

## Urban Design Students Focus on Waterfront

Students from University of Notre Dame are in town to conduct an urban design charrette for Ventura, including but not limited to Downtown waterfront area and the Edgewater redevelopment project.

Edgewater is the 11-acre Downtown waterfront site anchored by the redevelopment of the existing public parking structure. The proposal includes beachfront shops, restaurants, public spaces and a boutique hotel.

An end-of-charrette presentation will be held on Friday, Oct. 2 at 3 p.m. at the Ventura Ventures Technology Center (V2TC) located at 505 Poli Street, 3rd floor behind City Hall.

For more information, contact Assistant Community Development Director/Town Designer Kaizer Rangwala at (805) 677-3918 or [krangwala@cityofventura.net](mailto:krangwala@cityofventura.net).



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[www.downtownventura.org](http://www.downtownventura.org)

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## BUSINESS NEWS

Welcome to the following businesses who have joined our thriving Downtown!

### Bikram Yoga

34 N. Palm • 648-6433  
*Hot yoga, EcoBoutique, yogawear*  
[BikramYogaVentura.com](http://BikramYogaVentura.com)

### Buffalo Exchange

532 E. Main • 648-6873  
[BuffaloExchange.com](http://BuffaloExchange.com)

### Cheryl Collins Signature Style

420 E. Main • 648-7778  
*Home interiors and design*

### CSUCI Art Gallery

Erle Stanley Gardner Bldg.  
494 E. Main / 267-4802  
[Art.csuci.edu/gallery](http://Art.csuci.edu/gallery)

### Estuary

451 E. Main  
*Waxing salon and bikini boutique*

### Fire Fly

Spa and therapy  
128 S. California • 648-4569

### The Glycerin Soap Company

*Handcrafted vegetable-based soap and bath products*  
451 E. Main • 804-6270  
[GlycerinSoapCompany.com](http://GlycerinSoapCompany.com)

### Go Fish Clothing & Jewelry Co.

309 E. Main • 648-3474  
[ventura.gofishretail.com/](http://ventura.gofishretail.com/)

### Quick Printing Plus

83 S. Palm • 654-1707  
[QPPVentura.com](http://QPPVentura.com)

### Pacific Western Bank

(formerly Affinity Bank)  
101 S. Chestnut

### The Wine Rack

(new name)  
14 S. California • 653-WINE  
[WeaverWines.com](http://WeaverWines.com)

### Skin Hut

35 South Oak • 652-1699  
*A boutique spa, facials, massage*  
[www.venturaskinhut.com](http://www.venturaskinhut.com)

### Urban Outfitters

327 E. Main • 652-0133  
[UrbanOutfitters.com](http://UrbanOutfitters.com)

### Pure Life and Home

576 E. Main • 641-2500

### Sew What

(new location)  
427 E. Main • 653-1920  
*Gown design and tailoring.*

### True Image

616 E. Main  
*Women's fashion boutique*

### Sicily by Gino

563 E. Main • 641-2220  
*Pizza, pasta, panini, espresso*

### Silver Trends

(new location)  
493 E. Main • 428-8070



## Downtown Ventura Organization Newsletter

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Fall 2009

## Improvement District Passes by Wide Margin

Downtown Ventura property owners voted overwhelmingly on Monday, May 11 to pool their resources and fund future Downtown revitalization activities. With a 76 percent affirmative vote, Downtown property owners completed the final step in a yearlong process to create a property-based business improvement district (PBID). This is the third time in 10 years that a PBID has been attempted.

Success of this attempt validates the council's decision three years ago to invest \$500,000 in the nascent Downtown Ventura Organization (DVO). The DVO follows the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Main Street Approach" to stimulate the commercial district's revitalization. The Main Street model is a nationally proven business model that promotes incremental changes within historic downtowns rather than relying on big redevelopment construction projects



Through the efforts of the Downtown Ventura Organization, major events like the Criterium bicycle race have exposed new tourists to Downtown Ventura.

as catalysts.

The county will collect these assessments in the fourth quarter of this year when property owners pay their taxes. Thus, funds will be delivered to the new 501 (c) 6 organization, the Downtown Ventura Partners, in January of 2010. A board of directors made up of 11 Downtown stakeholders will manage the assessments collected. The city will have one representative on the new board and the City Council gave its approval of the plan. A higher level of security, maintenance and other improvements that property owners have agreed to are planned.

Despite the local and national economy, the majority of property owners realized the value of having a Downtown management district. "Supporters hailed it as a milestone and contend the pooled resources will lead to increased business and

*Please turn to page 2*

## New 11-Member Board Elected to Manage Revenues

The PBID Management Plan approved in May 2009 by the Downtown property owners called for an 11-member board of directors: three business owners, seven property owners, and one representative from the City of Ventura.

More than 20 members of the community stepped forward and placed their names on a ballot that was circulated to all 220 property owners. Votes were weighted based upon the owners' assessment-to-be-paid in 2010, i.e. each dollar to be paid was afforded one vote. The list below reflects the highest vote-getters; each will serve staggered one, two, and three-year terms. The CEO of

the Chamber of Commerce and the city's parking manager are permanent (non-voting) liaisons to the board. Officers were elected in June. The founding board is:

Dave Armstrong, Chairman of the Board, Partner, Armstrong Advisors

David Comden, Vice Chairman  
Publisher, Ventana Monthly and the  
Ventura County Reporter

Greg Smith, Treasurer  
Partner, Smith-Hobson

Jerry Breiner, Secretary  
REMAX Gold Coast Realtors

The Honorable Christy Weir  
Mayor, City of Ventura

Cheryl Heitmann,  
Executive Director, Ventura  
Music Festival

Mark Hartley  
Partner, The Fitzgerald Hartley Co.

Ed Warren  
Owner, Landmark 78 & The Busy Bee

Jeff Becker  
Partner, The Becker Group, Inc.

Jeff Smith  
Partner, Smith-Hobson

Mike Merewether  
Partner, Tolman & Wiker Insurance  
Brokers (Retired)

# DVO Committees Working for You

## Design Committee

Twenty new sidewalk flower pots were added to the Downtown landscape in late spring. Ornamental plum trees now line California street where there had been only palm trees. Pygmy palm trees and more creeping annuals were added for an even more lush look. Members of the committee are now designing new newspaper racks to add conformity and cleanliness to our sidewalks.

Our 10 new recycle and refuse bins arrived in June and were well received by the community. The new bins add a sense of conformity and replace concrete trash cans that were almost 20 years old, tagged, dirty, and with broken lids.



## Economic Restructuring Committee

Committee members hosted an open house for commercial real estate brokers in the region earlier this spring. The reception held at W2O gave property owners and their representatives and opportunity to expose their available inventory to new brokers.

Another open house is planned for October 5 at 60 S. California St.

Future projects being considered by the committee include: participating in the city's effort to compare fees charged by Ventura vs. other cities; compiling a Downtown database with property uses, tenant types, vacancies, parking demand, etc. in order to benchmark progress over time; and the development of a system to measure the impacts of public outdoor festivals over time.

## Promotions Committee

The first DVO ArtWalk fundraiser, held at Red Brick Gallery, raised \$4,000. Budget cutbacks in the city's Cultural Affairs Department have prompted a need for private funds to continue future events. The Harvest ArtWalk is October 24-25. Event and special advertising planning efforts have begun for the winter holiday shopping season.

## Organization Committee

In an effort to interest more young professionals in the revitalization work of the DVO, we launched a Third Thursdays young professional mixer. It's a simple monthly happy hour networking event to bring our younger (under 40) crowd together and cultivate the future leaders of Ventura. So far, restaurants El Rey, Watermark, Charline's, Caffé Bella, and Zoey's have hosted the group.

Education of retailers on the value of everything from historic preservation of their buildings to customer service and business practices has been the focus of our quarterly merchant seminars. Topics covered thus far have included small business lending, inventory control and even using social networking sites like Facebook to foster customer loyalty.

On Sept. 8 the committee coordinated DVO's second City Council candidate forum. With four incumbents and 11 challengers, this election cycle will be a hotly contested one. The DVO asked council candidates to take positions on issues that directly affect small businesses and property owners.

Find their written position on 12 issues on our website: [www.DowntownVentura.org](http://www.DowntownVentura.org) in the About Us section.

## Traffic Keeps Increasing on Downtown Website

If you haven't looked at ShopDowntownVentura.com in a while you've missed the phenomenal growth the site has enjoyed over the past several months to more than 100 merchant and service providers in the Downtown Ventura area. The site, which was created and maintained as a free service to all Downtown Ventura businesses, has seen more growth over the past three months than any period in its history since its inception in early 2007, said Pacific Western vice president and DVO board member Lucas Johnston.

"I think it's a matter of reaching critical mass," said Johnston. "The more businesses that get involved, the more that want to join. We've seen an increase in traffic to the site and in the number of discount coupons being printed, and we are seeing more coupons being printed by people visiting Ventura from around the country and from abroad."

The site is open for participation by all businesses in the Downtown area. "This site is all about Downtown Ventura and its businesses. We just wanted to do our part to help promote this exciting, diverse shopping and dining destination."

Johnston said anyone not currently participating on the site may do so by contacting Pacific Western's Downtown Ventura office at (805) 804-8200.



## Letter from the Executive Director

By Rob Edwards



I'm writing to you today as the executive director of the new Downtown Ventura Partners (DVP)! As planned, the DVO's three-year funding commitment from the city's Redevelopment Agency expired on June 30. With a short-term loan from the city, the DVP was able to secure enough funding to carry the organization through the summer and fall of this year until assessments from the new PBID are delivered to us by the county in January of 2010. The DVO will continue as a 501(c)(3) organization enabling us to fundraise and offer a tax benefit to all donors.

The new 501 (c)(6) DVP, among other things, has the latitude to lobby for policy changes both locally and statewide if it so chooses over time. Both boards meet jointly on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 8:30 a.m. We'll continue to follow the Brown Act and all of DVP's board meetings, minutes and financials are open to the public.

Here are some of the highlights of the achievements made over the past six months:

A reinterpretation of existing outdoor dining rules and regulations were agreed to after our Restaurant and Design committees requested them; now alcohol may be served outside on public sidewalks as long as fencing and appropriate ADA laws are followed. Savory Café & Bakery and Caffé Bella were the first to take advantage of this opportunity ... In May we assisted the Amgen Employee Cycling Club with the production of the Ventura County Stage Race—two of the three stages of which were held Downtown. A "criterium" is a cycling race on closed city streets. ... Retail grand openings are listed on the back of this newsletter with two noteworthy additions: national retailers Buffalo Exchange and Urban Outfitters opened stores in August. ... In late September the DVO hosted the statewide association of downtown management districts, CDA. The DVO's bid to host this conference bested bids from Palm Springs and Pasadena. ... and finally, the DVO received its sixth award in two years. This one comes from the International Downtown Association for a new website we created with Panomatics USA. A stunning virtual tour of our Downtown's indoor and outdoor amenities allow you to enter stores and restaurants and stroll along our streets and the beachfront promenade—right from your computer. This specific technology has never been deployed before in the USA and we are indebted to Panomatics for partnering with us to create a truly unique website. Take a look for yourself: [www.VirtualVentura.net](http://www.VirtualVentura.net)

## Stay Informed!

Follow us on [Twitter](#) for Downtown emergency alerts (only): DowntownVentura ... And befriend us on [Facebook](#) for interesting updates about the neighborhood: retail and restaurant trends, special events, live music, and the local economy. Want more news more often? Sign up for our weekly e-newsletter on our website: [www.DowntownVentura.org](http://www.DowntownVentura.org)



These 10 new recycle bins are supported by ads and were obtained at no cost.

## PBID Passes

Continued from page 1

property values that would more than make up for the cost of the special assessments," reported the Star.

A \$443,000 annual budget was developed by a steering committee of Downtown landowners last fall. The assessment funds will be spent on cleanliness and safety, advocacy and administration, economic development and marketing.

## A New Bank in Town

Pacific Western Bank acquired Affinity Bank on August 28, 2009 and Affinity's 10 branches opened on Monday, August 31, 2009 as branches of Pacific Western Bank.

Although new to Ventura County, Pacific Western Bank has served small and medium-sized businesses and their principals for 27 years and has 59 full-service community banking branches throughout Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego Counties. With \$4.5 billion in assets, Pacific Western Bank is the 18th largest commercial bank headquartered in California.