

**2023 - 2024
Ventura County Grand Jury**



COUNTY *of* VENTURA

Final Report

**Building Better Together
Suggestions for
Smoother Permitting Processes**

June 5, 2024

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Building Better Together Suggestions for Smoother Permitting Processes

SUMMARY

After receiving public complaints regarding the difficulty developing property in the cities of Oxnard and Ventura, the 2023-2024 Ventura County Grand Jury researched how long it takes to approve building projects in those cities.

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

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

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

METHODOLOGY

The Grand Jury interviewed a wide range of stakeholders, including current and former planning staff, Community Development Department personnel, developers and consultants across Oxnard and Ventura. The Grand Jury analyzed project timelines through Planning and Building Department reports. The Grand Jury reviewed Human Resources Department reports, which provided context on staff turnover and experience.

Additionally, the Grand Jury examined publicly available information, including newspaper articles, city council and design/planning commission agendas, minutes, city budgets and committee meeting videos. The Grand Jury reviewed information provided by the County of Ventura Auditor-Controller’s and Assessor’s offices. Legal statutes, both from California state law and specific city ordinances, were also reviewed.

BACKGROUND

Securing city approval for a property development project is a multifaceted process. It starts with a city's General Plan, which designates how land can be used. A developer proposes a use for a plot of land. The city evaluates if the use is in compliance with the General Plan, municipal codes and design and historical preservation requirements. After this evaluation, the city holds a public hearing to approve, or entitle, the use. (Ref-01, Ref-02, Ref-03)

After the entitlement is granted, the developer then submits a more detailed building plan to the building department, which checks for compliance with federal and state laws and municipal building codes regarding fire prevention, water, stormwater and wastewater requirements. After this plan check, approval of one or more permits may be granted by city staff. (Ref-04)

Both entitlement and plan checking could involve multiple cycles of plan revision and re-submission if the plan does not meet city requirements. A plan may be approved with conditions to be addressed later in the process.

The process includes the ability for an applicant or the public to appeal a decision. The City Council is the ultimate decision maker. (Ref-05)

Smaller projects, like installing an electric vehicle charger, replacing a water heater, upgrading plumbing or re-roofing, also require a building permit. An applicant can obtain these permits online or during a quick visit to a city's Community Development Department. An evaluation and approval are granted ministerially by city staff.

A developer or applicant must generally pay fees before any of these evaluations take place. (Ref-06)

California has enacted numerous laws in recent years to promote housing development, including more than 30 laws in 2023. These laws often impose timelines, require approval process changes and reduce local control for non-compliance. California's Permit Streamlining Act recommends reducing governmental delays by limiting processing times to one year in most cases and requiring agencies to specify information needed for complete and acceptable applications. (Ref-07, Ref-08, Ref-09, Ref-10, Ref-11, Ref-12)

For multiple-unit housing projects, the Permit Streamlining Act mandates that cities approve or send a Letter of Incompleteness within 30 days for projects of 25 units or fewer, and 60 days for projects with 26 or more units. If an environmental quality assessment is not required, the project must be approved or disapproved within 60 days. (Ref-07, Ref-08, Ref-09, Ref-10, Ref-11, Ref-13, Ref-14)

California Law AB-2221 requires cities to approve or deny applications for Accessory Dwelling Units within 60 days. (Ref-15, Ref-16, Ref-17, Ref-18)

The Grand Jury chose the Permit Streamlining Act and ADU laws to assess compliance because of their required timelines.

Part of a city's General Plan is a state mandated Housing Element, which requires adequate planning to meet the housing needs of everyone in the community. Included in the Housing Element is a required number of housing units from the Regional Housing Needs Allocation process. A Housing Element is an eight-year plan that requires state approval and annual progress reports. A Housing Element includes strategies to promote housing development and maps of developable land. The strategies often focus on multi-unit housing and ADUs to meet the regional housing needs requirement. (Ref-19)

Other factors that can play a role in project timelines are the number of cycles of plan revision and resubmission, environmental reviews, coordination among city departments, the number of public hearings and time spent implementing compliance with new laws.

Per the Permit Streamlining Act, when an application is submitted and fees are paid, the city generally has 30 days to deem the project application complete and forward it to a public hearing or issue a Letter of Incompleteness outlining deficiencies for the applicant to address before resubmitting. This letter is required to list all deficiencies, that if addressed would lead to approval. In practice, there can be different interpretations between the applicant and the city over whether deficiencies have been addressed, which may lead to further delays. (Att-02)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), depending on the level of analysis required, could add 60 to 180 days between when an application is deemed complete and when a public hearing can take place. (Ref-14, Ref-20)

Coordination between city departments involved in a plan assessment, such as Community Development, Police, Fire and Public Works, can be either sequential or concurrent.

A city's project approval process may require more than one public hearing before a project is approved.

Many of the new state laws lack state funding, placing financial burdens on cities for expenditures such as requiring computer system upgrades. Cities are also tasked with dedicating additional personnel, time and training to updating Municipal Codes, General Plans and Housing Elements to comply with existing and new laws. The state has filed lawsuits against some cities for non-compliance with state laws (e.g., Huntington Beach and Coronado). (Ref-21, Ref-22, Ref-23)

The Grand Jury investigated several areas that may play a role in the length of time it takes to approve a development project.

- Leadership: What priorities and policies did the City Council establish? Was there consistent leadership in the positions of City Manager and Community Development Director?
- Staffing: How did the city manage the challenges of recruiting staff, retaining staff, managing workload and retaining institutional knowledge?
- Process: How is the process defined and implemented? Are process steps done concurrently or sequentially?
- Technology: What technological solutions are used and to what effect?
- Hearings: How many public hearings and for what purpose?
- Compliance: Were state-mandated timelines for ADUs and multi-unit housing met? Did the city meet its regional housing requirement?

Sales tax and property tax are the two main sources of revenue a city uses to pay for public services. If the cost of these public services is rising at the rate of inflation, revenue also needs to increase at the rate of inflation to maintain the same level of public services.

Property tax revenue comes from the assessed value of property. Proposition 13 limits the annual increase for existing property to 2%, making it difficult to maintain city services if the inflation rate is greater than 2%. Cities can mitigate this effect by approving new development projects in a timely manner.

Because a city has direct control over the timely approval of development projects, looking at assessed property values should provide a good measure of how well a city is doing in maintaining its level of public services. Delayed approval of development projects can directly impact the level of public services. (Ref-24, Ref-25)

DISCUSSION

Oxnard

Leadership

The Oxnard City Council expanded the Community Development workforce by six full-time positions in 2022 because of new sales tax revenue from the passage of Measure E in 2020. (Ref-26)

The City of Oxnard's 2021-2029 Housing Element lists several goals and strategies to meet its regional housing needs requirement. The city outlines a plan to streamline the process for approving housing development and has established a concierge program to assist with the entitlement process. To meet its regional housing needs requirement, the city has goals to promote the development of ADUs and annex unincorporated areas known as Rio Urbana and Teal Club. (Ref-27 [Programs 7, 24, 34, 36])

The City of Oxnard has employed one City Manager since 2018. (Ref-01, Ref-28, Ref-29)

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The City of Oxnard has employed five different Community Development Directors since 2018. (Ref-01, Ref-28, Ref-29, Ref-30)

Staff

The City of Oxnard's 2018 budget funded 53 full-time positions in the city's Community Development Department. That number rose to 66 in the 2024 budget. As of April 2024, there are four open positions. (Ref-31, Ref-32, Ref-33)

As of November 2023, only 24 employees of the original 53 staff members hired in 2018 remained with the City of Oxnard's Community Development Department. (Ref-28, Ref-29)

From 2018 to 2023, 12 applications for housing with more than five units were entitled. The average number of days between application and entitlement was 121 days. (Ref-34, Att-05)

From 2018 to 2023, the number of applications for ADUs in Oxnard increased from three to 191. The average number of days between entitlement and permitting was 406 days. (Ref-34, Att-06, Att-07)

In 2022, Oxnard's Community Development Department had a backlog of more than 400 ADU applications. In order to allow staff time to process the backlog, the Building Division has closed the public counter for half-days. As of November 2023, the backlog of ADU applications was under 200. The City of Oxnard Building Division public counter is open Monday through Thursday, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and Friday, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. (Ref-01, Ref-04)

Process

For development projects, the City of Oxnard uses some concurrent steps early in its approval process. The Community Development Department Planning Division holds Development Advisory Committee meetings to discuss an application with city departments that will play a role later in the process, such as Building & Safety, Fire, Water and Public Works. (Ref-03)

The Oxnard Building and Engineering Division website indicates extended time frames for evaluating a building permit application of nine weeks for residential projects and 12 weeks for commercial/industrial/multifamily projects. Waiting for acknowledgement that application fees have been paid adds another one to three weeks to the process. (Ref-35)

Technology

The City of Oxnard is using an outdated computerized system for handling building applications in all divisions of the Community Development Department. The city is exploring a new computer program, EnerGov, to improve processing of all application types. It is anticipated that the new system will be installed by the end of 2024. (Ref-01, Ref-36)

Hearings

Public discretionary hearings for development projects can be conducted by the Community Development Director or the Planning Commission.

The City of Oxnard utilizes a rarely used Downtown Design Review Committee (DDRC), which makes written design recommendations specifically for the downtown area to the Community Development Director and/or Planning Commission. (Ref-01, Ref-37)

At the discretion of the Community Development Director, a pre-application public hearing on a project may be held with the City Council. (Ref-27, Page E-33)

Assessed Property Values

Assessed property values in the City of Oxnard, adjusted for inflation, have increased about 6% since 2018, and were flat between 2020 and 2023, having recovered to pre-pandemic levels. (Ref-24, Ref-38, App-02)

Compliance

The City of Oxnard is not in compliance with the Permit Streamlining and ADU Acts. (Ref-01, Ref-07, Ref-08, Ref-09, Ref-10, Ref-11, Ref-13, Ref-14, Ref-15)

The City of Oxnard's 2021-2029 Housing Element has been certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development with a requirement for 8,549 housing units. Whether or not the city meets this requirement will not be known until 2029. Annual progress reports are submitted. The city did not meet its 2014-2021 Housing Element requirement for 7,301 housing units, falling 2,376 units short. (Ref-27)

Ventura

Leadership

In 2019, the Ventura City Council contracted with the Matrix Consulting Group to improve the process for reviewing land use applications. The consulting group conducted a multiphase analysis, examining the organizational and operational aspects of development services across all relevant divisions. The resulting report, with 57 recommendations and an implementation plan, was unanimously approved by the City Council on November 19, 2019. The city's Community Development Department provided implementation progress reports to the City Council on May 21, 2021; November 28, 2021; January 19, 2022; and October 6, 2022. (Ref-39, Ref-40, Ref-41, Ref-42)

Responding to the COVID-19 crisis, on May 18, 2020, the Ventura City Council implemented the Emergency Streamlining Ordinance "to help aid the economic recovery effort in the city and support local businesses by expediting their re-opening and expansion." The Ventura City Council adopted the Permanent Streamlining Ordinance on December 6, 2021, as "Streamlining the Development

Review Process has been a City Council priority for several years.” (Ref-41, Ref-42, Ref-43)

The City of Ventura’s 2021-2029 Housing Element has a goal of producing at least 100 ADUs over the eight-year cycle, with incentives and increased public awareness of ADU opportunities. It has a goal to establish development standards by 2026 to allow for up to six-story residential units in the vicinity of the Pacific View Mall. (Ref-44)

The City of Ventura has employed five different City Managers since 2018. The Ventura City Council hired its latest City Manager on August 8, 2023. (Ref-01, Ref-45, Ref-46, Ref-47)

The City of Ventura has employed five different Community Development Directors since 2018. The Ventura City Council hired its latest Community Development Director on February 17, 2024. (Ref-01, Ref-46, Ref-47, Ref-48)

Staff

The City of Ventura’s 2018 budget funded 42 full-time positions in the city’s Community Development Department. That number rose to 45 in the 2024 budget. As of April 2024, there is one open position. (Ref-49, Ref-50, Ref-51)

As of 2018, only 37 of the 42 full-time positions were on the payroll of the Community Development Department, leaving five unfilled positions. (Ref-46, Ref-47)

As of November 2023, only five employees of the original 37 staff members from 2018 remained with the City of Ventura’s Community Development Department. (Ref-46, Ref-47)

The employees designated to be subject matter experts with initial training in 2021 on the department’s new EnerGov computer system (OPS) are no longer employed by the City of Ventura. Training records for the OPS software system were requested by the Grand Jury, but not provided. (Ref-01, Ref-36, Ref-52)

From 2018 to 2022, the City of Ventura did not report any housing with more than five units in the Housing Element annual progress report. There was no data for the average number of days between application and entitlement. (Ref-34)

From 2018 to 2022, the number of applications for ADUs in the City of Ventura increased from zero to 23 annually. There was no data for the average number of days between entitlement and permitting. (Ref-34)

The City of Ventura public permitting services counter is open Monday through Thursday, 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. (Ref-53)

Process

For development projects, the City of Ventura uses some concurrent steps early in its approval process. The Community Development Department Planning Division holds Development Advisory Committee meetings to discuss an application with city departments that will play a role later in the process, such as Building & Safety, Fire, Water and Public Works. The city recently consolidated public counter permitting service for Building and Safety, Ventura Water, Fire Prevention, Land Development, and Planning while enabling scheduled appointments. (Ref-64, Ref-54)

The Matrix Consulting Group conducted a survey of prior customers of the City of Ventura's development services process. The survey revealed:

- The development community is dissatisfied with lengthy delays in approval of projects. (Ref-39, Survey Section 3.8-3 and 4.2, Ref-40)
- Slow review time frames, multiple review committees and a lack of coordination are identified as the areas with the greatest opportunity for improvement in the development review process. (Ref-39, Survey Section 4.2)

The Matrix Consulting Group Report makes several recommendations about process improvements. The Grand Jury found many of these recommendations yet to be fully implemented, such as:

- The City of Ventura has not created a decision-making authority matrix and posted it on its website. (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #1, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "In Progress," Ref-40)
- The City of Ventura has not developed a consolidated list of review timelines for all building application types and posted it on its website. (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #17, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "In Progress," Ref-40)
- The City of Ventura has not created a developmental review webpage that acts as a central hub and provides an overview of permitting requirements and links to departments for more information. (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #20, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "In Progress," Ref-40)
- The City of Ventura is not starting the CEQA process as soon as possible, regardless of whether or not the application has been deemed complete, as stated in interviews. (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #13, Status Report (October 17, 2022) indicates "Completed," Ref-20, Ref-40, Ref-55)

Technology

An upgraded version of EnerGov software, named Ventura Online Permitting System (Ventura OPS), was launched in August 2021 before it was fully configured. A common complaint was that the system was difficult to use. The City of Ventura held a user training session in June 2022, however the Planning and Building and

Safety Divisions have not been able to utilize EnerGov software and coordinate with other divisions of the Community Development Department. For entitlement, the Planning Division is still using manual spreadsheets to track projects. For building permits, the Building and Safety Division uses the system to track projects. The City of Ventura has contracted with a consulting group to build custom reports after finding standard reports noncomprehensive.

The Matrix Consulting Group Report makes several recommendations regarding technological improvements. The Grand Jury found that many of these recommendations have yet to be fully implemented, though stated otherwise. Among these are: (Ref-01, Ref-36, Ref-52, Ref-56)

- User training to all plan review staff involved in the development review process, including a formalized training program for new hires (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #31, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "Completed," Ref-40, Ref-52)
- Features to calculate the appropriate plan check and permitting fees (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #32, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "Completed," Ref-40, Ref-52)
- Proper configuration to allow utilization for all development review activities (plan review and inspections) across all departments (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #33, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "Completed," Ref-40, Ref-52)
- Proper configuration to allow electronic application and plan submittals for all development application types (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #34, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "Completed," Ref-40, Ref-52)
- Proper configuration to allow for tracking workload data and performance measures to accurately track information (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #40, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "Completed," Ref-40, Ref-52)
- Proper configuration to allow for tracking time spent on all stages of the development review process (e.g., inspections, plan check, etc.) (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #41, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "In Progress," Ref-40, Ref-52)
- Proper configuration to allow utilization of features to generate comprehensive reports on time spent on development review activity (Ref-39, Matrix recommendation #42, Status report (October 17, 2022) indicates "Completed," Ref-40, Ref-52)

Hearings

The City of Ventura utilizes the combination of Design Review and Historic Preservation committees in addition to a Planning Commission for discretionary hearings of development projects. (Ref-57, Ref-58)

One of the three main recommendations made by the Matrix Consulting Group Report is to reduce reliance on the Design Review Committee and Historic

Preservation Committee, stating these committees should be eliminated or reduced in scope. (Ref-39, Ref-40, Ref-57, Ref-58)

The Permanent Streamlining Ordinance deemed these committees advisory only, with no decision-making authority. The Matrix Report observed that no other cities in Ventura County employ a similar tri-committee configuration that could potentially cause three discretionary hearings. Grand Jury analysis of agendas from the past three years reveals minimal activity within both the Design Review and Historic Preservation committees.

Notably, in all cases considered by the Design Review Committee, the final decision was ultimately referred to either a Director's Hearing or the Planning Commission, raising the question of the true necessity for these committees.

Assessed Property Value

As the staff report states, "Streamlining the development review process is critical to enable investment and business growth in Ventura.... A process that supports investment into private property translates into economic development and quality city services." (Ref-42)

Assessed property values in the City of Ventura, adjusted for inflation, have increased about 10% since 2018, and were flat between 2020 and 2023, having recovered to pre-pandemic levels. (Ref-24, Ref-38, App-02)

Compliance

The City of Ventura is in compliance with the state ADU Act. (Ref-15, Ref-16, Ref-17, Ref-18)

The City of Ventura is in compliance with California's Permit Streamlining Act to respond to applications in 30 days. It is not in compliance, as the lead agency, to schedule a public hearing to approve or deny a project within 60 days if there is a negative declaration or exempt from CEQA. (Ref-01, Ref-07, Ref-08, Ref-09, Ref-10, Ref-11, Ref-13, Ref-14, Ref-20, Ref-58)

The City of Ventura's 2021-2029 Housing Element has been certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development with a requirement for 5,312 housing units. Annual Progress Reports are submitted but appear to have misclassifications and missing data. The city did not meet its 2014-2021 Housing Element requirement of 3,654 housing units, falling 1,658 units short. (Ref-34, Ref-59, Att-08)

FINDINGS

Oxnard

- F-01.** The City of Oxnard is not in compliance with California’s Permit Streamlining Act with regard to mandated timelines for development projects, taking 171 days, on average, between application and entitlement for housing with more than five units.
- F-02.** The City of Oxnard is not in compliance with the California State ADU Act with regard to the mandated 60 days from application (entitlement) to permitting, taking 406 days, on average.
- F-03.** Since 2020, assessed property values adjusted for inflation in the City of Oxnard have not increased. This indicates that city services may be maintained but could be expanded by streamlining the approval process.
- F-04.** Inadequate staffing, leadership turnover and increased workloads have led to lengthy delays in project approvals for the City of Oxnard.
- F-05.** Out-dated computer systems have led to lengthy delays in project approvals for the City of Oxnard.

Ventura

- F-06.** The City of Ventura is in compliance with California’s Permit Streamlining Act for the 30-day requirement to deem Complete or issue an Incomplete Letter, but not for the lead agency approving or disapproving a project with an exempt CEQA status within 60 days.
- F-07.** The City of Ventura did not meet the regional housing-needs requirements from its 2014-2021 Housing Element, and little data was available from the annual progress report dashboard.
- F-08.** There has been inadequate training for the EnerGov system from deployment to present.
- F-09.** Inadequate staffing and leadership turnover have led to lengthy delays in project approvals.
- F-10.** Departures of experienced individuals have caused a lack of continuity and institutional memory in several Community Development Divisions.
- F-11.** The City of Ventura’s Community Development Department is unable to generate meaningful reports using EnerGov software.

- F-12.** The City of Ventura has not implemented several of the 2019 Matrix Consulting Group Report recommendations as highlighted in the Discussion Section of this report.
- F-13.** Lengthy delays in project approvals and increased costs are causing dissatisfaction among the development community and discouraging development activities.
- F-14.** Since 2020, assessed property values adjusted for inflation have not increased. This indicates that city services may be maintained but could be expanded by streamlining the approval process.
- F-15.** The lack of training on the EnerGov software system is causing inefficiency and workplace stress for entire divisions of the Community Development Department.
- F-16.** The staffs of the Community Development Department and the Information Technology Department are attempting to fix implementation and configuration deficiencies in using EnerGov software, causing increased workloads.
- F-17.** Utilizing the Historic Preservation Committee and the Design Review Committee in non-decision-making roles has delayed project approvals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Oxnard

- R-01.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Oxnard identify specific steps that will be taken to reduce turnaround times to comply with California's Permit Streamlining and ADU Acts and include expected completion dates for those steps by January 1, 2025. (F-01, F-02, F-03)
- R-02.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Oxnard identify and recruit potential hires having EnerGov experience in the Planning and Building Divisions of the Community Development Department by January 1, 2025. (F-04)
- R-03.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Oxnard utilize EnerGov personnel, expert consultants and IT personnel of Oxnard to properly configure meaningful reports regarding compliance, workload and timeliness EnerGov reports for the Community Development Department by June 30, 2025. (F-05)

Ventura

- R-04.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Ventura identify specific steps that will be taken to reduce turnaround times to comply with

California's Permit Streamlining Act and include expected completion dates for those steps by January 1, 2025. (F-06, F-14)

- R-05.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Ventura work with the California Department of Housing and Community Development to correct errors in annual progress reports by January 1, 2025. (F-07)
- R-06.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Ventura identify and recruit potential hires having EnerGov experience in the Planning and Building Divisions of the Community Development Department by January 1, 2025. (F-09, F-10)
- R-07.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Ventura create a standardized training protocol for new hires and existing employees for the EnerGov software system, including ongoing periodic training, by January 1, 2025. (F-08, F-15)
- R-08.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Ventura properly configure and put into practice all originally purchased EnerGov modules by January 1, 2025. (F-15, F-16)
- R-09.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Ventura, in conjunction with the IT department and expert consultants, implement and properly configure meaningful reports regarding compliance, workload and timeliness within the EnerGov software system by January 1, 2025. (F-11, F-12, F-16)
- R-10.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City of Ventura implement recommendations #1, 13, 17, 20, 31, 32, 33, 34, 41 and 42, from the Matrix Consulting Group Report by January 1, 2025. (F-12)
- R-11.** The Grand Jury recommends that the City Council re-examine the roles of the HPC and DRC, taking into consideration the goals outlined in the Matrix Consulting Group Report to streamline the entitlement approval process by January 1, 2025. (F-13, F-17)

RESPONSES REQUIRED FROM:

Responses required from: Oxnard City Council within 60 Days: for the findings listed: [F-01, F-02, F-03, F-04, F-05, R-01, R-02, R-03]

Responses required from: City of Oxnard Community Development Director within 90 Days: for the findings listed: [F-01, F-02, F-03, F-04, F-05, R-01, R-02, R-03]

Responses required from: Ventura City Council within 60 Days: for the findings listed: [F-06, F-07, F-08, F-09, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15, F-16, F-17, R-04, R-05, R-06, R-07, R-08, R-09, R-10, R-11]

Responses required from: City of Ventura, Community Development Director within 90 Days: for the findings listed: [F-06, F-07, F-08, F-09, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15, F-16, F-17, R-04, R-05, R-06, R-07, R-08, R-09, R-10, R-11]

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ATTACHMENTS

- Att-01.** Based on Interviews and Data Provided by City of Ventura.
- Att-02.** Entitlement Process (Development Projects), City of Ventura.
- Att-03.** 2019 and 2023: Population vs. Number of Planning Staff.
- Att-04.** Percent Change in Real Assessed Property Value since 2018.
- Att-05.** Housing Development Timeline. Jurisdiction: Oxnard. Structure type: Five or more units per structure. Submitted to entitled.
- Att-06.** Housing Development Timeline. Jurisdiction: Oxnard. Structure type: Accessory Dwelling Unit. Average days from entitled to permitted.
- Att-07.** Construction Structure Type. Jurisdiction: Oxnard. Structure types: Five or more units per structure and accessory dwelling unit.
- Att-08.** Construction Structure Type. Jurisdiction: Ventura. Structure types: Five or more units per structure, accessory dwelling unit and mobile home unit.

APPENDICES

- App-01.** Table 01. Decision Making Matrix
- App-02.** Table 02. Unequalized Ventura County Assessment Roll (in billions)
- App-03.** Table 03. 2019 Comparison of Development Review Processes
- App-04.** Table 04. 2023 Comparison of Development Review Processes

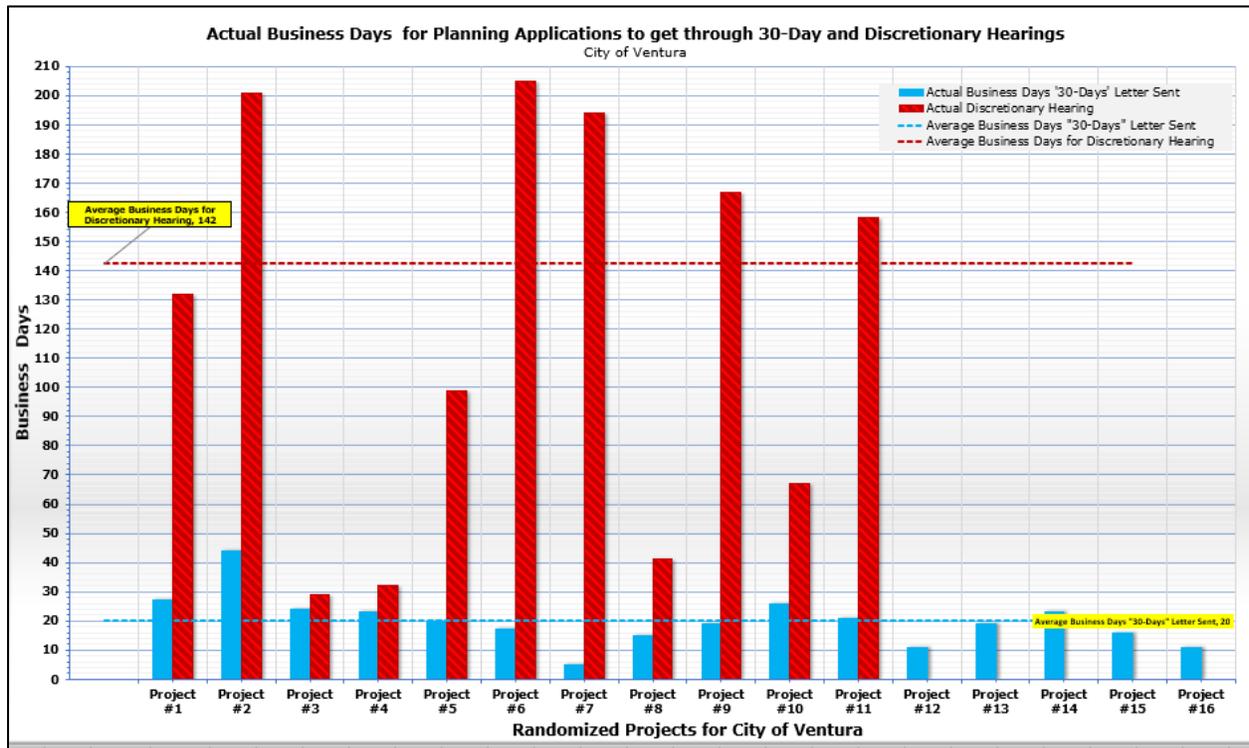
GLOSSARY

TERM

DEFINITION

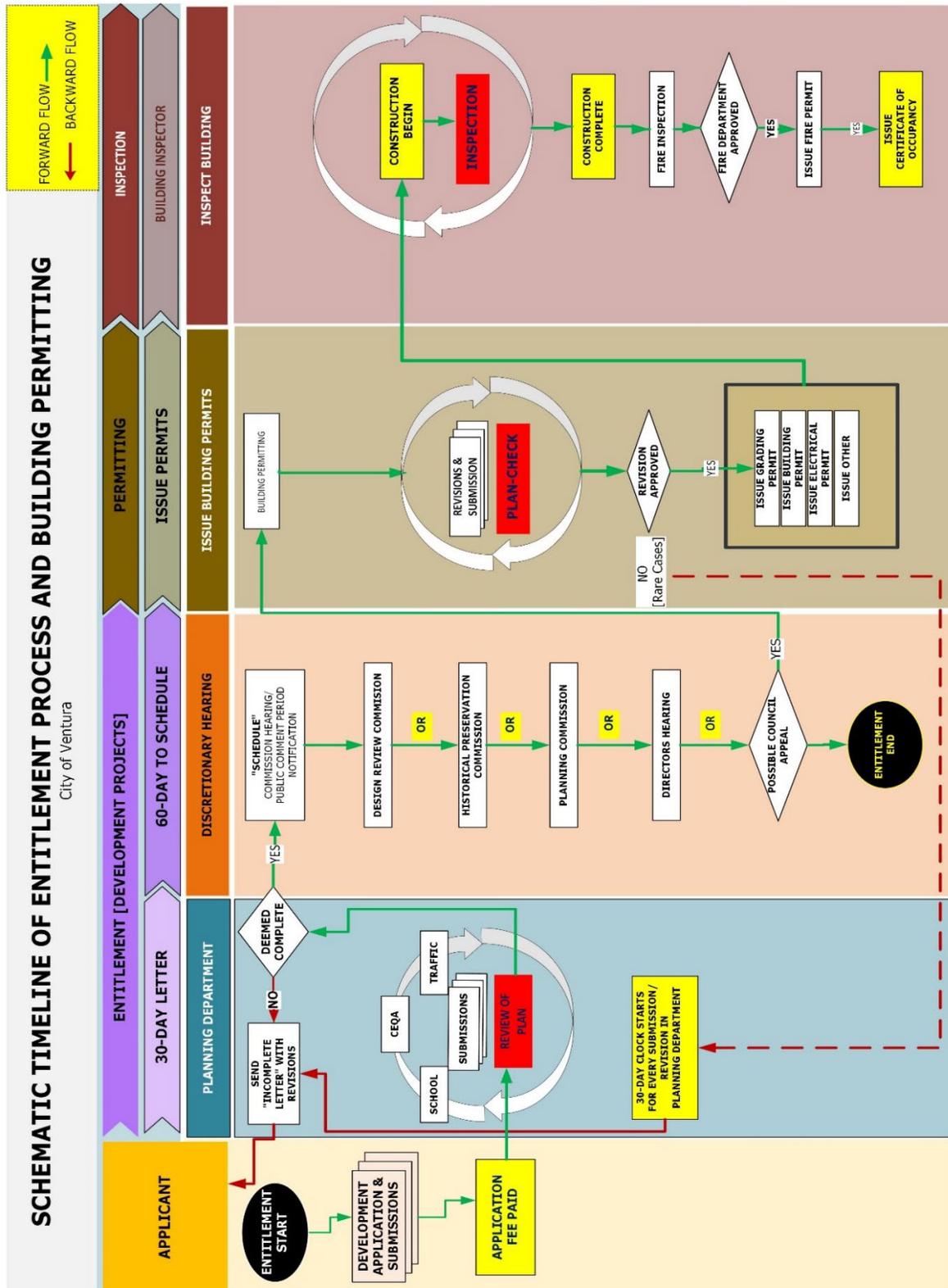
CDD	Community Development Department
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
DAC	Development Advisory Committee
DRC	Design Review Committee, City of Ventura
DDRC	Downtown Design Review Committee, City of Oxnard
Development Entitlement	This is a broad term encompassing various approvals and authorizations required for a development project. It could include land use entitlements, as well as environmental permits, building permits and infrastructure approvals. An "Entitlement" in this context would represent any official permission necessary for a specific development stage.
Development Project	'Development project' means any project, whether mixed use or not, which involves the following: The construction, demolition, or change of use of buildings or structures, the division of real property, including the creation of lots or the reconfiguring of lot lines, the creation of a mining pit, excavation, or landfill, the placing or removal of fill material or vegetation.
EnerGov	Permitting and Licensing software for government agencies from Tyler Technologies, recently renamed Enterprise Permitting & Licensing
HPC	Historic Preservation Committee

Attachment-01



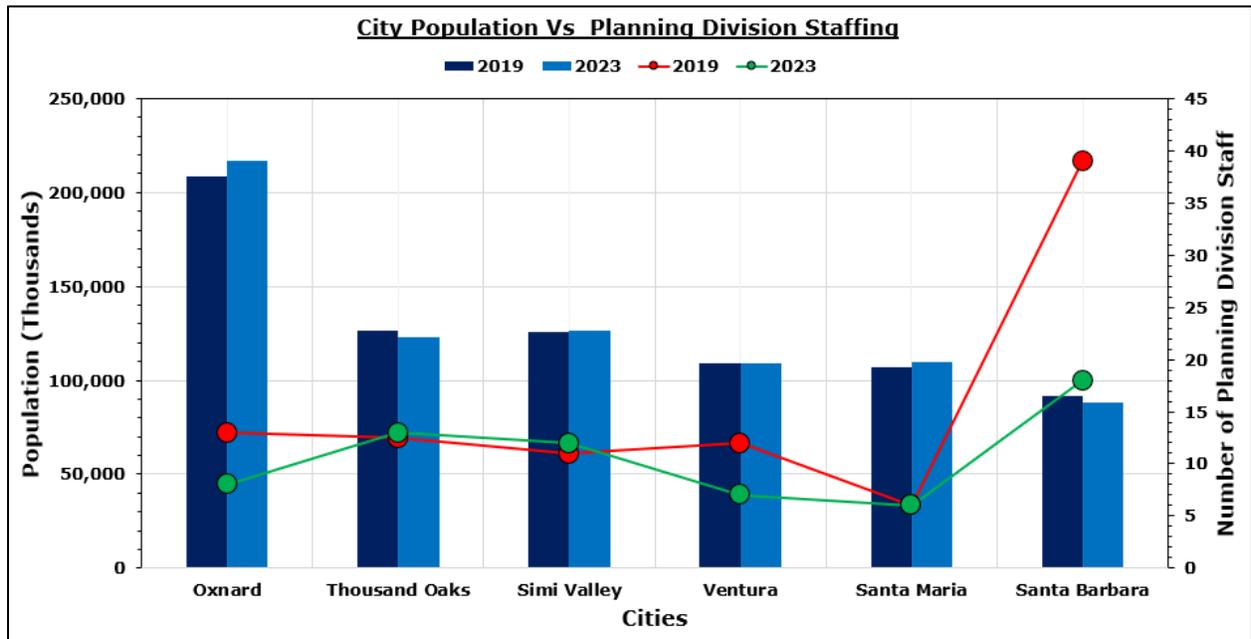
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Attachment-02



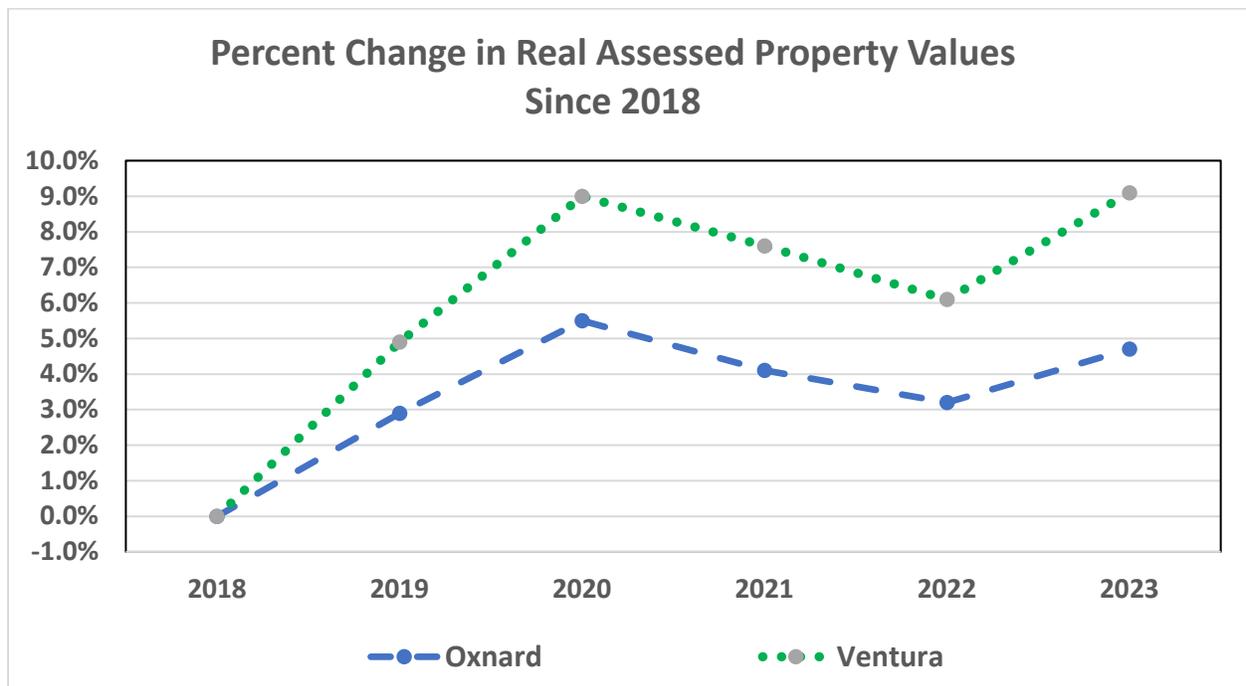
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Attachment-03



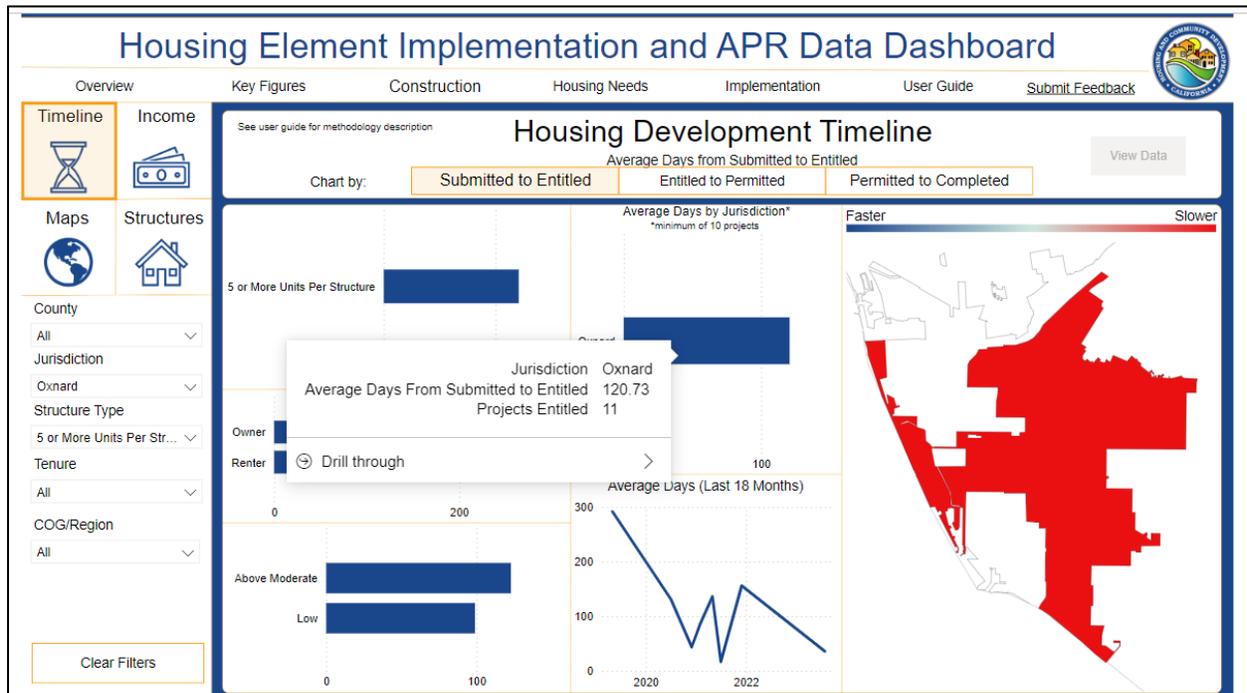
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Attachment-04



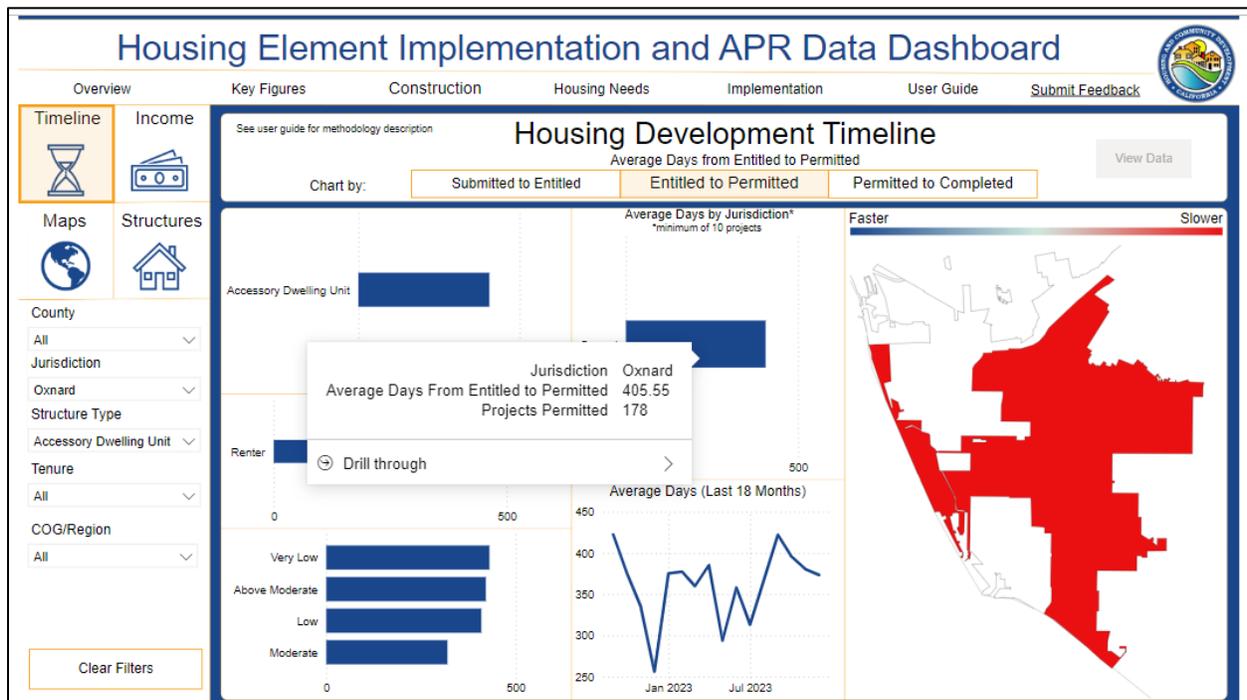
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Attachment-05



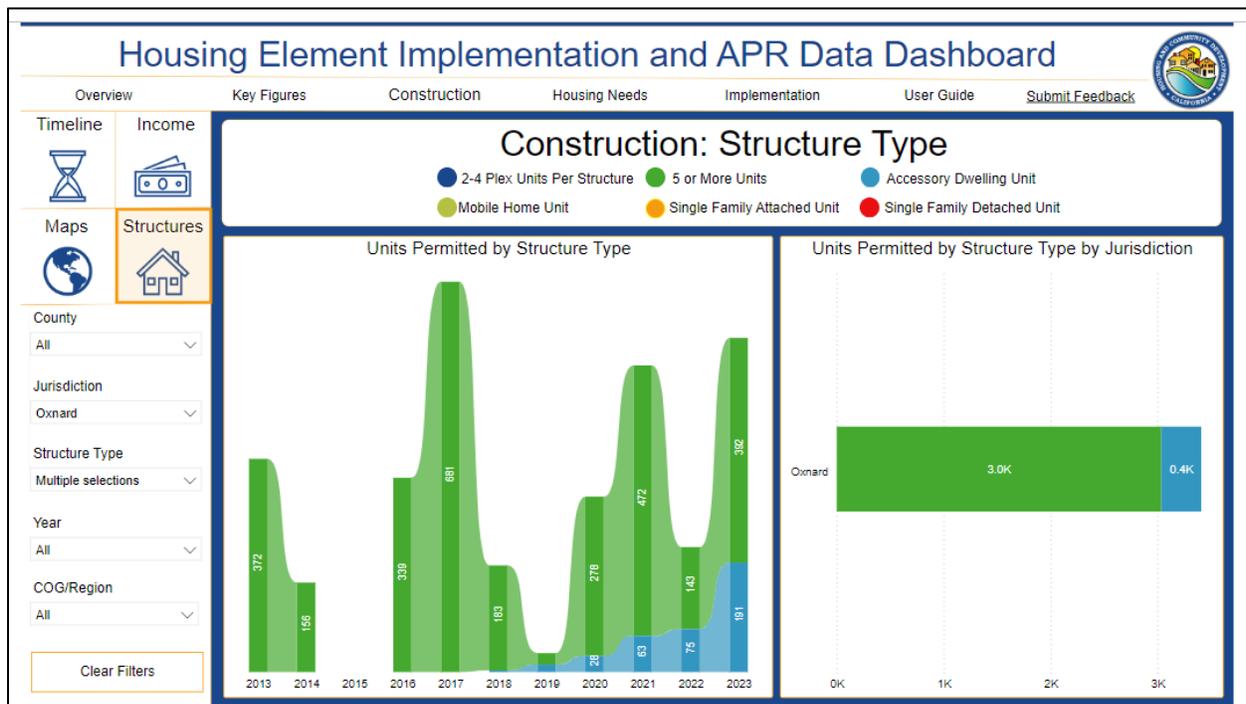
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Attachment-06



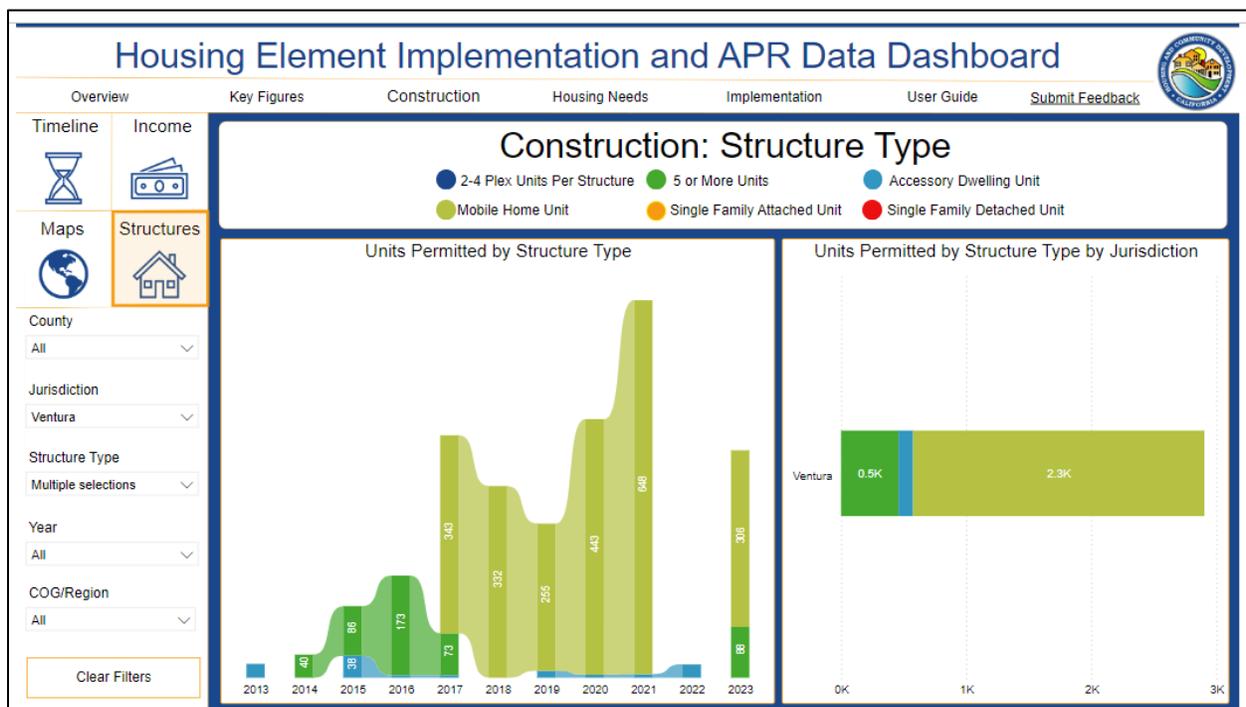
(Source: Ref-34)

Attachment-07



(Source: Ref-34)

Attachment-08



(Source: Ref-34)

APPENDICES

App-01.

Decision-making Matrix Example					
Application Type	Staff	Historic	Design Review	Planning Commission	Elected Body
Single Family(New Construction)	■		■ (Design Approval)		
Tenant Improvement	■	■ (Rec)			
Commercial Renovation(Exterior)			■ (Design Approval)		Appeal
Multi-family (New Construction)			■ (Design Approval)		Appeal
Sign (New)	■			■ (Rec)	

Table 01. Decision Making Matrix (From Matrix report (Ref-39), page 10)

App-02.

Cities	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Oxnard	20.256	21.199	22.020	22.883	24.551	25.851
Ventura	16.074	17.149	18.053	18.766	20.039	21.370
Inflation Adjustment						
August	2.7%	1.7%	1.3%	5.3%	8.3%	3.7%
2023 dollars	1.2184	1.1980	1.1826	1.1231	1.0370	1
Assessed Property Values in 2023 Dollars						
Oxnard	24.680	25.396	26.041	25.700	25.459	25.851
Ventura	19.585	20.545	21.349	21.076	20.780	21.370
Real Percent change since 2018						
Oxnard	0	2.9%	5.5%	4.1%	3.2%	4.7%
Ventura	0	4.9%	9.0%	7.6%	6.1%	9.1%

Table 02. Unequalized Ventura County Assessment Roll (in billions) (Ref-24, Ref-60)

App-03.

City	Population (Thousand)	Budget (Million)	Planning Division	Planners per 1000	Design Review	Historical Preservation	Final Actions at design/historical boards?
Oxnard	209	\$427	13	0.06	Staff/DD RC [1]/ [2]	County CHB [3]	No
Thousand Oaks	127	\$214	13	0.09	Staff [1]	PC	NA
Simi Valley	126	\$196	11	0.09	Staff [1]	PC	NA
Ventura	109	\$301	12	0.11	DRC	HPC	Partial [4]
Santa Maria	107	\$222	6	0.06	Staff [1]	PC	NA
Santa Barbara	91	\$109	39	0.43	ABR [5], SFDB[6], SC[7]	HLC [8]	Partial [4]

Table 03. 2019 Comparison of Development Review Processes (Ref-39)

App-04.

City	Population (Thousand)	Budget (Million)	Planning Division	Planners per 1000	Design Review	Historical Preservation	Final Actions at design/historical boards?
Oxnard	217	\$606	8	0.04	Staff/DD RC [1]/ [2]	County CHB [3]	No
Thousand Oaks	123	\$270	13	0.11	Staff [1]	PC	NA
Simi Valley	126	\$253	12	0.09	Staff [1]	PC	NA
Ventura	109	\$428	7	0.06	DRC	HPC	Partial [4]
Santa Maria	110	\$258	6	0.05	Staff [1]	PC	NA
Santa Barbara	88	\$201	18	0	ABR[5], SFDB[6], SC[7]	HLC [8]	Partial [4]

Table 04. 2023 Comparison of Development Review Processes (Ref-39)

Legend	
1	Staff in these cities perform Design Review, not a Design Board
2	Downtown Design Review Committee (Oxnard) reviews downtown projects

3	Oxnard uses the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board
4	Boards have a mix of final authority and recommendations. Major projects receive piecemeal decision making
5	Architectural Board of Review (Santa Barbara)
6	Single Family Design Board (Santa Barbara)
7	Sign Committee (Santa Barbara)
8	Historic Landmarks Commission (Santa Barbara)