingress/Egress: 1 each
- CBC/Accessible Spaces: 2
- Regular Spaces: 22
- Electric Vehicle Charging (EV): 0
- Covered Spaces: 0

*Note: The parking lot is currently inaccessible. Parking counts were derived from a previously scanned plan and may vary from actual conditions.

City Lot with Solar Array

- Ingress/Egress: 2
- CBC/Accessible Spaces: 0
- Regular Spaces: 13
- Electric Vehicle Charging (EV): 2
- Covered Spaces: 7

Santa Ana Street

- Ingress/Egress: Perpendicular parking from street
- CBC/Accessible Spaces: 2
- Regular Spaces: 4
- Electric Vehicle Charging (EV): 0
- Covered Spaces: 0

Unpaved Lot Ventura Street (north of intersection)

- Ingress/Egress: 1
- CBC/Accessible Spaces: 0
- Regular Spaces: unmarked
- Electric Vehicle Charging (EV): 0
- Covered Spaces: 0

*Note: This lot is primarily used for city-related vehicles and overflow parking.

Street Parking

Additional street parking is available along the perimeter streets surrounding the campus. Santa Ana Street provides limited parallel parking along both sides of the roadway. Ventura Street includes parallel parking along the east side south of Santa Ana Street, while parking is permitted on both sides north of the intersection. Blanche Street also provides parallel parking along both sides of the street.

Delivery and Maintenance Access Points

Delivery and maintenance access to the campus is provided through several key locations designed to support service operations while remaining compatible with the pedestrian-oriented character of the site. Primary access is available through the Kent Hall parking lot, which accommodates maintenance and service vehicles accessing the western portions of the campus. Additional ingress and egress are provided through the existing porte-cochere and gravel drive connecting Santa Ana Street and Ventura Street. Along Ventura Street, a shared 12-foot-wide access route accommodates scheduled maintenance and delivery vehicles while also functioning as a pedestrian connection.

Existing Bicycle Parking

Two existing bicycle racks are currently located on the City Hall Campus. One rack is situated adjacent to the left side of the main City Hall building entrance and provides a minimum capacity of nine bicycle spaces. A second bicycle rack is located within the lawn area east of the City Hall building and also accommodates a minimum of nine bicycle spaces.



Proposed Vehicular Parking

Proposed vehicular parking is located along the southeastern portion of the property adjacent to Ventura Street. The parking area is proposing two CBC-accessible parking spaces with the required access aisle, signage and striping. In addition, approximately two to three perpendicular standard parking spaces measuring 9 feet by 20 feet are proposed to support visitor and campus use.

Proposed Bicycle Parking Locations

Proposed bicycle parking locations are distributed throughout the campus to improve accessibility and support alternative modes of transportation. New bicycle parking is proposed within the Kent Hall parking lot area and near the Ventura Street entry to provide convenient access to key campus destinations. The existing bicycle rack located north of the pickleball courts is proposed to be relocated to an adjacent area to improve circulation and site organization. The existing bicycle rack located in front of the City Hall building will remain in place.

Proposed Entries

The Master Plan establishes several primary campus entry points designed to improve circulation, accessibility, and orientation throughout the site.

The Santa Ana Street entry, located along the east side of the City Hall building at the existing porte-cochere and gravel drive, provides access to the Historic Gardens, including the event lawn and pickleball courts. This entry accommodates pedestrians, bicyclists, and limited delivery and maintenance vehicles.

The Ventura Street entry serves as a primary access point to the Workshop Hub, Demonstration Gardens, pickleball courts, and Historic Gardens. This entry is designed to accommodate pedestrians, visitor parking access, delivery and maintenance vehicles, and emergency vehicle access where necessary.

An additional pedestrian-only entry is proposed at the historic perimeter wall, creating a more direct and welcoming connection into the campus while reinforcing the historic character of the site.

Accessible Parking Requirements

California Building Code Title 24, Chapter 11B

Conclusion

Based on existing site conditions, available on-site parking, nearby public parking within the downtown area, the proposed passive nature of campus use, and the anticipated scale of future programming, the proposed parking, entry points, and external circulation network are expected to adequately accommodate campus users.

The scheduling and management of workshops, events, and other programmed activities can further help regulate visitor numbers, particularly for larger gatherings that may generate increased parking demand. Coordinating event timing and group use will also assist in minimizing impacts to the site and reducing traffic congestion during peak periods.

Consistent with the broader goals of the Ecology Center and the campus vision, alternative modes of transportation—including walking, bicycling, trolley access, public transit, and carpooling—should be encouraged to support sustainability, reduce vehicle dependence, and promote a more connected and environmentally responsible community experience.



RAIN GARDENS AND BIOSWALES

Demonstrating Water Stewardship

The Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan incorporates a series of integrated stormwater management strategies designed to improve on-site drainage, enhance water quality, and support groundwater recharge. Key elements include the installation of rain gardens strategically located to capture and treat stormwater runoff from existing buildings and surface lots - including city hall and the Kent Hall parking lot - as well as the proposed workshop building. These systems are designed to slow, filter, and infiltrate runoff, reducing surface flow and allowing water to be naturally absorbed into the landscape. Planted with native and climate-appropriate species, the rain gardens contribute to both ecological function and site aesthetics while supporting long-term sustainability.

In addition, bioswales are proposed along the parking areas fronting Ventura Avenue to intercept and manage runoff from paved surfaces. These features will not only improve drainage performance but also serve as visible, educational components of the landscape. Together, the rain gardens and bioswales create a network of green infrastructure that demonstrates best practices in stormwater management. Designed as demonstration gardens, these systems will provide opportunities for education and inspiration, showcasing how native planting and thoughtful design can work together to manage water, enhance habitat, and contribute to a resilient and regenerative landscape.



SIGNAGE PLAN

The Ojai City Hall Campus Master Plan proposes a comprehensive signage plan and interpretive program designed to enhance visitor understanding of the site's ecological, cultural, and historical significance. The campus presents a unique opportunity to communicate the interconnected systems that define the landscape—from native oak woodlands and riparian habitats to the historic landscape and regenerative design strategies. Interpretive signage will be thoughtfully integrated throughout the site to highlight key features such as the historic estate garden, restoration area, demonstration garden, children's pollinator gardens, rain gardens, bioswales, and areas showcasing native and climate appropriate planting. Proposed signage also provides fire-wise landscape design and general defensible space information. Collectively, these elements will convey the campus's role as an ecological hub and living laboratory for sustainable practices in the heart of Ojai.

The interpretive program is intended to foster a deeper connection between people and place by emphasizing the relationship between ecological health, water stewardship, habitat restoration, and community well-being. Signage will communicate how systems function—such as how rain gardens capture and filter stormwater, how bioswales improve water quality, or how native and fire-wise planting strategies contribute to long-term resilience. Educational content will also highlight the layered history of the site, including the Chumash cultural connection to the land and the legacy of the Smith-Hobson Estate, creating a multi-dimensional narrative that reflects both past and future stewardship.

In addition to interpretive elements, a coordinated wayfinding system will guide visitors through the campus and improve overall accessibility and navigation. Wayfinding signage will clearly identify and direct visitors to key destinations, including City Hall, the workshop building, restrooms, the restoration area and creek crossing, the Hobson Barn and children's nature play areas, and other major program spaces. A campus map will be provided at key entry points, illustrating primary ADA circulation routes, secondary trails, and the four core campus areas, allowing visitors to orient themselves and explore the site with ease.

All signage elements will be designed to be subtle, cohesive, and responsive to the natural character of the site. Signage should be low-profile, durable, and constructed from materials that complement the surrounding landscape, with placement that minimizes visual intrusion while remaining accessible and engaging. Through a combination of clear, informative, and thoughtfully designed interpretive and wayfinding features, the signage plan will support the campus as a place of learning, inspiration, and stewardship. Visitors will be encouraged to explore at their own pace, gaining insight into ecological processes, sustainable design, and the cultural history of the site. Collectively, the signage program reinforces the Master Plan's vision of creating an accessible, educational, and ecologically rich civic landscape that serves both the Ojai community and future generations.




Welcome to your Community Compost Site!
DROP OFF CORRECTLY & RESPECTFULLY:
USE THIS

MAINTENANCE

Overview

Maintenance components to consider are fire safety, plant health, methods for pruning, pest management, wildlife management, irrigation, soil building, path, trail and hardscape conditions, waste disposal and recycling, composting or green waste, maintenance of the buildings, structures and utilities and regular restroom servicing. Who will provide the services and when will figure into the success of the site long term but also into operational costs. Note the recommendations here are generic and will require a comprehensive detailed maintenance manual prior to implementation of the project.

Operational options to consider are maintenance by city staff exclusively, hiring an outside contractor or organization, the use of volunteers or a workable combination of the above.

Plant Maintenance

General plant maintenance for the property will vary by area and its needs, with certain species such as the Quercus agrifolia/Coast Live Oak, the dominant tree found throughout the entire property and trees in general falling into a category of their own. A maintenance manual including general guidelines and standards, details for each area and feature and if needed individual plant genera or species specifics is recommended to ensure the long-term success of the Ecology Hub.

Integrated Pest Management

Of importance and in support to the ecological health of the site is the Ojai Earth Friendly Management Policy. The Ojai City Council adopted the City of Ojai Earth Friendly Management Policy on December 10, 2024

The Earth Friendly Management Policy aims to mitigate the risks pesticides pose to human health, wildlife, and the environment by implementing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) principles. IPM involves a sustainable, science-based approach that integrates biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools to manage pests while minimizing economic, health, and environmental risks. The policy establishes best practices for controlling pests on City-managed properties in an efficient, environmentally responsible, and safe manner.

Under this policy, City staff and contractors must first explore non-pesticide methods to address pest issues, such as removing food sources, sealing entry points, using non-toxic traps, employing beneficial insects, or maintaining landscaping. If pest problems are minor, no action may be taken. Pesticides are considered only after exhausting other control options.



Fire Safety

Of further importance are fire-safe measures. As the Ecology Hub is an educational center featuring California native plants and the existing historic estate gardens, there may be some consideration for alternate specifications and guidelines from the County of Ventura Fire Department Standards with plant selection and spacing where a specified maintenance manual and practices may suffice.

1. Provide general standards:
   Debris removal
   Remove all dead wood annually
   Weeding including removal of invasive species
   Leaf litter not to exceed depth of 2”
   Mulch not to exceed 3” depth
   Maintain Zone 0 for all new structures
2. Specific Guidelines for various areas or species type and timing. See below.

Trees:
• monitor dead wood and any signs of decline
• keep all mulch and irrigation 12” away from the base of all trees
• meet clearance requirements

Historic Gardens:
• mowing and maintaining the lawn area
• annual rose pruning, trimming formal hedges
• removing spent and dead plant material
• removal of dead palm fronds
• irrigation monitoring
• replenishing mulch

Workshop Hub:
• Community garden beds - weeding, removal of spent plant material
• orchard - winter and summer pruning, fertilizing/compost applications, harvesting, rodent monitoring, mulch renewal

Discovery Corner:
• weeding including the removal of invasive species, removal of dead plant material, dead heading
• minor pruning
• replanting as needed

Restoration Area:
• weeding including the removal of invasive species
• removal of dead plant material
• replanting as needed
• monitor creek for debris and trash

Bioswale and Raingardens:
• annual clean-up and weeding
• debris removal
• mulch replenishment to ensure stormwater filtration and to prevent clogging
• perform monthly inspections to remove trash and invasive plants
• conduct seasonal maintenance

A Closed-loop System

A closed-loop composting system integrating the on-site composting operation with green waste generated throughout the campus gardens will reduce off-site waste while supporting long-term soil health and ecological function. Reapplied organic material will help build soil structure and fertility, improve water retention by increasing the soil’s sponge-like capacity, balance soil pH, and contribute to the natural suppression of pests and diseases—all of which support resilient landscapes and optimal plant growth.



FIRE PREVENTION

The landscape strategy includes the establishment of managed and irrigated zones in proximity to structures and key use areas. Planting design will prioritize California native, Chumash cultural uses, climate appropriate, and well-maintained plant communities, while minimizing the accumulation of combustible materials. Existing vegetation will be selectively managed to remove invasive and fire-prone species, including the periodic removal of dead plant material, leaf litter, and palm fronds.

Ongoing maintenance will be a critical component of the fire prevention strategy. The Master Plan supports a program of regular site monitoring and biannual vegetation management, including seasonal clearing, pruning, and fuel reduction to maintain safe conditions throughout the year. Trails and open space areas are designed to help define and segment landscape zones, reducing continuous fuel loads while allowing for appropriate ecological function. Together, these measures establish a proactive and adaptive framework for fire safety that protects both the site and the surrounding community while supporting long-term landscape resilience.

Design and Maintenance Considerations

1. Invasive and Fire-prone trees: Pruning and removal of select existing Eucalyptus species, palms, Pistacia atlantica (see Master Plan Phase 1 tree removal plan)

2. Demonstration Garden: Plantings may be a deviation from the Ventura County Fire Code as the plantings will be for educational purposes. Plants that may be included from the Ventura County Fire Department Do Not Plant List include the following genera: Adenostema, Arctostaphylos, Artemisia, Baccharis, Ceanothus, Eriodictyon, Eriogonum, Larrea, Leymus, Muhlenbergia, Nassela, Salvia, Stipa, and Solanum, for example.

3. Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration Area: Plantings will feature indigenous and endemic plant species which may include plants from the V.C.F. D. DO Not Plant List. See list in #2 above. Maintenance in the restoration area will include a minimum annual clean-up with ongoing removal of invasive plant species.



PROGRAMMING

Future programming opportunities identified through the community engagement process reflect a strong desire for passive, nature-based activities that are compatible with the ecological character of the site. Programming may occur through a variety of formats and partnerships, including self-guided experiences, City of Ojai Parks and Recreation programs, and workshops, classes, lectures, films, and events hosted by local non-profit organizations and community partners. Collectively, these activities are intended to foster environmental stewardship, community connection, lifelong learning, and meaningful engagement with the landscape.

Programming Possibilities

1. Passive Individual Engagement

- Self-guided educational tours supported by interpretive signage
- Passive wellness activities such as yoga, tai chi, and meditation
- Children's nature play
- Walking experiences along paths and nature trails
- Bird watching and quiet observation of the natural environment
- The Japanese art of forest bathing

2. City of Ojai Parks and Recreation Department

- Outdoor classes and recreational programming
- Indoor educational and community-based classes within the Garden House

3. Local Non-Profit Organizations & Community Partners

- Environmental and educational film screenings
- Lectures, presentations, and guest speaker series focused on ecology, history, and sustainability
- Hands-on workshops and "how-to" series featuring topics such as Chumash cultural knowledge, ecology, botany, regenerative agriculture, gardening, composting, irrigation, and alternative building techniques
- Nature-based classes for children, natural sciences education, soil biology, bird watching, and plein air art
- Community events and celebrations such as Arbor Day, Earth Day, and seasonal gatherings
- Guided site tours focused on site history, restoration efforts, native habitats, and demonstration gardens
- Volunteer stewardship and maintenance days

4. Community Stewardship and Participation

- micro-scale agricultural community plots for growing fruits and vegetables
- Flexible "test plots" or temporary community-led installations for creative experimentation, ecological demonstrations, or artistic interventions
- Shared stewardship and maintenance opportunities through collaboration between the City and community

5. City of Ojai and Private Event Use

- Small private gatherings and events such as weddings, celebrations, and community functions compatible with the passive and nature-based character of the site



FUNDING

In today's evolving funding landscape, the City of Ojai may embrace a multi-faceted approach to secure sustainable resources for the gardens and ecology center, maintenance, and recreational programming including general funds, Measure C, and competitive state grants. According to the Trust for Public Land and other park equity advocates, there has been a notable shift toward philanthropic giving, private partnerships and collaborative funding models to meet the rising demand for high-quality, accessible green spaces. Climate change, public health challenges and the increasing recognition of parks as essential infrastructure are also driving new opportunities through environmental, health and resilience-focused funding streams.

Layering these with private donations, non-profit partnerships or sponsorships can fill critical gaps, especially for maintenance and long-term operations. The city can also benefit from aligning project proposals with broader state and federal goals such as active transportation, climate resilience, and environmental justice to strengthen competitiveness for funding. Equally important is the role of the community. Community-driven planning not only results in more meaningful and responsive park spaces, but it also builds momentum for innovative funding models like participatory local fund raising campaigns. Community ownership fosters stewardship and helps ensure the long-term success of the park and recreational programs. Consider the support of local non-profits and community members who rallied together and helped build the successful Libbey Park playground. As this plan is implemented, engaging residents as co-investors - not just beneficiaries - may be key to building a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable park.

Future phases include continuing the design process, developing a design team, bidding and contractor award and then implementation.

Design and Construction Phases

Depending on funding availability, the project implementation may be divided into phases. We recommend an approach that includes sensible planning and implementation for instance, where infrastructure including utilities and access for construction equipment is considered as a priority before softer components such as planting is installed.

- Design Development (team: architect, landscape architect, civil engineer, structural engineer, arborist, other consultants)
- Construction Documents (team: architect, landscape architect, civil engineer, structural engineer, arborist, other consultants)
- Bidding and Award Contract (select contractor)
- Implementation (contractors, specialty trade and consultants, possible community volunteer participation)

Implementation Phasing Opportunities

- Garden House/kitchen/restroom, terracing, hardscape, planting, utilities, entry and pedestrian paths
- Expansion of Middle Stewart Canyon Creek restoration area: bridge, expanded trails, irrigation, planting
- Smith-Hobson Estate Gardens: Event lawn, rose garden, picnic pergola, badminton court, landscape behind city hall
- Public restroom and utilities
- Discovery Corner including the Hobson Barn rehabilitation, utilities, amphitheater, nature based play area, paths, planting and irrigation
- Orchard and community garden plots including terracing with hügelkultur, raised beds, shed, planting, irrigation and fencing
- Demonstration garden including paths, planting, and irrigation
- Parking on Ventura Street including hardscape, markings, signage
- Cross walks at intersection of Santa Ana and Ventura Streets
- Phase I tree removals and trimming
- Signage including informational, educational and way finding
- Compost Area including cleanup, modified layout, and shed

Future On-Site Funding Opportunities

- Area or entire site rental fees for weddings and community events
- Building rental fees for meetings, workshops, lectures, films
- Passive recreation programs though the Parks and Recreation Department (for example: outdoor yoga, tai chi, art classes)
- Non-profit workshops, courses, events

Non-Profit Partnerships

Consider nonprofit partnerships to pool resources, expertise, and networks for achieving shared goals. Built on trust, communication, shared values and mutual respect, partnerships aim for long-term impact rather than just immediate financial transactions.

NEXT STEPS

Immediate Next Steps

With strong community support and growing momentum, alignment with the City Council's Goals and Tactics, the City of Ojai's General Plan, and the opportunity to build upon previous successful restoration and community initiatives, the time is right to move forward with a vision that fosters a thriving, regenerative and resilient civic landscape for future generations.

The next immediate step is funding for Design Development.



Design Development is the phase where preliminary concepts are refined into pragmatic, feasible plans that balance aesthetics with financial and functional constraints. During this stage the design team moves from idealized visions to specific material selections, technical details, and cost verification to ensure the design is constructible.

Key activities and outcomes of the Design Development phase include:

Hardscape materials, fixtures and furnishing selections based on criteria like durability, appearance and cost.

Planting selections: (including specific species and nursery container sizes)

Visualization: Creating detailed models or renderings to accurately explore features, layouts, and spatial relationships before final approval.

Cost Estimation and Budgeting: Soliciting preliminary construction estimates from multiple contractors to validate the design against the budget, allowing for adjustments to quantities, features, or materials if necessary.
Technical Detailing: Developing section drawings and detailed specifications for complex or custom elements, such as retaining walls, custom arbors, or drainage systems, consulting with structural engineers or other specialists.

Contractor Collaboration: Assessing contractor feedback and value-added suggestions to refine the design approach, ensuring the selected contractor is a good fit for the project's specific technical requirements.

The decisions made during Design Development are codified in the subsequent Construction Documents phase, providing the comprehensive drawings and specifications needed for permits and actual construction.



PRELIMINARY COST ANALYSIS

OVGC: ECO CENTER PRELIM COST ESTIMATE & ALLOWANCE					
DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	COST	TOTAL	NOTES
Note: costs shown are non-prevailing wage					
DEMOLITION					
clearing & grubbing	140,000	sf	$ 0.80	$ 112,000.00	85% of total project area
concrete removal @ badminton court	1,200	sf	$ 3.00	$ 3,600.00	assume a 4" slab
concrete removal @ min golf	432	sf	$ 3.00	$ 1,296.00	TBD - HPC determination
ex. pergola	815	sf	$ 3.00	$ 2,445.00	TBD - HPC determination
ex. shed	1	ea		$ 1,500.00	allowance
ex. kiosk	1	ea		$ 1,600.00	at compost area, allowance
ex. conc. trash can	1	ea		$ 100.00	allowance
ex. wedding arbor	1	ea		$ 1,600.00	TBD - HPC determination
TOTAL				$ 124,141.00	
GRADING					
minor grading @ pathways	13,815	sf	$ 0.80	$ 11,052.00	inc. mulched paths & dirt trails
minor grading @ bioswale areas	2,575	sf	$ 0.80	$ 2,060.00	1' depth
minor grading @ planted areas	103,800	sf	$ 0.80	$ 83,040.00	
cut & fill @ amphitheatre	715 -2860	cf	$ 3.00	$ 8,580.00	20.00/cy
cut & fill @ garden house & terraces	7,215	sf	$ 3.00	$ 21,645.00	20.00/cy
minor grading @ vehicular rated path	1,345	sf	$ 1.00	$ 1,345.00	
TOTAL				$ 127,722.00	
UTILITIES					
electrical			Allowance	$ 100,000.00	Allowance
water			Allowance	$ 100,000.00	Allowance
sewer			Allowance	$ 100,000.00	Allownace
communications			Allowance	$ 100,000.00	phone, wifi
TOTAL				$ 400,000.00	
SITE WORK					
sunken amphitheatre	180	lf	$ 50.00	$ 9,000.00	local stone ($50.00/lf)
CMU retaining wall, plaster face	85	lf	$ 250.00	$ 21,250.00	4' ht not inc. footing
dry stack boulder retaining wall	140	sf	$85.00	$ 11,900.00	3-4' ht, large boulders
CMU seat wall w/plaster face	40	lf	$ 125.00	$ 5,000.00	18" ht, 18" depth, alternative material: cob
TOTAL				$ 47,150.00	
HARDSCAPE AREAS					
6' ADA stabilized dg paths (primary)	5,155	sf	$ 15.00	$ 77,325.00	3" depth w/ 8-12" compacted base to accommodate small motorized cart , Organic Lock
4' ADA stabilized dg paths (secondary)	2,885	sf	$ 15.00	$ 43,275.00	3" depth w/ 4-6" compacted base, Organic Lock
mulched paths & open areas	11,700	sf	$ 1.25	$ 14,625.00	3" depth per code, tree trimmings/mulch
3' restoration path	3,460	sf	$ 2.00	$ 6,920.00	dirt trail
decomposed granite open areas	11,650	sf	$ 15.00	$ 174,750.00	3" depth w/ 4-6" compacted base, Organic Lock
12' stabilized dg vehicular path	1,345	sf	$ 18.00	$ 24,210.00	6" depth w/ 10-12" compacted base to accommodate maintenance truck, Organic Lock
TOTAL				$ 341,105.00	

PRELIMINARY COST ANALYSIS

PLANTING AREAS					
planting areas (inc. veggie beds, orchard)	103,800	sf	$ 12.00	$ 1,245,600.00	inc. minor grading, soil prep, irrigation, planting, mulch
TOTAL				$ 1,245,600.00	
PARKING - PER CITY					
ADA stall for van w/ aisle, stripping + signage	1	ea		$11,000.00	
parking stall, non-ADA	3	ea	$ 1,800.00	$ 5,400.00	
miscellaneous				$ 2,000.00	allowance for improvements as needed
TOTAL				$ 18,400.00	
GARDEN HOUSE (1,200-1,500sf)					
commercial kitchen	400	sf	$ 500.00	$ 200,000.00	
meeting room	1,500	sf	$ 500.00	$ 750,000.00	
entry pergola	330	sf	$ 75.00	$ 24,750.00	heavy timber and metal
west pergola @ terrace	600	sf	$ 75.00	$ 45,000.00	heavy timber and metal
restroom, ADA compliant		ls	$ 200,000.00	$ 200,000.00	per city standard
TOTAL				$ 1,219,750.00	
STRUCTURES					
restroom, ADA compliant, 2 stalls	1	ls	$ 200,000.00	$ 200,000.00	per city standard
new pergola, heavy timber	815	sf	$ 75.00	$ 61,125.00	
shed, 10' x 12'	2	ea	$ 7,000.00	$ 14,000.00	
TOTAL				$ 275,125.00	
FENCING					
hog wire, 6' ht, single gate	200	lf		$ 6,500.00	community garden
TOTAL				$ 6,500.00	
SIGNAGE					
campus map	5	ea	$ 900.00	$ 4,500.00	
educational (inc. photo project)	17	ea	$ 600.00	$ 10,200.00	
directional	7	ea	$ 500.00	$ 3,500.00	allownace
ADA parking	1	ea	$ 300.00	$ 300.00	
plant ID markers	200	ea	$ 45.00	$ 9,000.00	
peace poles - relocation	2	ls		$ 300.00	allowance
public art flex space	8	ea		TBD	
TOTAL				$ 27,800.00	

PRELIMINARY COST ANALYSIS

SITE FURNISHINGS					
bike racks	4	ea	$ 1,000.00	$ 4,000.00	accommodate 6 bikes
water refill stations/drinking fountain	2	ea	$ 15,000.00	$ 30,000.00	
picnic tables	13	ea	$ 1,800.00	$ 23,400.00	6' tables
children's picnic tables	8	ea	$ 1,500.00	$ 12,000.00	
wood benches, 6' length	10	ea	$ 350.00	$ 3,500.00	optional: repurposed on-site from existing wood
veggie boxes, 4' x 6' x 16" ht	10	ea	$1,000.00	$ 10,000.00	4" heavy timber
trash/recycling receptacles	5	ea	$ 1,200.00	$ 6,000.00	per city standard
TOTAL				$ 88,900.00	
LIGHTING					
path lights		ls		$ 25,000.00	Phase 1 allowance, inc. transformer & conduit
TOTAL				$ 25,000.00	
MISCELLANEOUS					
creek bridge		ls		$ 500,000.00	inc. permitting & monitoring, PAX environmental
nature play furnishings		ls		$ 3,000.00	tree rounds, timber poles, tinker toys/logs
bird boxes		ls		$ 2,000.00	2 owl, 2 kestral (ojai raptor center)
reuse of ex. tree material		ls		$ 7,000.00	site furnishings (benches, tree rounds, table tops, etc)
TOTAL				$ 512,000.00	
OVERHEAD & MOBILIZATION					
total cost				$ 4,459,193.00	
contractor cost				$ 1,337,757.90	30% of total cost
soft costs				$1,500,000.00	(professional services, design fees, administrative fees, financial, and insurnace - 30% of budget)
SUBTOTAL				**$ 5,796,950.90**	
PROJECT RESERVES					
3% contingency cost				$ 173,908.53	3% of subtotal
1 year escalation cost				$ 173,908.53	3% of subtotal
GRAND TOTAL				**$ 6,144,767.95**	



OJAI VALLEY green coalition
Advancing a Regenerative and Resilient Ojai Valley

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



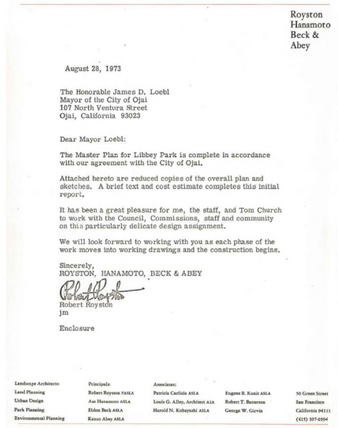
Smith-Hobson Home (Ojai City Hall)

Originally built as the family home of Abram and Helen Hobson in 1907, the Hobson house was a craftsman style structure of all wood construction located in the small town of Nordhoff, California. This home featured a stunning fireplace constructed from handmade ceramic tiles and a beautiful built-in sideboard including a long serving surface and a china cabinet. These two original architectural features can still be viewed in the Council Chambers today, which occupies the original parlor and dining room of the home.

Some year's latter, Ohio Glass magnate and Ojai visionary, Edward Drummond Libbey, persuaded the town leaders of Nordhoff to perform an architectural over hall of the town. In 1917, Libbey contracted with the San Diego based architectural firm of Frank Mead and Richard Requa to redo much of the western-style architecture that existed in the downtown area into the mission revival style. This included building the Spanish style arcade on the storefronts along the main street, and a new post office with its iconic bell tower. Both of these architectural features help to define our community's charter to this day. The reinvention of the town was complete with the change of its name from Nordhoff to Ojai.

While the mission revival style architecture was becoming so prevalent in Ojai, the Hobson family also sought the help of the San Diego architect firm of Mead & Requa to redesign their home. In addition, the builder of the arcade, Robert Winfield, was hired for this renovation. By 1925, the remodel of the Hobson home was complete. The original craftsman style home was transformed into a Spanish style home with beautiful arches and wide patios. A smaller Spanish style guest house was also built, located immediately to the west of the original home. The two structures were connected by walkway under a wisteria covered pergola supported by stucco covered columns. In addition to the homes, the grounds of the estate now included a tennis court, a miniature golf course, and formal gardens. What had started as a rather simple structure had truly become a splendid estate.

After the passing of Abram Hobson in 1929, his daughter Grace and her husband Fred Smith took up residence in the guest house so Grace could be near her mother, Helen Hobson. Then early in the 1970s, after Grace's death, Fred Smith, generously donated the Smith-Hobson estate to the city of Ojai as a gift on the behalf of the Smith-Hobson family.



Royston
Hanamoto
Beck &
Abey

August 28, 1973

The Honorable James D. Loebl
Mayor of the City of Ojai
107 North Ventura Street
Ojai, California 93023

Dear Mayor Loebl:

The Master Plan for Libbey Park is complete in accordance with our agreement with the City of Ojai.

Attached hereto are reduced copies of the overall plan and sketches. A brief text and cost estimate completes this initial report.

It has been a great pleasure for me, the staff, and Tom Church to work with the Council, Commissions, staff and community on this particularly delicate design assignment.

We will look forward to working with you as each phase of the work moves into working drawings and the construction begins.

Sincerely,
ROYSTON, HANAMOTO, BECK & ABEY
Robert Royston
jm

Enclosure

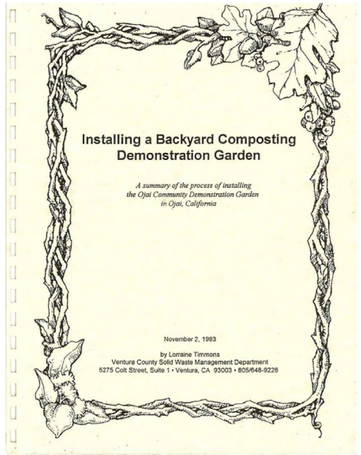
Landscape Architects:
Land Planning
Urban Design
Park Planning
Environmental Planning

Principals:
Robert Royston FASLA
Aso Hanamoto ASLA
Helen Beck ASLA
Kazuo Abey ASLA

Associates:
Patricia Carlisle ASLA
Louis G. Allen, Architect ALA
Harold N. Kobayashi ASLA

Eugene R. Kinkl ASLA
Robert T. Bannerot
George W. Girvin

50 Green Street
San Francisco
California 94111
(415) 397-0504



PHASE I HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY REPORT
SMITH-HOBSON HOUSE / OJAI CITY HALL
401 SOUTH VENTURA STREET
OJAI, VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
(APN 023-090-010)



PREPARED BY:
Carole Denardo, M.A., RPA and Joshua Severn, M.A.
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1552 N. Refugio Road
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(805) 350-3134
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PREPARED FOR:
City of Ojai
Community Development
401 S. Ventura Street
Ojai, California 93024
(805) 646-5581

November 2016

Middle Stewart Canyon Creek Restoration Project
City of Ojai, California

RESTORATION DESIGN PLAN



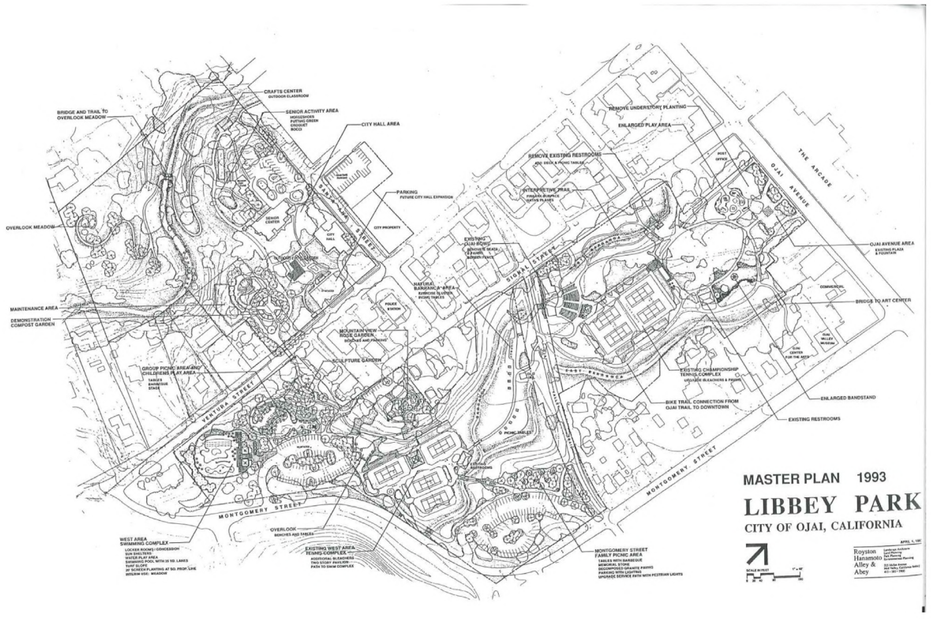
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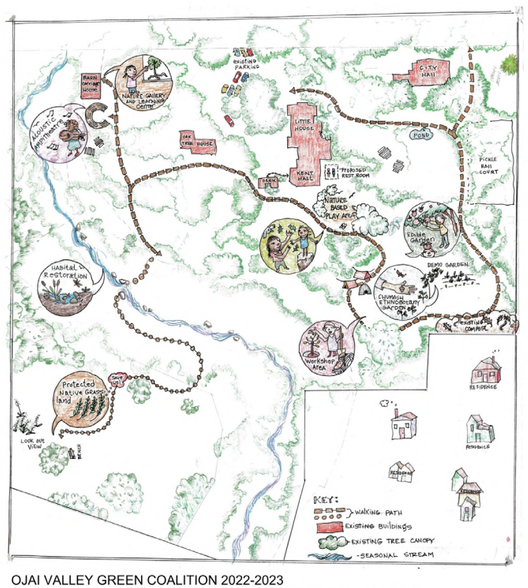
PAX Environmental, Inc.

Pax Environmental, Inc.

Prepared for:
Greg Grant, Public Works Director
City of Ojai

Fall 2019





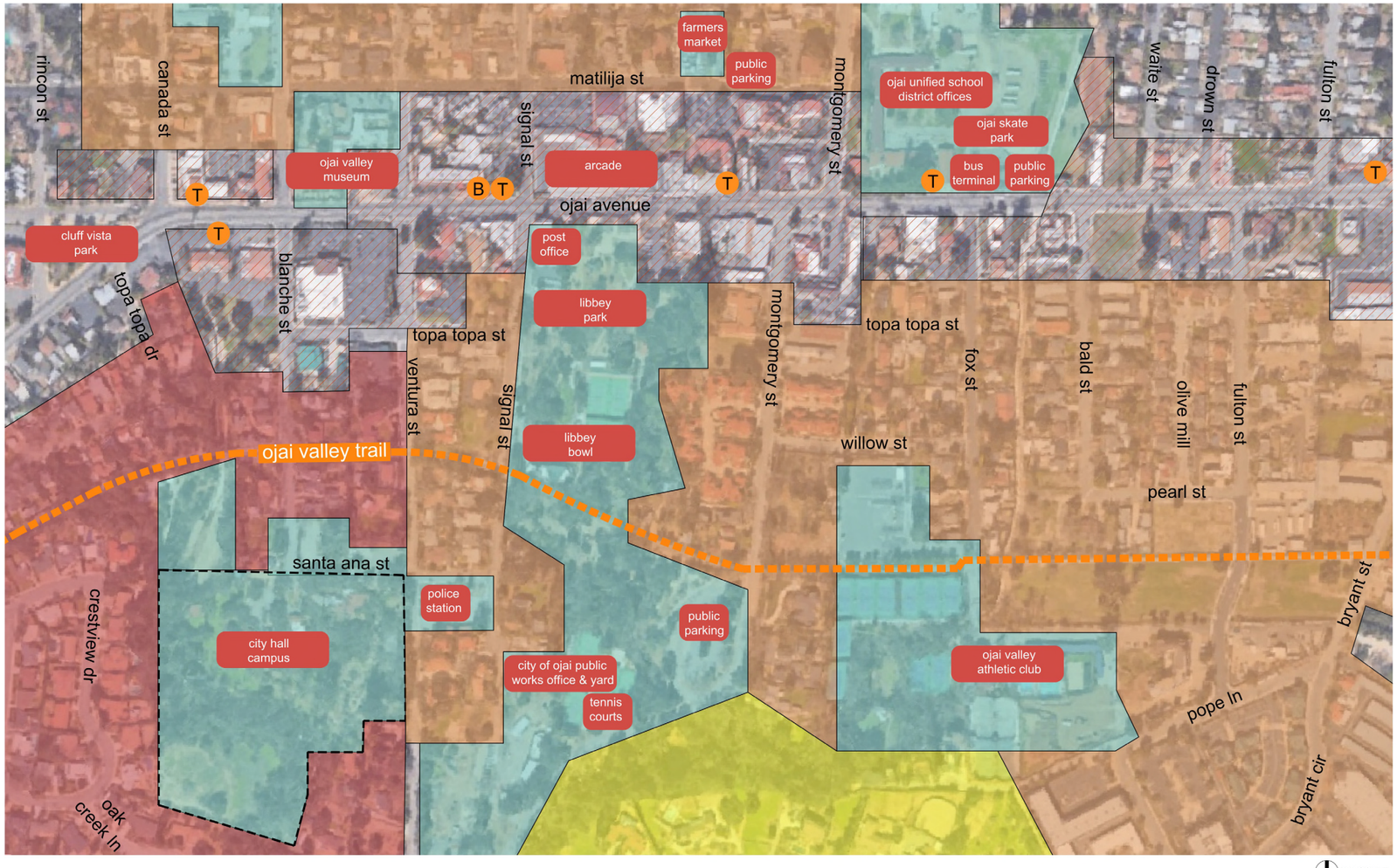
OJAI VALLEY GREEN COALITION 2022-2023
COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANT/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MAP
FEATURED ARTIST: CHRISTINE BRENNAN

OJAI VALLEY green coalition
Advancing a Regenerative and Resilient Ojai Valley

DOWNTOWN OJAI NEIGHBORHOOD VICINITY MAP

PUBLIC LAND
COMMERCIAL
VILLAGE MIXED USE VMU
RESIDENTIAL R-1
RESIDENTIAL R-4

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
T TROLLEY STOP
B BUS STOP



CITY HALL CAMPUS EXISTING SITE MAP




PHOTO A


PHOTO B


PHOTO C


PHOTO D


PHOTO E


PHOTO F


PHOTO G


PHOTO H


PHOTO I


PHOTO N

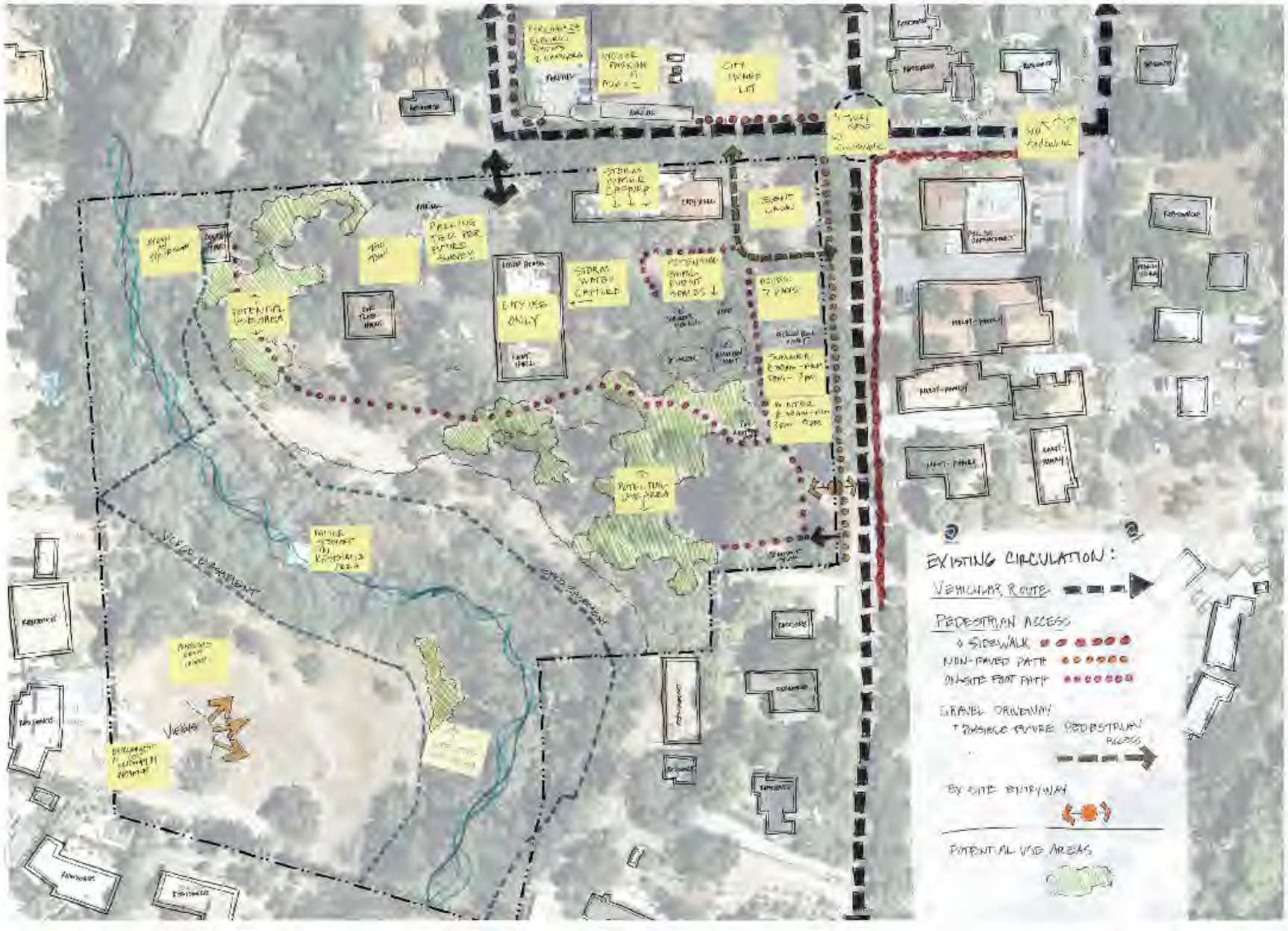

PHOTO M


PHOTO L


PHOTO K


PHOTO J

OJAI CITY HALL CAMPUS - PRELIMINARY SITE ANALYSIS



THE ECO CENTER: A NATURE BASED PARK

REIMAGINING OJAI CITY HALL CAMPUS - THE CITY OF OJAI ECOLOGY CENTER MASTER PLAN



PURPOSE DRIVEN GOALS ADDRESS CHALLENGES RELATED TO:

WATER SUPPLY AND QUALITY
OPEN SPACE
RURAL CHARACTER
BIODIVERSITY
ENERGY
CLIMATE CHANGE
A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL RESIDENTS THROUGH EDUCATION



SITE ANALYSIS:
EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROJECT NARRATIVE:

OJAI'S HISTORIC CITY HALL IS SURROUNDED BY EIGHT ACRES OF OPEN SPACE. IN 2022, THE OJAI VALLEY GREEN COALITION BEGAN DEVELOPING A MASTER PLAN FOR THE CITY OF OJAI FOR THE FUTURE OF THIS "CAMPUS" SURROUNDING CITY HALL. THIS LAND CURRENTLY CONSISTS OF A FORMER ECOLOGICAL DEMONSTRATION GARDEN, A RESTORED CREEKSIDE NATURAL HABITAT, AND SOME LONG NEGLECTED OPEN SPACES THAT MANY SEE AS POTENTIALLY A BEAUTIFUL AND VALUABLE COMMUNITY RESOURCE.

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, UNDER A GRANT AND CONTRACT WITH THE CITY, THE GREEN COALITION HAS LED A SERIES OF COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF THIS PUBLIC SITE. THESE HAVE RESULTED IN A CONSENSUS THAT THIS LAND COULD BECOME A NEW IN-TOWN COMMUNITY PARK, FOCUSED ON VALUING NATURE AND ECOLOGY, A VIBRANT PLACE FOR WORKSHOPS, EVENTS, AND GATHERINGS BASED IN THE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN, AND INSPIRED BY THE ADJACENT NATURAL LANDSCAPE.

WITH THE WORKING NAME OF "OJAI ECO-CENTER," IDEAS (ELEMENTS) INCLUDE BUILDING PATHS AND TRAILS, CHILDREN'S NATURE-BASED PLAY AREAS, A SHELTER FOR CONDUCTING CLASSES, WORKSHOPS AND TALKS, REVITALIZED DEMONSTRATION GARDENS, AND POTENTIALLY THE RESTORATION OF THE HISTORIC CARRIAGE HOUSE. THE PICKLEBALL COURTS AND THE PARKING LOT CURRENTLY OCCUPIED BY OJAI TENT TOWN ARE SEPARATE FROM, AND WILL COEXIST WITH, THE ECO-CENTER.

DESIGN BASIS: OVERALL CONCEPT STRATEGIES

RESPECT NATIVE HABITAT
1. "IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TREES!" - PROTECT THE NATIVE OAK WOODLAND
2. COLLABORATION WITH RESTORING THE RIPARIAN CREEK & HABITAT
3. MINIMIZE SITE GRADING BY WORKING WITH EXISTING CONTOURS

EDUCATIONAL & EXPLORATORY OPPORTUNITIES
1. EXPERIENTIAL PATHWAYS! - WORK WITH EXISTING CIRCULATION
2. ADA ACCESSIBILITY
3. ENGAGE COMMUNITY
4. CAPTURE VIEWS
5. DESIGN A MIX OF USE SPACES
6. CHILDREN CENTERED DESIGN/NATURE PLAY

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING PRACTICES:
1. OPTIMAL LOCATION FOR WORKSHOP BASED ON TREE CANOPY & SLOPE
2. RAINGARDENS FOR STORMWATER CAPTURE ON SITE
3. MAXIMIZE SOLAR/SHADE CONDITIONS
4. RESPECT EXISTING SITE FEATURES
5. REPURPOSE EXISTING MATERIALS ON SITE

PROTECTING NATIVE OAKS

"IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TREES!" HAS BEEN OUR GUIDING MANTRA THROUGHOUT THE DESIGN PHASE. PROTECTING THE NATIVE OAK WOODLAND NOT ONLY PROTECTS THE FUTURE OF THESE IMPORTANT TREES BUT ALSO PRESERVES ITS CONNECTION TO THE PAST HISTORY OF THE SITE AND THE HISTORIC LANDMARK ESTATE PROPERTY.

TREE SURVEY



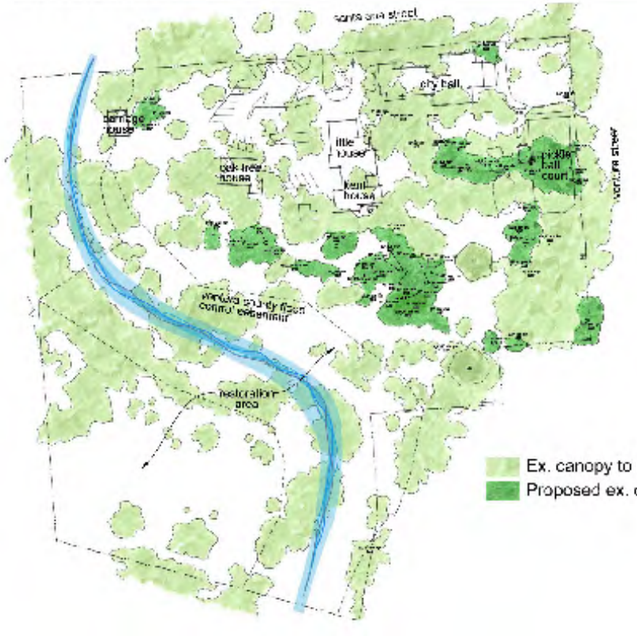
SUMMARY FROM ARBORIST REPORT:
MOST TREES WERE NATIVE (85%). THERE WERE SOME NATIVE TREES OTHER THAN OAKS INCLUDING WILLOWS IN THE CREEK, SEVERAL HOLLY-LEAF CHERRY, ELDERBERRY (1) AND CALIFORNIA BAY LAUREL (SEVERAL PLANTED TREES IN A HEDGE NEAR THE COMPOSTING AREA COUNTED AS A SINGLE OCCURENCE.)

TOTAL # OF TREES
NATIVE: 329
NON-NATIVE (INC. INVASIVES): 57
CONSIDERED INVASIVE: 39

GENERAL HEALTH OF TREES REFLECTING YEARS OF DROUGHT STRESS
GOOD: 132
FAIR: 190
POOR: 60
DEAD: 4

TREES NEEDING ATTENTION
TREES AT RISK OF WHOLE TREE FAILURE OR CATASTROPHIC LIMB DROP
MINOR: 28
SIGNIFICANT: 53
HAZARD: 21

EXISTING TREE CANOPY STUDY



CONDITIONS FOR REMOVALS ARE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
1. HAZARDOUS
2. INVASIVENESS
3. DISEASED OR POOR HEALTH
4. CROWDING OUT PROTECTED SPECIES

A PHASED APPROACH FOR REMOVALS IS RECOMMENED TO BE DONE IN 2 PHASES:
PHASE 1: IN AREAS OF IMMEDIATE RISK
PHASE 2: IN THE RESTORATION AREAS

TREE CANOPY
EX. CANOPY: 273,905 SF
REDUCED CANOPY: 34,042 SF
REMAINING CANOPY: 239,863 SF

TREE COUNT
EXISTING TREES: 422
PROPOSED TREE REMOVALS: 92
TOTAL TREES REMAINING: 330

CONCEPT STRATEGIES:

1. PROTECT THE NATIVE OAK WOODLAND INCLUDING NATIVE OAKS AND OTHER NATIVE SPECIES
2. REMOVE INVASIVE TREE SPECIES IN ORDER TO INHIBIT SPREAD INTO THE RIPARIAN WATERSHED
3. RE-PURPOSE TREE REMOVALS INTO SITE AMENITIES SUCH AS FURNITURE, NATURE PLAY, HUGELKULTUR AND MULCH.









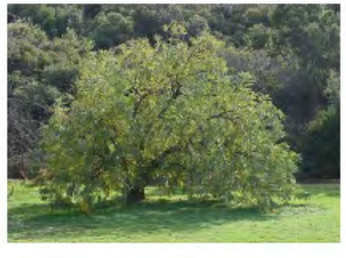


QUERCUS AGRIFOLIA
COAST LIVE OAK





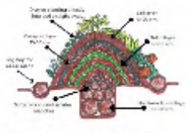
QUERCUS LOBATA
VALLEY OAK





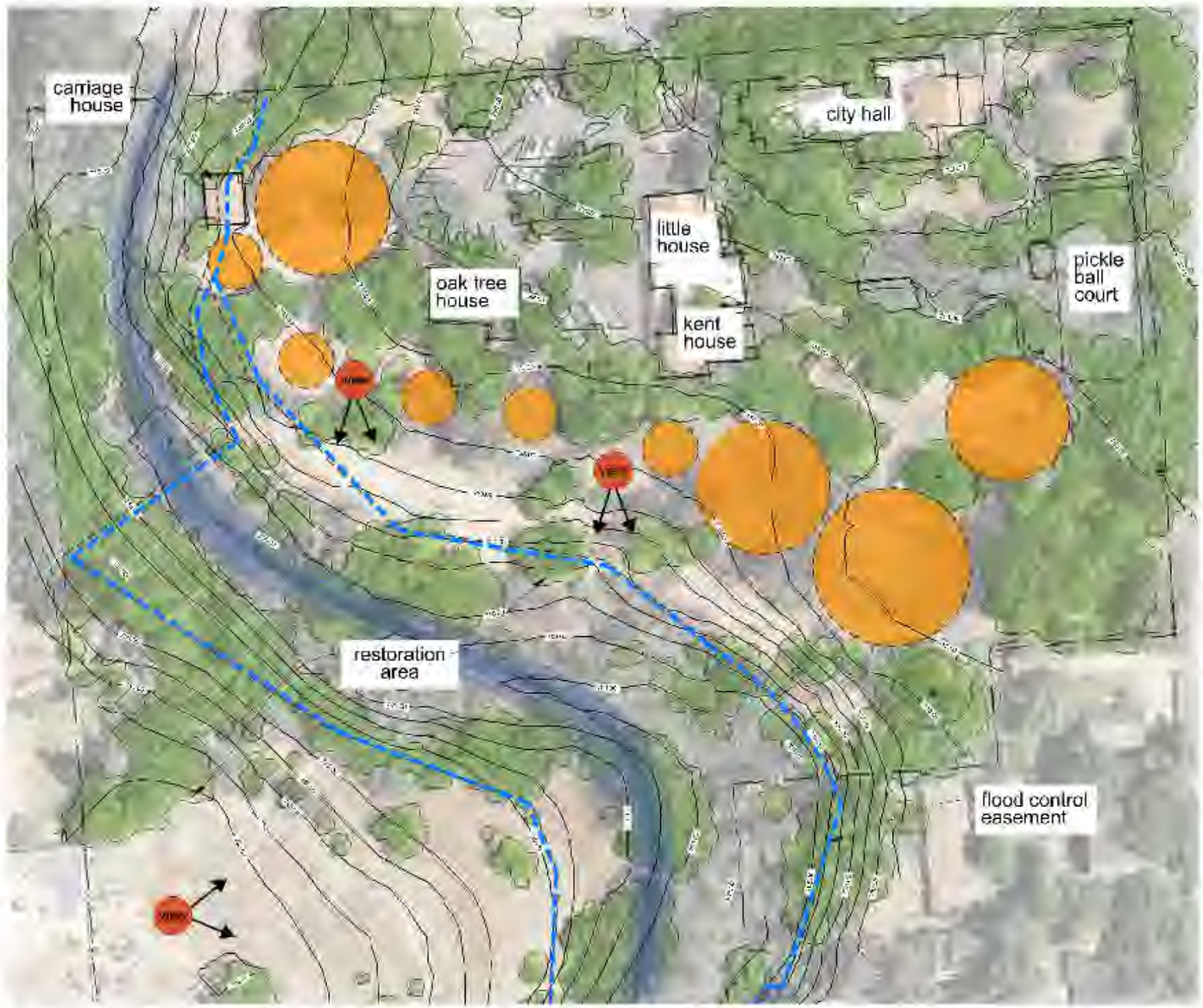
JUGLANS CALIFORNICA
CALIFORNIA WALNUT





HUGELKULTUR BED

THE ECO CENTER: POTENTIAL USE AREAS



CONCEPT STRATEGIES:

1. WORK WITH EXISTING CONTOURS & MINIMIZE GRADING ON SITE
2. WORK WITH EXISTING CIRCULATION
3. WORK WITH EXISTING TREE CONDITIONS
4. MAXIMIZE SOLAR/SHADE CONDITIONS
5. CAPTURE VIEWS
6. RESPECT EXISTING SITE FEATURES
7. REPURPOSE EXISTING MATERIALS SUCH AS TREE REMOVALS AND BOULDERS

IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL USE AREAS AFTER TREE REMOVAL BASED ON DEGREE OF SLOPE AND DISTANCE AWAY FROM REMAINING TREE CANOPIES.

POTENTIAL USE AREA

THE ECO CENTER: SCHEMATIC SKETCH OPTION A



OPTION A CONCEPT:

PROS/OPPORTUNITIES:

- TAKES ADVANTAGE OF GREAT VIEWS
- LOCATED AWAY FROM THE PICKLE BALL COURT (REDUCED SOUND)
- ON AXIS WITH THE PROPOSED NEW ENTRANCE ON VENTURA STREET
- THE PREFERRED OPTION BASED ON SURVEY INPUT

CONS/CONSTRAINTS:

- LOCATED AWAY FROM THE CITY HALL BUILDING

THE ECO CENTER: SCHEMATIC SKETCH OPTION B



OPTION B CONCEPT:

PROS/OPPORTUNITIES:

- MORE CENTRALLY LOCATED
- CLOSER TO THE CITY HALL BUILDING

CONS/CONSTRAINTS:

- LOCATED CLOSER TO THE PICKLE BALL COURT (INCREASED SOUND DURING PLAY HOURS)
-

DESIGN STRATEGY: PROGRAMMING, SITE FEATURES & LANDSCAPING








children's core

nature play
discovery & exploration
educational opportunities
native plants & signage
sensory plants
pollinator plants

riparian corridor

existing & future restoration area
trails & overlook
native plants
native oak woodland restoration
riparian stream bed



social core

intimate gathering areas
small events
event lawn
a mix of native plants & existing ornamentals
vegetative screening
rain gardens

demonstration core

workshop building
home demonstration gardens
view terrace
orchard
community garden beds
chumash garden

DESIGN STRATEGY: PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

PROBLEM:

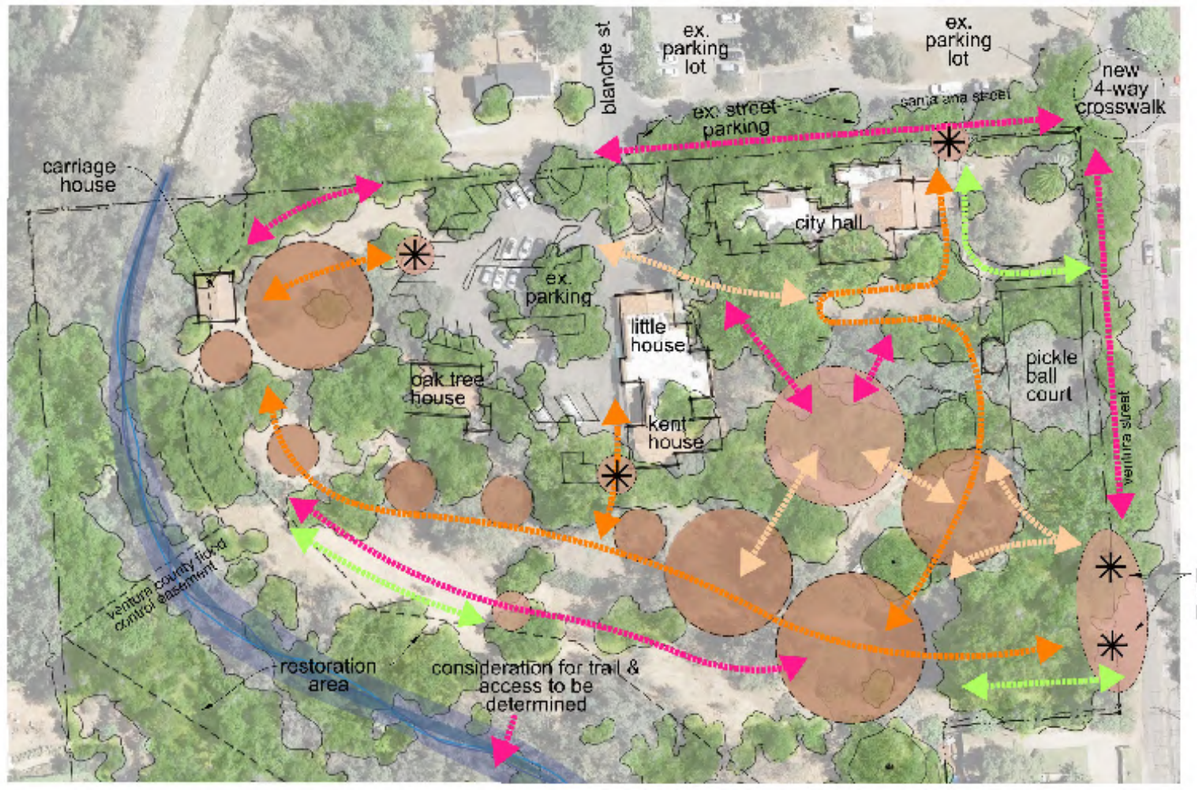
EXISTING PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY IS UNDEFINED AND DISCONNECTED IN MANY AREAS.
ADA ACCESS IS LACKING ACROSS SITE.

GOALS:

- CONNECTIONS TO EXISTING CIRCULATION
- DESIGN ADA PATHS THROUGHOUT ENTIRE SITE
- CONNECT ANY GAPS IN EXISTING PATHWAYS
- CONNECT TO RESTROOMS, PARKING, ETC.
- ADD EDUCATIONAL & WAYFINDING SIGNAGE





KEY SYMBOLS

- PRIMARY PATH / ADA ACCESSIBLE
- SECONDARY PATH / ADA ACCESSIBLE
- TRAIL (GRAVEL OR MULCH)
- SMALL VEHICLE ACCESS
- ENTRY NODES

DESIGN STRATEGY: STORMWATER CATCHMENT

OPPORTUNITIES:

IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL AREAS FOR STORMWATER CATCHMENT BASED ON EXISTING AND PROPOSED ROOFWATER RUN-OFF.
ALTERNATIVE CATCHMENT SYSTEMS SUCH AS RAINWATER STORAGE TANKS FOR IRRIGATION & FIRE SUPPRESSION TO BE CONSIDERED


RAINGARDEN

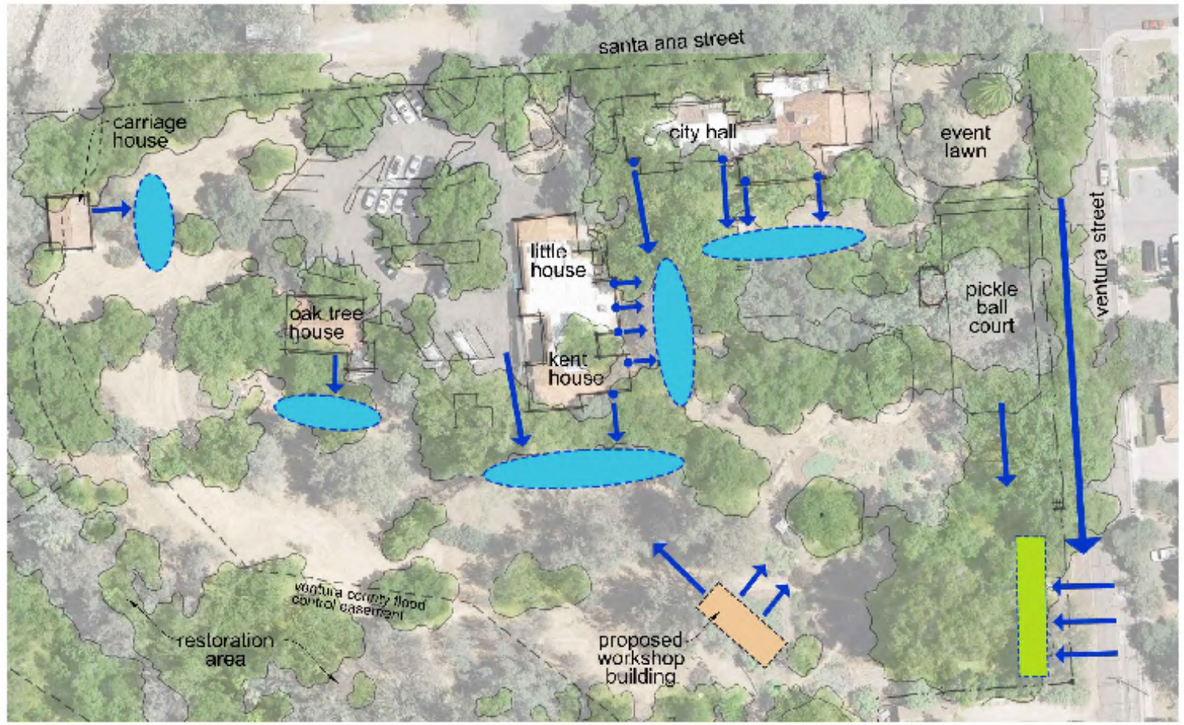

ACHILLEA MILLEFOLIA
COMMON YARROW


JUNCUS PATENS
COMMON RUSH


LEYMUS CONDENSATUS
WILD RYE


CAREX FANSA
DUNE SEDGE


STACHYS BULLATA
CALIFORNIA HEDGENETTLE



KEY SYMBOLS

DIRECTION OF STORMWATER FLOW

RAINGARDEN

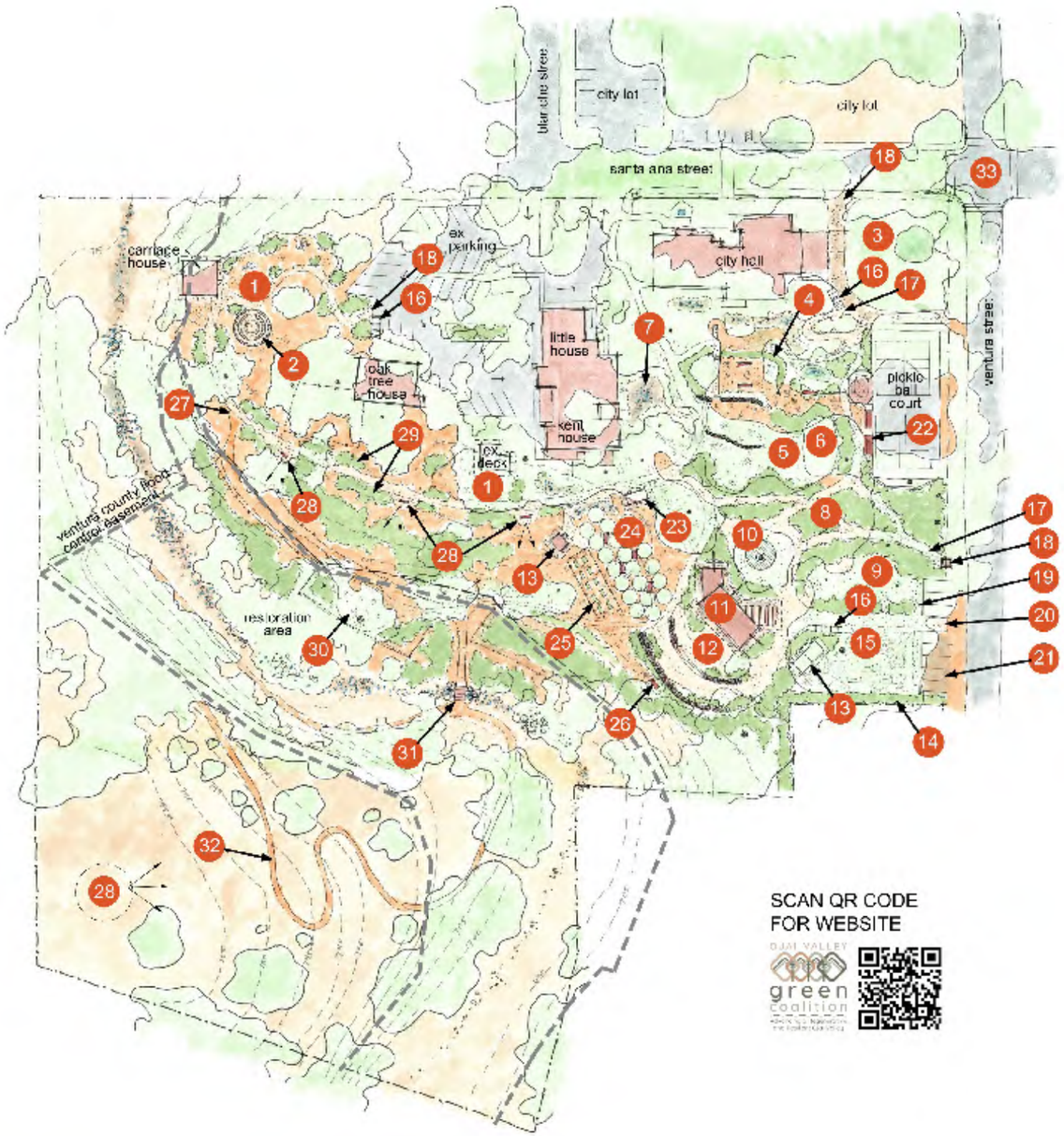
BIOSWALE ALONG STREET

THE ECO CENTER CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

PROJECT VISION:

THE HISTORIC 8-ACRE CITY HALL CAMPUS PROPERTY HAS THE POTENTIAL TO SERVE AS AN ESSENTIAL ECOLOGICAL HUB FOR OJAI. IT IS WONDERFUL TO HAVE A PLACE IN THE HEART OF TOWN THAT OFFERS REFUGE TO NON-HUMAN AND HUMAN MEMBERS OF OUR SMALL COMMUNITY. THE SITE HAS THE POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE A PLACE FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS TO GAIN APPRECIATION FOR OUR ECOSYSTEM, AND TO LEARN HOW TO STEWARD AND TEND THE SITE IN A SUSTAINABLE AND REGENERATIVE MANNER. WE CAN WALK THE TRAILS, GARDEN TOGETHER, GATHER AND MEET WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY, AND THEN TAKE THE EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE GAINED BACK TO OUR OWN HOMES AND COMMUNITIES. THIS SITE CAN SERVE AS AN INVITING PLACE FOR RESIDENTS, AND VISITORS ALIKE TO JOIN US IN HARMONIOUS WAYS.

1. FLEX/PLAY SPACES
2. AMPHITHEATRE
3. EVENT LAWN
4. EXISTING FORMAL GARDENS
5. FLEX AREA/PICNIC
6. EXISTING BADMINTON COURT
7. RAINGARDENS
8. DEMONSTRATION GARDENS
9. FLEX AREA
10. OAK TREE SEATING AREA
11. PROPOSED GARDEN HOUSE - OPTION A
12. VIEW TERRACE
13. NEW SHED (2 LOCATIONS)
14. HEDGE SCREENING
15. EX COMPOST AREA
16. BIKE RACK
17. ADA PATH (5' WIDE)
18. ENTRY NODE
19. BIOSWALE
20. ENTRY NODE & MAINTENCE PATH FOR VEHICLES
21. PARKING INC. ADA SPACES
22. BENCH SEAT
23. RESTROOM
24. ORCHARD W/ PICNIC TABLES
25. COMMUNITY GARDEN BEDS
26. PICNIC TABLE
27. RESTORATION SIGNAGE
28. VIEW POINT W/ BENCH
29. POLLINATOR GARDENS
30. SHADED AREA
31. CREEK CROSSING
32. RESTORATION TRAIL
33. NEW CROSSWALK



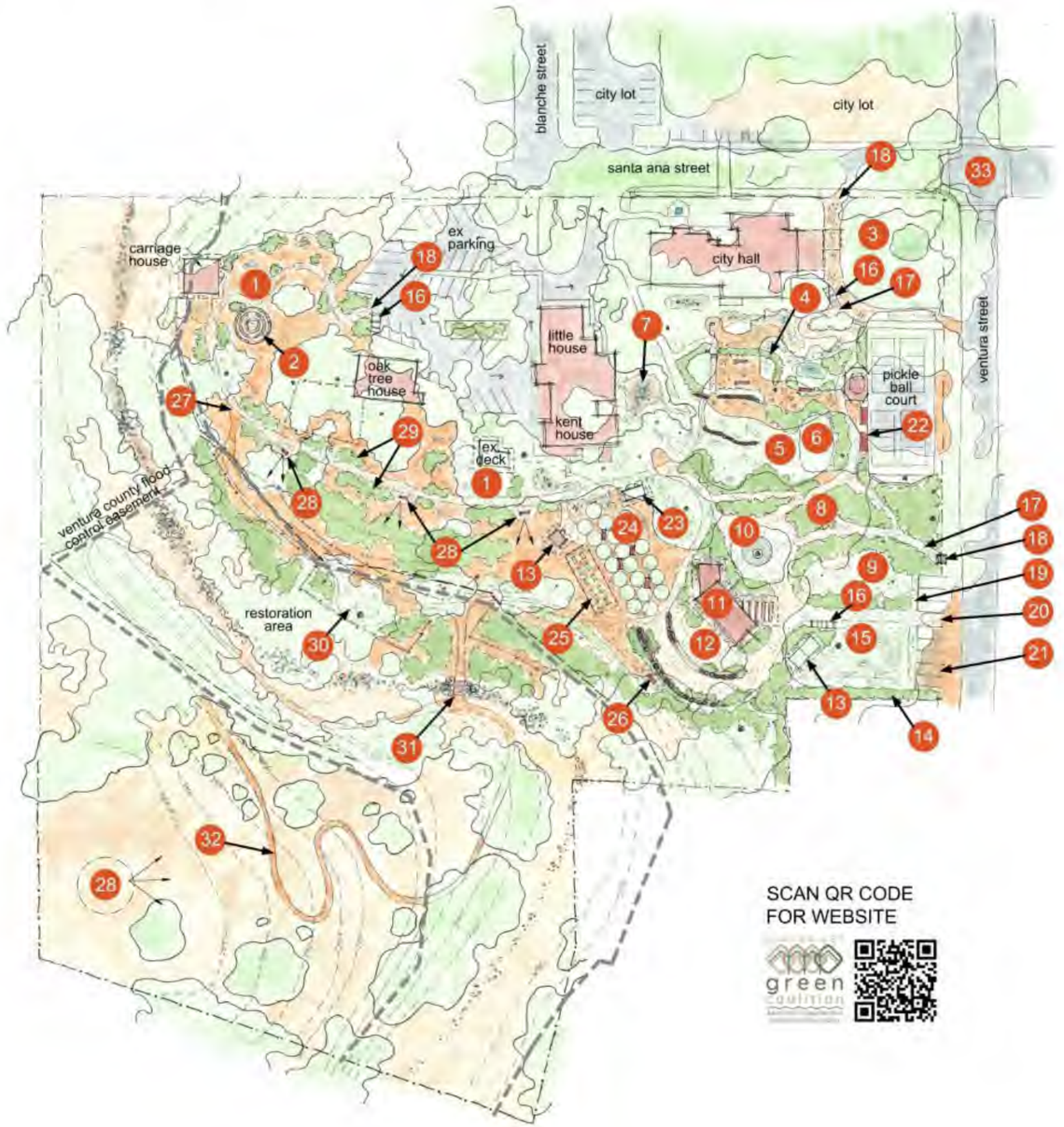

REIMAGINING OJAI CITY HALL CAMPUS:
THE OJAI ECO CENTER
A CITY CAMPUS FOR EVERYONE
OJAI CITY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 24, 2026
6 PM
OJAI VALLEY
green
coalition
Advancing a Regenerative and Resilient Ojai Valley

THE ECO CENTER CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

PROJECT VISION:

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14. HEDGE SCREENING
15. EX COMPOST AREA
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17. ADA PATH (6' WIDE)
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19. BIOSWALE
20. ENTRY NODE & MAINTENCE PATH FOR VEHICLES
21. PARKING INC. ADA SPACES
22. BENCH SEAT
23. RESTROOM
24. ORCHARD W/ PICNIC TABLES
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32. RESTORATION TRAIL
33. NEW CROSSWALK



GARDEN HOUSE, KITCHEN & TERRACE



STRAWBALE CONSTRUCTION







NIGHT ON THE TERRACE



COMMUNITY KITCHEN



CREATIVE EVENTS

SITE STRUCTURES



EX. CARRIAGE HOUSE



EX. ARBOR



RESTROOMS



CREEK CROSSING BRIDGE



PARKING & BIOSWALE

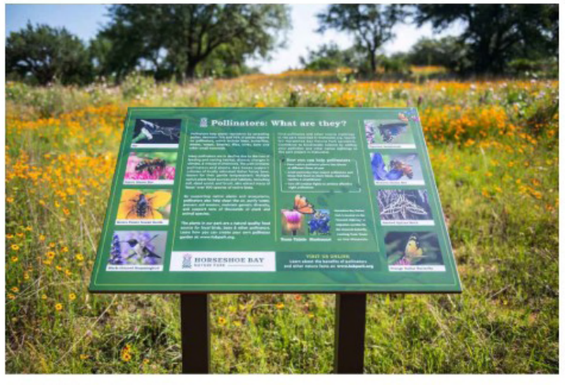
SITE FEATURES



DEMONSTRATION GARDENS



POP-UP EVENTS



SIGNAGE

TREE REPURPOSING PROGRAM



INTERIOR WOOD

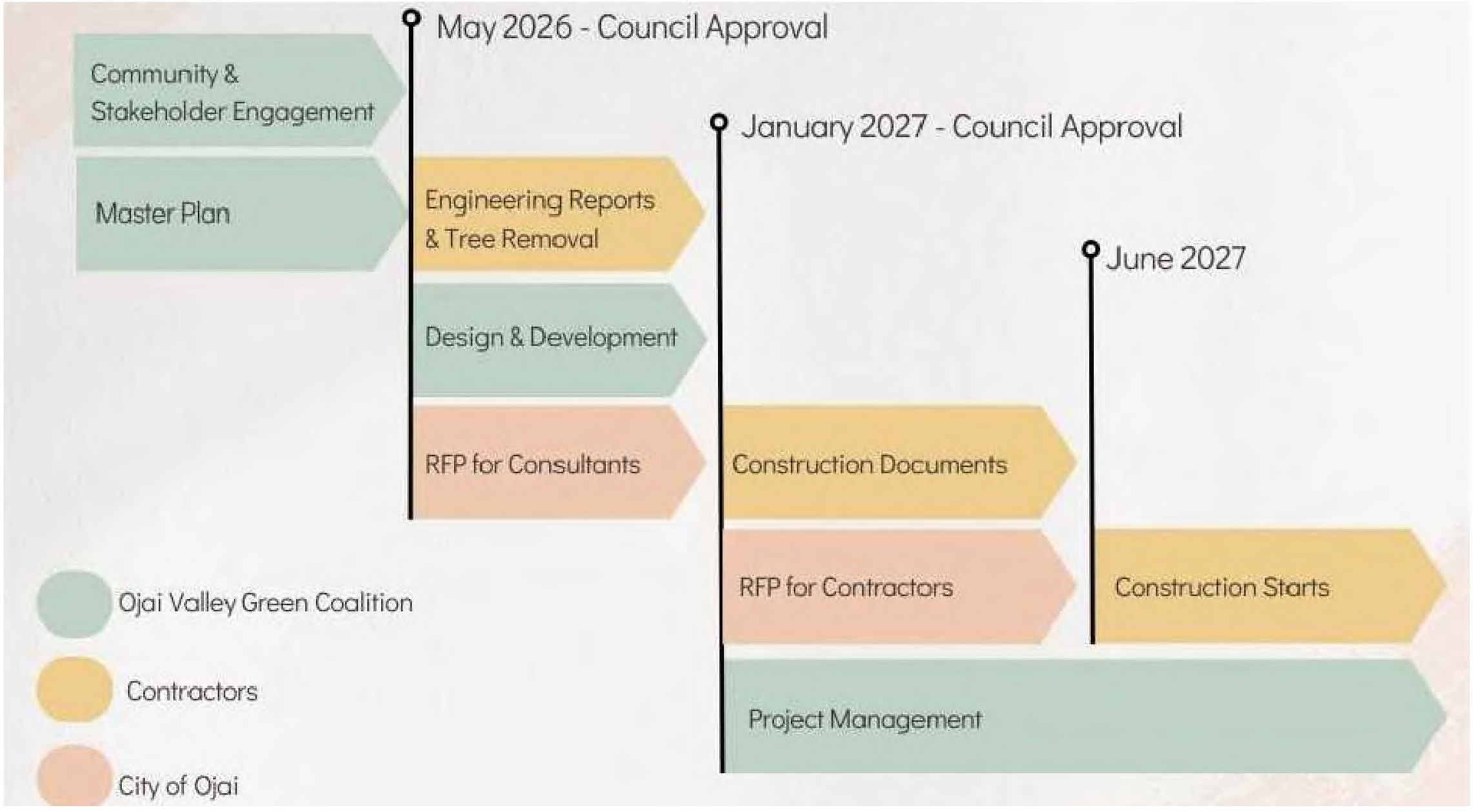


NATURE PLAY LOGS & MULCH



BENCH SEATING

OJAI ECO CENTER TIMELINE



REFERENCES, SOURCE MATERIALS & DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

City of Ojai. *Ojai General Plan – Conservation Element.* Adopted May 13, 1987.

City of Ojai. *Ojai General Plan – Recreation Element.* Adopted May 13, 1987.

City of Ojai. *Ojai General Plan – Open Space Element.* Adopted May 13, 1987.

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Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**
Bethany Burgess, City Attorney

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **County of Ventura Civil Grand Jury Report Regarding Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project (*Legal Requirement*)**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Discuss report issued by County of Ventura Civil Grand Jury regarding the Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project on June 25, 2026.
2. Direct the City Attorney to prepare a draft response to the report for further consideration by the City Council at a regular or special meeting of City Council in August, 2026.

DISCUSSION

On June 25, 2026, the County of Ventura Civil Grand Jury ("Civil Grand Jury") released a report regarding the Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project pertaining to best practices to ensure a fair and competitive selection process (Attachment A). According to the report, on April 16, 2025, the Civil Grand Jury received "a public complaint alleging that the Ojai City Council authorized the city manager to negotiate a contract with DignityMoves for around $10 million for the construction of a 30-unit permanent supportive housing complex for people experiencing homelessness without obtaining competitive bids based on the lowest price as required by law for construction projects of this size."

The Civil Grand Jury investigated the complaint and based on the summary provided in the report, concluded that "[t]here are lessons to be learned and recommendations that should be followed after a Ventura County Civil Grand Jury investigation found that the City of Ojai selected a vendor for inclusion in a grant application, and later awarded a contract to that vendor, without conducting a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency as required by law." The Civil Grand Jury further recommended that best practices should be followed in all jurisdictions, including the City of Ojai.

The Civil Grand Jury's summary noted that the risk of running out of time and missing deadlines arose as a consistent theme in Ojai's decision-making process and recognized that that "Ojai certainly faced pressure to keep the project funded and moving forward." The report summary concluded with recognition that providing safe and secure accommodations for the unhoused population is an important goal shared by the City of Ojai and its Ventura County partners, and that the issues were not with the project's good

intentions, but rather with the execution and management of the project.

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 925a, a grand jury may examine the records of any incorporated city and "may investigate and report upon the operations, accounts, and records of the officers, departments, functions, and the method or system of performing the duties of any such city" and make recommendations as it may deem proper and fit. Reports resulting from such investigations must be transmitted to the governing body of any affected agency. Following completion of an investigation, and with approval of the presiding judge, a grand jury may make its findings and report available to the public and may also submit the report for comment to responsible officers, agencies, or departments of the agency that is the subject of the investigation.

After receiving a report from a grand jury, Penal Code Section 933 requires that the public agency that is the subject of the report provide comments to the presiding judge of the superior court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to the matters under the governing body's control within 90 days after submission of the final report. Penal Code Section 933.05(a) establishes the form of such responses to findings and provides that they must indicate one of the following:

> (1) The respondent agrees with the finding.
>
> (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefor.

(Penal Code Section 933.05(a)).

Additionally, with respect to grand jury recommendations, the agency must identify whether (1) the recommendation was implemented with a summary of the implemented action, (2) the recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation, (3) the recommendation requires further analysis, or (4) the recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable, with an explanation.

Beginning on page 13 of the Civil Grand Jury's report, the Civil Grand Jury listed 18 findings related to the project and also provided six recommendations for future action. Page 15 of the Civil Grand Jury's report requests responses within 60 days from the date of the report from the City Manager (and 90 days from the City Council). Because grand jury reports often pertain to legal issues, a common practice for a city receiving a civil grand jury report is for the initial draft of the response to be prepared by the City Attorney's Office with subsequent input from City staff and approval by the City Council. Consistent with this practice, the City Attorney recommends that City Council provide direction to the City Attorney's Office to prepare a consolidated response from the City Council and the City Manager for review by City Council at a meeting in August.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

Goal No. 8 - Financial Stability

OPTIONS

1. Provide alternate direction to the City Attorney and City Manager.

FISCAL IMPACT

Preparation of the response to the Civil Grand Jury report will require attorney and staff time. Implementation of the Civil Grand Jury's recommendations will also require attorney and staff time. City attorney and staff time is incorporated in the FY 26/27 budget.

Prepared by: Bethany Burgess, City Attorney

ATTACHMENT(S)

A. Civil Grand Jury Report, including attachments.

2025-2026

COUNTY of VENTURA

Civil Grand Jury

Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project

Best Practices to Ensure a Fair and Competitive Selection Process

June 25, 2026

Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project

SUMMARY

There are lessons to be learned and recommendations that should be followed after a Ventura County Civil Grand Jury investigation found that the City of Ojai selected a vendor for inclusion in a grant application, and later awarded a contract to that vendor, without conducting a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency as required by law. The Civil Grand Jury recommends that best practices for selecting vendors and awarding city contracts should be followed in all jurisdictions.

The Civil Grand Jury discovered that the possibility of running out of time and potentially missing opportunities or important deadlines came up as a consistent theme in Ojai's decisions to circumvent the required fair and competitive selection process. Whether it was the looming deadline to submit the grant application, or the imminent deadline to spend 50% of the grant or risk losing the funding despite not having a contract in place, Ojai certainly faced pressure to keep the project funded and moving forward.

Providing safe and secure accommodations for the unhoused population of Ojai is an important goal that is shared by Ojai employees and elected officials, along with its Ventura County partners. The issues found in this report are not related to the good intentions of the project, but with the execution and management of the project.

METHODOLOGY

During its investigation, the Civil Grand Jury interviewed elected city officials and city staff from Camarillo, Fillmore, Ojai, Ventura, and Thousand Oaks to understand the process that cities in Ventura County have followed in their identification and selection of development managers for their public grant-supported projects.

Additionally, interviews were conducted with representatives from the County of Ventura Community Development Division (CDD) to understand its role in assisting local cities with their grant applications, and representatives from HELP of Ojai, one of the support partners for Ojai's Permanent Supportive Housing Project.

Finally, the Civil Grand Jury received information from the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) regarding various state-level administrative details of California's Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Grant Program.

BACKGROUND

The original complaint

On April 16, 2025, the Ventura County Civil Grand Jury received a public complaint alleging that the Ojai City Council authorized the city manager to negotiate a contract with DignityMoves for around $10 million for the construction of a 30-unit permanent supportive housing complex for people experiencing homelessness without obtaining competitive bids based on the lowest price as required by law for construction projects of this size.

Addressing the unhoused population in Ojai

In July 2023, the CDD, the City of Ojai, and local community representatives began discussing various long-term approaches and available public funding to address the city's unhoused population. (Ref-001, Att-001)

According to Ojai's website, "The City has experienced people camping on the City Hall Campus since early 2019. To address this issue and community concerns, the City temporarily created the tent town on the City Hall parking lot adjacent from Kent Hall. The City is interested in a long term solution to address the housing crisis in Ojai. To do so, the City plans to turn part of the southern portion of the City's Public Works Department's Maintenance Yard into a permanent supportive housing site, described as the Cabin Village. Preliminary plans for the Cabin Village project include up to 30 units assembled in a 'Mediterranean Village' format equipped with a centralized courtyard, and communal facilities in a cooperative living environment, which may include a resident stewardship program to maintain the Cabin Village." (Ref-002)



Figure 1: Current Ojai Tent Town. Source: Civil Grand Jury Photograph dated October 4, 2025. (Att-002)

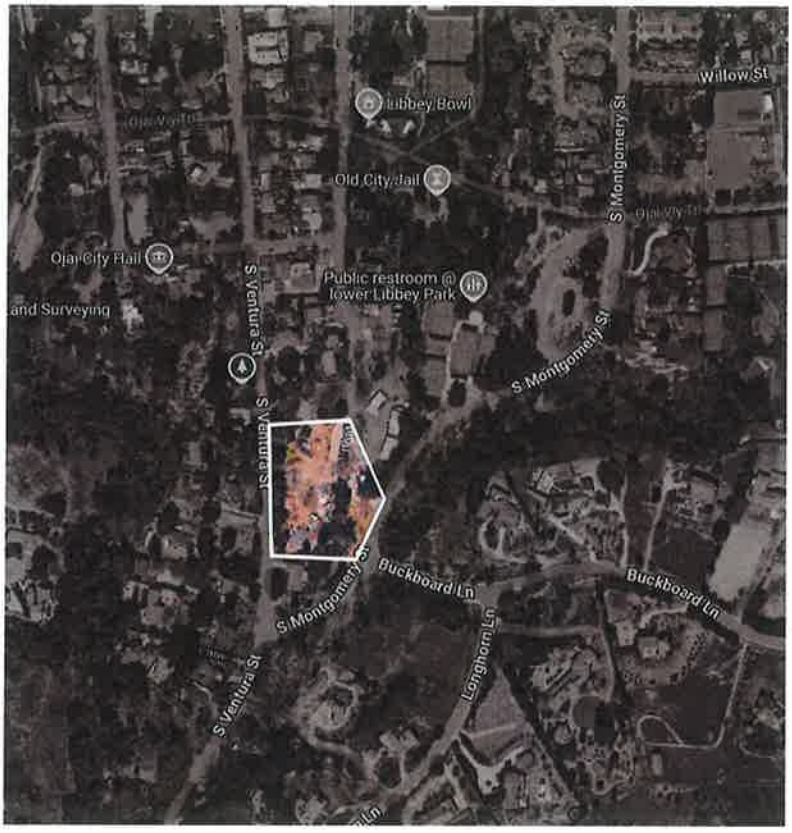


Figure 2: Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Proposed Location. Source: City of Ojai Website (Ref-003)

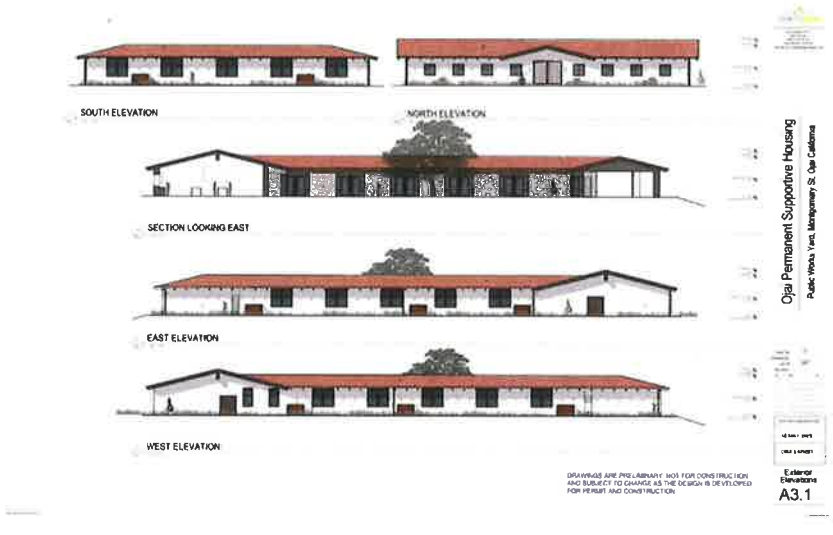


Figure 3: Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Preliminary Design. Source: City of Ojai Website (Ref-003)

The role of the CDD

According to its website, the CDD "is dedicated to serving the diverse needs of Ventura County residents, primarily those with lower incomes, through partnerships with non-profit and government organizations to meet the unmet needs for affordable and supportive housing, community development programs, social service programs and economic development opportunities." (Ref-004)

In discussions with the CDD, it was learned that the CDD serves as the administrative entity for the Ventura County Continuum of Care (CoC) and supports the CoC's Alliance, Governance Board, and various committees. (Ref-001)

According to its mission statement, the CoC Alliance is a collaborative group dedicated to promoting a safe, desirable and thriving community by ending homelessness in Ventura County. (Ref-005)

It should be noted that the CDD is sometimes referred to as the CoC in Ojai's meeting agenda, minutes, and administrative reports.

The ERF Grant Program

On August 4, 2023, at a meeting between Ojai officials, local community representatives, and the CDD, information about the HCD's ERF grant program was presented. (Ref-001, Att-003)

According to the HCD website, the ERF grant program is "a competitive grant program available to assist local jurisdictions to provide services and support to people experiencing homelessness in encampments that result in meaningful paths to safe and stable housing. Eligible applicants include counties, Continuums of Care (CoCs), and cities of any size." (Ref-006)

As of December 31, 2025, the ERF program has awarded 123 grants throughout the state totaling more than $855 million. (Ref-007, Ref-008)

The introduction of DignityMoves

Ojai elected officials and employees confirmed that Ojai based its selection of DignityMoves for its grant application to the State of California in January 2024 on a recommendation from the CDD, which was based in part on the experience of other cities in and around Ventura County. (Ref-001)

Further, Ojai openly acknowledged that DignityMoves was the only development manager it considered, based on this recommendation from the CDD. (Ref-001)

For its part, the CDD acknowledged introducing DignityMoves to the City of Ojai. On August 7, 2023, the CDD provided Ojai with a copy of Thousand Oaks' recent and successful ERF grant application and budget that included DignityMoves. (Ref-001, Att-003)

Both the City of Ojai and the CDD believed that the prospects of receiving a grant would improve if they used the same development manager that had been included in Thousand Oaks' successful ERF grant application. (Ref-001)

The ERF application and grant approval

From August 8, 2023, to January 17, 2024, at least seven additional planning meetings were held with the CDD, Ojai, and local community representatives to develop the ERF grant application. (Ref-001, Att-004)

In discussions with the CDD and with Ojai, it was confirmed that no other entities were considered besides DignityMoves during this time. (Ref-001)

On December 1, 2023, an administrative report to the Ojai City Council for its December 12, 2023, meeting stated that the CoC had offered to assist Ojai with the application development and submission to the state. (Ref-009)

On January 19, 2024, an administrative report to the Ojai City Council for its January 23, 2024, meeting stated that Ojai was engaging with DignityMoves for the Cabin Village project. (Ref-010)

On January 23, 2024, the Ojai City Council voted 3-2 to submit the ERF grant application, which was submitted to the State of California prior to the deadline of January 31, 2024. (Ref-011) This application, which named DignityMoves as the development manager, was authored by the City of Ojai with assistance from, and then certified by, the CDD. (Ref-001, Ref-009, Ref-012)

On April 18, 2024, the California Interagency Council on Homelessness provided written confirmation for the ERF grant. The City of Ojai was awarded an amount of $12,667,461.04. (Ref-002)

On September 25, 2024, the City of Ojai executed the ERF Standard Agreement with HCD. (Ref-013)

The contract with DignityMoves

More than 13 months transpired between the awarding of the grant on April 18, 2024, and the signing of the contract with DignityMoves on May 27, 2025. Ojai elected officials and employees confirmed that much of the delay was caused by a continuing lack of alignment among Ojai's employees, elected officials, and local residents on a variety of issues including the final selection of the development site which changed several times during this period. (Ref-001)

On March 25, 2025, the city council voted 3-2 to authorize the city manager to negotiate a development management agreement with DignityMoves. (Ref-014) This was the event that prompted the complaint to the Civil Grand Jury.

On May 27, 2025, City of Ojai Resolution No. 25-19 was introduced to approve the permanent supportive housing project known as Cabin Village. It also approved a sole source management agreement with DignityMoves. Page 20 of the resolution states that the sole source agreement was justified as necessary based on, among other things, the following statements:

- "The City has determined that DignityMoves is uniquely qualified to provide the product and services laid out in the Development Management Agreement.
- There are no other known vendors that have the ability to design, develop, and construct the City's Public Works Department's Storage Yard into a permanent supportive housing site.
- DignityMoves was specifically named as a key development partner in the ERF grant funding application, which was approved by HCD.
- Because the City is obligated to spend fifty percent (50%) of the ERF grant by the June 30, 2025, deadline, the typical procurement process for a vendor would delay the project beyond this deadline and is unlikely to find another vendor capable of providing a similar product.
- If DignityMoves is not selected, the project will be unable to proceed because the ERF funding will be jeopardized." (Ref-015)

As a result of this resolution, the Ojai City Council voted 3-2 on May 27, 2025, to authorize the city manager to execute the development management agreement with DignityMoves, formally granting it a $9.5 million contract. (Ref-016)

Turnover among city staff and elected officials

There was significant turnover at the City of Ojai from the early discussions in the summer of 2023 to the awarding of the contract on May 27, 2025.

The interim city manager, who was in place when discussions began in the summer of 2023, resigned in mid-November 2023, well before the ERF grant application was submitted in January 2024, or when the development management agreement was signed on May 27, 2025. (Ref-017)

The assistant city manager, who was in place when discussions began in the summer of 2023, became the interim city manager in mid-November 2023 until a new city manager was hired in January 2024. (Ref-018) This employee then returned to their assistant city manager position before eventually leaving Ojai in May 2025. (Ref-019)

The current Ojai city manager was hired in January 2024. (Ref-020) This was right at the time the ERF grant application was being submitted to the state and well after the work was done to identify DignityMoves or develop the application. This is the employee who signed the Development Management Agreement dated May 27, 2025. (Ref-021)

The former mayor and city council members who were in place when the discussions began in the summer of 2023 were all in place when the ERF grant application was submitted in January 2024.

There was an election in November 2024. As a result, a new mayor and one new city council member were elected, and the current mayor and one of the existing city council members left office. (Ref-022) Three of the existing city council members remained in office.

The new mayor signed the City of Ojai Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, which included language that supported the selection of DignityMoves as the sole source provider without a fair and competitive selection process. (Ref-015)

Finally, the CDD's primary liaison to Ojai, as well as the city's outside law firm, remained the same during the timeframe referenced in this report, specifically from July 2023, when discussions began, through May 27, 2025, when the contract with DignityMoves was signed. (Ref-001)

DISCUSSION

Was Ojai required to get competitive bids?

As stated above, the initial complaint alleged that Ojai was moving forward with a contract without obtaining competitive bids based on the lowest price as required by law for construction projects of this size.

Based on the scope of professional services work in the development management agreement with DignityMoves, the Civil Grand Jury found that Ojai was exempt from obtaining a competitive bid based on the lowest price under Government Code § 4525 et seq. This area of California law expressly exempts contracts for certain professional services such as architectural, engineering, landscape architectural, environmental, land surveying, and construction project management from formal price-based competitive bidding statutes.

Instead, these types of contracts fall under a Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) process (see below) where such services are procured on a qualifications and competency basis in which agencies select the most qualified firm and then negotiate price and scope.

It should be noted that DignityMoves has pursued the required competitive bids based on the lowest price for all construction work it is managing with subcontractors for this project. Contractors have been selected and determined to be qualified to bid on the project based on their responses to the Request for Qualifications issued by DignityMoves and received on or before July 25, 2025. (Ref-023)

What was Ojai required to do in the selection process?

Under California Government Code section 4529.12, the city was required to engage in a fair and competitive selection process. It did not necessarily have to conduct a formal Request for Qualifications. In the investigation, it was confirmed that the City of Ojai did not conduct any due diligence, nor did it engage in a fair and competitive selection process. (Ref-001)

TERMS IN THIS REPORT

CDD	County of Ventura Community Development Division (CDD)
CoC	Continuum of Care
ERF	Encampment Resolution Funding
HCD	California Department of Housing and Community Development

So, how did Ojai select DignityMoves?

In the interviews with Ojai elected officials and employees, it was acknowledged by everyone that the selection of DignityMoves as the development manager was done without any competitive or qualifications-based due diligence. Specifically, everyone interviewed acknowledged that Ojai did not perform a Request for Information, a Request for Qualifications, or a Request for Proposal from DignityMoves or any other potential vendors. Instead, the City of Ojai relied on a recommendation from the CDD. (Ref-001)

Why did Ojai select DignityMoves without a fair and competitive selection process?

The first reason given by Ojai elected officials and employees for not pursuing other vendors was that DignityMoves had been recommended by the CDD based on DignityMoves' recent successful project with the City of Thousand Oaks. Ojai was also aware of successful DignityMoves' projects outside of Ventura County, including one for the City of Santa Barbara. (Ref-001)

The second reason given by Ojai elected officials and employees for not pursuing other vendors was the lack of time to conduct a proper due diligence process, claiming that it only learned about the ERF grant about six weeks before the January 31, 2024, application deadline. (Ref-001)

The Civil Grand Jury's investigation revealed that the CDD provided Ojai with information about the ERF grant program no later than August 4, 2023, almost six months before the application deadline of January 31, 2024, which would have given the city sufficient time to conduct a fair and competitive selection process. (Ref-001, Att-003)

Further, the investigation revealed that while there had been significant turnover during the months leading up to the ERF grant application submission date, there was enough continuity at the City of Ojai during the period in question to refute the claim of insufficient time. The former assistant city manager who cosigned the ERF grant application was engaged in the process from the summer of 2023 through the application submission date in January 2024. Additionally,

the former Ojai mayor and the then-city council members were in office during this time, as was Ojai's outside law firm. (Ref-001)

Could the CDD have done things differently?

The CDD, in its role as the administrative entity for the CoC, maintains a Memorandum of Understanding, Ventura Countywide Homelessness, dated February 26, 2018, that has been signed by city officials from Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, and Ventura. This document outlines several shared agreements between the CoC and the cities in Ventura County, including one that states the cities "commit to consult with the CoC as the city/county considers recommendations for programs and funding related to homelessness." (Att-005)

For its part, the CDD acknowledged recommending DignityMoves to Ojai and providing a copy of the recent and successful Thousand Oaks ERF application that included DignityMoves. (Ref-001, Att-003) Additionally, the CDD aided in the development of, and then certified, the City of Ojai's 2024 Encampment Resolution Funding grant application. (Ref-001, Ref-012)

In interviews with the Civil Grand Jury, the CDD stated that it believed Ojai had conducted a fair and competitive selection process prior to the submission of the ERF grant application since the Ojai City Council had approved the selection of DignityMoves. The CDD acknowledged that it did not independently verify the information before certifying the ERF grant application. (Ref-001)

How did other cities in Ventura County select development management partners?

The Civil Grand Jury interviewed employees from the cities of Camarillo, Fillmore, Thousand Oaks, and Ventura to understand their process in identifying and selecting development partners for their ERF grant-supported projects.

One city identified its development manager in its ERF grant application after conducting a fair and competitive selection process. (Ref-001)

Another city did not include a development manager in its ERF grant application. Instead, the city noted that a development manager would be selected later. Then, after a fair and competitive selection process, a development manager was selected, and an amended application was submitted to the state. (Ref-001)

Two cities submitted ERF grant applications to support ongoing work that was in progress with development managers that were previously selected based on a fair and competitive selection process. (Ref-001)

Each city interviewed stated that it took about three to four months to conduct a fair and competitive selection process from end to end, including obtaining final approval of the selected partner by their city councils. (Ref-001)

Was Ojai obligated to award a contract to DignityMoves in May 2025 because it was uniquely qualified for this type of project?

Page 20 of the City of Ojai Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, states that DignityMoves is uniquely qualified to provide the product and services laid out in the development management agreement, and that there are no other known vendors that have the ability to design, develop, and construct the city's Public Works Department's storage yard into a permanent supportive housing site. (Ref-015)

This language was used to justify Ojai's selection of DignityMoves for the development management agreement as a sole provider of services without considering other providers or conducting a fair and competitive selection process.

The ERF Grant Program has funded 123 projects to date throughout California. Of those, DignityMoves has been selected at least five times based on a review of the projects listed on the DignityMoves website. These projects include Modesto, Ojai, San Luis Obispo, Thousand Oaks, and Watsonville. (Ref-024) While every project is different, other development managers have been selected for the remaining 118 projects.

Also, without a fair and competitive selection process, Ojai could not have known if DignityMoves was uniquely qualified and that no other vendors existed. Just because DignityMoves had developed similar projects for a small number of other cities including Thousand Oaks does not make DignityMoves uniquely qualified for this type of project.

These findings refute Ojai's statement about DignityMoves being uniquely qualified and that no other vendors existed that could do this type of work.

Was Ojai obligated to award a contract to DignityMoves in May 2025 because it was included in the ERF grant application in January 2024?

Page 20 of the City of Ojai Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, states that DignityMoves was specifically named as a key development partner in the ERF grant funding application, which was approved by the HCD. It also stated that if DignityMoves is not selected, the project will be unable to proceed because the ERF funding will be jeopardized. (Ref-015)

This language was used to justify Ojai's selection of DignityMoves for the development management agreement as a sole provider of services without considering other providers or conducting a fair and competitive selection process.

In the interviews, Ojai elected officials and employees confirmed their belief that, because DignityMoves was included in the original application in January 2024, which was approved by the state, it could not select another partner for the actual contract in May 2025. (Ref-001)

However, the CDD and other local cities confirmed that changes to development partners can be made at any time by submitting an amended application to the state. (Ref-001)

While it would have required conducting a fair and competitive selection process, and the possibility of submitting an amended application to the state, Ojai was not obligated to award a contract to DignityMoves in May 2025 because it was included in the ERF grant application in January 2024.

These findings refute Ojai's statement that it was obligated to award a contract to DignityMoves based on its inclusion in award application.

Was Ojai obligated to award a contract to DignityMoves in May 2025 because 50% of the grant had to be spent by June 30, 2025?

Page 20 of the City of Ojai Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, states that because the city was obligated to spend 50% of the ERF grant by the June 30, 2025, deadline, the typical procurement process for a vendor would delay the project beyond this deadline and is unlikely to find another vendor capable of providing a similar product. (Ref-015)

Thirteen months had elapsed between approval of the grant in April 2024 and the issuing of the contract to DignityMoves dated May 27, 2025. At that point, the City of Ojai was facing a real deadline to spend half of the grant in five weeks.

However, Ojai had other options, as confirmed by the CDD and other cities. First, Ojai could have approached the state and asked for an extension. Second, Ojai could have spent the intervening months between April 2024 and May 2025 doing the proper due diligence and conducting a fair and competitive selection process. (Ref-001)

Because it took Ojai until May 27, 2025, to award a contract, knowing all along that 50% of the grant had to be spent by June 30, 2025, it was running out of time. As with the grant application, the possibility of running out of time does not justify awarding a contract without conducting a fair and competitive selection process.

These findings refute Ojai's statement that it was obligated to award to contract to DignityMoves based on the time constraints.

FINDINGS

F-01. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai was exempt from obtaining competitive bids based on price when selecting a development manager for its Encampment Resolution Funding grant application and contract under an area of California law that expressly exempts contracts for certain professional services.

F-02. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai was required by law to conduct a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency when selecting a development manager for its Encampment Resolution Funding grant application in January 2024.

F-03. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai did not conduct a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency when it included DignityMoves as its development manager in its Encampment Resolution Funding grant application in January 2024.

F-04. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the recommendation of DignityMoves by the County of Ventura Community Development Division did not absolve the City of Ojai from conducting a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency when it included DignityMoves as its development manager in its Encampment Resolution Funding grant application in January 2024.

F-05. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai's claims of insufficient time did not absolve the City of Ojai from conducting a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency when it included DignityMoves as its development manager in its Encampment Resolution Funding grant application in January 2024.

F-06. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai could not support its claim of insufficient time to conduct a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency prior to submitting its Encampment Resolution Funding grant application in January 2024.

F-07. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai was required by law to conduct a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency when it awarded a contract to DignityMoves on May 27, 2025.

F-08. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai did not conduct a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency when it awarded a contract to DignityMoves on May 27, 2025.

F-09. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai issued a series of findings on page 20 of Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, to justify the awarding of a contract to DignityMoves as its sole source development manager on May 27, 2025, without conducting a fair and competitive selection process.

F-10. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai could not support its claims on page 20 of Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, that DignityMoves was uniquely qualified and that no other development managers could have been identified.

F-11. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai could not support its claim on page 20 of Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, that it was obligated to award a contract to DignityMoves because DignityMoves was listed in the grant application.

F-12. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai could not support its claims on page 20 of Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025, that it was obligated to award a contract to DignityMoves because it faced a short timeline to spend 50% of the grant due to delays leading up to the deadline.

F-13. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the City of Ojai's claims of insufficient time did not absolve the City of Ojai from conducting a fair and competitive selection process based on qualifications and competency when it awarded the contract to DignityMoves on May 27, 2025.

F-14. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that there was significant turnover of staff and elected officials at the City of Ojai during this process which contributed to the issues in this report.

F-15. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found a lack of full public transparency throughout the process of the City of Ojai selecting DignityMoves for the Encampment Resolution Funding grant application in January 2024 and awarding the contract in May 2025.

F-16. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found a lack of alignment within the Ojai City Council, and between the city and local residents, resulting in delays that impacted the progress of the project.

F-17. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the County of Ventura Community Development Division acknowledged recommending DignityMoves to the City of Ojai and providing a copy of the recent and successful City of Thousand Oaks Encampment Resolution Funding grant application that included DignityMoves.

F-18. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury found that the County of Ventura Community Development Division aided in the development of, and then certified, the City of Ojai's 2024 Encampment Resolution Funding grant application without confirming that a fair and competitive selection process had occurred.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R-01. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury recommends that, by January 1, 2027, the City of Ojai develop policies and procedures that support conducting a fair and competitive selection process in all cases moving forward. (F-01, F-02, F-03, F-04, F-05, F-06, F-07, F-08, F-09, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-14)

R-02. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury recommends that, by January 1, 2027, the City of Ojai implement a plan to improve its public transparency throughout the selection process in all cases moving forward. (F-15)

R-03. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury recommends that, by January 1, 2027, the City of Ojai implement a plan to gain alignment among employees, elected officials, and local residents before initiating large and complex projects. (F-16)

R-04. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the County of Ventura Community Development Division be clear in its discussions with local cities that any recommendations still need to be vetted through a fair and competitive selection process in all cases moving forward. (F-17, F-18)

R-05. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury recommends that, by January 1, 2027, the County of Ventura Community Development Division amend the Memorandum of Understanding, Ventura Countywide Homelessness, to include language requiring a fair and competitive selection process in all cases moving forward. (F-17, F-18)

R-06. The Ventura County Civil Grand Jury recommends that, by January 1, 2027, the County of Ventura Community Development Division develop policies and procedures that confirm a fair and competitive selection process has occurred before certifying grant applications in all cases moving forward. (F-17, F-18)

RESPONSES

Responses required from:

The following governing body within 90 days:

Ojai City Council (F-03, F-04, F-05, F-06, F-08, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-15, F-16, R-01, R-02, R-03)

Responses invited, but not required, from:

The following appointed officials within 60 days:

Ojai City Manager (F-03, F-04, F-05, F-06, F-08, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-15, F-16, R-01, R-02, R-03)

Ventura County Executive Officer (F-18, R-04, R-05, R-06)

REFERENCES

Ref-001. Interviews with various government officials and other interested parties.

Ref-002. City of Ojai website - Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://ojai.ca.gov/589/Oja002i-Permanent-Supportive-Housing-Projec

Ref-003. City of Ojai website – Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing, City Council Review Set. Accessed April 29, 2026, from https://ojai.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2749/Project-Renderings

Ref-004. Community Development Division, Ventura County Executive Office website. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://venturacounty.gov/county-executive-office/community-development/

Ref-005. Ventura County Continuum of Care Alliance website. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://coc.venturacounty.gov/get-involved/

Ref-006. California Department of Housing and Community Development, Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Program website. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://www.hcd.ca.gov/funding/erf

Ref-007. California Department of Housing and Community Development, Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Program website - Approved applications. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://www.hcd.ca.gov/funding/erf/approved-applications

Ref-008. California Department of Housing and Community Development, Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Program website – Program dashboard. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://www.hcd.ca.gov/housing-open-data-tools/erf-dashboard

Ref-009. City of Ojai website - Administrative report dated December 1, 2023. Accessed on September 8, 2025, from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OqlkbYPjnJbaqUM-9NTrseK5oYGgwRud/view

Ref-010. City of Ojai website - Administrative report dated January 19, 2024. Accessed on September 8, 2025, from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-R9xOW2q6LX8gejtvAY1r0QUWPH3PvL0/view

Ref-011. City of Ojai website – Pages 7-10 of the Ojai City Council meeting minutes dated January 23, 2024. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1srEBk14GdzKP4nRHMVwm6S5FFWcwMt3M/view

Ref-012. HCD website – Pages 3, 4, and 20 of the City of Ojai's ERF application. Accessed on September 8, 2025, from https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/grants-and-funding/calich/erf-r3-rw1-city-of-ojai-74.pdf

Ref-013. City of Ojai website – Pages 77-102, Signed ERF Agreement between the City of Ojai and HCD dated September 24, 2024. Accessed on August 23, 2025, from https://ojai.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3076/25-19_Cabin-Village-DRPLocation-Approval_DMA-w-Dignity-Moves_05-27-25

Ref-014. City of Ojai website – Pages 4-5 of the Ojai City Council meeting minutes dated March 25, 2025. Accessed on September 8, 2025, from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1b3e_ADxZUcBy6mQII24i97RxYqTDOm3x/view

Ref-015. City of Ojai website – Page 20 of the City of Ojai Resolution No. 25-19 dated May 27, 2025. Accessed on September 8, 2025, from https://ojai.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3076/25-19_Cabin-Village-DRPLocation-Approval_DMA-w-Dignity-Moves_05-27-25

Ref-016. City of Ojai website – Page 3 of the Ojai City Council meeting minutes dated March 27, 2025. Accessed on September 8, 2025, from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dbk59Z_uuKyjCHa4UYEIu9ZlVdYUzPu7/view

Ref-017. Ventura County Star article dated November 14, 2023. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/2023/11/14/ojai-interim-city-manager-mark-scott-resigns/71588035007/

Ref-018. City of Ojai website – Page 1 of the Ojai City Council meeting minutes dated November 14, 2023. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://drive.google.com/file/d/13bZQll_BoBYljelLoi1IgwbbIrM6HZMc/view

Ref-019. Ventura County Star article dated May 15, 2025, and updated May 16, 2025. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://www.vcstar.com/story/news/2025/05/15/ojai-assistant-city-manager-charged-embezzlement/83653796007/

Ref-020. City of Ojai website – Pages 4-5 of the Ojai City Council meeting minutes dated January 23, 2024. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1srEBk14GdzKP4nRHMVwm6S5FFWcwMt3M/view

Ref-021. City of Ojai website – Pages 45-68, Signed Development Management Agreement between the City of Ojai and DignityMoves dated May 27, 2025. Accessed on January 27, 2026, from https://ojai.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3076/25-19_Cabin-Village-DRPLocation-Approval_DMA-w-Dignity-Moves_05-27-25

Ref-022. City of Ojai website - City of Ojai Resolution No. 24-40 dated December 10, 2024. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://www.ojai.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3056/24-40_November-2024-Elections-Certification

Ref-023. City of Ojai website - Qualified Contractors Invitation to Bid. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://ojai.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2780/Invitation-to-Bid-Ojai-PART-1-07282025_

Ref-024. DignityMoves website. Accessed on April 29, 2026, from https://dignitymoves.org

ATTACHMENTS

Att-001. Email confirming initial July 2023 contact between the CDD and Ojai.

Att-002. Civil Grand Jury photo of Ojai tent town dated October 4, 2025.

Att-003. Email confirming the CDD's introduction of DignityMoves to Ojai on August 4, 2023, and the CDD's sharing of Thousand Oaks' ERF grant application with Ojai on August 7, 2023.

Att-004. Email detailing seven additional meetings between the CDD and Ojai from August 8, 2023, to January 17, 2024.

Att-005. Signed Memorandum of Understanding, Ventura Countywide Homelessness, dated February 26, 2018. Accessed on February 26, 2026.

DISCLAIMER

One juror chose to be recused from the investigation and vote.

COUNTY of VENTURA
Civil Grand Jury

800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009
Tel (805) 477-1600
Fax (805) 658-4523
grandjury.countyofventura.org

Response to 2025-2026 Ventura County Civil Grand Jury Report Form

(Please See California Penal Code Section 933.05)

Report Title: Ojai Permanent Supportive Housing Project

Responding Entity: City Manager, City of Ojai

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered: _____
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered: _____
  (Attach a statement specifying any portions of the Findings that are disputed; include an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered _____ have been implemented.
  (Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ have not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.
  (Attach a summary indicating the timeframe for implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.
  (Attach an explanation to include: scope and parameters of the analysis or study and timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion with the agency or department head. The timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the report.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
  (Attach an explanation.)

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Title: _____

Number of pages attached: _____

California Penal Code Section 933.05

(a) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Section 933, as to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:
(1) The respondent agrees with the finding.
(2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefor.

(b) For purposes of subdivision (b) of Section 933, as to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
(1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
(2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation.
(3) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.
(4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefor.

(c) However, if a finding or recommendation of the grand jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the board of supervisors shall respond if requested by the grand jury, but the response of the board of supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel matters over which it has some decision making authority. The response of the elected agency or department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department.

(d) A grand jury may request a subject person or entity to come before the grand jury for the purpose of reading and discussing the findings of the grand jury report that relates to that person or entity in order to verify the accuracy of the findings prior to their release.

(e) During an investigation, the grand jury shall meet with the subject of that investigation regarding the investigation, unless the court, either on its own determination or upon request of the foreperson of the grand jury, determines that such a meeting would be detrimental.

(f) A grand jury shall provide to the affected agency a copy of the portion of the grand jury report relating to that person or entity two working days prior to its public release and after the approval of the presiding judge. No officer, agency, department, or governing body of a public agency shall disclose any contents of the report prior to the public release of the final report.

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**
Bethany Burgess, City Attorney

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Municipal Code Revisions (*Legal Requirement*)**

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction to the City Attorney's Office to work with staff to prepare recommended Code revisions to various ordinances as further described in this report.

DISCUSSION

Periodically, it is necessary and prudent for a local public agency to review its code of ordinances and provide updates to ensure that such provisions reflect current public agency best practices, comply with updates in applicable laws and regulations, ensure internal consistency, and ensure clarity. Additionally, over time, staff and the City Attorney may identify other areas where a City's code contains gaps that result in an inability to effectively address certain issues facing the City.

Over the past six months, the new City Attorney's office has identified a list of areas where revisions to the City of Ojai Municipal Code would allow the City to better serve the needs of the community, help address updates in state law, and provide for better organizational efficiency and accountability. Specific Municipal Code updates currently recommended include:

1. Public Works Bidding Procedures (Chapter 7-4) and general Purchasing System ordinance (including surplus property disposal) (Chapter 8-4).

2. Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance (Section 10-2.1709)

3. Creation of Voluntary Lot Merger Ordinance

4. Creation of ordinance adopting Objective Design Standards (in process through Planning Commission ad hoc subcommittee)

5. Sign Standards (Sections 10-2.1601, *et seq.*)

6. Encroachment Permits for Outdoor Dining (Sections 7-7.701, *et seq.*)

7. Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 4-8)

8. Affordable Housing Incentives and Density Bonuses (Sections 10-2.901, *et seq.*)

9. Parking and Loading Standards (Sections 10-2.1401, *et seq.*)

10. Use of Zoning Clearances (Sections 10-2.1901, *et seq.*)

11. Certain City Administrative provisions, such as provisions providing the time and place of Council meetings to reflect current practices (Section 2-1.201)

12. Code enforcement lien requirements (Chapter 1-6)

If Council provides authorization to the City Attorney's Office to begin work on these revisions, the City Attorney's Office will begin with the City's bidding and purchasing ordinances and Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance (though work may take place in parallel on the others).

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT
Goal No. 1 - Affordable Housing
Goal No. 4 - Infrastructure Maintenance and Improvement
Goal No. 8 - Financial Stability
Goal No. 9 - Communication and Relationships

OPTIONS
1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative directions to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT
Preparation of code revisions will require attorney and staff time. Implementation of such revisions will also require attorney and staff time. City attorney and staff time is incorporated in the FY 26/27 budget.

Prepared by: Bethany Burgess, City Attorney

ATTACHMENT(S)
None

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Concept Review of Contracted Services *(City Council Direction)***

RECOMMENDATION

1. Review the attached list of contracted services and identify those contracts for which the City Council would like additional analysis; and
2. Direct staff to return at a future meeting with a detailed evaluation of the selected contracts, including operational, staffing, financial, legal, and service level considerations associated with potentially bringing those services in-house.

DISCUSSION

The City contracts for a variety of municipal services to efficiently provide high-quality services while maintaining fiscal responsibility and operational flexibility. The purpose of this concept review is to provide the City Council with an opportunity to identify which, if any, contracted services warrant additional analysis regarding the feasibility of transitioning those services to City employees.

This report is not intended to recommend that any service be brought in-house or continue to be contracted. Rather, it is intended to allow the City Council to prioritize which contracts staff should study in greater detail before any policy decisions are considered.

Municipal Service Delivery Models

California cities utilize a wide spectrum of service delivery models. Some municipalities provide nearly all services with City employees, while others contract for many municipal functions. Most cities operate somewhere between these two models, utilizing a combination of in-house staff and specialized contractors depending on operational needs, available expertise, workforce capacity, economies of scale, and fiscal considerations.

Contracting for municipal services is a long-established and common practice throughout California, particularly among small and medium-sized cities where maintaining specialized full-time staff for every municipal function may not be practical or cost-effective. Even many larger cities routinely contract for specialized professional services, engineering, construction management, legal services, information technology, animal services, landscape maintenance, and other operational functions.

As part of any future evaluation, staff would assess not only direct financial costs, but also

considerations such as:

- Required staffing levels
- Employee recruitment and retention
- Equipment and capital needs
- Ongoing training and certifications
- Liability and risk management
- Service quality and performance
- Operational resiliency
- Long-term financial impacts

Example: City of Lakewood

The City of Lakewood, California, is widely recognized as one of the earliest examples of the "contract city" model. Since its incorporation in 1954, Lakewood has delivered municipal services primarily through contracts with both public agencies and private firms rather than maintaining large municipal departments.

Under what has become known as the "Lakewood Plan," the City contracts for services such as law enforcement, public works, engineering, parks maintenance, recreation programming, building and safety, and numerous administrative functions while maintaining a relatively lean municipal workforce focused on policy oversight, contract administration, and customer service.

The success of the Lakewood model has influenced numerous California cities and demonstrated that municipalities can maintain high service levels while utilizing contracted service providers. Over the decades, many cities have adopted varying degrees of this approach based on their individual operational and financial needs.

California Contract Cities Association (CCCA)

The California Contract Cities Association (CCCA) is an organization representing cities that utilize contracted municipal services as all or part of their service delivery model. The Association currently represents dozens of California municipalities and provides education, advocacy, and collaboration regarding municipal contracting practices.

Membership within the CCCA illustrates that contracting municipal services is a common governance model throughout California rather than an exception. While each member city structures its operations differently, the organization provides examples of municipalities that successfully balance contracted and in-house services to meet community needs.

Future Analysis

Should the City Council direct staff to evaluate specific contracts, future reports would include information such as:

- Current scope of services
- Current contract costs
- Historical performance
- Staffing requirements if brought in-house
- Estimated salaries and benefits
- Equipment and facility needs
- Technology requirements

- Transition costs
- Legal and labor considerations
- Risks and opportunities
- Comparative analysis of continuing contracted services versus internal operations
- Staff recommendation, if appropriate

This phased approach allows the City Council to focus staff resources on the contracts of greatest interest before undertaking detailed operational and financial analyses.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

N/A (See Explanation Below)

This item does not directly align with a specific city Council Goal or Tactic because it is a policy-level concept review intended to facilitate Council discussion and provide direction to staff.

OPTIONS

1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with this concept review, other than the staff time required to prepare future analyses as directed by the City Council.

If the City Council requests additional evaluations, staff time and consultant assistance, if necessary, may be required depending on the complexity of the contracts selected for review. Any future recommendations involving changes to service delivery would include a comprehensive fiscal analysis identifying one-time transition costs, ongoing operating costs, staffing impacts, equipment requirements, and any anticipated budget adjustments prior to City Council consideration.

Prepared by: Norma Cervantes, Assistant to the City Manager

ATTACHMENT(S)

A. Log of Contracts

CONTRACTS LOG

Number	Dept	Contractor Name	Activity	Amount	Purchase Authority	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Considerations to bring internal	Notes
1	CD	Raimi & Associates	General Plan Update	$ 342,025	Council	12/12/2019	12/31/2026	Would require hiring additional City employee	
2	CD	Willdan Engineering	Building & Safety Services	$ 270,000	Council	8/1/2024	7/31/2026	Would require hiring additional City employees	Contract renewal forthcoming to City Council. Partially reimbursed through fees.
3	CD	Willdan Engineering	Code Compliance Services	$ 150,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Would require hiring additional City employees	Contract renewal forthcoming to City Council. Partially reimbursed through fines.
4	CD	Historic Resources Group, LLC	Historic Resource Inventory Survey Update	$ 88,050	Council	3/17/2026	3/17/2028	Independent Expertise	
5	CD	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Professional Consulting Services (SWPPP)	Professional Services for Storm Water projects	$ 29,999	City Manager	1/24/2026	1/24/2027	Would require additional City employees	
6	CD	Data Ticket Inc.	Administrative Citation processing & Collection	$ 12,000	City Manager	3/24/2021	renews every year after 2026 unless cancelled	Would require hiring additional City employees	
7	CM	Ventura County Sheriff Department	Police Services	$ 4,175,390	Council	1977	Continues until terminated (60 day notice)	Considerable effort; would require creation of new City department	Amount is the adopted budget
8	CM	Aleshire & Wynder LLP	Legal Services	$ 773,383	Council	12/2/2025	12/2/2030	Considerable effort; would require creation of new City office	
9	CM	Bartkiewicz, Kronick & Shanahan	Ventura Watershed Lawsuite	$ 400,000	Council	2/19/2020			Water Litigation
10	CM	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council	Community Outreach & Education & Wildfire Risk Mitigation	$ 386,025	Council	10/1/2025	9/30/2026	Independent Expertise	
11	CM	Secural Security Corp	Encampment Security	$ 185,000	Council	7/1/2024	6/30/2026	Would require hiring additional City employees	Contract renewal forthcoming to City Council
12	CM	Tripepi Smith	Communication Support Services	$ 155,600	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Contract for add'l. year just awarded	Contract for add'l. year just awarded
13	CM	Help of Ojai	Case Management Services	$ 144,720	Council	1/30/2025	1/30/2027	Independent Expertise	ERF Grant reimbursable
14	CM	Ojai Valley Chamber of Commerce	Community Vitality & Business Development	$ 109,200	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Independent Expertise	Contract renewal forthcoming to City Council
15	CM	Help of Ojai	Rental Assistance Program	$ 100,000	Council	11/1/2025	11/1/2026	Independent Expertise	
16	CM	Ojai Valley Historical Society & Museum	Support for full service museum services	$ 75,000	Council	6/30/2019	7/1/2026	Independent Expertise	Contract renewal forthcoming to City Council
17	CM	Hinderliter de Llamas & Associates	Business License & Cannabis Software Application	$ 52,000	Council	11/3/2025	Auto Renew	Independent Expertise	Previously handled in-house
18	CM	HdL ECONSolutions	Economic Development Action Plan	$ 52,000	Council	1/27/2026	1/27/2029	Would require hiring additional City employee	
19	CM	Ojai Valley Unified School District	Fire Preparedness, Climate Resilience Education Partnership	$ 50,000	Council	3/3/2026	2/28/2028		Involves OUSD students
20	CM	County of Ventura - Animal Services	Animal Services	$ 47,683	Council	7/1/2022	6/30/2027	Not feasible	
21	CM	County of Ventura - VC Behavioral Health	Non-emergent mental health field	$ 44,412	Council	5/1/2025	9/30/2026	Not feasible	50% ERF Grant Reimbursable
22	CM	Ojai Valley Green Coalition	City Hall Campus Master Plan	$ 41,352	Council	3/11/2026	6/30/2026		Master Plan presneted to City Council 07/11/2026
23	CM	Kiley & Associates LLC	Federal advocacy & funding support	$ 36,000	Council	1/27/2026	1/27/2027	Independent Expertise	
24	CM	Municipal Resource Group LLC	On-Demand Human Resource Services	$ 30,000	Council	3/8/2024	12/31/2026	Independent Expertise	The contract is project based and provides assistance with policy development, classification and compensation, workplace investigations, training and coaching.
25	CM	California Consulting	Grant writing and administration services	$ 29,999	City Manager	7/1/2026	6/30/2027	Would require hiring additional City employee	
26	CM	InfoSight	Cybersecurity Assessment & Compliance Review	$ 16,151	Council	9/29/2025	9/29/2028	Independent Expertise	
27	FIN	Rogers, Anderson, Malody & Scott LLP	Auditing Services	$ 187,875	Council	4/22/2025	5/31/2028	Independent Expertise	Cummulative total
28	FIN	Eide Bailly LLP	Accounting & Financial management support	$ 167,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Contract in final year	Trial balance, year-end efforts, implementation of accounts payable module, year-end support FY 25-26
29	FIN	Olivarez Madruga Law Organization LLP	Legal Services related to TOT audit appeal hearings	$ 60,000	Council	12/2/2024	Shall remain in full force & effect until terminated by either party hereto	Not feasible	

Note: CIP contracts, Franchise Agreements (i.e. EJ Harrison), software contracts, subscriptions, and licensing contracts are not included.

CONTRACTS LOG

Number	Dept	Contractor Name	Activity	Amount	Purchase Authority	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Considerations to bring internal	Notes
30	FIN	Olivarez Madruga Law Organization LLP	Legal Services related to TOT audit appeal hearings	$ 29,999	City Manager	12/2/2024	Shall remain in full force & effect until terminated by either party hereto	Not feasible	
31	FIN	Olivarez Madruga Law Organization LLP	Legal Services related to TOT for Short Term Rental	$ 29,999	City Manager	3/31/2025	Shall remain in full force & effect until terminated by either party hereto	Not feasible	
32	FIN	HdL Coren & Cone	Property Tax Consulting/Audit Services	$ 22,600	City Manager	5/1/2025	6/30/2027	Independent Expertise	
33	FIN	HdL Coren & Cone	Direct Assessment on Property Tax for Library Special Tax	$ 5,000	City Manager	5/1/2025	6/30/2027	Independent Expertise	
34	PW	Kelly Cleaning and Supplies	Maintenance Services	$ 115,264	Council	10/10/2022	6/30/2027	Already evaluated by City Council	Facilities cleaning/maintenance.
35	PW	Mark Crane Tree Service	Maintenance Services	$ 95,000	Council	8/28/2018	6/30/2027	Possible hiring arborist and crew to maintain large trees large bucket truck and expertise	Annual maintenance agreement for removal of trees, trimming, pruning, etc. Staff does not have the equipment or adequate staffing to dedicate a full 4 man or 3 man crew to accomplish this work.
36	PW	County of Ventura - GSA MOU	Fleet Asset Services & Repairs	$ 75,000	Council	12/21/2023	Shall automatically renew each Fiscal Year	Would require hiring of additional employees	Hourly rate based on service
37	PW	Ventura Pest Control	Maintenance Services	$ 42,300	Council	4/1/2026	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	
38	PW	Solid Waste Solutions, Inc.	Solid Waste Consultant Services	$ 23,000	City Manager	7/25/2017	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	SB1383 compliance and Harrison Franchise agreement management assistance
39	PW	Prudential Overall Supply	Maintenance Services	$ 15,000	City Manager	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Laundering services	Uniform and other laundry services ie. mats, towels etc.
40	PW	Willdan Engineering	Landscape and Lighting District Engineers Reports	$ 14,465	City Manager	1/1/2026	12/31/2026	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	
41	PW	Fence Factory	Fence Rental	$ 6,541	City Manager	1/29/2025	1/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	As-needed basis ie. OTT, tree down.
42	PW	Phoenix Civil Engineering	On-Call Agreement	$ 200,000	Council	12/14/2022	6/30/2027	Requires hiring of City Engineer	Non-CIP design work ie. RRFBs, other non-CIP projects
43	PW	Flowers & Associates	On-Call Agreement	$ 100,000	Council	7/1/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Civil Engineering
44	PW	Avant Garde	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Engineering services
45	PW	BC Tree Service	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	10/24/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Tree trimming
46	PW	Falcon Roofing Co.	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Roofing
47	PW	Frank's Underground Utilities Inc	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	10/23/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	General construction contractor
48	PW	Green Globe HVAC	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Would require hiring of an HVAC expert	Heating and cooling for HVAC
49	PW	Hansen's Plumbing	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Pulumbing
50	PW	J&H Engineering	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Would require hiring of City Engineer	General construction contractor
51	PW	Jordan Mellett Construction	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Would require hiring of additional employees	General contractor services
52	PW	Kasraie Consulting	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	General contractor services
53	PW	M6 Consulting	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Architechtural design
54	PW	MAC Painting	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	4/3/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Facilities painting
55	PW	Mark Crane Tree Service	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Possible hiring arborist and crew to maintain large trees large bucket truck and expertise	Tree trimming
56	PW	McLeod Construction	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	General contractor
57	PW	Precision Concrete Cutting	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Sidewalk repairs as needed
58	PW	Specialized Pavement Marking	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Street markings
59	PW	Superior Restoration	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	4/3/2023	6/30/2027	Independent Expertise	Hazardous waste clean-up
60	PW	The CREW	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Would require hiring of City employees	Brush clearing
61	PW	Toro Enterprises	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Labor compliance assistance
62	PW	Union Materials Testing	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Construction materials testing
63	PW	Ventura Concrete Cutting	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	10/24/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Sidewalk repairs
64	PW	West Coast Arborists	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Would require hiring of City Arborist	Tree trimming
65	PW	Whitman Architectural Design	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Storm water/drain services
66	PW	Wingate Earthworks	On-Call Agreement	$ 75,000	Council	8/27/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Tree trimming
67	PW	GPA Consulting	On-Call Agreement	$ 40,000	Council	7/1/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Environmental & Permitting Services
68	PW	Willdan Engineering	On-Call Agreement	$ 40,000	Council	10/24/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Engineering services
69	PW	WM Surveys	On-Call Agreement	$ 30,000	Council	10/24/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Surveyor

Note: CIP contracts, Franchise Agreements (i.e. EJ Harrison), software contracts, subscriptions, and licensing contracts are not included.

CONTRACTS LOG

Number	Dept	Contractor Name	Activity	Amount	Purchase Authority	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date	Considerations to bring internal	Notes
70	PW	Architerra Design Group	On-Call Agreement	$ 29,999	City Manager	7/1/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Design services
71	PW	Benner & Carpenter	On-Call Agreement	$ 29,999	City Manager	7/1/2024	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Surveying
72	PW	Hamner Jewell & Associates	On-Call Agreement	$ 29,999	City Manager	4/17/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Right of way consulting firm
73	PW	Minagar & Associates	On-Call Agreement	$ 25,000	Council	10/24/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Traffic engineering
74	PW	Jan Scow	On-Call Agreement	$ 10,000	Council	10/24/2023	6/30/2027	Frequency of work would not merit FTE	Arborist
75	Transit	CR Mobile Repair & Towing	Mobile Mechanic	$ 29,999	City Manager	7/1/2026	6/30/2027	Would require hiring of additional employees	
76	Transit	Pristine Auto Detail	Auto Detailing	$ 50,000	Council	7/5/2024	6/30/2026	Would require hiring of City employee	Contract renewal forthcoming to City Council
77	Transit	Fillmore Area Transit DBA Sun Shuttle & Transit	Trolley Drivers	$ 60,000	Council	8/23/2025	8/23/2026	City working to hire additional drivers	

Note: CIP contracts, Franchise Agreements (i.e. EJ Harrison), software contracts, subscriptions, and licensing contracts are not included.

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**
Bethany Burgess, City Attorney
Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Affordable Housing Agreement Located at 312 West Aliso Street And Third-Party Income Qualify Household for Deed-Restricted Affordable Housing Units**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Receive the staff report and presentation and ask clarifying questions related to the Affordable Housing Agreement associated with Cottages Among the Flowers.
2. Direct the City Manager and City Attorney to finalize and execute the Declaration of Land Use Restrictive Covenants (Affordable Housing Agreement) with Ojai Bungalows LP, associated with the two deed-restricted units within the Cottages Among the Flowers site and cause it to be recorded in the Official Records of Ventura County (Attachment A).
3. Direct the City Manager to negotiate and execute a formal Professional Services Agreement with Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura. The proposal from Area Housing Authority includes performing third party services to income qualify households for deed-restricted affordable housing units. The Area Housing Authority proposal for third-party services is Attachment B.
4. Direct the City Manager to establish a reporting schedule and compliance format associated with those households which are income qualified to reside within the deed-restricted units.

DISCUSSION

Affordable Housing Agreements are required as regulatory agreements for dedicated deed-restricted units to legally enforce, monitor, and preserve the properties long-term affordability and compliance with state and local land-use regulations. The affordable housing agreement serves as the operational contract that dictates how the restriction functions. Below are key points to the draft agreement:

Land Use Restrictive Covenants — Key Provisions

- The agreement is between Ojai Bungalows LP (Owner) and the City of Ojai, and governs the property at 312 West Aliso Street.
- The Owner is required to maintain two newly built affordable Accessory Dwelling Units: one deed-restricted low-income unit and one deed-restricted very low-income unit, each consisting of at least one one-bedroom unit.

- The affordability period commences upon issuance of a certificate of occupancy and continues for a minimum of 55 years, regardless of any sale, transfer, or conveyance of the property.
- Rents for the two affordable units shall be set at an "Affordable Rent" as defined under Health and Safety Code Section 50053 throughout the affordability period.
- Annual income determinations must be made by the Owner or designated third-party agent, with appropriate documentation submitted to the City.
- In the event a tenant's income subsequently exceeds the applicable income limit, the Owner or designed third-party agent, must rent the next available comparable unit to an income-qualified household, at which point that unit becomes the affordable unit.
- The Owner or designated third-party agent must provide the City with an annual certification of compliance in a format and on a schedule approved by the City.
- All affordable units must be rented for a minimum of 30-days; short-term assignments, subletting, and vacation rentals are expressly prohibited.

AHA Monitoring Proposal |
The proposal was submitted by Carrie Sabatini, Executive Director of the Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura and outlines three service scenarios, each with a corresponding fee structure. Those three scenario's are highlighted below:

- Scenario 1 — Full Eligibility Screening. AHA would maintain and administer a waiting list for the Ojai deed-stricted affordable units, perform eligibility screening in accordance with the Affordable Housing Agreement(s) and the Ojai Affordable Housing Requirements and Incentives Ordinance Title 10, Chapter 2, Article 9, conduct annual reexaminations of tenant income to determine continued eligibility, coordinate with the City and property management on required reporting and monitoring, and maintain client and applicant records per City retention requirements.

  The fee for Scenario 1 would follow the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Administrative Fee schedule for the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program, set at $162.50 per unit per month in 2025, with annual adjustments per the HUD schedule.

- Scenario 2 — Review of Eligibility Assessments. The owner/city would maintain their own waiting list and conduct their own eligibility calculations; AHA would only review complete documentation and calculations to verify that the household meets income eligibility requirements for the property. The fee structure would be $250 per file reviewed.

- Scenario 3 — Other Services (As Needed). If neither Scenario 1 nor Scenario 2 adequately reflects the work required, AHA offers an hourly fee of $150 per hour, or a mutually agreed-upon fee prior to commencing work.

Other Affordable Housing Groups Considered |
No Request for Proposals was performed for this third-party service. However, staff has performed research and contacted or considered other affordable housing groups who could review eligibility assessments. They include Cabrillo Economic Development

Corporation (CEDC), Habitat for Humanity of Ventura County, Many Mansions, and HELP of Ojai. Each organizational group provides various housing related services.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT
Goal No. 1 - Affordable Housing

OPTIONS
1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff which includes: If the City Council determines that the Owner's property management team has sufficient capacity to administer eligibility independently, staff could return with a modified agreement under Scenario 2 at $250 per file reviewed. This alternative would reduce ongoing costs but would require the City to more actively monitor each Owner's internal processes to ensure compliance.
3. Direct staff to perform a request for proposals (RFP) for screening eligibility requirements through a third-party affordable housing group and return with an affordable housing group which meets the needs of the task identified.

FISCAL IMPACT
The financial impact to the City is primarily administrative. Under Scenario 1 (Full Eligibility Screening), the AHA fee of $162.50 per unit per month would apply to the two deed-restricted units, resulting in an estimated annual cost of approximately $3,900 per year (2 units × $162.50 × 12 months), subject to annual HUD fee schedule adjustments. Under Scenario 2 (Review of Eligibility Assessments), costs would be incurred on a per-file basis at $250 per file, making total costs variable depending on tenant turnover and application volume. Under Scenario 3 (Other Services as Needed), costs would be determined on an hourly basis at $150 per hour or by mutual agreement.

Prepared by: Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director

ATTACHMENT(S)
A. Affordable Housing Covenant
B. Area Housing Authority Proposal
C. Sample Application for Deed Restricted Units

RECORDING REQUESTED BY,
AND WHEN RECORDED RETURN TO:

City Hall, City of Ojai
Attn: Lucas Seibert,
Community Development Director
401 South Ventura Street
Ojai, CA 93023

APN(s): 020-0-250-015, 020-0-250-025

[SPACE ABOVE FOR RECORDER'S USE ONLY]

EXEMPT FROM RECORDING FEES PER GOV. CODE §§ 6103, 27383

DECLARATION OF LAND USE RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

This Declaration of Land Use Restrictive Covenants ("**Declaration**") is made and entered into as of the date of the last signature hereunder (the "**Effective Date**"), by and between Ojai Bungalows LP, a California limited partnership ("**Owner**") and the City of Ojai, a municipal corporation ("**City**"). Owner and City are sometimes referred to individually as "**Party**" and collectively as the "**Parties**" throughout this Declaration.

RECITALS

A. **WHEREAS,** Owner is the owner of certain real property located at 312 West Aliso Street, Ojai, CA 93023, designated as Assessor's Parcel Number(s) 020-0-250-015, -025 as more particularly described in **Exhibit A** attached hereto and incorporated herein ("**Property**") and has developed a project on the Property referred to herein as the "Cottages Among the Flowers" or "Project."

B. **WHEREAS,** a dispute arose between Owner and City concerning Owner's development of certain real properties within the City of Ojai and Owner filed a complaint/petition against the City in Ventura County Superior Court – Case No. 2023CUWM016948; and

C. **WHEREAS,** the Parties settled the foregoing case through that certain Settlement Agreement Concerning Ojai Bungalows Project signed by Owner on December 22, 2023 and the City on December 23, 2023 ("**Settlement Agreement**"); and

D. **WHEREAS,** the Property includes ten residential units; and

E. **WHEREAS,** the Owner is approved to develop two new second-story Accessory Dwelling Units above the existing garage on the Property; and

F. **WHEREAS,** under the Settlement Agreement, Owner agreed to develop the Cottages Among the Flowers with two income- and rent-restricted units (the "**Affordable Units**"); and

G. **WHEREAS,** the Affordable Units will include one deed-restricted low-income unit and one deed-restricted very low-income unit; and

H. **WHEREAS,** the Parties intend for the covenants contained herein to preserve the Affordable Units for 55-years consistent with the Settlement Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, for good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the Owner hereby covenants, agrees, and declares that the Property shall be owned, held, used, maintained, and transferred pursuant to the following restrictive covenants, conditions, restrictions, and limitations ("**Covenants**"). Such Covenants shall be binding upon all of Owner's successors, assigns, and transferees to or of the Property, and upon all leases, tenants, contractors, agents, and persons claiming an interest in the Property, or claiming an interest by and through any of the foregoing.

COVENANTS

I. INCORPORATION

The foregoing recitals and **Exhibit A** are incorporated herein by reference.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. "**Actual Household Size**" means the actual number of persons in the applicable household.

B. "**Affordable Rent**" shall have the meaning set forth in Health and Safety Code section 50053.

C. "**Area Median Income**" or "**AMI**" means the median income for Ventura County, California, adjusted for Actual Household Size, as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") pursuant to Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 and as published from time to time by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development ("HCD") in Section 6932 of Title 25 of the California Code of Regulations or any successor provision published pursuant to California Health and Safety Code section 50093(c). If there is a discrepancy between applicable HUD and HCD AMI levels, then the HCD AMI will be applied, unless otherwise required by mandatory requirements of applicable federal law.

D. "**Qualified Household**" means a household which meets the specific income limit criteria as defined below and in Section 6932 of Title 25 of the California Code of Regulations in effect at the time an application for occupancy is submitted, of the Restricted Unit to which they are applying:

"**Low-income households**" has the same definition as "persons and families of low-income" as set forth in Health and Safety Code section 50093, subd. (a).

"**Very low-income households**" has the same definition as set forth in Health and Safety Code section 50105.

E. "**Rent**" means the total of monthly payments for a rental or cooperative unit for: (a) Use and occupancy of a housing unit and land and facilities associated therewith; (b) Any separately charged fees or service charges assessed by the lessor which are required of all tenants, other than security deposits; (c) A reasonable allowance for utilities not included in (a) or (b) above, including regular garbage collection, sewer, water, electricity, gas, and other heating, cooking and refrigeration fuels; provided, that such utilities shall not include telephone service, cable or internet services, which shall be at the tenant's separate expense, and such allowance shall take into consideration the cost of an adequate level of service for the included utilities ("Utility Allowance"); and (d) Possessory interest, taxes, or other fees or charges assessed directly against the Qualified Household occupying the Restricted Unit for use of the land and facilities associated with the Project by a public or private entity other than the lessor. Monthly rent shall be an average of estimated costs for the next twelve months. (Section 6918 of Title 25 of the California Code of Regulations).

F. "**Restricted Units**" means and refers to those units which are subject to this Agreement and are rented at the Permitted Rental Rate to Qualified Households as either Very Low-Income or Low-Income.

G. The term "**Owner**" as used in this Declaration shall include Ojai Bungalows LP and all successors, assigns, and transferees to or of any or all of Ojai Bungalows LP's interest in the Property but does not include tenants of the Property.

H. "**Qualified Tenants**" means individuals or families that are income qualified to occupy the Restricted Units under Section III.C. below.

I. "**Unrestricted Units**" means the residential units in the Project that are not subject to any rental rate or sales price restriction under this Agreement.

J. "**Equivalent Sized"** has the same definition as set forth in Government Code Section 65915 (c)(3)(D).

III. TERMS OF AGREEMENT

A. Tenant Protections. Owner shall provide the following additional tenant protections to residents residing in the Cottages Among the Flowers.

1. No current tenant shall be evicted (other than for nonpayment of rent or breach of lease by a tenant, or otherwise in accordance with the Tenant Protection Act of 2019 and the Ojai Municipal Code for just-cause evictions) (each, a "Cottages Displaced Tenant") to commence construction of a Cottages Among the Flowers unit unless at least an "equivalent-sized" unit is available in Cottages Among the Flowers or Owner's projects located

at 412 Mallory Way (the "Mallory Project"), 304 South Montgomery (the "Montgomery Project"), or 510 E. Ojai Ave.

2. Units for displaced/relocated tenants are available in Cottages Among the Flowers, the Mallory Project, the Montgomery Project, or 510 E. Ojai Ave.

3. Developer first provides a right of first refusal to a Cottages Displaced/relocated Tenant to establish a residential tenancy at Cottages Among the Flowers, the Mallory Project, the Montgomery Project or 510 E. Ojai Ave., at a rental amount not to exceed the rental rate that the tenant is paying at the time of such eviction referred to in Paragraph 1., above, and any future increase to rent for that tenant is limited by any applicable rent stabilization ordinance.

4. Developer will reimburse moving costs to the Cottages Displaced Tenant up to $2,000. This amount must be paid within seven days of receiving proof of moving expenses (receipts).

B. **Local Tenant Preference Policy.** Promoting community stability and access to housing for individuals with established ties to the City of Ojai, a two-tiered tenant preference shall apply to qualified tenants consistent with fair housing laws and City of Ojai Ordinance No. 945.

1. Tier One – Local Residence Preference. First priority shall be given to qualified tenants who are current residents of the City of Ojai, the Ojai Sphere of Influence Area, or Area of Interest.

2. Tier Two – Community Connection Preference. Second priority shall be given to qualified tenant who resided in the City of Ojai, the City's Sphere of Influence, or the designated Area of Interest, for at least ten years, and who left such area within the past five years, or who currently work or have worked within those areas during the same timeframe.

3. All preferences shall be applied only after eligibility screening and in a manner consistent with fair housing and civil rights laws.

4. If insufficient qualified tenant(s) exist within a Tier One, applicants from Tier Two shall be considered.

C. **Application Submittal.** The developer will submit an application to the City to add two Accessory Dwelling Units ("ADU") to the Cottages Among the Flowers over the Existing garage (1 deed-restricted low-income unit and 1 deed-restricted very low-income unit).

1. The City will process and approve the application consistent with State ADU Laws.

2. The two ADUs over the existing garage are addressed 312G West Aliso Street and 312H West Aliso Street.

IV. USE RESTRICTIONS; AFFORDABILITY PERIOD

A. Residential Use. During the term of this Declaration, each Affordable Unit shall be used only for residential purposes in accordance with this Declaration and applicable local ordinances and regulations. Any commercial use, or transient occupancy or rental of less than 30-days is expressly prohibited.

B. Rent Limits. Throughout the Affordability Period, Owner shall set the rents for the Affordable Units at an Affordable Rent and maintain the Affordable Units as affordable rental housing. Qualified Tenants who rent or apply for the Affordable Units are deemed to be third party beneficiaries of this subsection with the right to enforce its terms against the Owner in any unlawful detainer proceeding or in a civil action against the Owner.

C. Income Limits.

1. Owner shall rent or hold vacant and available for rent a minimum of one of the Affordable Units to very low-income households.

2. Owner shall rent or hold vacant and available for rent a minimum of one of the Affordable Units to low-income households.

3. The Affordable Unit(s) designated for very low-income households must consist of at least one, one-bedroom unit. The Affordable Unit(s) designed for Low-income households must consist of at least one, one-bedroom unit.

D. Affordability Period. The Covenants in this Declaration shall be binding, effective, and enforceable commencing upon the date a certificate of occupancy is issued for the Project, and they shall continue in full force and effect for a period of not less than 55-years, regardless of any sale, assignment, transfer, or conveyance (including, without limitation, by foreclosure sale or deed in lieu of foreclosure) of the Property or any portion thereof ("**Affordability Period**").

E. Annual Determination. The determination of whether tenants designated as a Qualified Tenant meet the income restrictions set forth herein shall be made by the Owner or its designated agent, appropriately documented to the satisfaction of the City at least annually on the basis of the current income of said tenant. If an Affordable Unit is occupied by an individual or family who were Qualifying Tenants at the commencement of occupancy but whose household income subsequently exceeds the income limits applicable to their Affordable Unit, then, subject to the Grace period provided for in Section IV.E.1., Owner shall rent the next available, comparable Project unit to individuals or families whose household income does not exceed said income limit, at which point the Affordable Unit with the over-income household shall no longer be considered an Affordable Unit and

the next available Project unit rented to the income-qualified household shall become an Affordable Unit.

1. Grace period on Restricted Units. If, upon any annual recertification, it is determined that the household income exceeds the maximum qualifying limit by more than one hundred forty (140) percent, and therefore no longer meets the requirements for a Qualifying Tenant, or if Developer is unable to certify due to tenant's noncooperation, Developer, or its authorized agent, shall have a period of no more than 24-months (Grace Period") to either (i) allow the current tenant to re-qualify as a Qualified Household for the Restricted Unit; or (ii) find a new Qualified Household to lease the Restricted Unit. During this Grace Period, the unit shall continue to be counted as one of the two Restricted Units required by this Agreement.

F. **Annual Certification of Compliance.** Owner shall provide City with an annual certification, in a format and on a schedule approved by the City in its sole discretion, that the Owner is fulfilling its obligations under this Declaration. The City may, from time to time, require additional information or reporting from Owner.

G. **No Short-Term Assignment, Subletting, or Vacation Rentals.** Owner shall rent all Affordable Units for at least 30-days. Owner shall include in all rental agreements for the Affordable Units a provision prohibiting tenants from assigning or subletting all or a portion of the Affordable Unit. If Owner's rental agreements provide tenants with the right to terminate their lease term early, then such provision shall expressly provide that tenants have no rights of early termination within the first 30 days of tenancy.

H. **ADU Unit(s) Rent Limitation.** Owner shall rent the following units addressed 312G West Aliso Street and 312H West Aliso Street to low-income households and very-low income households.

V. RECORDING AND FILING; COVENANTS RUN WITH THE LAND

A. **Recordation.** Upon execution of this Declaration by the Owner and the City, the City shall cause this Declaration and all amendments hereto to be recorded and filed in the Official Records of Ventura County. Upon recording, the City shall transmit to Owner a copy of the recorded Declaration.

B. **Covenants Run with the Land.** The Property is held and hereafter shall be held, conveyed, hypothecated, encumbered, leased, rented, used, and occupied subject to this Declaration and the Covenants set forth herein. The Covenants constitute both equitable servitudes and covenants running with the land. Owner expressly acknowledges and agrees that the Covenants are reasonable restraints on the Owner's right to own, use, maintain, and transfer the Property and any restraint on interests therein are not and shall not be construed to be unreasonable restraints on alienation. Each and every contract, deed, or other instrument hereafter executed

covering or conveying the Property or any portion thereof or interest therein (other than a rental agreement) shall contain an express provision making such conveyance or transfer subject to this Declaration and the Covenants set forth herein. Each and every contract, deed, or other instrument hereafter executed covering or conveying the Property, or any portion thereof, shall be held conclusively to have been executed, delivered, and accepted subject to such Covenants, regardless of whether such Covenants are set forth in such contract, deed, or other instrument.

VI. ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A. No Unapproved Transfers.

1. Owner shall not, except with the City's prior written consent, sell, encumber, hypothecate, assign, refinance, pledge, convey, or transfer the Property or any interest therein. Any attempted unapproved sale, encumbrance, hypothecation, assignment, pledge, conveyance or transfer shall be *void ab initio.*

2. If the City determines, in its sole and absolute discretion, to grant its prior written consent for a sale, encumbrance, hypothecation, refinance, pledge conveyance, or transfer, such consent may impose terms and conditions, as necessary, to preserve or establish the fiscal integrity of the Property, to ensure compliance, continued affordability of the Affordable Units throughout the Affordability Period, or to ensure compliance with applicable laws.

B. Binding Effect. This Declaration shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the successors and assigns of the respective parties hereto.

C. Charges; Liens. Owner shall pay all taxes, assessments, and other charges, fines, and impositions attributable to the Property when due directly to the payee thereof. Owner shall pay when due all encumbrances, charges, and liens on the Property and shall make payments on notes, loans, mortgages, or other obligations secured by an interest in the Property with interest in accordance with the terms thereof. Owner shall have the right to contest in good faith any claim or lien, or payment due thereunder, so long as Owner does so diligently and without prejudice to the City.

D. Enforcement of Agreement. Each term of this Agreement is contractual. Any Party shall have the right to enforce the terms of the Agreement by proceedings in the Ventura County Superior Court of the State of California.

E. Record Maintenance. Owner shall maintain records documenting compliance with this Declaration and retain such records throughout the Affordability Period.

F. **City Review of Tenant Eligibility.** Upon receipt of a complete rental application from a prospective tenant and third-party verification of income, the information shall be submitted to the city for authentication.

G. **Record Access.** Owner shall allow the City and its authorized representatives to inspect, audit, and copy records related to the Project or this Declaration upon reasonable notice from the City to Owner.

H. **Project Access.** Owner shall allow the City access to the Project (including the rental units) to evaluate Owner's compliance with this Declaration upon reasonable notice from the City to Owner.

I. **Agents and Other Compliance.** Owner shall cause its agents, employees, contractors, and assignees, if any, to comply with the terms and conditions of this Declaration.

J. **Third Party Beneficiaries.**

1. Third party beneficiaries under this Declaration are limited to those Qualified Tenants applying for or occupying an Affordable Unit. The rights of such third parties are restricted to enforcement of the terms of the Declaration against Owner as contemplated by the Declaration.

2. Third party beneficiaries under this Declaration shall have no claim, cause of action, or other right of recourse against the City with respect to any action or lack of action taken by the City with respect to this Declaration or the Project, or arising from their rights under this Declaration.

VII. REMEDIES

A. **Deficiencies.** The City may, from time to time, identify and direct the Owner to correct deficiencies in its compliance with this Declaration, which the Owner shall correct as reasonably directed by the City.

B. **Additional Remedies.** If the Owner fails to comply with any term or condition of this Agreement, and if such default remains uncured by Owner for a period of at least 30 days after notice thereof shall have been given by the City, or if such default runs for a period of 30 days from the date the Owner should, with due diligence, have discovered such default, then an Event of Default shall be deemed to occur and the City may exercise its rights under this subsection. Following the occurrence of an Event of Default hereunder, the City may, at its option, take any one or more of the following steps in addition to all other remedies provided in this Declaration, by law, or in equity:

1. Commence an action for specific performance and such other equitable relief available under the laws of the State of California.

2. Commence an action for injunctive relief, including, without limitation, an action seeking to enjoin any acts or things that may be lawful, inconsistent with this Declaration, or in violation of Owner's obligations or the City's rights under this Declaration.

3. Obtain the appointment of a receiver to operate the Project in compliance with this Declaration.

4. Require the termination of the Owner's property manager and its replacement to the City's satisfaction.

5. Require the Owner to cease management of the Project and to engage a property manager acceptable to the City.

C. Foreclosure. In consideration for Owner's agreement to the terms and conditions hereof, the City has or will convey real property abutting Mallory Way to Owner to provide Owner with more land upon which to develop the Project, as set forth in section 1.b.(iv)(d) of the Settlement Agreement. In further consideration for Owner's agreement to the terms and conditions hereof, the City has or will waive or reduce the development-related fees that Owner is required to pay the City for the Project's development, which may include, without limitation, planning, grading, City development impact fees, and building permit fees, as set forth in section 2 of the Settlement Agreement. In the event that a third party lawfully acquires title to the Property through foreclosure or deed in lieu of foreclosure in a manner that causes this Declaration to be extinguished or otherwise terminated prior to the end of the Affordability Period, then the City may sue Owner for the value of the land it conveyed to Owner for Project use and for the amount of any Project development-related fees that the City waived or reduced pursuant to the Settlement Agreement.

D. Remedies not Exclusive. The foregoing remedies shall not be exclusive and are in addition to any other rights and remedies available at law, in equity, or otherwise. No failure of or delay by the City to enforce any provision of this Declaration shall constitute a waiver by the City of that or any other provision, nor shall any single or partial exercise of any right, power, or privilege under this Declaration preclude any other or further exercise of such right, power, or privilege or the exercise of any other right, power, or privilege.

E. Survival of Remedies. The rights and remedies of the City provided for in this Declaration, which by their nature are intended to survive termination of this Declaration, shall survive the termination of the Affordability Period and this Declaration.

F. Remedies for Breach. For remedies available through the Judicial resolution, Parties agree that monetary damages may be inadequate. Remedies shall also include specific performance and/or injunctive relief and other remedies available at law or in equity.

VIII. MISCELLANEOUS TERMS/EXCLUSIONS

A. Obligation Satisfaction. The Parties shall, at all times, act in good faith in a timely manner to satisfy their respective obligations under the terms of this Agreement and further actions reasonably necessary to effectuate this Agreement. Failure to perform is a material breach of the Agreement.

IX. OWNER REPRESENTATIONS.

Owner represents and warrants to the City that (a) Owner has sufficient interest in the Property to support the operation of the Project in accordance with this Declaration; (b) to Owner's actual knowledge and belief, there are no agreements, contracts, covenants, conditions, or exclusions to which Owner (or its predecessor in interest) is a party which would, if enforced, prohibit or restrict the use of the Property in accordance with the terms of this Declaration; (c) Owner has the full right and authority to enter into this Declaration; (d) this Declaration constitutes a valid and legally binding obligation on Owner, enforceable in accordance with its terms; and (e) Owner is duly organized and authorized to do business in the State of California.

X. NOTICE.

Any notice which any party may desire to give to the other party under this Declaration must be in writing and may be given by either personal service or mailing via certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested, addressed to the address of the party as set forth below, or at any other address as that party may later designate in a written notice to the other party:

To City:

Ben Harvey
City Manager
401 South Ventura Street
Ojai, CA 93023

With a Courtesy Copy to:

Ojai City Attorney
401 South Ventura Street
Ojai, CA 93023

To Owner:

Ojai Bungalows, LP
c/o The Becker Group, Inc./Jeffrey R. Becker
40 South Ash Street
Ventura, CA 93001

With a Courtesy Copy to:

Beth Collins
Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP
1021 Anacapa, 2nd Floor
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

XI. MISCELLANEOUS

A. **No Discrimination.** Owner will not discriminate in the provision of housing on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, familial status, source of income, disability, veteran or military status, genetic information or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or federal law.

B. **Representation of Understanding.** Each party represents and warrants to the other that (a) they have carefully read this Declaration, and in signing this Declaration, they do so with full knowledge of any right which they may have; (b) they have received independent legal advice from their respective legal counsel as to the matters set forth in this Declaration, or have knowingly chosen not to consult legal counsel as to the matters set forth in this Declaration; and (c) they have freely signed this Declaration without any reliance upon any agreement, promise, statement, or representation by or on behalf of the other party, or their respective agents, employees, or attorneys except as specifically set forth in this Agreement, and without duress or coercion, economic or otherwise.

C. **Construction.** The Parties acknowledge that each party has participated in the drafting of this Declaration. Accordingly, the parties agree that any rule of construction to the effect that ambiguities are to be resolved against the drafting party will not apply in the interpretation of this Declaration and any amendment, modification, supplementation, or restatement of the foregoing or of any exhibit to this Declaration.

D. **Captions.** The captions or headings in this Declaration are for convenience only and in no way define, limit, or describe the scope or intent of any provision of this Declaration.

E. **Assignments, Successors and Assigns.** Owner shall not assign or otherwise transfer any interest in this Declaration without prior written consent from the City. Any attempted unauthorized assignment or transfer shall be *void ab initio*.

F. **Time is of the Essence.** Time is of the essence in the performance of this Declaration.

G. **Governing Law.** This Declaration shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of California. Any dispute concerning, relating to, or arising under this Declaration shall be brought in Ventura County Superior Court.

H. **Attorney Fees.** In any action between the Parties to interpret, enforce, reform, modify, rescind, or otherwise in connection with any of the terms or provisions of this Declaration, the prevailing party shall be entitled to their reasonable costs and expenses, including, without limitation, litigation costs and reasonable attorneys' fees.

I. **Multiple Counterparts and Electronic Signatures.** This Declaration may be executed in multiple counterparts. Electronic, faxed, and PDF signatures shall have the same force and effect as handwritten signatures.

J. **Severability.** All terms and conditions of this Declaration will be deemed severable. Should any one or more of the terms and conditions hereof be deemed void or unenforceable, then the remaining provisions will have full force and effect and those provisions deemed void or unenforceable will be interpreted, to the extent possible, to render such provisions enforceable and in a way consistent with the original intent of the parties hereto.

K. **Entire Agreement.** This Declaration constitutes the entire agreement between the Parties on the subject matter hereof. There are no understandings, agreements, or representations, oral or written, not specified herein regarding this Declaration.

L. **Modifications.** This Declaration may only be modified by a writing signed by the Parties.

M. **Effectiveness.** Unless signed by all parties, this Declaration shall have no legal effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Owner and City have caused the Declaration to be signed below by their duly authorized representatives.

CITY OF OJAI**,**
a California Municipal Corporation

By: _____
Ben Harvey, City Manager

Ojai Bungalows LP,
a California limited partnership

By: _____
Name: _____
Its: _____

NOTARY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A notary public or other officer completing this certificate verifies only the identity of the individual who signed the document to which this certificate is attached, and not the truthfulness, accuracy, or validity of that document

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)

) §

County of _____)

On _____, before me, _____
a Notary Public, personally appeared _____
who proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

I certify under PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing paragraph is true and correct.

WITNESS my hand and official seal. (Affix seal here)

_____
Signature of Notary

NOTARY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A notary public or other officer completing this certificate verifies only the identity of the individual who signed the document to which this certificate is attached, and not the truthfulness, accuracy, or validity of that document

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)

) §

County of _____)

On _____, before me, _____
a Notary Public, personally appeared _____
who proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

I certify under PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing paragraph is true and correct.

WITNESS my hand and official seal. (Affix seal here)

_____
Signature of Notary

EXHIBIT A

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

LEGAL DESCRIPTION
Exhibit "A"

Parcel I:

A Portion of Tract 14 of the Bard Subdivision of the Rancho Ojai, in the City of Ojai, County of Ventura, State of California, according to the map thereof recorded in Book 5, Page 254 of miscellaneous records, in the office of the County Recorder of said county, described as follows:

Beginning at the point in the east line of the land conveyed to L.G. Fertig, et ux., by deed recorded July 15, 1948 in Book 833, Page 208 of official records, distant south 0° 02' west 185.00 feet from the northeast corner of said land; said point being the southeast corner of the land conveyed to John W. Rains, et ux., by deed recorded October 23, 1950 in Book 961, Page 389 of official records; thence from said point of beginning, along the east line of said land conveyed to L.G. Fertig,

1st: South 0° 02' West 468.27 feet to a point in the north line of Aliso Street; Thence, along said north line,

2nd: South 84° 15' west 73.49 feet to the southeast corner of the land conveyed to Elzo L. Van Dellen, et ux., by deed recorded March 23, 1949 in Book 864, Page 561 of official records; thence, along the east line of said land,

3rd: North 6° 55' west 101.45 feet to the southeast corner of the land conveyed to Herbert Hedges, et ux., by deed recorded October 22, 1948 in Book 843, Page 448 of official records; thence, along the east and north boundaries of said land,

4th: North 7° 08' east 57.97 feet; thence

5th: South 88° 02' 17" west 114.27 feet to a point in the westerly line of said land conveyed to L.G. Fertig, et ux.; thence, along said west line,

6th: North 1° 23' east 2.34 feet to the beginning of a curve concave to the east having a radius of 327.23 feet and a central angle of 20° 11'; thence

7th: Northerly, along said curve, 115.27 feet; Thence, tangent to said curve,

8th: North 21° 34' east 199.87 feet to the beginning of a tangent curve concave to the west having a radius of 110.00 feet; thence

9th: Northerly, along said curve, to the southwest corner of said land conveyed to John W. Rains, et ux.; thence, along the south line of said land,

10th: South 89° 58' east to the point of beginning.

Parcel II:

A non-exclusive easement for road purposes over a strip or parcel of land 40.00 feet wide lying adjoining and immediately easterly of the west line of the land conveyed to Herbert Hodges, et ux., by deed recorded October 22, 1948 in Book 843, Page 449 of official records. The side lines of said easement to be shortened or extended so as to intersect the northerly and southerly boundaries of said land.

Parcel III:

A non-exclusive easement for road purposes over a strip or parcel of land 25.00 feet wide lying adjoining and immediately easterly of the west line of the land conveyed to Elzo L. Van Dellen, et ux., by deed recorded March 23, 1949 in Book 864, Page 561 of official records. The side lines of said easement to be shortened or extended so as to intersect the northerly and southerly boundaries of said land.

Parcel IV:

A portion of Tract 14 of the Bard Subdivision of the Rancho Ojai, in the City of Ojai, County of Ventura, State of California, as per map thereof recorded in the office of the County Recorder of said County in Book 5, Page 25 ½ of maps, described as follows:

Beginning at the north east corner of the land conveyed to Joseph A. Forsythe, et ux., by deed recorded in Book 2142, Page 15, of official records of said county; thence along the easterly line of said Forsythe land,

1st: South 11° 28' west 101.64 feet to the southeast corner thereof, being also a point in the north line of the land conveyed to James Albert Wadsworth, et ux., recorded in Book 878, Page 431, of official records of said county; thence along the northerly line of said Wadsworth land,

2nd: South 79° 42' west 61 feet to a point in the westerly line of the land conveyed to Foster E. Kuhnes, et ux, by deed recorded in Book 2920, Page 342, of official records of said county; thence along the westerly line of said Kuhnes land.

3rd: North 21° 34' east 106.05 feet to a point of intersection with the southeasterly prolongation of the north line of the aforesaid Forsythe property; thence along said southeasterly prolongation of the north line of said Forsythe land,

4th: North 81° 25' west 79.82 feet, to the point of beginning.

Parcel V:

A portion of Tract 14 of the Bard Subdivision of the Rancho Ojai, in the City of Ojai, County of Ventura, State of California, as per map thereof recorded in the office of the County Recorder of said County in Book 5, Page 25 ½ of maps, described as follows:

Beginning at a point in the east line of Mallory Way, also being the northwest corner of the land conveyed to Joseph A. Forsythe, et ux. By deed recorded in Book 2142, Page 15, of official records of said county; thence along the north line of said Forsythe land and its southeasterly prolongation,

1st: South 81° 25' east 100 feet, thence,

2nd: Northerly along a line perpendicular to the southeasterly prolongation of the north line of said Forsythe land, a distance of 5 feet; thence along a line parallel with and 5 feet distant from the north line of said Forsythe land,

3rd: North 81° 25' west to a point of intersection with the easterly line of Mallory Way; thence,

4th: South along the east line of Mallory Way to the point of beginning.

Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura
1400 West Hillcrest Dr. Newbury Park, CA 91320-2721
(805) 480-9991 • TTY (805) 480-9119 •FAX (805) 480-1021 www.ahacv.org

Serving Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, and the unincorporated areas of Ventura County

March 23, 2026

Lucas Seibert
Bridget Mara
Aida Lawrence

Re: AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT MONITORING

The Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura (AHA) would like to take this opportunity to provide an updated preliminary proposal for affordable housing monitoring services per our mutual conversations.

The AHA's understanding of the needed services includes a few scenarios:

Full Eligibility Screening

- Maintaining and administering a waiting list for the Ojai affordable units
- Performing eligibility screening for the Ojai affordable housing units in accordance with the Affordable Housing Agreement(s) *[agreements and terms to be provided at a future date]* and the Ojai Affordable Housing Requirements and Incentives Ordinance § 10-2 Article 9.
- Performing annual reexaminations of tenant income to determine continued eligibility
- Coordination with the City of Ojai and property management on required reporting, monitoring, etc.
- Maintain client and applicant records in accordance with City of Ojai established retention requirements

The fees proposed to provide such services would be in accordance with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Administrative Fee schedule for the Housing Choice Voucher (also known as Section 8 Voucher) program. In 2025, that fee is $162.50 per unit per month. The HUD schedule of fees is adjusted annually.

Review of Eligibility Assessments of Developers/Managers

- Developer/manager maintains their own waiting list, conducted their own eligibility calculations
- AHA would only be reviewing their complete documentation and calculations to verify the documentation supports that the household meets the income eligibility for the property.

In this scenario, the AHA would propose a fee of $250 per file.

Other Services (as needed)

If a scenario arises where none of the above scenarios properly reflects the work necessary, the AHA could propose an hourly fee ($150 per hour) or a fee could be agreed upon prior to the project.

If we reach agreement on the concept for provision of services, we can enter into a formal service agreement.

Please feel free to reach out to discuss any questions or details.

Sincerely,

Carrie Sabatini
Deputy Executive Director

Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura
1400 West Hillcrest Dr. Newbury Park, CA 91320-2721
(805) 480-9991 • TTY (805) 480-9119 • FAX (805) 480-1021 • www.ahacv.org

Serving Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, and the unincorporated areas of Ventura County

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION

For Deed Restricted Units in the City of Ojai

I hereby authorize the Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura (AHA) to obtain the information listed below for the purpose of determining my eligibility to receive or to continue affordable rent housing benefits. The AHA may use this release to make inquiries or secure information from any and all sources, such as the ones listed below, including, but not exclusively, a person, business, organization, present or former employer, school and other entities that have, or may have, information about me. I understand that this authorization is part of the initial and continuing eligibility process, and that refusal to sign this consent form will result in the denial of eligibility or termination of affordable housing benefits, or both. I further understand that the information I provide may be released to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, when relevant, and to civil, criminal, or regulatory investigators and prosecutors.

- Legal identity verification.
- Income—wages, salary, and asset information from any source including, but not limited to employers, private income verification contractors, such as The Work Number, Thomson Reuters, Bank VOD, etc. for all family members;
- School registration for minor children, and for family members over the age of 18 where required to establish program eligibility, registration in educational or vocational training programs including information about participation completion of such programs.

I understand that the information gathered from my household is utilized to either verify eligibility for the income-restricted housing program associated with my application, or to verify my continued eligibility to occupy the income-restricted unit. I also hereby authorize that a photocopy of this authorization is accepted with the same authority as the original.

(This release EXPIRES 15 months from the date signed).

I, (head of household), certify under penalty of perjury that the signatures below were signed in my presence.

Print Name (Head of Household)	Signature (Head of Household)
Print Name Other family member 18 yrs & over	Signature of other family member 18 yrs & over
Print Name Other family member 18 yrs & over	Signature of other family member 18 yrs & over
Print Name Other family member 18 yrs & over	Signature of other family member 18 yrs & over

Date MM/DD/YYYY

AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPLICATION (Part 1)
(Deed Restricted Units)

The Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura (AHA) will use the information below to determine if your household's income meets the criteria required to rent an affordable unit at the property you indicated below. This eligibility determination will be based on the property's regulatory agreement and Section 6932 of Title 25 of the California Code of Regulations in effect when you submit this application. WARNING: Under the laws of the State of California it is a crime to knowingly and willingly provide false information or to make fraudulent claims to state, county, or local government agencies for payment or benefits.

Name and Address of Property:_____

A. APPPLICANT (HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD)

Name (Legal Name): _____

Present Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Primary Telephone: ___(_____)_____ Secondary Telephone: ___(_____)_____

E-mail Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____

Language(s) applicant speaks and/or writes fluently: ☐ English ☐ Spanish ☐ Other: _____

B. HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

#	Persons Residing in Unit Legal names: Adults & children	Relationship to Head of Household	Gender	Date of Birth	Social Security Number	Legal Resident/Citizen Yes/No
1		Head of Household				
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

# Bedrooms _____ # Adults _____ # Children _____ (F) # Children _____ (M) Race _____	Total Annual Gross Income: _____ ☐ Ineligible(reason):_____ Language Spoken: ☐ English ☐ Spanish ☐ Other _____ Processed by: _____ Date: _____	

Revised 04-06-26

Do you have legal permanent or joint custody of any minor child/children listed on page 1, under "Household Composition"?
☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ N/A

If yes, list the absent parent(s) information for any of the children listed in the household:

Child Name _____ Parent Name: _____ Last known address: _____
Child Name _____ Parent Name: _____ Last known address: _____
Child Name _____ Parent Name: _____ Last known address: _____

Are any of the listed family members temporarily absent from the home? (away for school, hospitalized, etc.) ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, who and explain the reason they are absent: _____

Are any of the listed family members currently attending college or vocational school full-time? ☐ No ☐ Yes
If yes, explain who and provide the school name, address and telephone number:

_____

Have you or any adult member(s) in your household, ever used another name(s) or social security number(s) other than the one you are using now? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, list names (i.e. maiden name, divorced name) and numbers used:

_____

C. HOUSEHOLD INCOME (This portion applies to all family members, including minors)

Do you or any member of your household work full-time, part-time, or seasonally (i.e. self-employment)? ☐ No ☐ Yes
If yes, provide the following information. For wages include fees, tips, bonus, and money for services:

Family Member #	Employer's Name, Address and Telephone Number	Monthly Gross Wages
		$
		$
		$
		$
		$
		$
		$

OTHER INCOME OR BENEFITS RECEIVED

Do you or any member of your household receive income from any other source(s)? ☐ No ☐ Yes
If yes, complete and provide gross income, as applicable:

Family Member #	How Paid? Weekly Bi-weekly Monthly	Child Support	Service related VA disability benefits	Social Security Disability (SSI)	Social Security (SSA)	Unemployment	TANF (cash grant)	Other (list source)
		$	$	$	$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$	$	$	$
		$	$	$	$	$	$	$

Do you or any member of your household work for anyone who pays you cash? ☐ No ☐ Yes
If yes, explain: _____

Does anyone outside your household give you money to pay your bills, or supply groceries, etc.? ☐ No ☐ Yes
If yes, explain: _____

Does any organization help you to pay a bill or expense (i.e. HEAP)? ☐ No ☐ Yes
If yes, explain: _____

D. CASH ASSETS

Do you or any household member have a bank account(s)?: ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, provide the information below:

Family Member #		
_____	Checking Balance: $_____ Is account interest-bearing? ☐ No ☐ Yes	Bank Name: _____ Account #: _____
_____	Checking Balance: $_____ Is account interest-bearing? ☐ No ☐ Yes	Bank Name: _____ Account #: _____
_____	Savings Balance: $_____ Is account interest-bearing? ☐ No ☐ Yes	Bank Name: _____ Account #: _____
_____	Savings Balance: $_____ Is account interest-bearing? ☐ No ☐ Yes	Bank Name: _____ Account #: _____
_____	Other Balance: $_____ Is account interest-bearing? ☐ No ☐ Yes	Bank Name: _____ Account #: _____
_____	Other Balance: $_____ Is account interest-bearing? ☐ No ☐ Yes	Bank Name: _____ Account #: _____

E. OTHER ASSETS

Do you or any household member own or have an interest in commercial or residential real estate, or land or mobilehome? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, please provide address/location: _____

Has any member of your household sold or given away any real estate in the past two (2) years? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, who and what was the market value? _____ Type of Asset: $_____

Does any household member have or receive benefits from an annuity or other retirement source? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, explain: _____ Monthly Amount: $_____

Does any household member have or receive income from certificates of deposit, stocks, bonds, or other investments?

☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, explain: _____ Monthly Amount: $_____

Does any household member have any inheritances, lottery winnings, or lump sum payments? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, explain: _____ Monthly Amount: $_____

Do you or any household member have a life insurance policy? ☐ No ☐ Yes

If yes, who, list the amount, to include if there is a cash value amount and provide a copy of the policy(ies)? _____

_____

AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPLICATION (Part 2)

Required Application Documents

Please provide the following items (copies only) for all family members listed on the application:
All documents must be dated within the last sixty (60) days. Damaged or illegible documents will not be accepted. Upon review of your application, the AHA may need to request additional documents and/or request that your household provide clarification.

Yes	No	N/A	
☐	☐	☐	Bank account statements for the last 3 consecutive months (all pages)
☐	☐	☐	Driver's license or photo identification for family members 18 years of age and older
☐	☐	☐	Marriage certificate, divorce papers, widow/death certificate (if applicable). If separated, bring legal documents or written statement confirming this.
☐	☐	☐	Military/Veteran Benefits
☐	☐	☐	Pension/Retirement/Annuity Statements
☐	☐	☐	Previous year's income tax return

Yes	No	N/A	
☐	☐	☐	Proof of child support payments
☐	☐	☐	Proof of employment, 3 months' worth of the most recent consecutive pay-stubs
☐	☐	☐	Proof of real estate owned
☐	☐	☐	Proof of State Disability Insurance (SDI), Workman's Compensation, or disability income
☐	☐	☐	Self-employment (Previous year's tax return and Schedule C, or IRS Form 4506 C or transcript from IRS stating "no filing" and one of the following: a. Profit and Loss Statement or, b. Statements from recurring clients)
☐	☐	☐	Social Security card(s) for all household members
☐	☐	☐	Social Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance benefit letter
☐	☐	☐	Stock/Bonds Statements for the last 3 consecutive months
☐	☐	☐	Unemployment benefits payment activity
☐	☐	☐	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefit letter
☐	☐	☐	If you have any additional household income not listed above, provide verification.

All adults in the household must complete, sign and date the attached forms listed below:

☐	☐	Authorization to Release Information

F. APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

By signing below, I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I/we certify that the information provided above and all attached documents are accurate and complete. I/we understand that any attempt to obtain rent reductions by false information, impersonation, failure to disclose or other fraud (and any act of assistance to such attempt) is a crime. I/we also understand that if I am approved for a unit, I will be required to provide the Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura (AHA) with income, asset and family composition information on an annual basis to determine continued eligibility.

Signature of Head of Household	Date
Signature of Spouse	Date
Signature of Co-Head of Household	Date
Signature of Other Adult Household Member	Date

G. RELEASE OF INFORMATION/OWNER & CITY OF OJAI FOR COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION

The property's rules require us to send your application and verified financial documents to the City of Ojai and property owner for approval. By signing below, you authorize the Area Housing Authority (AHA) to share your eligibility information both with the owner *Ojai Bungalows, LP* and with the *City of Ojai* and acknowledge that the city may review or audit your records upon request.

Signature of Head of Household	Date
Signature of Spouse	Date
Signature of Co-Head of Household	Date
Signature of Other Adult Household Member	Date

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk**

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Ad Hoc Committee Formation for Community Land Trust *(City Council Direction)***

RECOMMENDATION

Select two (2) City Council Members to form an ad hoc committee for a six-month term.

DISCUSSION

At the May 12, 2026 Regular Meeting, City Council received information outlining various considerations related to the formation of a Community Land Trust. The City Council also directed staff to return with a proposal to create an ad hoc committee that could work with staff and the City Attorney's Office to further evaluate and develop a framework for creating a Community Land Trust.

City staff recommends that Council establish a City Council ad hoc committee composed exclusively of two (2) City Council Members for a limited duration of six (6) months. The ad hoc committee would not be a standing commission or citizen advisory committee. Per the City's Boards and Commissions Handbook and established practice, ad hoc committees may be formed to accomplish a specific goal within a given time frame, and ad hoc committee membership must be less than the quorum of the full body. The recommended six-month term would expire at the end of January 2027, providing sufficient time for the committee to work with staff to develop Community Housing Trust framework and return to the full Council with recommendations. If additional time is needed City Council could extend the term.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

Goal No. 1 - Affordable Housing

OPTIONS

1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

No direct fiscal impact associated with the formation of an ad hoc committee.

Prepared by: Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk

ATTACHMENT(S)

NONE

Administrative Report

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Ben Harvey, City Manager**
Bethany Burgess, City Attorney
Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Concept Review - Building Code Options Return *(City Council Direction)***

RECOMMENDATION

Receive the information and presentation by Staff, ask clarifying questions and consider providing additional direction on alternative building code options for local amendments to the building code.

DISCUSSION

The December 9, 2025, approval of the Building and Fire Code updates included a condition that staff return to City Council with information regarding additional building code modifications the City could adopt related to climate, geology, topography, during the code freeze contemplated by AB 130, as potential options for Council consideration.

Background – Assembly Bill 130 (AB 130) adopted in 2025, established a code freeze from October 1, 2025 to June 1, 2031 for local amendments to the California Building Code, subject to very limited exceptions. Pursuant to AB 130, local amendments may only be made during the code freeze if one of the following conditions are met:

(1) The changes or modifications are substantially equivalent to changes or modifications that were previously filed by the governing body of the city or county and were in effect as of September 30, 2025.

(2) The California Building Standards Commission deems the changes or modifications necessary as emergency standards to protect health and safety.

(3) The changes or modifications relate to home hardening.

(4) The building standards relate to home hardening and are proposed for adoption by a fire protection district pursuant to Section 13869.7.

(5) The changes or modifications are necessary to implement a local code amendment that is adopted to align with a general plan approved on or before

June 10, 2025, and that permits mixed-fuel residential construction consistent with federal law while also incentivizing all-electric construction as part of an adopted greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy.

(6) The changes or modifications are related to administrative practices, are proposed for adoption during the intervening period pursuant to Section 18942, and exclusively result in any of the following:

(A) Reductions in time for a local agency to issue a post entitlement permit.

(B) Alterations to a local agency's post entitlement fee schedule.

(C) Modernization of, or adoption of, new permitting platforms and software utilized by the local agency.

(D) Reductions in cost of internal operation for a local agency.

(E) Establishment, alteration, or removal of local programs related to enforcement of building code violations or complaints alleging building code violations.

If a proposed amendment satisfies one or more of these conditions, the governing body of a city shall also make express findings that the change is reasonably necessary because of local climatic, geological, or topographical conditions, and submit such findings with the proposed change to the California Building Standards Commission.

Some California communities have adopted local amendments meeting these requirements. The City of Piedmont located in northern California adopted several Building Code Amendments which included the following revisions to the California Building and Fire Code requirements related to home hardening:

- The City recently established strict fire safety standards for residential buildings, especially in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas. Decks close to structures require one-hour fire-resistant materials, with exceptions for certain types of construction. Bay windows and similar features above ground must have underside fire protection. Wood shingles and shakes are generally banned, except for historic structures. Roof replacements must meet WUI standards, and vents must follow specific codes. If over half of a wall is replaced, upgraded materials and protective sheathing are required. Under-floor and wall ventilation openings must comply with WUI codes. Buildings destroyed or demolished beyond half their structure must add automatic fire sprinklers upon rebuilding. Spark arresters are mandatory for improvements over $1,000. Importantly, all additions and remodels, regardless of original construction date, must now comply with WUI Code requirements, eliminating previous exemptions.

- Additionally, Piedmont has incorporated tiered energy efficiency and electrification standards (similar to our Flex-Path matrix) based on the value of single-family remodel or addition projects. For projects valued at $35,000 or more, at least one approved

energy efficiency or electrification improvement must be included. For projects valued at $135,000 or higher, either one “high energy impact” improvement or any two approved improvements must be implemented. The approved options include upgrades such as attic insulation with air sealing, duct sealing or replacement with insulated ducts, wall and raised floor insulation, heat pump water heater replacement, gas furnace replacement with a heat pump, solar panel installation, heat pump clothes dryer, and induction cooktop with gas line cap. Projects may be exempt if the building already has a Home Energy Score of 7 or higher, if unique construction features prevent installation, if the cost of improvements exceeds 20% of the overall project cost, or if installation is prohibited by law. To address inflation, the $35,000 and $135,000 thresholds will be automatically updated each year beginning January 1, 2028, based on the California Construction Cost Index.

Other communities have adopted local code amendments under exception number (5), provied above for changes or modifications that are necessary to implement a local code amendment that is adopted to align with a general plan approved on or before June 10, 2025, and that permits mixed-fuel residential construction consistent with federal law while also incentivizing all-electric construction as part of an adopted greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategy.” This provision allows changes to the state Building Code when the amendment, (1) aligns with a general plan approved before June 10, 2025; (2) permits mixed-fuel construction, incentivizes all-electric construction, and is consistent with federal law (i.e., the federal Energy Policy & Conservation Act, or EPCA); and (3) is part of an adopted greenhouse gas emissions reductions strategy. Changes adopted under this provision include requirements related to conversion of air conditioners and furnaces to heat pumps, electric readiness for outdoor gas appliances, and pre-wiring requirements to support electrification.

Does the City Qualify to adopt local amendments under the AB130 Exceptions?
Maybe. The City’s existing General Plan was adopted prior to the June 10, 2025 date; the City’s ordinance allows for mixed-fuel construction while incentivizing all-electric alternatives; however, the City of Ojai does not yet have a Climate Action Plan (CAP). It does, however, include several existing/adopted greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reduction strategies/provisions (i.e. Flex-path, ban on gas powered lawn equipment, City Council priorities regarding other GHG reduction incentives). The City may also be able to adopt local code amendments pertaining to home hardening.

Examples of Home Hardening Provisions |
Roof and Gutter Provisions

- Class A Roof Coverings: Utilizing materials like fiberglass composition shingles, concrete, clay tiles, or metal.
- Roof Edge "Bird Stops": Capping or blocking the open spaces between roof decking and corrugated tiles to prevent ember entry.
- Non-Combustible Gutter Covers: Installing metal mesh guards to stop dry leaves and pine needles from collecting.
- Metal Drip Edges: Installing a non-combustible metal flashing edge to guard the roof sheathing underneath the gutters.

Vent and Opening Provisions

- Ember-Resistant Vents: Upgrading foundation, attic, and crawlspace vents to

specialized flame/ember-resistant models.

- 1/8-inch Metal Mesh: Covering all functional openings with corrosion-resistant wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch to catch microscopic sparks.
- Metal Flapper Dryer Vents: Replacing plastic exterior dryer exhausts with self-closing metal flapper vents.
- UL-Compliant Weather Stripping: Sealing the bottom and perimeter of garage doors to eliminate air gaps larger than 1/16 inch.

Window and Door Provisions

- Dual-Pane Tempered Glass: Requiring windows with multi-paned glass where at least one layer is tempered. Tempered glass is four times more heat-resistant than standard glass and prevents structural shatter.
- Metal Window Screens: Replacing standard fiberglass or plastic window screens with heavy-duty metal mesh.
- Solid-Core Exterior Doors: Mandating exterior entrance doors be constructed of solid wood, heavy metal, or a certified fire-rated material.

Siding and Wall Provisions

- Ignition-Resistant Siding: Specifying non-combustible outer wall materials like three-coat stucco, fiber-cement board, brick, or stone instead of traditional wood shingles.
- Enclosed Eaves: Boxing in or plastering the underside of roof overhangs (soffits) to trap heat and block embers from swirling into the attic rafters.
- Gap Caulk Sealing: Using fire-resistant outdoor caulk to pack structural expansion joints, rot holes, or deep wood cracks.

Attached Structure Provisions

- Ignition-Resistant Decking: Building decks, balconies, and exterior stairs using heavy timbers, composite materials certified for fire safety, or metal framing.
- Non-Combustible Fence Connections: Mandating that if a perimeter fence links directly to a building, the first 5 to 8 feet of the barrier must be crafted from a non-combustible material like steel or wrought iron.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS ALIGNMENT

Goal No. 7 - Climate Resiliency

OPTIONS

1. Take no action;
2. Provide alternative direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

No immediate impact to the 26/27 approved budget. However, future incentives or programs to incentivize additional measures to support home hardening activities may have financial impacts to the approved budget.

Prepared by: Lucas Seibert, Community Development Director

ATTACHMENT(S) - None

TO: **Honorable City Council**

FROM: **Weston Montgomery, Chief Deputy City Clerk**

MEETING DATE: **July 14, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Written Public Comments**

The attached public comments were submitted to the City Clerk prior to 3:00 p.m. the date before the meeting (referenced above) and are being posted to the City's website for public access.

Posted: July 13, 2026

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Written/emailed public comments must be submitted no later than 3:00 p.m. on the day before the meeting.

The City encourages public participation. Members of the public who wish to make public comments may do so in person at the meeting, comment live via telewebinar software, or submit written public comments in advance of the meeting. Written public comment emails should be sent to cityclerk@ojai.ca.gov.

Communications to the City Council are public records and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to the City Council, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications to the City Clerk's Office at 401 S Ventura St, Ojai Ca, 93023, or you may email the comment as an attached PDF to the email and request in the email to only include the attachment. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication.

As a government agency, the City of Ojai is subject to the California Public Records Act (Government Code § 6250 et seq.). Please be advised that all communications submitted to City officials and staff are subject to public disclosure under the California Public Records Act. There are limited exceptions that allow the City to redact personal information under the California Public Records Act. If you have concerns regarding privacy, please do not include your personal identifying information, such as your name, e-mail, phone number, and home address in your correspondence to the City, including, but not limited to, public comment.

Weston Montgomery

From: Bill <wdmiley32@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2026 7:22 AM
To: Weston Montgomery
Subject: Council meeting 7/14/26

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

7/13/26
To: Ojai City Council
From: Bill Miley
Subject: meeting 7/14/26…several agenda items

Hello.

Agenda item 9…city hall landscape plan adoption

This comprehensive plan has been developed with multiple opportunities for community input and review. I support it with one key correction, one land based suggestion and one key ADA recommendation.

On page 3 there is a paragraph on the site history. It says it was deeded to the city in 1917 which is wrong. The Smith Hobson Family gave it to the City about 1972.

On a site diagram it shows the most southern portion of the property…hill top south of the Stewart Creek as # 28 (viewpoint with bench and #32 restoration trail) I have been on the site several times years ago and find it has great potential as one can almost see 360 degrees from this hill top. Excellent for night time star gazing. It needs more than "a bench with a view".

For parking there appears to be 3 spaces on South Ventura Street. With supporting comments about minimal impact and protecting nature. No disagreement with protecting nature. And of the 3, one is ADA. I use an ADA space. With very little city owned public parking space available in the area, those few spots likely will be taken by Pickleball players. More spaces are needed, especially for handicapped. (I know the law ratio 1-25.) Parking and walking for those handicapped wanting a nature experience should not require a stressed walk/hike from some street parking where it can be found. What about folks in general? A long walk on a road without sidewalks?

Agenda item 10…Grand Jury Report in reply to public complaint

I read it all. Ok, the Grand Jury presentation says the city was right there is no competitive bidding due to price required, but was required to do so for qualification and competency of contractors. . **As i read their conclusion it says in the future the city shall agree to follow the competitive bidding law requirements. It does not say the city has to rebid this project.** Of their 6 Recommendations 5 have the ending phrase "in all cases moving forward".

And they detail 4 options for responding. Thus the city likely should select number 2 response option. "…will be implemented in the future with a timeline."

Agenda 13. Cottage of the Flowers Affordability review process.

I don't like any of the three proposed options for reviewing tenant applications. They are either too expensive 162$ (?) per month per unit (AHA) ouch or owner reviewed (fair/transparentk.?) I like the option of using another agency in the county…Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation, as they are building a development next to Whispering Oaks.

Agenda 15…information about 2025 Assembly Bill 130, building code freeze. No need for anything else.

Certainly important to know about. As to why the legislature adopted this, my guess is to prevent local cities and counties from amending their housing laws to affect affordable housing. Information yes, but now a request for changing local ordinances based on listed exemptions. That part of this agenda item is irrelevant other than knowing it can be done. Where does the example come from? Pick a spot on a California Map and use the nearest city. Since this law goes until 2030, why rush with made up suggestions. We can aways produce needed changes and submit them to the state. Lots of time.

Sincerely, Bill Miley

July 12, 2026

Honorable Mayor, Mayor Pro tem, Council members and City Administration,

I would like to voice my whole hearted support of the planned Eco Park being developed by the Ojai Valley Green Coalition. This is a project that is long past due. The plans as proposed will take the gem that is the 8 acre campus and polish it to a high gleam.

Many of the valley residents are unaware that the 8 acres surrounding City Hall are generally undisturbed eco systems of Riparian and Oak Woodland, crowned by the meadow above Stewart Creek. This park, as designed by the Coalition, will provide a quiet place (other than the pickle ball noise) for contemplation, a place for people to learn about the native plants and the people who lived here long before the settlement of Ojai existed, as well as on going educational opportunities for people of all ages. It will serve as a draw to our town from other communities surrounding Ojai and provide a family friendly venue for fun and education.

My only concern with the plans for the park is the proposed amphitheater. We in the neighborhoods surrounding the park have experienced how sound travels from OTT up the hill to the Crestview neighborhood and down the barranca on the west side of South Blanche St. There is no orientation of the amphitheater that will not impact homes, since the park is surrounded by houses. While this is proposed as a venue for non amplified events, we have see repeatedly, in the bandstand at Libbey Park and other parks, that there will be people who bring their battery powered amplifiers and ‘share’ their music with the public. I ask the city to be aware of this issue when you discuss moving forward with this worthy project.

Please vote YES to approve this project with recommendations to remove the opportunity for abuse from those chronic offenders we see at our other parks.

Thank you for your consideration

Leeana McNeilley
A Neighbor to the 8 acre park

Weston Montgomery

From: Larry Steingold <larrysteingold@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2026 10:33 AM
To: Weston Montgomery
Subject: Public Comment For July 14, 2026 Meeting

7/13/2026
July 13, 2026

To All City Councilors and Mayor
From: Larry Steingold
RE: Public Comment

Good evening, Council and Mayor

I respectfully request that a Council member or the Mayor sponsor a future agenda item titled: "Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the City Council Agenda Publication Timeline."

At present, agendas are released too late to meet the local newspaper's print deadline. This effectively creates a digital divide, limiting participation for residents who do not rely on or have access to last-minute online notifications. Civic engagement should not depend on constant digital access or the ability to monitor updates in real time.

The Council has the authority to direct the City Manager to change this. He said that he takes is marching orders from the City Council. Please give him the order. By ensuring agendas are published well in advance, the City would move beyond the minimum standard and actively demonstrate a stronger commitment to transparency and public participation.

You inherited this, and as it's a well known and tried and true political tactic to avoid civic engagement. It's time for it to be changed- It will be a change for the better.

This change would help ensure that residents who do not use computers, social media, or email still have a fair opportunity to stay informed and take part in their own governance.

I ask that you formally sponsor this discussion and help establish a standard of good government that includes every member of the public.

Sincerely

Larry

Larry Steingold
Ojai, CA

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The Council has the authority to direct the City Manager to change this. By ensuring agendas are published well in advance, the City would move beyond the minimum standard and demonstrate a stronger commitment to transparency and public participation.

The Council inherited this tried and true well known political tactic to avoid political engagement. Take this opportunity to change.

This change would help ensure that residents who do not use computers, social media, or email still have a fair opportunity to stay informed and take part in their own governance.

I ask that you formally sponsor this discussion and help establish a standard of good government that includes every member of the public, and provides them an opportunity to participate. T

Sincerely

Larry Steingold
Ojai, CA
401-529-3829
Larrysteingold@gmail.com

Weston Montgomery

From: Larry Steingold <larrysteingold@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2026 11:25 AM
To: Weston Montgomery
Subject: Agenda 11. Municipal Code Revisions

To: City Council and Mayor, and Cit Manager and City Attorney
From: Larry Steingold
Re: Municipal Code Revisions – July 14, 2026

I am writing to express concern with how the proposed list of Municipal Code revisions is being characterized and advanced.

While described as “administrative” or “housekeeping” updates, many of these items have direct, real-world impacts on Ojai residents, property rights, and the use of public space. Ordinances related to accessory dwelling units, encroachments into the public right-of-way, parking standards, and code enforcement liens are not merely technical corrections—they are public policy decisions that shape how our community functions day to day for years to come.

When a comprehensive set of revisions is initiated through the City Attorney’s office, it is inherently significant. These changes deserve the same level of transparency, deliberation, and public engagement that we would expect for any other policy initiative of this scope. This avoids creating dictates without civic input.

I am particularly concerned that the current approach risks prioritizing administrative efficiency over public understanding and participation. The stakeholders in this process are not internal—they are the residents, property owners, and businesses who must comply with and live under these rules.

To strengthen both the process and public trust, I respectfully request that the Council provide the following direction:

1. Require Plain Language Impact Statements for each proposed code revision, clearly identifying who is affected and how so, and that they don't have to be interpreted by multiple attorneys upon every reading.
2. Establish a public-facing, phased review process, including study sessions prior to formal adoption for high-impact items such as ADUs and Objective Design Standards.
3. Refer specific items with clear public safety and community implications—such as encroachment permits, parking and loading standards, and code enforcement lien provisions—to the appropriate commissions for review and recommendation prior to Council action.
4. Direct staff to create a publicly accessible webpage where draft ordinance language is posted as it is developed, allowing stakeholders to engage in real time rather than only at the final hearing stage.

Ojai benefits from an engaged and informed community. A transparent and participatory process will not slow progress—it will produce better, more durable policy outcomes.

Please remember these are written by staff and the City Attorney for the residents of Ojai. They will apply to us and no one else. We need an opportunity to review, provide input, and argue changes prior to them getting to City Council, where there will be discussion, but at least you will have obtained stakeholder engagement and seen their suggestions and reasons.

Thank you for your consideration.

Larry Steingold
Ojai, CA
401-529-3829
Larrysteingold@gmail.com