

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Jeff Hereford, Principal Transportation Engineer, jhereford@cityofventura.ca.gov**Shared Streets for Health and Safety During COVID-19**

Ventura, CA – Starting this week, the City’s Public Works Department will launch a Shared Streets for Health and Safety during COVID-19 initiative to help make neighborhood streets safer to walk and bike through the creation of wider spaces using current traffic lanes and sidewalks. This effort is intended to help pedestrians and cyclists practice physical distancing while enjoying healthy outdoor activities and sharing the street with slower-moving vehicles.

During COVID-19, five streets will have “Local Traffic Only” signage posted in neighborhoods to provide more space for physical activity on traffic lanes with slower-moving vehicles. This includes Olive Street, San Nicholas Street, Preble Avenue, Mound Avenue, and Darling Road. [Click here](#) for a map of pilot phase streets.

“This initiative provides additional street space for more than just cars. It enhances pedestrian and bicycle safety while maintaining access needs for those who live in the area,” commented Phil Nelson, Ventura Public Work Director. “Sidewalks are typically too narrow to exercise proper physical distancing around others who use the same path. Oftentimes, people walk into the street, which can be dangerous for pedestrians when vehicles are driving by in the same or adjacent lane.”

Traffic patterns will not change on the “Local Traffic Only” and “Shared Streets” configurations. Emergency services will continue to have full access to the street network. Designated street signs for this temporary initiative will include signage or barricades, indicating one of the following designs:

- “*Local Traffic Only*,” open to motorists traveling to a specific destination on that street.
- “*Shared Street*,” open to cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles. Motorists are encouraged to drive slowly and be extra cautious.
- “*Repurposed Street*,” temporary parking restrictions or lane changes in select locations to widen key walking and biking corridors.

The public is encouraged to provide feedback on the five pilot phase streets as well as share ideas for other areas in the Shared Streets initiative. [Click here](#) to submit your input to our Public Works Department.

Some examples of cities that have successfully implemented similar models include Alameda, Oakland, Burlington, Salt Lake City, Seattle, Pittsburgh, and more.

For more information on this initiative, the pilot phase, or to let us know if you would like your street considered, please visit www.cityofventura.ca.gov.