



February 28, 2025

Dear Downtown Property Owner:

Downtown Ventura Partners holds an annual election for its Board of Directors. Each seat last 3 years.

Included is your Ballot for the 2025 Election. This ballot is **due by March 21**. DVP uses cumulative voting, which allocates multiple votes to each owner, who can allocate his or her votes among candidates as he or she sees fit.

Under DVP bylaws, each property owner receives a number of votes determined by: (1) the number of seats up for election multiplied by (2) the property owner's most recent DVP assessment. If, for example, there are three seats up for election and a property owner's 2024 DVP assessment is \$500, then the property owner has 1,500 votes to cast.

A property owner may cast all of his or her votes for one candidate or may otherwise distribute such votes as he or she sees fit among the candidates. A property owner with 1,500 votes, for example, may cast 750 votes for one candidate, 500 votes for another candidate, and 250 votes for a third candidate. Alternatively, he or she may cast 1,500 votes for a single candidate.

A property owner does not have to cast all of his or her votes, but he or she may not cast more votes than his or her total amount. If a ballot casts more votes than the property owner has, the ballot will NOT be counted.

DVP has two classes of directors: (1) Property Owners and (2) Business Owners. There are three (3) seats up for election in the Property Owner class and one (1) seat up for election in the Business Owner class. The following individuals are candidates for each class:

Property Owners: **Keith Cody, Edith Espejo, Angelique Friend, Jeremy Ireland, Evan Jonker, Stephen Morseman and Alex Schneider.**

Business Owner: **Maria Fiore, Larry Krogh, Michael Mendelson and Emily White.**

You may allocate your votes among these candidates as you see fit, regardless of class. The three candidates in the Property Owner class who receive the most votes and the candidate in the Business Owner class who receives the most votes will be seated as directors of DVP.

The ballot contains information from the Assessor's Office. We have identified the parcels and their corresponding DVP assessment for each property for which you are listed as the owner. If you are NOT the owner for any of the parcels listed or you own parcels in the downtown district that are not listed, please contact Kevin Clerici at DVP at kevin@downtownventura.org or 805-302-1660. If the information on the ballot is correct, please certify as such by signing the ballot at the bottom. Also, by signing the ballot you are certifying that you are authorized to vote on behalf of a property owner that is an entity.

If you have any questions regarding your ballot, please contact Kevin Clerici immediately. Please return your completed ballot by **MARCH 21** to kevin@downtownventura.org, by mail to P.O. Box 1414, Ventura 93002 (postmarked by March 21), or by dropping the ballot off at the DVP office at 420 E. Santa Clara Street during regular business hours. We need the completed and signed ballot. Please do NOT send just an email listing your votes.



PROPERTY OWNER BIOS – 7 CANDIDATES

Keith Cody:

Keith Cody is a dynamic business leader with a proven track record of driving innovation and operational excellence across multiple industries. Beginning his career in home construction, Keith later transitioned into technology working as a computer systems engineer for industry leaders such as Apple, Adobe, and Autonomy (an HP company). His expertise in problem-solving and strategic execution has allowed him to successfully lead complex projects that emphasize efficiency, creativity, and tangible results.

As an entrepreneur, Keith founded a visual engineering corporation specializing in live event productions, consistently delivering high-quality experiences that exceed client expectations. His ability to adapt to evolving challenges, foster collaboration, and implement forward-thinking strategies has made him a respected leader in his field.

Beyond his professional achievements, Keith is deeply invested in the Ventura community. Born in Oxnard, Keith and his family have lived in downtown Ventura for the past 20 years. He holds a degree in Business Economics from UCSB, with additional graduate-level study in Economics at UCSB, and an MBA from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. His commitment to continuous learning and staying ahead of industry trends underscores his dedication to strategic growth and effective governance.

Keith's strong business acumen, leadership experience, and passion for community development make him a valuable asset to any board. He and his family are proud to call downtown Ventura their home.

Edith Espejo:

I am honored to be considered for a position on the Downtown Ventura Partners (DVP) Board. As a Ventura resident and recent Downtown property owner, I am committed to establishing my roots in this community and contributing to the continued vibrancy and sustainability of our Downtown community.

As a young professional working in the environmental non-profit sector, I bring a perspective that aligns with the principle of "think globally, act locally." I believe in fostering a downtown that prioritizes sustainability, enhances pedestrian and bike-friendly infrastructure, and supports alternative modes of transportation. As one of the founding members of Ventura POP, Venturans for People Oriented Places, I believe in the collective power of residents advocating for a city that prioritizes community. While our group has canvassed residents and businesses in Downtown for the past 4 months, we have learned what the community as a whole wants for downtown Ventura. I aim to ensure that Ventura remains a welcoming and dynamic environment for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

I can serve as a resident liaison for Downtown Ventura businesses and property owners, since I am in the unique position of being heavily involved in resident outreach and non-profit organization engagement. I am passionate about collaborating with a broad demographic to help shape the future of our city. I offer a resident's perspective on the evolving needs of our downtown, and I am eager to team up with fellow stakeholders to drive innovative and inclusive initiatives. Furthermore, I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve on the DVP Board and to contribute my vision, experience, and dedication to making Downtown Ventura a thriving and sustainable community. Thank you for your consideration.

Angelique Friend:

I am currently the trustee for the property, which owns The Busy Bee Café located at 478 E. Main Street, and the property with the restaurant formally known as The Tavern located at 211 E. Santa Clara St. I bring years of experience, expertise, and leadership qualities and I am confident that my background as a Professional Trustee would allow me to add valuable insight to the mission of Downtown Ventura. I manage large multimillion dollar estates and have a strong financial background, including my previous experience as an Internal Auditor. I fully understand that a successful organization requires clear communication and goals. If elected to the Board, I intend to apply this experience and build upon the collaborative and balanced dynamic that already exists.



I enjoy being involved with many non-profit organizations. Listening to the community and offering creative and collaborative solutions. I have the determination to stand firm when meeting challenges and the ability to stand up for what the community wants. Most importantly, my professional experience has taught me how to be firm, fair, impartial, empathetic, and 'do' the homework. Know the issues, know the law, and know how decisions will affect us all now and in the future. Throughout my career, I have demonstrated a strong commitment to our community engagement and a passion for helping non-profit organizations, such as The New West Symphony, Interface, Boys and Girls Club, Studio Channel Islands, Children's Burn Foundation and Baby2Baby.

I am particularly drawn to the mission of Downtown Ventura because I have been a long-time resident of the area. I went to Buena High School and Graduated from California Lutheran University with MBA in Business. I am excited about the opportunity to help shape its future as a board member. I am committed to working collaboratively with other board members and staff to foster an environment of transparency, innovation, and accountability. I am grateful for the opportunity and thank you for your time and consideration.

Jeremy Ireland:

As a local resident, business owner, and commercial property developer in Ventura, I have been investing and working tirelessly to improve our community for well over a decade. My business partners and I are dedicated to transforming Ventura into one of the premier beach towns in Southern California. I am particularly proud of our Downtown development, The Yard, a vibrant experiential urban environment centered around the community, history, culture, and products of Ventura.

I believe my vision, dedication, and experience would be an asset to the DVP group. I see things through accomplishment and I'm willing to tackle tough issues, such as neglected vital infrastructure. The status quo is holding Ventura back and I'd like to do my part to help propel Ventura forward into an exciting and vibrant future. I thank you for the opportunity to serve and I am honored to be considered for a seat on the DVP.

Evan Jonker:

I am a downtown property owner and work on Fir St. in the downtown area. My family owns commercial, residential, office, and industrial property in the DVP zone. I am downtown daily and regularly travel the county. My family owns and operates Toppers Pizza locations throughout the county and within the Perimeter DVP zone. We are also part of the partnership that built and now operate two hotels located in the Core DVP zone: Hotel San Buena and Waypoint Ventura. The success of downtown directly affects our tenants and our own business ventures. I am passionate about Ventura; and have a vested interest in making downtown as successful as possible for all parties involved.

My day-to-day work involves the operation and construction of restaurants throughout the county. I believe this gives me a unique perspective on business trends, and a practical base from which I can offer expertise that will benefit the downtown area.

Stephen Morseman:

As a proud downtown Ventura property owner and resident in the Front St corridor, I'm excited to announce my candidacy for the Downtown Ventura board. Ventura has been the backdrop for many cherished life moments — my wife and I exchanged vows at City Hall, became stewards of our historic-landmark craftsman home, and are fully invested in making our community an even better place to live. As someone who regularly surfs, bikes, and explores our beautiful city with my loved ones (pets included), I'm committed to preserving the unique spirit that makes Ventura so special and to market that essence to the rest of the world. Professionally, I have over a decade of experience as a Data Scientist driving evidence-based decisions at companies like Uber and Meta, which will help the board take better market-informed actions that benefit our entire community. My foundation in Political Science (MA from UCLA) offers perspective into the complexities of community development and public affairs. I'm excited to contribute my unique combination of rigor, skills, and expertise to help advance positive change in this role.



I envision a downtown that is not only clean, safe, and inviting to all — but also thriving with eclectic businesses, cultural activities, & new development. As a board member, I will focus on initiatives that foster this ideal to enhance our community & support local entrepreneurs. Specifically, I'll:

- Prioritize walkability (ie. crosswalks, trashcans) throughout downtown and advocate for a pedestrian-oriented vision for Main St.
- Promote art initiatives, such as mural programs that showcase Ventura's unique character and creativity.
- Advocate for graffiti removal; since I believe it's essential to maintain the beauty and charm of our downtown.
- Activate public spaces with more cultural, musical, & commercial events to foster community and drive commerce.
- Push for safer parks to ensure the general public can always fully enjoy them (ie. enforce leash laws).
- Reduce red-tape to lower barriers for development downtown, and connect capital investment with local business leaders & aspiring entrepreneurs.
- Embrace an ambitious long-term vision for downtown's development (ex. fairground redevelopment, increasing the urban tree canopy, new civic-spaces, etc.).

I believe that by working together, we can create a downtown that is vibrant, inclusive, and authentic – a place that reflects the best of Ventura's spirit.

Alex Schneider:

I've been a resident of Ventura since 2006 and have worked in Downtown Ventura that entire time. My first four years was working for the City of Ventura's Economic Development division where I conceived and founded the City's high-tech business incubator, the Ventura Ventures Technology Center. That effort was able to attract a roster of entrepreneurs and tech start-ups to a shared office space behind City Hall.

The most successful start-up to graduate from the incubator has been The Trade Desk (Nasdaq: TTD), a \$40B business with 4,000 global employees, 300 of which are based in our Downtown Ventura Headquarters. I joined TTD in 2010 as employee #8 and continue to be employed as their VP of Executive Operations. I see lots of opportunities to work more closely with the DVP and the City to get our employees more active and engaged in the community.

I believe small actions, a shared vision and a well-executed plan can lead to big results. It would be an honor to join the DVP Board of Directors and spend more of my time giving back to a community that has been so good to me.

BUSINESS OWNER BIOS – 4 CANDIDATES

Maria Fiore:

I have always been in the food industry, so naturally opening a restaurant would be my next step. An unbelievable 23 years later, Cafe Fiore is thriving and has made my stay here in Ventura an amazing adventure. I graduated from CSUN and my family owned an Italian deli in the valley. That business made we fall in love with food, interactions with people and always trying new ideas to grow the business.

My husband, Bill and I have a 14-year-old son who is going to Ventura High School. He has been in little league, started hockey in Oxnard, which he still plays in Goleta, and he has been a great benefit in meeting many locals and developing friendships along the way. But being the owner of Cafe Fiore for 23 years has been a great way to talk to the locals, knowing what is going on in Ventura and being an active participant. A small quaint town that has welcomed my restaurant with open arms and giving us the longevity that makes us thrive in the life of a restaurant. I have been on the DVP board for the last year and it really has taught me a great deal of what it takes to make a community strong, thrive with activities to bring more people in town and to create a destination location. When the restaurant opened in 2003, life in Ventura was pretty sleepy, but over the years many businesses have opened and have changed the dynamics of Ventura as a memorable place to visit.



Larry Krogh:

Larry Krogh has been a committed member of the Ventura community for over 35 years. A dedicated business professional, he has successfully operated a real estate company on Main Street for 25 years. With decades of business experience, Larry is passionate about ensuring Ventura remains a safe, beautiful, and thriving place for all its residents. Currently, Larry serves as the managing broker/ owner for LIV Sotheby's International Realty and is the owner of 554 E. Main St. His involvement in the local community extends beyond his business, as he has consistently supported downtown Ventura projects and initiatives. He has actively participated in events like Art Walks, the Wine Walk, holiday activities for children, and charitable donations including backpacks for students, toys for tots, and food drives. Additionally, Larry and his team have contributed to the alley improvement project behind their building at 554 E Main St, enhancing the area for all.

Larry has shown strong support for the Red Shirt Ambassadors for downtown Ventura and has worked closely with local law enforcement to improve safety and security, including efforts to assist businesses affected by incidents involving unhoused individuals. With his deep ties to Ventura, including 35+ years of community involvement, Larry is eager to contribute to the continued progress of Ventura's downtown. His qualifications, passion for improvement, and commitment to the city make him an excellent candidate for any initiative aimed at enhancing Ventura's future.

Michael Mendelson:

I am the co-owner of Very Ventura Gift Shop & Gallery, located Downtown Ventura, and a Ventura resident for 28 years. Over the years, I have had the privilege of witnessing the ebb and flow of the downtown business landscape, adapting to changing shopping trends, and connecting with both locals and visitors. As a resident and business owner, I've developed a deep appreciation for Ventura's unique charm and the importance of fostering a welcoming space that celebrates a sense of community.

Presently I am a board member of the DVO. My professional experience also consists of working in the building industry for 40+ years. First as a remodeling contractor and now as a representative/project manager for a national window manufacturer, working with architects and builders. Considering both my retail and construction experience, I feel I would be able to make a valuable contribution to the DVP.

I am appreciative of the DVP's work to enhance the safety and success of our Downtown. Downtown Ventura is the heart and identity of our city, and supporting its growth is essential to preserving its unique character and sense of community. I would be honored to be part of the DVP and its continued efforts to achieve these goals. Thank you for your consideration.

Emily White:

I'm Emily White and I've been involved in business downtown for over 8 years. My husband and I are the owners of BellRinger Brewing Company in Downtown Ventura. We were given the opportunity and privilege to build on the legacy of Anacapa Brewing Company when the landmark brewpub was set to close its doors. We had big shoes to fill, as Anacapa was a staple in the community, and we have worked hard to maintain that connection for the last two years.

When I first moved to Ventura in 2016 I quickly fell in love with the town and knew I wanted to be a contributing member of the community. I began volunteering with the Downtown Ventura Organization and hosting events at Ventura Coast Brewing Company. I planted roots in Ventura, purchasing a house and starting a family. Now, as a resident of 8 years, a Downtown Ventura business owner, and a mother raising two young children in Ventura, I once again am called to play a bigger role. I am very passionate about the growth, safety, and cleanliness of Downtown Ventura and it would be an honor to serve on the DVP as a business owner and contribute to the future of our community.