



# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



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# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

## PREPARED FOR

City of Ventura



## PREPARED BY

RRM Design Group



# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

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# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>Section 1: Introduction and Scope .....</b>	<b>1</b>
a) Project Location .....	1
b) Project Assumptions .....	3
c) Related Main Street Projects .....	4
d) Summary of Community Outreach .....	5
e) Vision Statement and Guiding Principles.....	6
f) Vision Plan Concepts .....	7
1. Public Activity Nodes .....	14
2. Connecting the Nodes .....	17
3. Enhancing the Heart of Downtown .....	18
4. Additional Key Features of the Vision Plan.....	21
<b>Section 2: Recommended Streetscape Improvements .....</b>	<b>24</b>
a) Short-Term Improvement Opportunities (Phase 1) .....	25
1. Gateways and Signage .....	25
2. Right-of-Way Improvements .....	27
3. Site Furnishings and Landscaping .....	30
4. Gathering, Play, and Activity Areas .....	38
b) Long-Term Improvement Opportunities (Phase 2) .....	43
1. Gateways and Signage .....	44
2. Right-of-Way Improvements .....	48
3. Site Furnishings and Landscaping.....	52
4. Gathering, Play, and Activity Areas .....	60

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

<b>Section 3: Advancing the Vision Plan .....</b>	<b>65</b>
a) Future Projects, Programming, and Additional Studies .....	67
b) Future Options for Main Street .....	70
<b>Appendix A: Community Outreach .....</b>	<b>71</b>
a) Public Visioning Session .....	72
b) Business Owners Meeting .....	74
c) Property Owners Meeting and Stakeholder Interviews .....	75
d) Community Questionnaire .....	77

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

## LIST OF FIGURES

1-1	Project Location Map.....	2
1-2	Main Street Ventura Vision Plan (West) .....	9
1-3	Main Street Ventura Vision Plan (East) .....	10
1-4	Vision Plan Enlargement by the Mission .....	11
1-5	Vision Plan Enlargement at California and Main.....	12
1-6	Vision Plan Enlargement by the Library.....	13
1-7	Main Street Ventura Activity Nodes .....	14
1-8	Before and After Rendering by the Library.....	15
1-9	Before and After Rendering at California .....	19
1-10	Before and After Rendering by the Mission .....	22
2-1	Short-Term Gateways and Signage Examples .....	26
2-2	Short-Term Right-of-Way Improvement Examples.....	29
2-3	Short-Term Site Furnishings and Landscaping Examples.....	33
2-4	Short-Term Gathering, Play, and Activity Examples .....	40
2-5	Long-Term Gateways and Signage Examples .....	46
2-6	Long-Term Right-of-Way Improvement Examples.....	50
2-7	Long-Term Site Furnishings and Landscaping Examples .....	56
2-8	Long-Term Gathering, Play, and Activity Examples.....	62
3-1	Vision Plan Poster .....	66

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

## LIST OF TABLES

1-1	Phasing Assumptions.....	3
2-1	Short-Term Gateway and Signage Opportunities.....	25
2-2	Short-Term Right-of-Way Opportunities.....	27
2-3	Short-Term Site Furnishings and Landscaping Opportunities.....	30
2-4	Short-Term Gathering, Play, and Activity Area Opportunities.....	38
2-5	Long-Term Gateway and Signage Opportunities.....	44
2-6	Long-Term Right-of-Way Opportunities.....	48
2-7	Long-Term Site Furnishings and Landscaping Opportunities.....	52
2-8	Long-Term Gathering, Play, and Activity Area Opportunities.....	60

## Section 1: Introduction and Scope

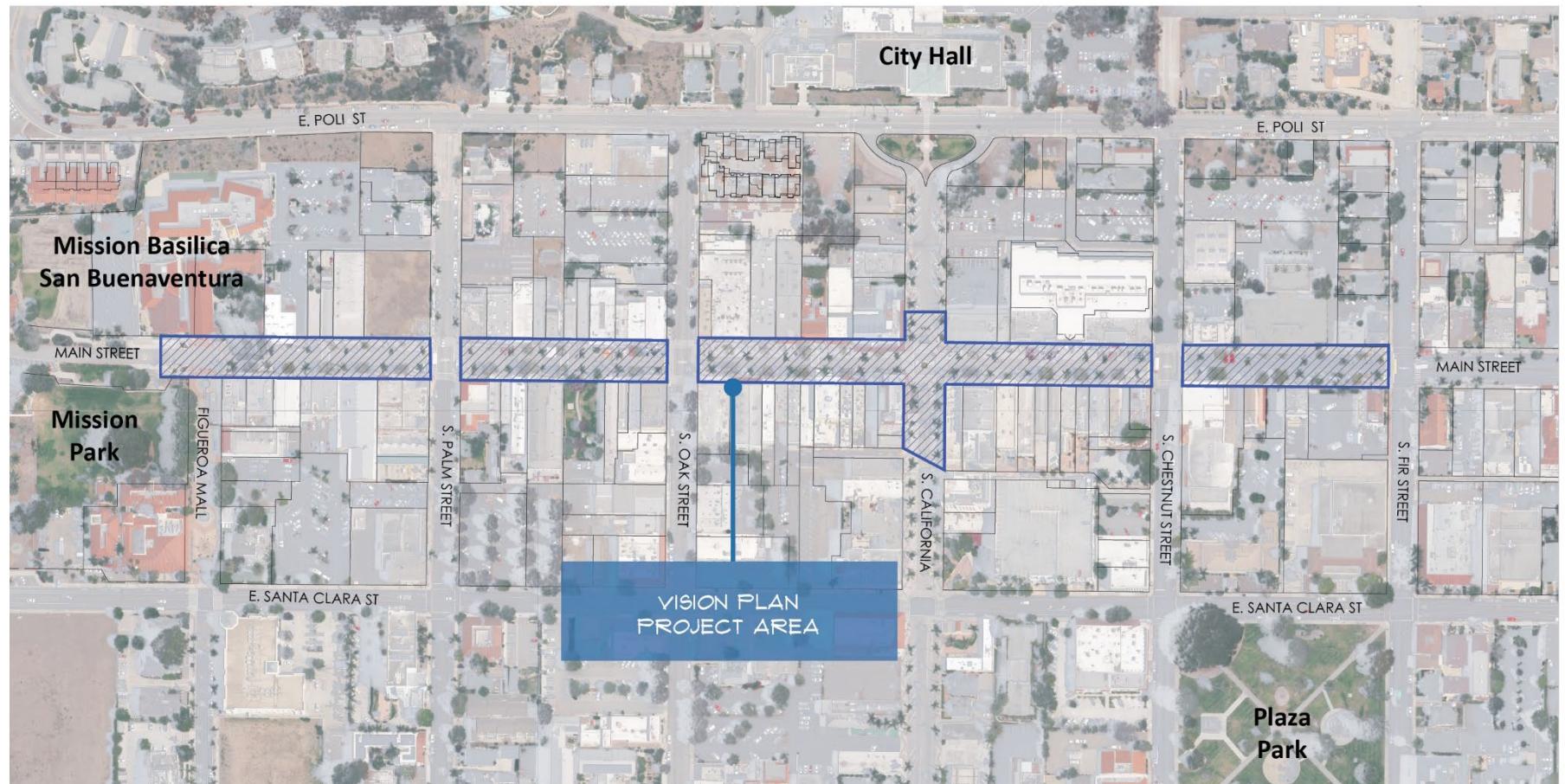
The Main Street Moves road closure originated in 2020 as a response to COVID-19 restrictions, enabling businesses to operate outdoors and fostering a vibrant sense of place in Downtown Ventura. Following the lifting of pandemic restrictions, the City Council directed staff to continue the program, evaluate long-term options and, in January 2025, advance a permanent street closure. To support this directive, the City engaged RRM Design Group (RRM) to conduct extensive outreach with the community, business owners, and property owners, and to prepare the Main Street Vision Plan (Vision Plan). This Plan establishes a coordinated framework of short- and long-term improvements that respond to community input and provide flexibility for implementation. While the Vision Plan is centered on streets being closed to vehicular traffic, many of the proposed enhancements are adaptable to an open street configuration and embody the City of Ventura's (City) commitment to the enhancement of Downtown Ventura.

### **a) Project Location**

The Vision Plan project area is within the public right-of-way along Main Street from Mission Park to Fir Street and portions of California Street north and south of Main Street.

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

Figure 1-1: Project Location Map



## b) Project Assumptions

The Vision Plan Handbook outlines a flexible framework for the Vision Plan project area, identifying high-priority improvements for near-term activation and long-term transformation. Recommendations are designed to enhance Downtown while allowing adaptability to future needs.

**TABLE 1-1: PHASING ASSUMPTIONS**

Phase	Timeframe	Key Assumptions / Scope
Short-Term (Phase 1)	1-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full pedestrian closure: Main Street from Mission Park to Fir Street, flexible for future reopening</li><li>• Temporary and movable improvements to allow future upgrades</li><li>• Low-cost, high-impact projects for immediate benefit</li><li>• Pilot projects that can be tested and expanded into permanent Phase 2 improvements</li></ul>
Long-Term (Phase 2)	2-10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continued pedestrian closure with flexibility to reopen if needed</li><li>• Permanent improvements such as in-ground planters with trees, curb bulb-outs, and decorative paving</li><li>• Enhancements designed for lasting impact and a more vibrant Downtown</li></ul>

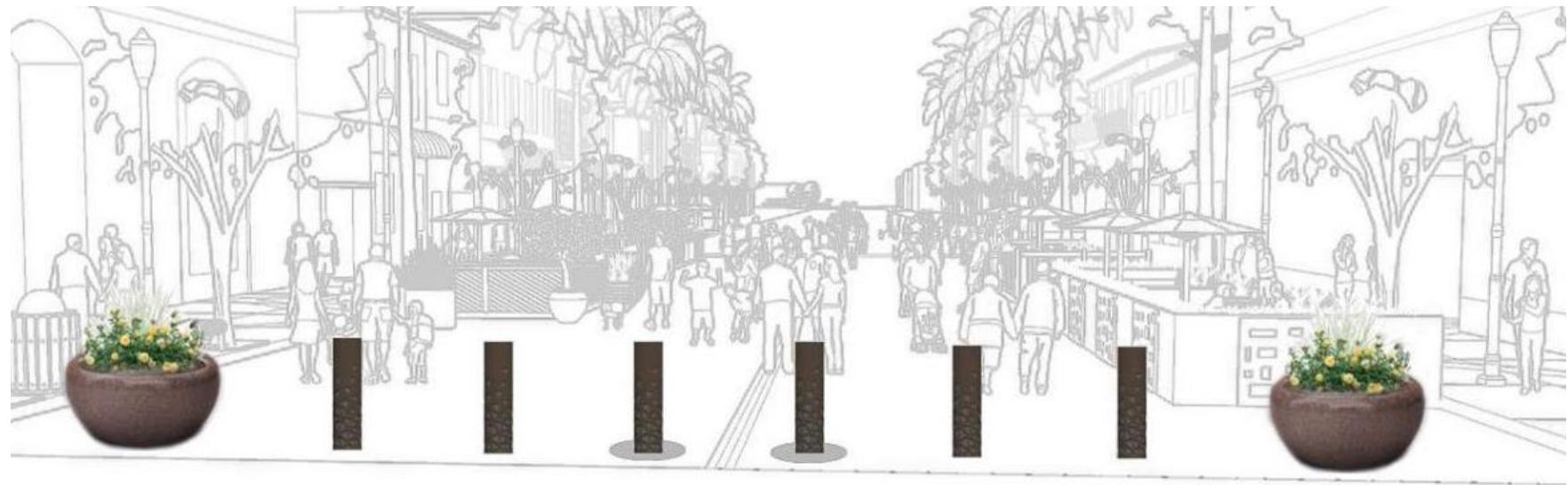


## c) Related Main Street Projects

This Handbook builds on prior City efforts to enhance Downtown Ventura's public spaces. The Citywide Parklet Design Guidelines and Standards (adopted March 2024) provide a cohesive framework for parklets and are scheduled for implementation in Fall–Winter 2025. Complementing this, parklet construction documents (expected Fall 2025) will provide pre-approved, permit-ready plans with customization options, reducing costs and barriers for businesses. Additionally, the conceptual Bollard Placement Plan outlines removable bollards and crash-resistant planters at key Downtown locations to improve safety while maintaining flexibility for vehicle access, with implementation planned for 2026. The rendering below depicts the bollard and planters replacing the existing barriers at the Vision Plan area entrances and additional information is included in Section 2a.

Refer to the City's website for more information about the related projects discussed above:

<https://www.cityofventura.ca.gov/2708/Parklet-Permits>



*Rendering from the conceptual Bollard Placement Plan showing the removable bollards and crash rated planters*



## d) Summary of Community Outreach

The Vision Plan Handbook is the product of a collaborative process that engaged the public, downtown property and business owners, City staff, and RRM Design Group. The City hosted a series of outreach events to invite input—including a community visioning session, an online questionnaire, and targeted meetings with business and property owners. These efforts helped identify opportunities for improvement, address concerns, and shape the vision for the Vision Plan area. Community involvement was essential in developing the vision, and an executive summary of key takeaways from the outreach process is included in Appendix A.



*Image from the Community Visioning Session*

## Key Takeaways from Community Outreach

The outreach process was designed to identify key issues, gather stakeholder input, and, where possible, align community interests for the Main Street Vision Plan. A recurring theme was the desire to enhance the closure area and surrounding intersections to create a cohesive, attractive, and welcoming environment. While opinions differed on whether Main Street should remain open to vehicles, stay closed, or adopt a hybrid model, there was broad consensus on the need to improve the area's look, feel, and functionality. Community members voiced support for play and activity spaces, shaded seating, enhanced gateways and intersections, and the addition of public restrooms. Property and business owners echoed many of these priorities, while also underscoring the importance of short-term, visible upgrades, balancing public space with business needs, and establishing clear timelines, cost expectations, and funding strategies.

### **e) Vision Statement and Guiding Principles**

Based on the outreach and community input, a vision statement was developed to encapsulate the aspirations for the Vision Plan project area. This statement has served as a foundational guide throughout the planning process and will continue to be a touchstone during implementation. It articulates the core values and desired outcomes that shaped project decisions and will remain central as the revitalization moves forward. The vision statement reads:

*Ventura's Downtown Main Street will be revitalized as a vibrant, walkable, and inclusive destination that reflects the City's unique character and cultural heritage. This flexible, people-focused corridor will feature welcoming public spaces, diverse amenities, and safe, accessible environments for all ages—supporting a thriving local economy and reinforcing Main Street's identity as Ventura's premier Downtown destination.*



The seven Guiding Principles listed below, shaped by community input, are essential to the vision for the Vision Plan project area. They will guide the priority of improvements, aiming to create an area that fosters community pride, reflects local values, and highlights Ventura's unique history and culture.

1. Establish a vibrant Downtown district that supports businesses
2. Make Main Street a great place for all ages
3. Create a flexible and adaptable street
4. Improve Main Street intersections and entries to create safe, welcoming, and attractive gateways
5. Provide diverse public amenities and seating
6. Integrate spaces for public art and activities
7. Incorporate accessibility and safety features

## f) Vision Plan Concepts

The Vision Plan creates a walkable string of experiences—where activity nodes, artistic paving, and a vibrant central plaza draw visitors through Main Street. This is an interactive, community-driven vision that celebrates Ventura's coastal identity while supporting a thriving local economy. The Vision Plan enlargements in Figures 1-2 to 1-6 depict a cohesive streetscape with vibrant public nodes, connected parklets, enriched landscaping, and flexible gathering spaces designed to host both informal and formal events — inviting residents and visitors alike to experience Main Street as a dynamic, welcoming, and engaging destination. The before and after visual simulations in Figures 1-8 to 1-10 illustrate the community's vision for Main Street's pedestrian areas, highlighting a unique identity with vibrant public spaces. A summary of the key improvements is listed on the following page, and these improvements are described in the tables and images within Sections 2a and 2b.

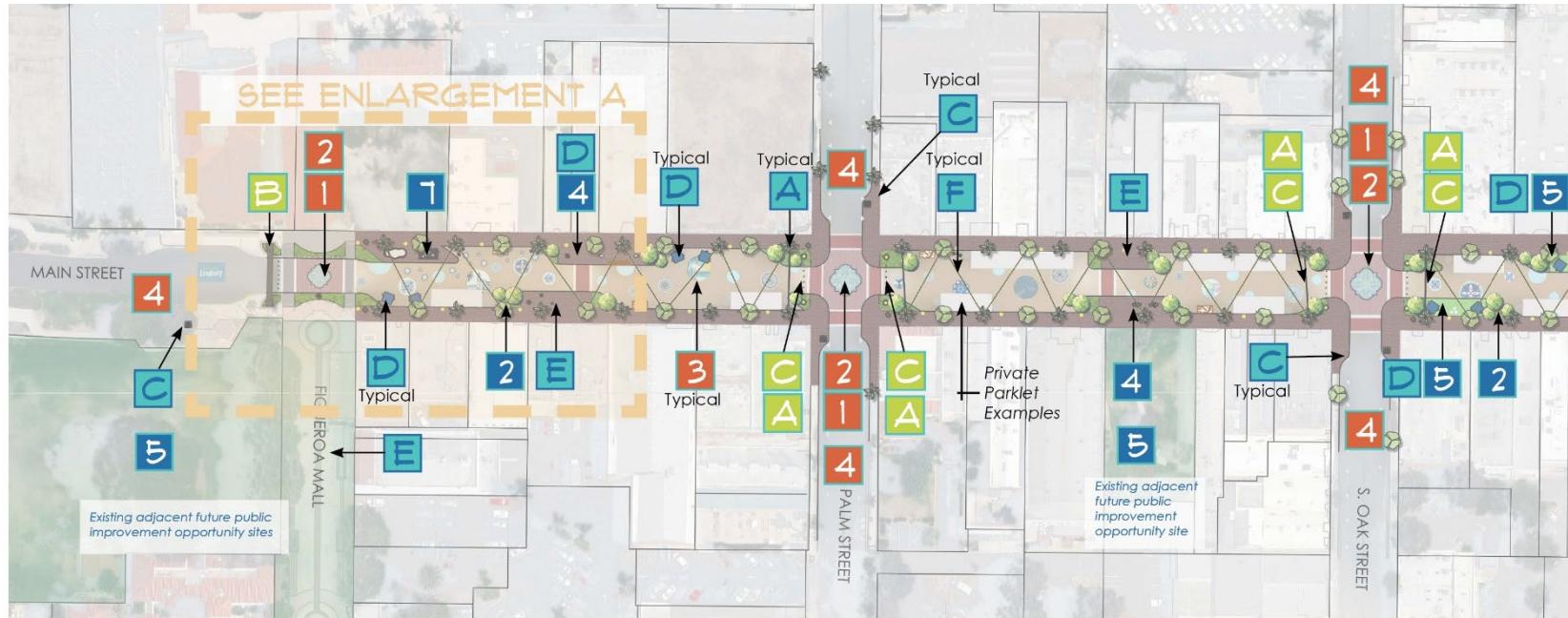
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 <b>GATEWAYS AND SIGNAGE</b>	 <b>RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS</b>	 <b>SITE FURNISHINGS AND LANDSCAPING</b>	 <b>GATHERING, PLAY, AND ACTIVITY AREAS</b>
<p>Improved intersection treatments with removable bollards and crash rated planters</p> <p>Primary entrances: overhead arch element</p> <p>Secondary entrances: welcome event banners and/or pilasters on the sidewalk</p> <p>Informational kiosks and directional wayfinding signage</p>	<p>Lithocrete mosaic paving at intersections</p> <p>Decorative paving in crosswalks and sidewalks with bulbouts at mid-block crossings and intersections</p> <p>Painted roadways with public art and/or chalk art areas</p> <p>ADA parking and short-term drop-off and pick-up areas adjacent to Vision Plan project area</p>	<p>In ground planters and enhanced landscaping with increased trees</p> <p>Movable umbrellas and furnishings</p> <p>Whimsical bike racks</p> <p>Fun seating such as loungers and terraced benches</p> <p>Public art and entertainment – with rotating exhibits, sculpture gardens, and /or live entertainment areas</p> <p>String lighting with accent elements</p> <p>Permanent public restrooms</p>	<p>Increased activation of the existing stage with spaces for outdoor movies</p> <p>Dog friendly spaces</p> <p>Splash bubbler pad</p> <p>Outdoor fire pits</p> <p>Game zones with large format games and tabletop games</p> <p>Soft green and spaces for relaxation, yoga and excercise</p> <p>Permanent outdoor playground area</p> <p>Interactive children's science exhibits and learning activities</p>

## *Summary of Key Vision Plan Improvements*

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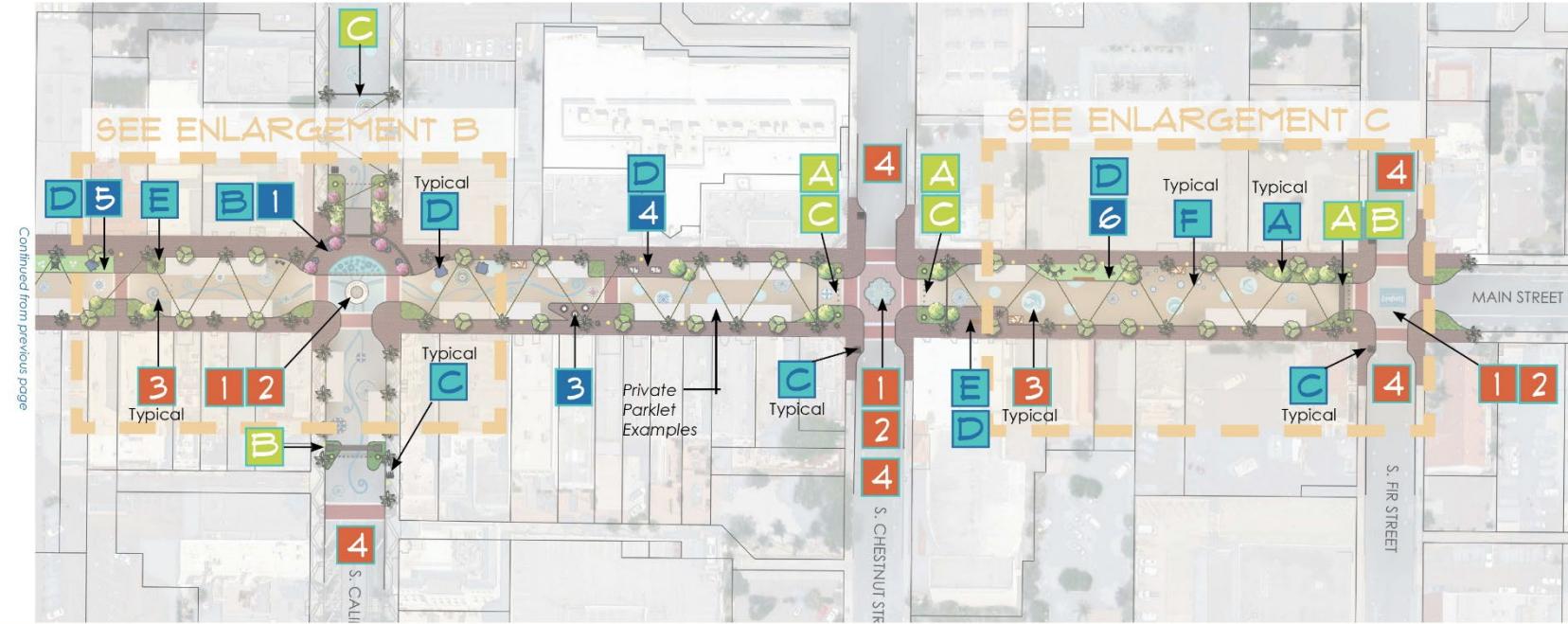
Figure 1-2: Main Street Ventura Vision Plan (West)



GATEWAYS AND SIGNAGE	RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS	SITE FURNISHINGS AND LANDSCAPING	GATHERING, PLAY, AND ACTIVITY AREAS
A Improved intersection treatments with removable bollards and crash rated planters	1 Lithocrete mosaic paving at intersections	A In ground planters and enhanced landscaping with increased trees	2 Dog friendly spaces
B Primary entrances: overhead arch monument signs	2 Decorative paving in crosswalks and bulbouts at mid-block crossings and intersections	B Movable umbrellas, colorful and movable furnishings	4 Game zones with large format games and tabletop games
C Secondary entrances: welcome event banners and/or pilasters on the sidewalk	3 Painted roadways with sandblasted or etched circles containing public art and/or chalk art areas	C Whimsical bike racks	5 Soft green spaces for relaxing, yoga, and exercise
	4 ADA parking and short-term drop-off and pick-up areas adjacent to Vision Plan project area	D Fun seating such as loungers and terraced benches	7 Interactive children's science exhibits and learning activities
		E Public art and entertainment- with rotating exhibits and live performances	
		F String lighting with accent elements	

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

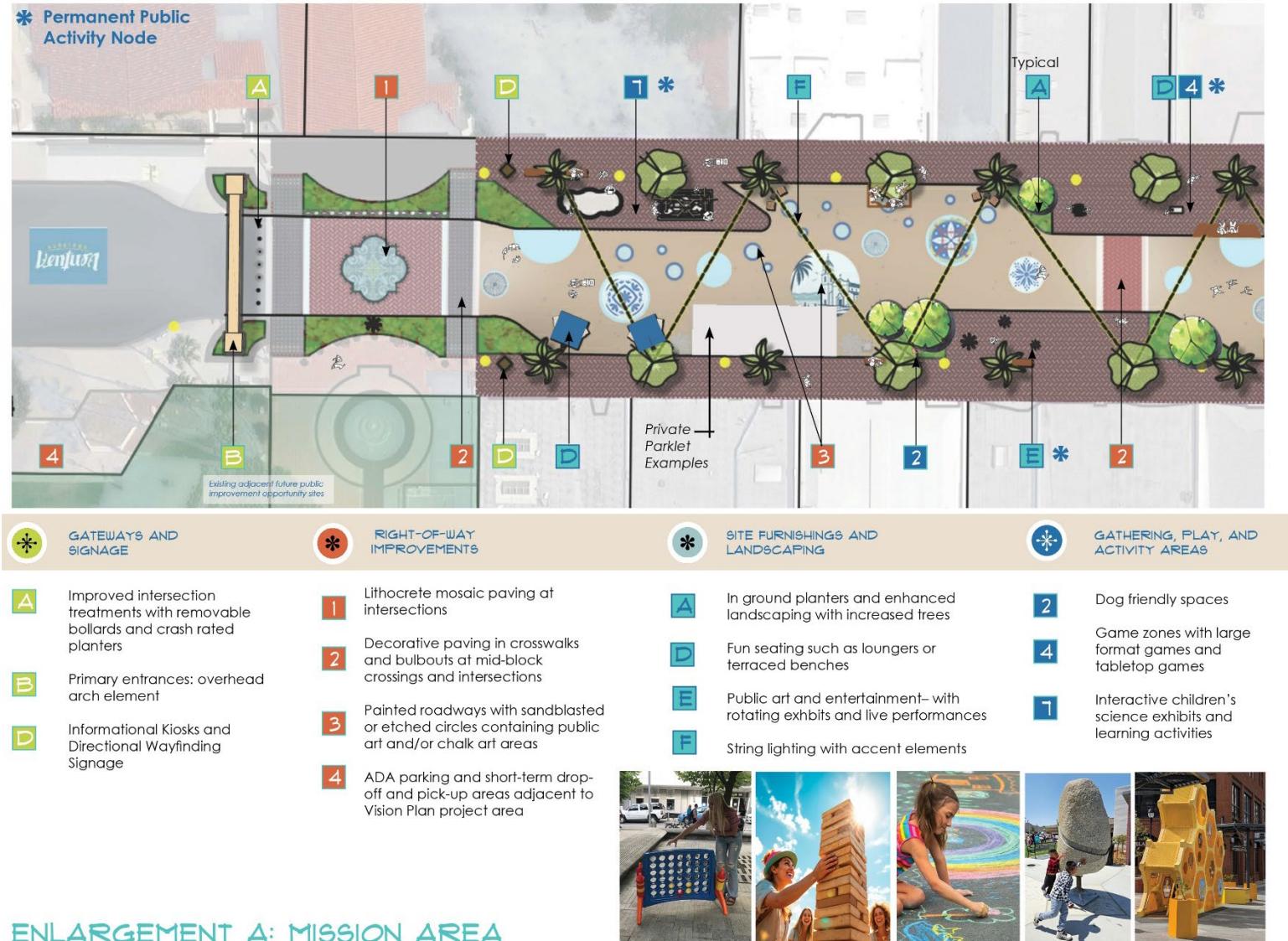
Figure 1-3: Main Street Ventura Vision Plan (East)



GATEWAYS AND SIGNAGE	RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS	SITE FURNISHINGS AND LANDSCAPING	GATHERING, PLAY, AND ACTIVITY AREAS
<p><b>A</b> Improved intersection treatments with removable bollards and crash rated planters</p> <p><b>B</b> Primary entrances: overhead arch monument signs</p> <p><b>C</b> Secondary entrances: welcome event banners and/or pilasters on the sidewalk</p>	<p><b>1</b> Lithocrete mosaic paving at intersections</p> <p><b>2</b> Decorative paving in crosswalks and bulbouts at mid-block crossings and intersections</p> <p><b>3</b> Painted roadways with sandblasted or etched circles containing public art and/or chalk art areas</p> <p><b>4</b> ADA parking and short-term drop-off and pick-up areas adjacent to Vision Plan project area</p>	<p><b>A</b> In ground planters and enhanced landscaping with increased trees</p> <p><b>B</b> Movable umbrellas, colorful and movable furnishings</p> <p><b>C</b> Whimsical bike racks</p> <p><b>D</b> Fun seating such as loungers and terraced benches</p> <p><b>E</b> Public art and entertainment- with rotating exhibits and live performances</p> <p><b>F</b> String lighting with accent elements</p>	<p><b>1</b> Increased activation of the existing stage with spaces for outdoor movies and splash bubbler pad</p> <p><b>3</b> Outdoor fire pits</p> <p><b>4</b> Game zones with large format games and tabletop games</p> <p><b>5</b> Soft green spaces for relaxing, yoga, and exercise</p> <p><b>6</b> Permanent outdoor playground area</p>

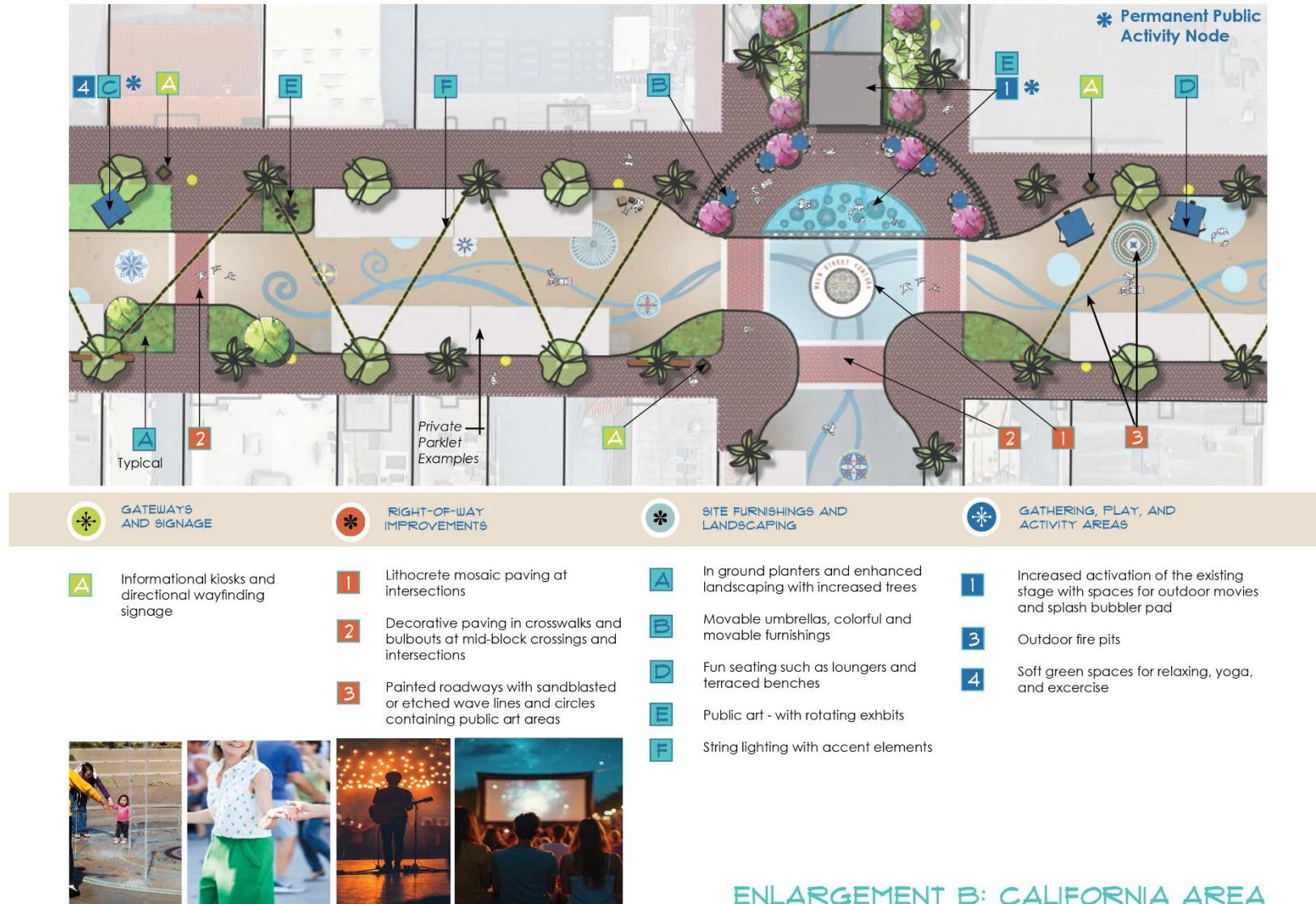
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Figure 1-4: Vision Plan Enlargement by the Mission



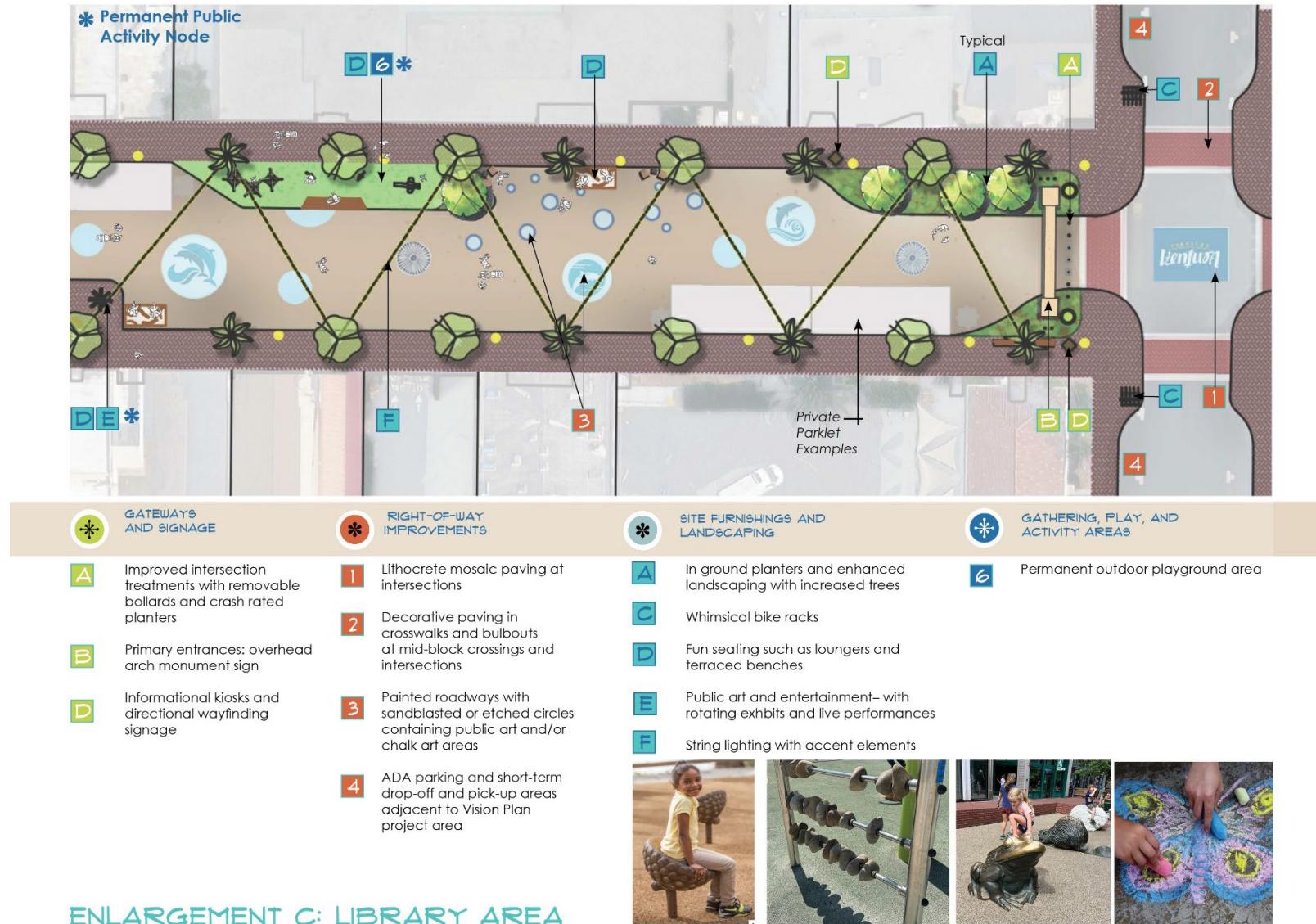
# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

Figure 1-5: Vision Plan Enlargement at California and Main



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Figure 1-6: Vision Plan Enlargement by the Library



## 1. Public Activity Nodes

The Vision Plan includes two to three distinct public activity nodes per block, each with its own theme or activity focus, such as:

- Children's Play Areas – Interactive, playful features designed to spark imagination.
- Teen & Adult Activity Areas – Spaces for games, performances, or casual recreation.
- Seating & Gathering Areas – Comfortable spots for conversation, relaxation, and people-watching.

Together, these nodes form a continuous chain of attractions that encourage movement along the entire length of Main Street, creating energy and engagement in every block. The Vision Plan in Figure 1-7 presents a conceptual layout for the long-term public activity node improvements.

*Figure 1-7: Main Street Ventura Activity Nodes*

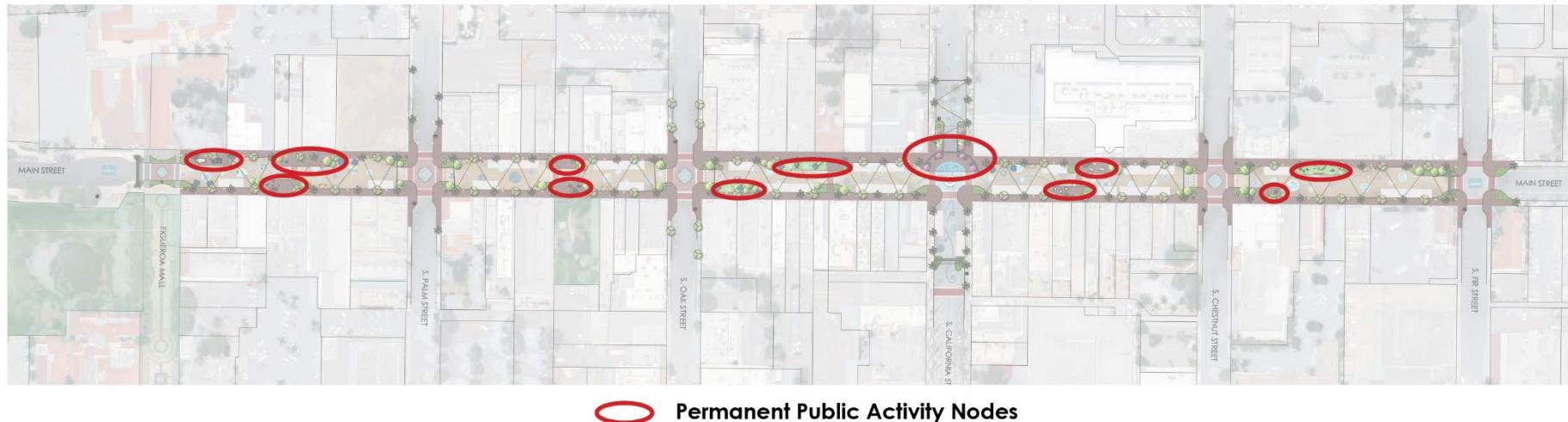


Figure 1-8: Before and After Rendering by the Library



# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



AFTER

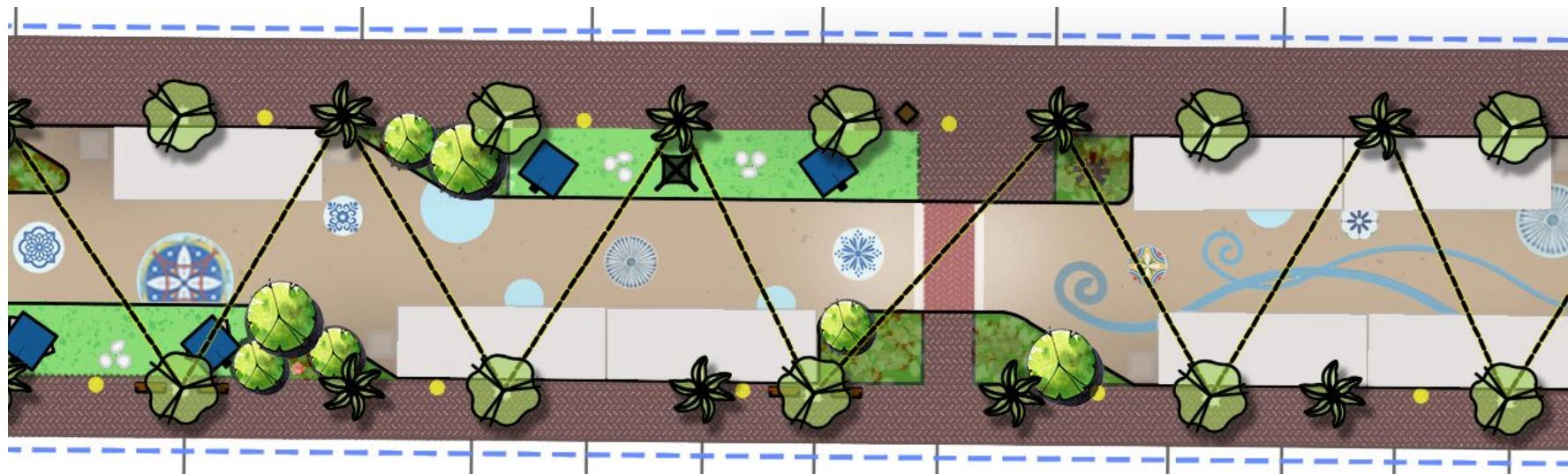


## 2. Connecting the Nodes

The Vision Plan introduces a series of circular “bubble” or “water drop” forms embedded in the paving—either sandblasted into the surface or artistically painted. These circles:

- Visually Connect Main Street – Guiding pedestrians from one activity node to the next.
- Celebrate the Coast – Symbolizing the ocean’s proximity and Ventura’s coastal character.
- Engage the Community – Some circles are designed to feature permanent art, while others will remain blank “canvases” for chalk art by children, local artists, and visitors.

This playful visual ribbon reinforces the sense of place and provides an ever-changing artistic element that keeps the street fresh and inviting.



*Example circular ‘bubble’ forms painted with Spanish designs*



### 3. Enhancing the Heart of Downtown

The California Street and Main Street intersection serves as the natural heart of Downtown Ventura—a flexible central gathering space that anchors the Main Street experience. The Vision Plan envisions:

- Overhead Gateway Monument – Welcoming visitors into the Downtown core from Santa Clara Street at California Street.
- Performance Stage with Trellis Backdrop—Framing the plaza and providing a backdrop for live music, community events, and seasonal celebrations. The stage renovation will enhance functionality and aesthetics, with design elements that accentuate City Hall as the event’s backdrop while preserving ocean views from City Hall and Poli Street.
- Interactive Bubbler Water Feature – A playful cooling element for children on warm days, illuminated at night for a colorful effect, and able to be turned off for events—ensuring the space remains flexible.
- Artistic Paving Design – Sandblasted, painted, or mosaic street art that extends the bubble motif into flowing wave-like ribbons reaching up and down both Main Street and California Street, visually drawing people to this vibrant central plaza.

This intersection is not only a focal point—it is the community’s living room, where art, play, music, and social life converge. Refer to Figure 1-9 for a rendering depicting the vision for enhancing the heart of Main Street.

Figure 1-9: Before and After Rendering at California



BEFORE

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## 4. Additional Key Features of the Vision Plan

- Flexible Street Design – Spaces adaptable for markets, festivals, and seasonal events. Many of the proposed improvements are designed to function effectively in either an open-street or closed-street scenario.
- Enhanced Landscaping – Shade trees, planters, and native species for beauty and comfort.
- Welcoming Gateways – Distinctive features at key intersections and entries.
- Enhanced Hanging Lights – String lights and hanging decorative/ catenary lights create a warm, inviting atmosphere, and sense of place.
- Accessibility & Safety – Clear, inclusive, and secure routes for all users including bollards at key intersections for flexibility for street closures.
- Support for Businesses – Parklets and outdoor seating aligned with Citywide Parklet Design Guidelines and Standards. Refer to the City's website for more information: <https://www.cityofventura.ca.gov/2708/Parklet-Permits>
- Highlighting Cultural Heritage - Spanish themed tiles and mosaics in the intersections and within artistic circles along Main Street and gateway elements reflect the community's history and roots.

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Figure 1-10: Before and After Rendering by the Mission





AFTER

## Section 2: Recommended Streetscape Improvements

This section establishes a foundation for future initiatives and outlines a strategic framework for the City to invest in the long-term growth and development of the Vision Plan project area.

### a) Short Term Improvement Opportunities (Phase 1)

To support the project's Guiding Principles, the following short-term improvements are suggested to be completed within the next one-to-two years. These improvements were selected because of their ability to make a significant visual impact and enhance the sense of place within the Vision Plan project area, while also being relatively simple to implement and cost-effective to install.

Temporary public parklet nodes, with seating and activity areas containing the improvements listed below, should be created in front of businesses which do not desire a parklet. Prioritizing the implementation of these public parklet nodes in key locations to activate existing gathering spaces along Main Street and California Street, such as near the Mission, Figueroa Street Mall, California Street and Main Street intersection, and the E.P. Foster Library is also a goal of the short-term vision.

The short-term improvements listed in the tables below are intended to be a comprehensive menu of options to implement the Vision Plan as funding becomes available. However, it is not intended for all improvements to be constructed. Note that the tables within this section include the following keys:

- Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach?<sup>1</sup>
  - V= Visioning Session, B= Business Owners, P= Property Owners, S= Stakeholder 1:1s, Q= Questionnaire, N= Not Mentioned
- Lead Responsible Department or Organization<sup>2</sup>
  - B= Building, CD= Community Development, CO= Communications, D= DVP, ED= Economic Development, F= Fire, P= Public Works

## 1. Gateways and Signage

This section includes elements to enhance the wayfinding and ambiance of the Main Street area.

**TABLE 2-1: SHORT-TERM GATEWAY AND SIGNAGE OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Short-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Estimated Cost Range “\$” low, “\$\$” midlevel, “\$\$\$” high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities 1 highest, 2 middle, 3 lowest
<b>1. GATEWAYS AND SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS</b>						
<b>A. Gateway Elements</b>						
1.A.i	Improved intersection treatments with removable bollards and crash-rated planters	V, B, P, S	P	\$\$\$	Spring 2026	1
1.A.ii	Overhead welcome banners at Main Street entrances	B, P	B / CD / CO / F	\$	Winter 2025	2
<b>B. Wayfinding Signage</b>						
1.B.i	Directional decals for key public spaces	N	CD / CO	\$	Spring 2026	3

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

Figure 2-1: Short-Term Gateways and Signage Examples



1



1



2



2



2

1: Overhead welcome event banners  
2: Crash rated planters and removable bollards



## 2. Right-of-Way Improvements

This section highlights proposed enhancements to the right-of-way, focusing on creating a safer, more inviting, and accessible environment. Improvements include pedestrian safety measures, decorative paving treatments, accessibility improvements, and design features that foster a welcoming and vibrant public realm for all community members.

**Table 2-2: SHORT-TERM RIGHT-OF-WAY OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Short-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Estimated Cost Range “\$” low, “\$\$” midlevel, “\$\$\$” high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities 1 highest, 2 middle, 3 lowest
<b>1. RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS</b>						
<b>A. Street Crosswalks and Intersections</b>						
2.A.i	Artistic painted crosswalks	V	P	\$\$	Summer 2026	1
2. A.ii	Brightly painted intersections	V	P	\$\$	Summer 2026	2
<b>B. Roadway and Sidewalk Improvements</b>						
2.B.i	Repainting roadway to remove striping	V, B	P	\$\$	Spring 2026	1
2.B.ii	Painted roadways with public art and/or chalk art areas	N	P	\$\$	Spring 2026	2
2.B.iii	Providing short-term drop-off and pick-up areas adjacent to the closure area	V	P	\$	Fall / Winter 2025	1

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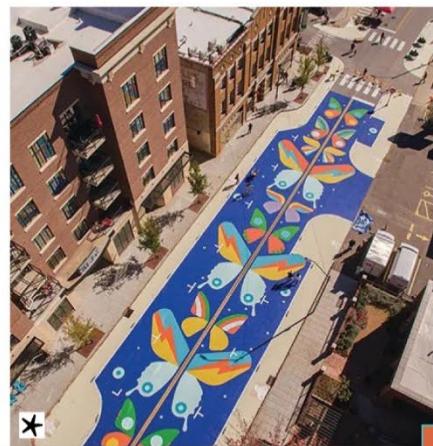
2.B.iv	Conduct an accessibility audit of the Vision Plan area	N	P	\$	Fall / Winter 2025	1
2.B.v	Accessibility upgrades: creating new curb ramps, accessible options for activities, and removing/ adjusting detectable warnings/ truncated domes	N	P	\$\$	Spring 2026	2

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



Figure 2-2: Short-Term Right-of-Way Improvement Examples

- 1: Painted roadways with public art
- 2: Artistic painted crosswalks
- 3: Brightly painted intersections



\* Images provided by the City of Ventura

### 3. Site Furnishings and Landscaping

This section includes elements which provide for increased gathering and community enjoyment of Main Street such as landscaping, public art, pedestrian furnishings, dog amenities, decorative lighting, and public restrooms.

**Table 2-3: SHORT-TERM SITE FURNISHINGS AND LANDSCAPING OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Short-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Estimated Cost Range “\$” low, “\$\$” midlevel, “\$\$\$” high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities 1 highest, 2 middle, 3 lowest
<b>3.</b>	<b>SITE FURNISHINGS AND LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
<b>A.</b>	<b>Landscape and Shade Enhancements</b>					
3.A.i	Movable planters and enhanced landscaping	P / V / Q	P / DVP	\$	Winter 2025 / Spring 2026	1
3.A.ii	Overhead shade sails and/or movable umbrellas at public nodes	S / Q	F / P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.A.iii	Hanging flower baskets on light posts	N	DVP	\$\$	Fall 2026	3
3.A.iv	Pilot landscape plan by testing seasonal and native plant displays	V	P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2

<b>B.</b>	<b>Streetscape Furnishing Improvements</b>					
3.B.i	Colorful and movable furnishings	V	CD / DVP	\$\$	Fall / Winter 2025	1
3.B.ii	Whimsical bike racks – located adjacent to the closure area	V	P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.B.iii	Dog bag dispensers	N	P / DVP	\$	Fall / Winter 2025	1
3.B.iv	Free book “libraries”	N	CO / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.B.v	Storage benches for games and activities	N	P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
<b>C.</b>	<b>Public Art and Placemaking Elements</b>					
3.C.i	Banners on light posts	N	P / DVP / CO	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.C.ii	Roadway painting and/or decorative decals	B	P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.C.iii	Public art – temporary – such as short-term rotating artwork (e.g. Artist of the Quarter)	V, S	P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.C.iv	Public art murals – permanent – such as alley wall art	P, S	P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.C.v	Selfie photo locations	P	P / DVP	\$\$-\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.C.vi	Public art – sculpture installations	V, P	P / DVP /	\$\$-\$	Spring / Summer 2026	3

<b>D.</b>	<b>Decorative Lighting</b>					
3.D.i	String lighting with accents elements	V	F / P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.D.ii	Accent lighting	V	P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Summer / Fall 2026	3
<b>E.</b>	<b>Public Restrooms</b>					
3.E.i	Public restrooms in close proximity to Main Street	V, P, B	P / DVP	\$\$\$	Summer / Fall 2025	1
3.E.ii	Water bottle filling stations	N	P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
3.E.iii	Dog bowl filling areas	N	P / DVP	\$\$	Summer / Fall 2025	1



Figure 2-3: Short-Term Site Furnishings and Landscaping Examples

1: Movable planters  
2: Hanging flower baskets



2



1





1: Whimsical bike racks located at the Main Street entrances





1: Colorful and  
movable furnishings



# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



1: String lighting with accents elements  
2: Accent lighting

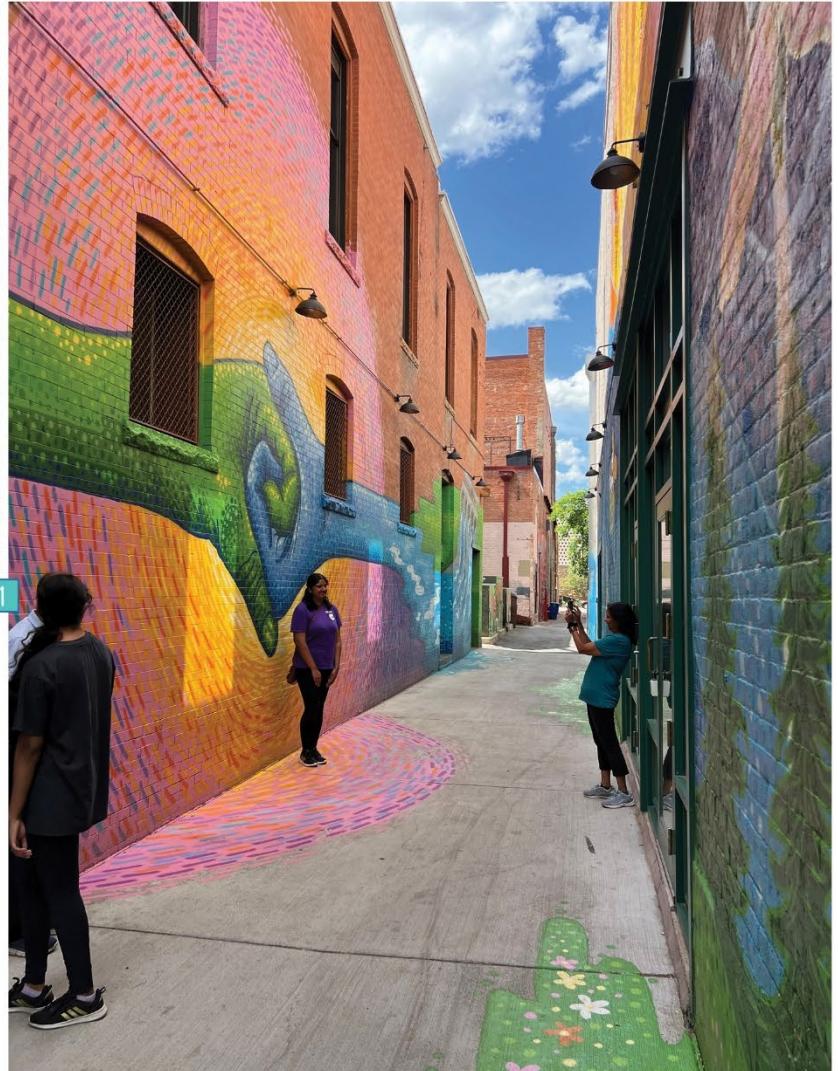
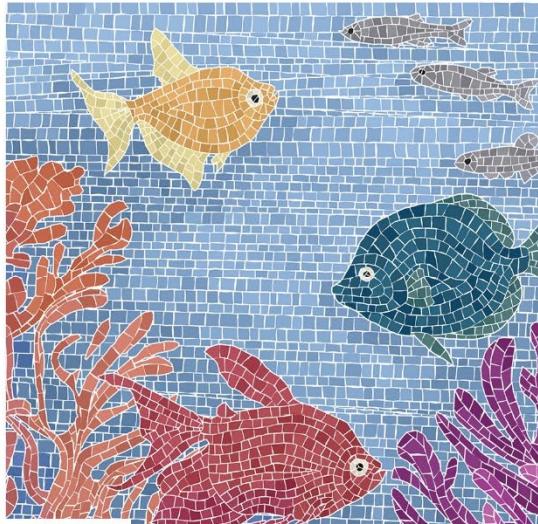
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# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



1: Permanent public art murals  
2. Short-term rotating artwork



## 4. Gathering, Play, and Activity Areas

This section includes elements which enhance group gathering opportunities, such as creating unique and inviting pedestrian-friendly spaces to activate the Vision Plan project area and draw residents and visitors.

**Table 2-4: SHORT-TERM GATHERING, PLAY, AND ACTIVITY AREA OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Short-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2a above	Estimated Cost Range " \$" low, " \$\$" midlevel, " \$\$\$" high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities 1 highest, 2 middle, 3 lowest
<b>1. GATHERING, PLAY, AND ACTIVITY AREA IMPROVEMENTS</b>						
<b>A. Public Gathering Spaces</b>						
4.A.i	Increased activation/ improvements of the existing stage	S	DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	3
4.A.ii	Dog friendly spaces – such as faux fire hydrant, fenced areas, play zones	P	P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
4.A.iii	Outdoor fire pits with seating in key locations	N	P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
4.A.iv	Flexible activity areas such as play area during the day and live entertainment at night	N	P / DVP	\$\$	Spring 2026	1

B.	Play Areas for All Ages					
4.B.i	Kid-friendly zones such as public parklet play and game zones with large format games (Connect 4, cornhole, chess, Jenga, giant Legos, etc.) and tabletop games that are grouped in clusters (chess, checkers, foosball and ping pong, etc.)	N	P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2
4.B.ii	Chalk art areas	N	P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2026	1
4.B.iii	Flexible play spaces such as boulders and cube chairs that can be used for seating but also facilitate temporary play activities	V	P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2026	1



Figure 2-4: Short-Term Gathering, Play, and Activity Examples

- 1: Outdoor Games
- 2: Dog friendly spaces
- 3. Flexible activity areas





1



1: Outdoor Games





1: Outdoor Chalk Areas



1



## b) Long-Term Improvements Opportunities (Phase 2)

To advance the project's guiding principles, long-term improvements are envisioned over the next two-to-ten years to build on and enhance the short-term strategies outlined in Section 2a. These enhancements aim to create a stronger sense of place and visual identity within the Vision Plan project area. These long-term strategies provide opportunities to expand sidewalks and install bulb outs, establishing permanent public nodes that complement the temporary parklets identified in the short-term improvements. These nodes would feature decorative paving, seating, and activity areas, with particular emphasis on mid-block crosswalks and intersections to activate spaces, improve pedestrian safety, and encourage social interaction.

The long-term improvements listed in the tables below are intended to be a comprehensive menu of options to implement the Vision Plan as funding becomes available. However, it is not intended for all improvements to be constructed. Note that the tables within this section include the following keys:

- Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach?<sup>1</sup>
  - V= Visioning Session, B= Business Owners, P= Property Owners, S= Stakeholder 1:1s, Q= Questionnaire, N= Not Mentioned
- Lead Responsible Department or Organization<sup>2</sup>
  - B= Building, CD= Community Development, CO= Communications, D= DVP, ED= Economic Development, F= Fire, P= Public Work

## 1. Gateway and Signage

This section includes elements to enhance the wayfinding and ambiance of the Vision Plan project area.

**TABLE 2-5: LONG-TERM GATEWAY AND SIGNAGE OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Long-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Estimated Cost Range “\$” low, “\$\$”midlevel, “\$\$\$”high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities 1 highest, 2 middle, 3 lowest
<b>1. GATEWAYS AND SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS</b>						
<b>A. Gateway Elements</b>						
1.A.ia	Overhead archways in key locations, such as at California Street and Santa Clara Street	B, P	C / P / DVP / CO	\$\$-\$\$\$	Summer / Fall 2027	1
1.A.ib	Consider installing permanent decorative poles for event banners installed in Phase 1	N	CD / P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	2
1.A.ic	Gateway pilasters on roadway edges	N	CD / P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	3

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

<b>B.</b>	<b>Wayfinding Signage</b>					
1.B.i	Directional wayfinding signs at entrances	B	CD / P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Summer / Fall 2027	2
1.B.ii	Wayfinding and informational kiosks	B	CD / P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Summer / Fall 2027	2
1.B.iia	Display boards and advertising for upcoming events	N	CD / P / DVP / CO	\$\$-\$\$\$	Summer / Fall 2027	2
1.B.iib	Directory maps for Downtown Ventura businesses	N	C / P / DVP / CO	\$\$-\$\$\$	Summer / Fall 2027	2

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



Figure 2-5: Long-Term Gateways and Signage Examples

- 1: Overhead archways in key locations
- 2. Secondary pilasters

1



1



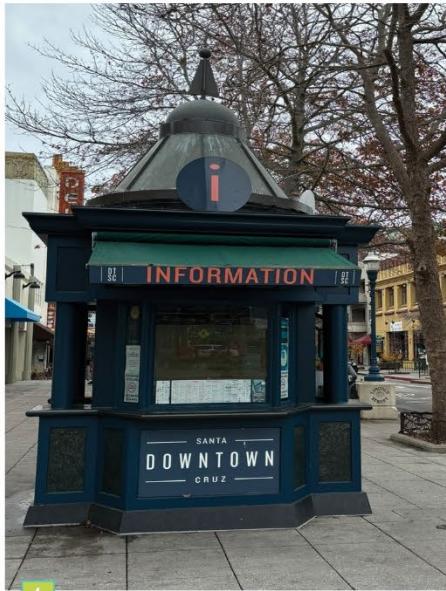
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1



# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



1. Wayfinding and informational kiosks
2. Directory maps
3. Directional wayfinding signs



## 2. Right-of-Way Improvements

This section highlights proposed enhancements to the right-of-way, focusing on creating a safer, more inviting, and accessible environment. Improvements include pedestrian safety measures, decorative paving treatments, accessibility improvements, and design features that foster a welcoming and vibrant public realm for all community members.

**TABLE 2-6: LONG-TERM RIGHT-OF-WAY OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Long-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Estimated Cost Range \$\$ low, \$\$\$ midlevel, \$\$\$ high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities 1 highest, 2 middle, 3 lowest
<b>2. RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS</b>						
<b>A. Street Crosswalks and Intersections</b>						
2.A.i	Decorative paving in crosswalks	N	P / F	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2028	1
2.A.ii	Enhanced paving in intersections	N	P / F	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2028	1
<b>B. Roadway and Sidewalk Improvements</b>						
2.B.i	Expanded sidewalk paving – such as bulb outs at intersections and mid-block crossings with more planting, art, directory signage, paving, etc.	V	CD / P / DVP		Spring / Summer 2030	1
2.B.ii	Accessible sidewalks and ramps (phased approach)	S	B / P		Spring / Summer 2027	1

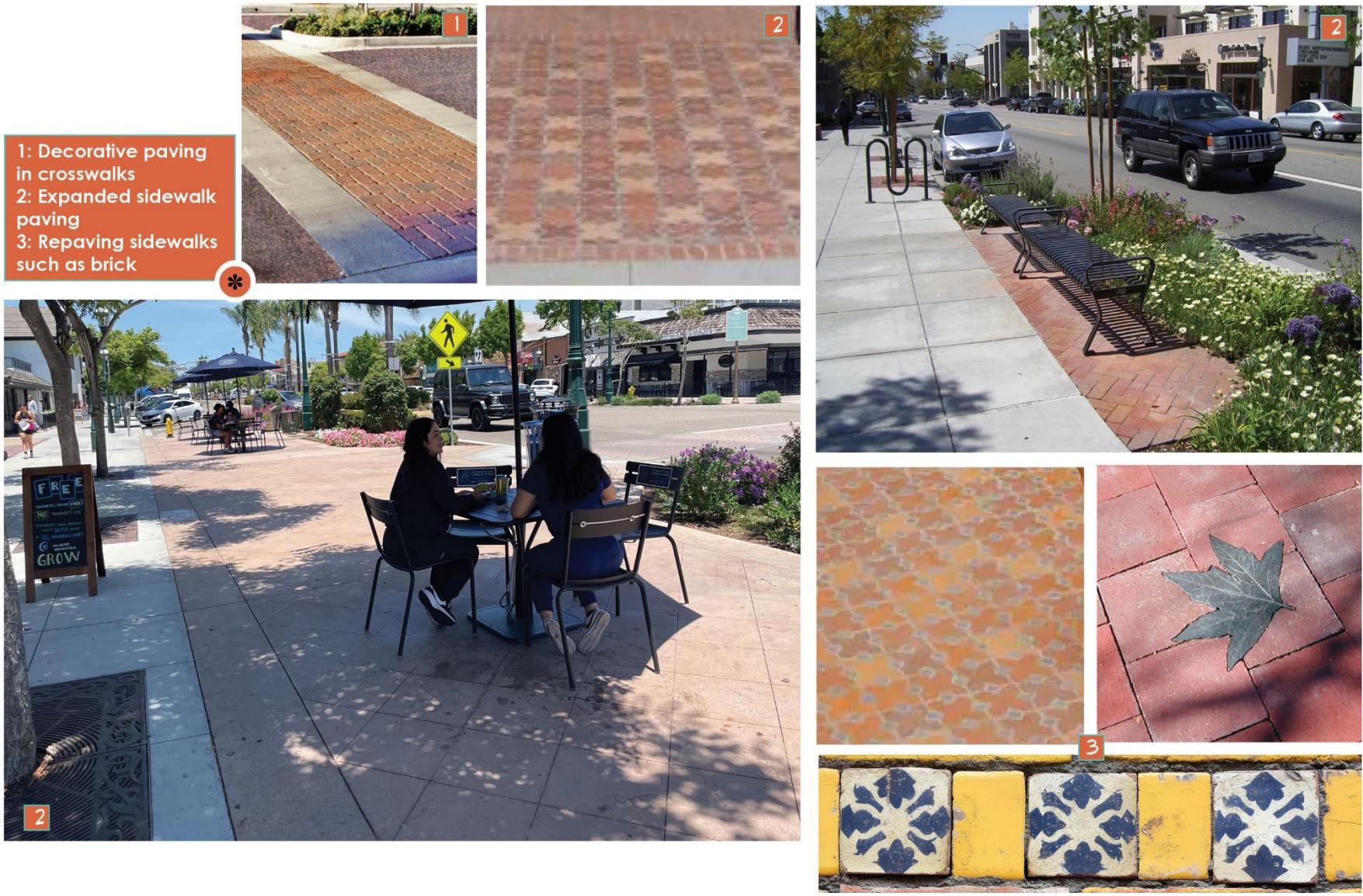
# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

2.B.iii	Repaving sidewalks, such as brick or scored concrete with decorative banding	P, S	P	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2030	3
2.B.iv	Lighter color roadway paving to be more heat reflective, paired with a sandblasted simple design, such as circles or wavy lines leading towards popular destinations	V	CD / P	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2030	1
2.B.v	Mobility shuttle provided during events	V, S	CD / P	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2029	3
2.B.vi	Future parking garage located in close proximity to Main Street	S	CD / P	\$\$\$	Spring 2032	3
2.B.vii	Introduce ADA-accessible parking at cross-street intersections	N	P	\$\$	Summer / Fall 2027	1

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



Figure 2-6: Long-Term Right-of-Way Improvement Examples





1: Enhanced paving  
in intersections, such  
as lithocrete mosaic or  
sanbblasting



### 3. Site Furnishings and Landscaping

This section includes elements which provide for increased gathering and community enjoyment of Main Street, such as landscaping, public art, pedestrian furnishings, dog amenities, decorative lighting, and restrooms.

**TABLE 2-7: LONG-TERM SITE FURNISHINGS AND LANDSCAPING OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Short-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Estimated Cost Range “\$” low, “\$\$” midlevel, “\$\$\$” high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities
3.	<b>SITE FURNISHINGS AND LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
A.	<b>Landscape and Shade Enhancements</b>					
3.A.i	In-ground planters / trees	V	CD / P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Spring 2031	1
3.A.ii	Trees / shade near the center of the street	V	CD / P / DVP / F	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Spring 2031	3
3.A.iii	Soft / green spaces at intersections and between blocks in public nodes	S	CD / P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Spring 2031	2
3.A.iv	Overhead trellises in public nodes	N	CD / P / B / F	\$\$	Spring 2031	3
3.A.v	Develop and implement a cohesive landscape plan	N	CD / P / B	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Winter / Spring 2031	1

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

Streetscape Furnishing Improvements						
B.						
3.B.i	Group seating in public spaces / terraced seating areas	V	P / DVP	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2031	3
3.B.ii	Visually interesting built-in seating, such as sculptural and undulating elements	V	P / DVP	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2031	1
3.B.iii	Integrate fun seating such as loungers and swings	V	P / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2031	2
3.B.iv	Flexible seating opportunities such as low walls and boulders	V	P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2031	1
3.B.v	Solar charging furnishings for public nodes	N	B / P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2031	3

<b>C. Public Art and Placemaking Elements</b>						
3.C.i	In ground sculpture / sculpture garden	V	CD / B / P	\$\$-\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2029	3
3.C.ii	Plaques / interpretive signage for historical buildings / cultural elements	V	CD / B / DVP	\$\$-\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2029	3
3.C.iii	Additional / rotating Instagram “photo opportunity” locations	P	CD / CO	\$-\$\$	Spring / Summer 2028	2
3.C.iv	Kinetic art / music experiences	N	CD / CO / DVP	\$-\$\$	Spring / Summer 2028	2
<b>D. Decorative Lighting</b>						
3.D.i	Improved / additional street lighting, such as catenary lighting or other suspended decorative luminaires	N	CD / B / F / P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2030	3
3.D.ii	Consider providing decorative poles for string lighting	N	CD / B / F	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2030	3
3.D.iii	Green screen / shadow play areas	N	CD / B / F	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2030	3

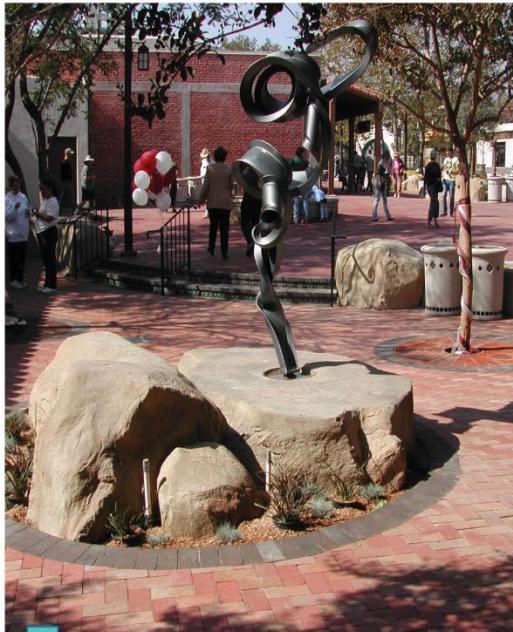
<b>E.</b>	<b>Public Restrooms</b>					
3.E.i	Additional permanent public restroom in close proximity to Main Street	V, B, P	CD / CO / P / DVP	\$\$\$	Spring 2033	3
3.E.ii	Self-cleaning permanent restroom options	B	CD / CO / P / DVP	\$\$\$	Spring 2033	3



*Permanent Public Restroom Examples*



Figure 2-7: Long-Term Site Furnishings and Landscaping Examples



- 1: In-ground planters/trees with boulders
- 2. Decorative seat walls

\*



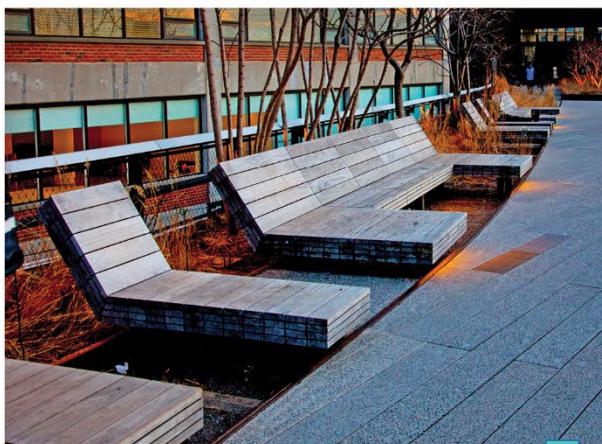
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2



# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



1: Fun seating such as loungers and swings  
2: Terraced group seating areas  
3: Interesting built-in and attached seating



Images provided by the City of Ventura

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK





1: Catenary lighting or other suspended decorative luminaires  
2: Shadow play areas



## 4. Gathering, Play, and Activity Areas

This section includes elements which enhance group gathering opportunities such as creating unique and inviting pedestrian friendly spaces to activate the Vision Plan project area and draw residents and visitors to Downtown Ventura.

**TABLE 2-8: LONG-TERM GATHERING, PLAY, AND ACTIVITY AREA OPPORTUNITIES**

Reference Number	Long-Term Improvement Type	Idea or Feedback from Community Outreach? <sup>1</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Lead Responsible Department or Organization <sup>2</sup> See key in Section 2b above	Estimated Cost Range "\$" low, "\$\$\$"midlevel, "\$\$\$\$"high	Target Installation Dates	List of Priorities 1 highest, 2 middle, 3 lowest
4.	<b>GATHERING, PLAY, AND ACTIVITY AREA IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
A.	<b>Public Gathering Spaces</b>					
4.A.i	Enhanced / relocated permanent outdoor stage – the stage could be improved at California Street or relocated	S	CO / ED / DVP	\$\$ - \$\$	Spring 2027	2
4.A.ii	Dog-friendly zones such as planter areas with faux fire hydrants, dog bags, etc.	P	CO / ED / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2026	2

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

4.A.iii	Relaxation zones such as lounge chairs and densely landscaped areas	Q	CD / P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	2
4.A.iv	Softscape and spaces for yoga and exercise	S	CD / P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2027	2
4.A.v	Outlets and power for events	N	B / P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	2
4.A.vi	Outdoor speakers in strategic locations (not near parklets)	N	B / P / DVP	\$	Spring / Summer 2027	2
4.A.vii	Monitored bike parking / bike valet for events	V	CD / P / DVP	\$	Fall 2026	1
<b>B.</b>	<b>Play Areas for All Ages</b>					
4.B.i	Permanent play equipment	V, S	CD / P / DVP	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	1
4.B.ii	Calisthenics gym	V	CD / P / DVP	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	3
4.B.iii	Temporary science exhibits (water tables and other interactive learning activities)	V	CD / P / DVP	\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	2
4.B.iv	Spaces for movie watching opportunities	V	CD / P / DVP	\$\$	Fall 2026	2
4.B.v	Splash bubbler pad	N	CD / P	\$\$\$	Spring / Summer 2027	1

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



Figure 2-8: Long-Term Gathering, Play, and Activity Examples



1: Permanent play equipment

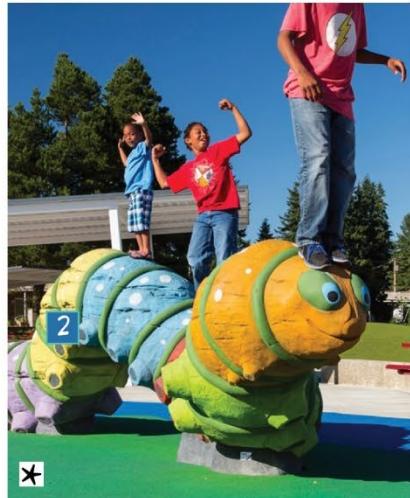


Image provided by the City of Ventura

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



1: Enhanced permanent stage  
2: Bubbler pad  
3: Softscape and spaces for exercise



# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



1: Enhanced permanent stage with entertainment  
2: Movie watching opportunities



## Section 3: Advancing the Vision Plan

This section identifies future potential projects, programming opportunities, and additional studies that support long-term success and adaptability of the Vision Plan project area. Implementation of the Vision Plan will require a collaborative approach, leveraging public-private partnerships, established community organizations (such as the Downtown Ventura Organization [DVO], Downtown Ventura Partners [DVP], and Chamber of Commerce, etc.), grant funding, and phased improvements to bring the vision to life.

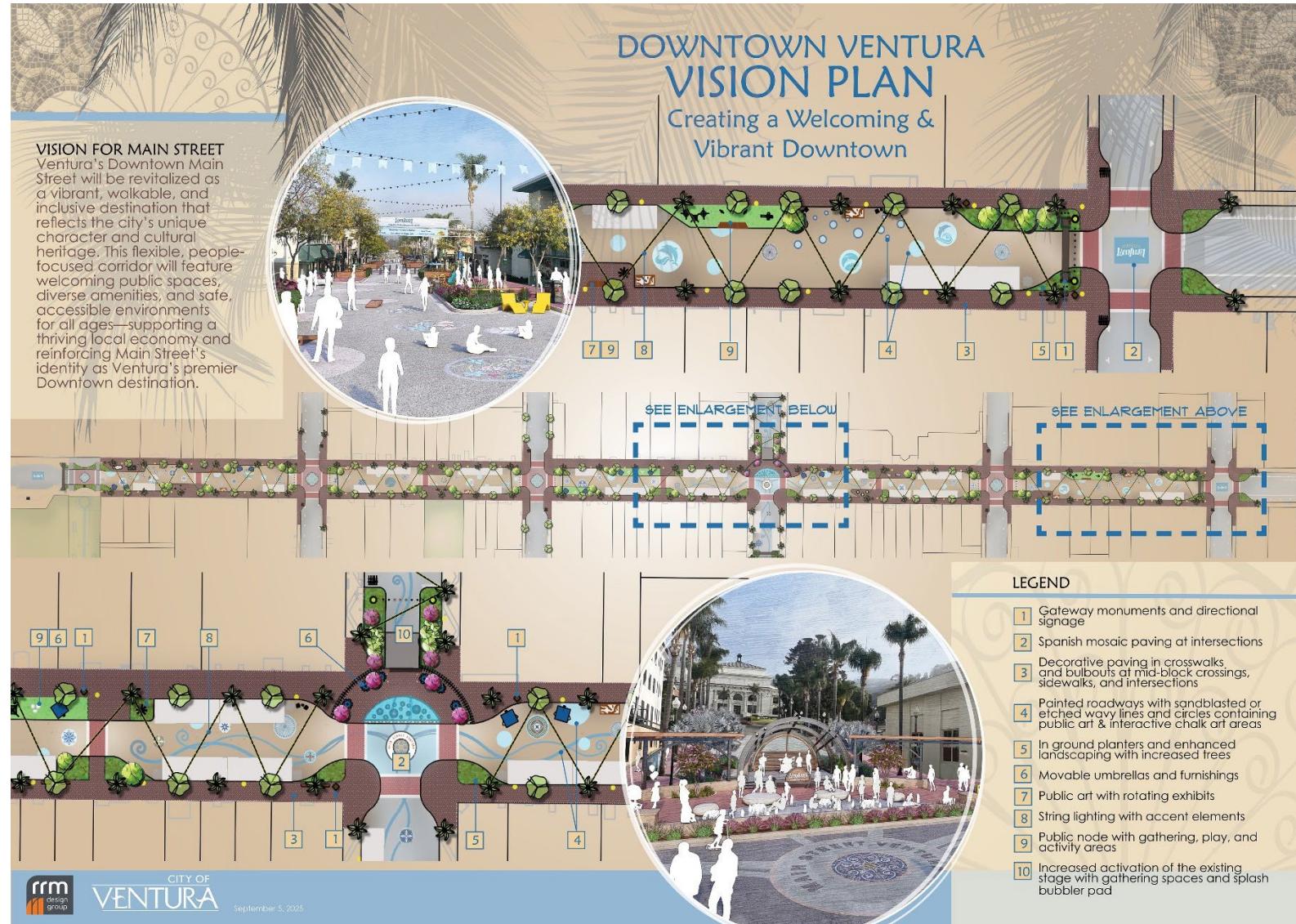
The list of short- and long-term improvements identified in Section 2 is intended to serve as a flexible menu of options that can be pursued as resources become available. Throughout implementation, the vision statement in Section 1 will remain a guiding reference – ensuring that each step reinforces Ventura’s commitment to a vibrant, inclusive, and pedestrian-focused Downtown.

While the City can initiate change through physical improvements and placemaking efforts, lasting transformation in the closure area will also depend on private investment in building upgrades, infill development, additional parking, new businesses, and housing. With a clear vision and community-supported priorities in place, this section outlines the path forward for implementing the Main Street Vision Plan with strategies to consider to further promote redevelopment and increased use of the Vision Plan project area.

A Vision Plan Poster is included in Figure 3-1 to help facilitate and illustrate the long-term vision for Main Street Ventura. The Vision Poster is also provided as a standalone full-size poster to serve as a marketing tool for future grants and investment efforts. The Vision Poster features graphic renderings and conceptual plan views which are also included in more detail in Section 1 to visually communicate the envisioned long-term improvements and depicts the transformation and revitalization of the Vision Plan project area’s public spaces.

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

Figure 3-1: Vision Plan Poster



## a) Future Projects, Programming, and Additional Studies

The elements outlined in this section fall outside the immediate scope of this Vision Plan Handbook, but they represent critical opportunities to support and sustain the long-term success of Main Street. These future projects, programs, and studies reflect community priorities and provide a roadmap for continued investment, activation, and refinement of the Vision Plan project area. By identifying complementary efforts—from park renovations and public art installations to accessibility audits and event programming—this section ensures that the Vision Plan remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with Ventura’s evolving needs.

- Future Projects

- Enhance existing open spaces and parks adjacent to Main Street - these opportunity sites, with thoughtful design, improvements, and activation, have the potential to become vibrant gathering places within the Downtown
  - Renovate Figueroa Mall
  - Revitalize Mission Park
  - Improve public parking areas
- Develop and implement a Downtown accessory signage and display program to better address unpermitted signage and outdoor displays
- Window display program – work with vacant storefronts to display local art in the windows
- Install speed bumps / speed tables if Main Street remains open or hybrid (consider at mid-block crossings)
- Refine and post Main Street rules and regulations
- Pilot projects – implement 6-month test projects for street closure options
- Additional parking
  - There is a strong demand for close, free, and ADA-compliant parking options
  - Provide temporary parking options, such as 15-minute takeout zones and/or drop-off and pick-up areas
- Safety improvements (Safe Streets 4 America Grant funding dependent)

- Future Programming

- Increased visible law enforcement in the closure area
- Require large events to provide additional temporary restrooms
- Develop City-sponsored event schedule (e.g. chalk art day, outdoor movie night, summer concert series)
- Advertise Downtown and Main Street events on the City's website
- Provide events to highlight cultural and historical resources
- Existing stage – include theatrical performances, competitions, comedy shows, kids programming featuring popular characters, etc.
- Ongoing scavenger hunt with social media aspect that gives out prizes from businesses
- QR codes with digital directory, scavenger hunt, audio guide, museum info, botanical garden info, trolley schedule, etc.
- Keep Farmer's Market on Main Street (short- and long-term goal)
- Children's art shows during the week, which would attract parents and families Downtown – partner with schools or aftercare programs
- Street dances, progressive dining events, and interactive cultural themes
- Time for deliveries for Downtown that allows delivery and services – such as 6-9am
- Bolster event schedule with City-sponsored marquee events (e.g. solstice festival)
- Special considerations for Farmers Market vendor space allocation
- Host family-friendly and history-focused events
- Local Thursdays – align with the concert series
- Audio guide for history of Downtown (partner with Museum and their oral history program)
- "Easter eggs" for kids to look for as they walk (e.g. find all the Channel Island Fox pictures)
- Support for businesses
  - Prepare event guidelines to minimize competition between vendors and local establishments
  - Consider providing free advertising for businesses within the Vision Plan project area
  - Keep access to buildings (visually and physically) and non-competitive uses for nearby businesses
  - Encourage a variety of spaces / uses to protect from becoming only bars / restaurants / thrift stores
  - Temporary spaces in Downtown for exploration such as incubator spaces, satellite universities, and learning spaces
  - Do not allow sub-letting parklets to other/adjacent businesses

- Additional Studies

- Main Street safety plan (dependent on Safe Streets 4 America Grant funding dependent)
- Maintenance and operations plan developed for Main Street
  - General maintenance, street cleanliness, and management of homelessness
  - Non-compliance clauses – if they are not being good citizens
- Noise standards within Main Street with enforcement
- Bike/ e-bike standards and restrictions and enforcement at crosswalks and within the Main Street area
- Reactivating and optimizing traffic signal operations at California Street and Santa Clara to enhance coordination across pedestrians / bicycles / vehicles
- Electric scooters / vans/ trolleys or buses brought in during events at the County Fair to bring people Downtown
- Parking study – provide additional parking – new parking structure
- Improve connections to Main Street from various points of interest:
  - Pacific Ocean
    - Revisit the possibility of a freeway cap / bridge over the freeway in future to connect to beach
  - Harbor and promenade
  - Fairgrounds
- Look for transportation options to connect Main Street to other areas of Ventura
  - Shuttle options for large events
  - Free / affordable electric trolley to beach / promenade
  - Crossing guards during events and summer weekends – from fairgrounds to the Downtown
  - Electric scooters brought in during events at the fair – such as up Figueroa Street Mall into the Downtown
  - Bird / Lyft scooters
  - Pedi-cabs



## b) Future Options for Main Street

This effort looked at Main Street as a closed street; however, if it is to reopen in the future, below are our suggested options to consider, many of which were informed by the community outreach process.

- OPTION1: Close one-to-two blocks permanently with hybrid approach for other blocks
- OPTION 2: Hybrid approach for all six blocks. Open to vehicles on weekdays and full closure on weekends and for events
- OPTION 3: Hybrid approach – full closure for summer / seasonal events
- OPTION 4: Shared street (Woonerf) – a pedestrian-focused street inspired by the Dutch concept of a “woonerf,” where sidewalks and the roadway are the same level, vehicles move slowly, and the space can easily be closed for events, creating a flexible, community-friendly public area
- OPTION 5: One-way travel lane and bike lane
  - One-way option with bike lanes – 20’ combined width for emergency access, such as a 12’ travel lane, 6’ bike lane, and 2’ buffer between the bike and travel lane
  - Consider parking modifications such as removing parking on one side of the street and/or revising to parallel parking to maximize pedestrian spaces

## Appendix A: Community Outreach

The City hosted a series of outreach events to gather community, business, and property owner feedback for the Main Street Vision Plan.

- **Community Visioning Session (May 31, 2025 – Museum of Ventura County, 100 East Main Street)**

Over 100 participants attended, including City staff from Community Development, Public Works, Transportation, Parks & Recreation, and Fire, as well as a councilmember, community members, and the consultant team. A community questionnaire was also launched on the City's website in early summer, allowing the community to share feedback on preferences, issues, and opportunities in the Vision Plan project area.

- **Business Owner Meeting (June 11, 2025 – E.P. Foster Library, 651 East Main Street)**

The meeting focused on gathering input from business owners within the Vision Plan project area regarding issues and opportunities. The presentation included an overview of the parklet construction documents project and information about the streamlined application process. The meeting was held in person with a virtual participation option via Zoom.

- **Property Owner Meeting (July 7, 2025 – Community Meeting Room, City Hall, 501 Poli Street)**

This meeting gathered feedback from property owners within the closure area to better understand challenges and opportunities from their perspective. The meeting was held in person and also accessible virtually via Zoom.

- **Stakeholder Meetings (Summer 2025)**

In addition to the group meetings, the consultant team (RRM) conducted meetings with property and business owners to identify key issues, understand stakeholder priorities, and build consensus around the vision for the Main Street area. On August 26th, the City hosted a property owner stakeholder session to discuss the future of the program and potential alternative street configurations. Common themes included the need for urgent action, independent economic analysis, and investment in infrastructure such as parking, bollards, and restrooms.

Refer to **Section 1d** for a summary of key takeaways from these outreach efforts. A detailed account of each event is provided below.



## a) Public Visioning Session

The public visioning session brought together the community, City staff, and project team members to collaboratively explore design opportunities for Main Street. The visioning session consisted of a brief presentation from the consultant team, overview of the project, and discussions regarding the stations and voting activities. Through a compressed, interactive format, participants engaged in presentations, discussions, and station-based activities that encouraged input, education, and feedback on key design concepts. City staff and the consultant team were available at each station to answer questions and facilitate discussion about the Main Street improvements. Additionally, the visioning session participants were invited to respond to the following questions through an online community questionnaire. A QR code, link, and hard copies were provided for participants to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was provided on the project website for ease of access.

Organized into four stations, the session revealed strong community support for a vibrant, inclusive, and artful Main Street blending urban and park-like elements. Key themes from the stations included:

- **Station 1:** Preferences for shade treatments, open turf areas, beachy and playful character, and functional art / play elements
- **Station 2:** Main Street identity should emphasize walkability, family-friendliness, historic-modern character, public art, green space, and support for local markets and public seating
- **Station 3:** High support for streetscape features such as string lights, planters, freestanding seating, inclusive play areas, public art, artistic crosswalks, and whimsical bike racks. Additional suggestions included QR codes for art/walking tours and expanded bike parking
- **Station 4:** Desired pedestrian mall character includes a mix of urban and park forms, shaded outdoor dining, big trees, safe nighttime lighting, integrated play areas, flexible turf/lounge spaces, flush pavement, event/gathering areas, a gazebo at Mission Park, ride-share hubs, and public restrooms

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK

Overall, the session emphasized the community's desire for a dynamic, family-friendly, and visually engaging Main Street that prioritizes walkability, public gathering spaces, and playful, artistic streetscape elements. Feedback from the session will directly inform short- and long-term improvements to create a vibrant, inclusive, and memorable Main Street district.



*Images from the Community Visioning Session*



## b) Business Owners Meeting

Following the public visioning session, RRM convened a meeting with retail and restaurant business owners located in and adjacent to the Main Street closure area to gather input on the study area's challenges and opportunities. The discussion focused on understanding business priorities, concerns, and ideas for both short- and long-term improvements.

Attendees voiced frustration over the lack of a clear timeline and budget for Main Street initiatives, emphasizing the need for immediate, achievable enhancements such as repaving, signage, public art, and enhancing the appearance of parklets. Key themes included improving the functionality of barriers and intersections, balancing public space with business operations, providing wayfinding and public restroom facilities, and establishing a clear City-led process outlining timelines, costs, and funding. Feedback from this meeting will inform strategies to create a flexible, pedestrian-friendly Main Street that supports both community activity and business vitality.



*Images from the Business Owners Meeting*



## c) Property Owners Meeting and Stakeholder Interviews

During the July 7, 2025 property owner's meeting, property owners and stakeholders expressed concern over high vacancy rates, limited infrastructure, and the need for a clear economic and implementation plan for Main Street. While many supported a flexible or hybrid street model with selective closures and enhanced amenities—such as permanent restrooms, increased shade treatments, and better parking access — there was widespread frustration over slow permitting, limited or committed funding, and the lack of coordinated planning. Feedback emphasized balancing aesthetics, accessibility, and diverse business uses to revitalize Downtown Ventura and attract consistent foot traffic.

Stakeholder interviews, including 1:1 meetings with Alex Schneider, Jeff Becker, Vim Jonker, Peter Goldenring, and Kate McDuffy, echoed these same concerns and emphasized the need for a more collaborative, transparent, and economically viable approach to Main Street planning. Opinions were mixed on whether to reopen the Vision Plan project area to vehicles. However, most interviewees consistently supported a flexible or hybrid closure model, with block-by-block testing, seasonal or event-based only closures, and streamlined permitting. Many stressed the importance of re-opening for economic reasons and to keep businesses open, while continuing to evaluate hybrid options through further analysis and future consideration of hybrid closures. Economic analysis was discussed substantially through the 1:1 meetings, with interviewees emphasizing the importance of better understanding viability of vehicle closures for the Vision Plan project area. Key concerns included high vacancy rates, lack of infrastructure and funding, parking and accessibility challenges, improved amenities, and a desire for greater collaboration and transparency from the City to ensure the economic and functional success of Main Street. Stakeholders advocated for activating underutilized spaces, such as rooftops, courtyards, and pocket parks, and emphasized the value of local businesses, live entertainment, and cultural programming to foster vibrancy. There was broad support for connecting Main Street to surrounding destinations like the fairgrounds and beach, and for enhancing the pedestrian experience with dog-friendly features, softscape areas, and distinctive design elements. Overall, the interviews reinforced the importance of a community-driven, economically sound, and creatively designed vision for Main Street's future.

# Main Street Ventura VISION PLAN HANDBOOK



*Images from the Property Owners Meeting*



## d) Community Questionnaire

In early summer, the City hosted the Main Street community questionnaire on its website, receiving 584 responses. The questionnaire gathered insights into experiences, priorities, and concerns regarding Downtown Ventura. Overall, respondents valued the pedestrian-friendly environment and community events but highlighted significant challenges related to accessibility, safety, business vitality, and street functionality.

### Key Findings:

- **Parking and accessibility:** difficulty finding nearby, ADA-compliant parking and navigating uneven surfaces was a major concern, particularly for elderly and disabled visitors
- **Homelessness and safety:** safety concerns, including the presence of unhoused individuals and limited visible law enforcement, were cited as detracting from the street experience
- **Aesthetic and infrastructure improvements:** temporary outdoor dining setups and barricades were seen as unappealing; respondents called for cohesive design, additional greenery, shade, and overall beautification
- **Reopening Main Street:** respondents expressed interest in reopening Main Street to vehicular traffic, either fully or partially, to improve mobility and support businesses. Hybrid models—such as weekday vehicle access and weekend closures—were also suggested
- **Support for local businesses:** many noted declining foot traffic and challenges for brick-and-mortar establishments, emphasizing the need for targeted business support
- **Community events and activities:** farmers markets, street fairs, and live music were highly appreciated, with interest in additional family-friendly, inclusive programming
- **Public transportation and alternative solutions:** suggestions included trolleys, shuttles, and creative programming such as street dances and interactive cultural events to increase access and attract visitors

## Conclusion:

Questionnaire responses reflect a community seeking a balance between pedestrian-focused initiatives and practical access for vehicles and parking. Addressing accessibility, safety, and business support—while enhancing the streets' aesthetics—will be critical to maintaining Downtown Ventura as a vibrant, welcoming destination for residents and visitors alike. A full copy of the survey results is provided on the City's website.