



COUNTY of VENTURA

Civil Grand Jury

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Response to 2024-2025 Ventura County Grand Jury Report Form (Please See California Penal Code Section 933.05)

Report Title: Prioritizing Best Practice Street Maintenance

Responding Entity: Ventura City Council

Rec'd
OCT 07 2025

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered: F-09
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered: F-04
(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 R-05 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: 8/26/2025

Signed: 
Jose Luis Sanchez-Palacios (Sep. 16, 2025 14:32:24 PDT)

Title: Mayor

Number of pages attached: 4

August 26, 2025

The Honorable Matthew P. Guasco, Presiding Judge
Superior Court of California
County of Ventura
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93003

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93003

SUBJECT: City of Ventura Response to the County of Ventura Civil Grand Jury Report Titled, "Prioritizing Best Practice Street Maintenance"

SUMMARY

The City of Ventura received the Civil Grand Jury report titled: "Prioritizing Best Practice Street Maintenance," dated June 4, 2025. In the report, the Grand Jury outlines industry accepted pavement management principles and best practices for managing and maintaining a city-wide pavement system. The report outlines the increased costs of deferring needed pavement maintenance. Additionally, the report further emphasizes the hidden cost to residents when needed pavement maintenance is deferred.

The Civil Grand Jury Report identifies two findings and provides one recommendation pertaining to the City of Ventura. In accordance with Penal Code Section 933.05, we submit following response to the Ventura County Civil Grand Jury findings and recommendation.

Grand Jury Findings:

F-04. *The Civil Grand Jury finds that Ventura does not maintain its streets in a best practice condition resulting in costlier deferred maintenance on streets and a hidden cost on residents due to extra vehicle wear.*

City Response: The City disagrees partially with this finding. While we agree with the Grand Jury that the City of Ventura's pavement condition is in the Pavement Condition Index (PCI) rating range of "at risk," based on a recent city-wide pavement management system update showing the City has an overall weighted average PCI of 63. We disagree with the Grand Jury that the system, as a whole, is in a poor condition.

The reported PCI is the result of a recently performed system-wide pavement condition update. Knowing that pavements are a priority for the City of Ventura and in an effort to better understand the City's pavements, the City has contracted with Pavement Engineering Inc. (PEI), a civil engineering firm that specializes in pavements to assess the City's entire pavement network. PEI's draft study shows that the City's arterial street system, which carries the heavier traffic volume and weight, has a weighted average PCI of 67. The collector street system, which carries a medium vehicle traffic volume and weight, has an average weighted PCI of 63. The residential street system, which has lower traffic volume and lighter vehicle weights, has a weighted average PCI of 62. The City's alley network has a weighted average PCI of 64. We recognize that these values are averages and that there are streets throughout the system that have PCI's much less than the average that contribute to higher deferred maintenance costs and increased hidden costs, however, because these are averages, there are also streets throughout the system that are in better condition, which results in smaller deferred maintenance and hidden costs.

The Grand Jury report indicates that best practices call for a PCI in the 80's. The principle is that a pavement in poor condition, (PCI <70), will require a more expensive treatment to rehabilitate it and increase the pavement's PCI. Whereas a pavement in good condition (PCI >70) only needs simple, less costly, maintenance treatment to maintain the pavement in good condition. No doubt a pavement management system with an average PCI over 80 will result in less deferred maintenance and hidden costs because the roads are smoother and the treatment costs are less expensive. However, it should be noted that while having a pavement system with an average PCI of 80 is desirable, the cost savings start to be noticed when pavements are about 70. At 70 PCI or above, the system as a whole is transitioning from pavements that need to be rehabilitated to pavements that only need to be maintained because they are in better condition. Therefore, the City's current overall pavement condition with a weighted average of 63 PCI, including arterial streets at 67 PCI, collector streets at 63 PCI, residential streets at 62 PCI, and alleys at 64 PCI, shows that while the streets are on average "at-risk" (PCI ratings ranging from 60 to 70) and remembering that this is a 100 point scale, the City's pavement system is not far from achieving the turning point of 70 PCI, with some streets being closer than others.

F-09. *The Grand Jury finds that Ventura, with its dedicated and knowledgeable staff, would make effective use of the funds allocated for street maintenance.*

City Response: The City agrees with the Grand Jury on this finding. As the Grand Jury addresses in their report, the real contributing problem to poorer pavement conditions is there are more pavement needs than there is available funds.

The City of Ventura, with its limited resources, uses three main delivery systems to address and improve its pavement system: capital improvement projects, maintenance projects, and on-

going street repairs. This multi-pronged approach is helping hold together the City's pavements. The capital projects focus on pavements that have deteriorated beyond simple maintenance treatments. Maintenance projects focus on keeping pavements that are in good condition, in good condition, by applying surface treatments, such as a slurry seal, that protect the original roadway pavement from the oxidizing effects of the sun and water. On-going street repairs and maintenance is work performed by City crews that include addressing immediate localized repairs such as filling potholes that develop and assisting with long term pavement care by crack sealing the pavements to protect the pavements from water intrusion. City crews also complete smaller resurfacing projects where streets have degraded and capital and maintenance projects are not planned within the 5-year horizon. City staff has learned how to effectively use these delivery systems to stretch any pavement dollars given them. The issue of not achieving a higher PCI is the result of insufficient funding.

Grand Jury Recommendation:

R-05. *The Civil Grand Jury recommends that Ventura set a goal to reach best practice pavement conditions within 10 years and create a plan to accomplish that goal by December 2025. (F-04, F-09).*

City Response: The City agrees with the recommendation and is already taking steps to move the City's overall pavement condition into the suggested best practice conditions outlined in the Grand Jury report. The first step to developing a plan is knowing where you are. To that end, the City has already hired Pavement Engineering Inc. (PEI) to rate the City's entire street network using certified raters to accurately calculate and determine the PCI of each street in the City of Ventura. From this point, a plan can be outlined that will accomplish the goal of improving the City's overall PCI. While PEI's findings are in draft form, the City is already reviewing the data and brainstorming on a phased approach to achieving the best practices goal of 80. The first step will be to achieve an overall system average PCI of 70 then after achieving the goal of 70, move to a PCI of 80.

As part of this effort, the City is developing an updated Pavement Management Plan (PMP) that will incorporate the new PCI data and outline strategies to achieve the goals identified in the Grand Jury report. The PMP will evaluate the level of funding efforts required to increase the City's overall PCI from 63 to 70 within five years. It will also consider multiple funding scenarios, including one that reflects maintaining current funding levels, which would be expected to result in a citywide PCI of about 55 over the same period. Addressing these funding gaps will be essential before overall PCI improvements can be achieved. The updated PMP is anticipated to be completed and released this fall, providing a clear framework for making progress toward the City's pavement condition goals.

The City of Ventura is not alone in having a funding gap between their available paving budgets and their paving needs. The question is asked, “what do other agencies do”? There are a variety of options that have been used to generate additional revenue for paving projects. These options include increasing tax revenue using sales taxes or property taxes; bonding against existing revenue sources; imposing franchise fees on services that take a toll on the pavement, such as refuse collections; utilizing value engineering approaches to make sure that the constraints are understood, so that pavement costs can be minimized while not sacrificing service life; add material testing to the ongoing inspection for paving projects (studies show that a 1% increase in compaction will add 2 to 3 years of service life to the overlay’s performance); and invest in using City crews to self-perform more of the work. Each of these options needs to be evaluated to determine the feasibility of the approach.

The City of Ventura is committed to improving their City’s overall pavement condition. Efforts are already underway to understanding what the City’s current pavement conditions are. From there, the City will develop a phased approach to achieve improved pavement conditions by first setting a goal of reaching a citywide average PCI of 70, and then working toward a goal of achieving a citywide average of 80.

As part of the improvement process, the City of Ventura will continue to look for additional funding and revenue sources, utilize value engineering approaches during design to get more service life from the available dollars, and explore emerging technologies that will cost-effectively address pavement needs.

Respectfully,


Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios (Sep 30, 2025 14:32:24 PDT)

Mayor Dr. Jeannette Sánchez-Palacios