

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

*Empowering the community
to take control of policy
outcomes*

**RESOLVING GAPS
BETWEEN
QUANTITATIVE DATA
AND CONSTITUENT
EXPERIENCES**

Oxnard, CA

Heather Schmidt, M.PA, CySA, C.DA
heatherschmidtmpa@gmail.com
805/561.2776

Heather Christena Schmidt
Community Consulting
HeatherChristenaSchmidt.com



BACKGROUND

Oxnard, California - positioned along the Central Coast between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara - is a City of roughly 200,000 people. The City has a mixed demographic, though is predominantly Hispanic or Latino with around three-quarters of the population identifying as either fully or partially of the classification. In the context of Ventura County, Oxnard is considered a high density City.

A pervasive issue in the City of Oxnard has been a longstanding issue of discrepancies between (a) quantitative data concerning municipal problems and services, and (b) constituent experiences. This issue is not exclusive to Oxnard, though; rather it is a larger pattern observed among local governments that rely upon evidence-based paradigms, while data evaluated often runs contrary to anecdotal experiences of constituents. Reasons for this discrepancy could include, but may not be limited to:

- inherent limitations of quantitative data collection;
- poorly designed survey sampling yielding low response turnout;
- budget or time constraints impacting study scope and participation;
- constraints created through state and federal mandates; and,
- misperceptions and misinformation.

Unfortunately, such gaps often result in loss of trust in government, dissatisfaction with elected officials, and unrest in the community. At times, it results in unresolved problems at the community level. Qualitative analysis could solve the issue by providing a more nuanced look at any given municipal situation in need of agency response; however, at the local level, qualitative analysis is rarely an option due to a limited availability of subject matter experts and budget/time constraints. It often does not provide a work-around to state and federal constraints either.

Recognizing these limitations does not alleviate the negative outcomes of the gaps between gathered data and constituent experience, though. Nor should residents tolerate yes/no thinking when it comes to resolving issues of concern. Thus, this community consultation provides residents of Oxnard with meaningful recommendations to take control of their community outcomes. We do this by evaluating specific complaints relative to multiple issues presently occurring in the Oxnard Shores and Oxnard Dunes region of the City, located at 5th Street and Harbor Boulevard.

CASE STUDY 1: THE ANOMALOUS PERMISSIVE LEFT TURN AT OXNARD SHORES

The intersection at 5th Street and Harbor Boulevard has grown increasingly concerning for residents of Oxnard in the region due to an anomalous permissive left turn going North on Harbor Boulevard. All other directions (E/W on 5th, S on Harbor) have either a protective or permissive protective left turn.

The Department of Transportation does call for uniformity in traffic signal policies; however, in this particular instance, such a policy does not apply. There is no set standard across similar roads in Oxnard, or Ventura County at large; therefore, a collision warrant would be considered by City traffic engineers when evaluating whether or not to change the anomalous signal in favor of creating consistency going in all directions.

A collision warrant is a set number of traffic collisions experiencing the same set of conditions, and presented at the same location and direction. According to California state law, the warrant for changing a traffic signal is 5 collisions in any 12 month period - again, all occurring in the same direction and manner.

In the case of the Northbound signal on Harbor Boulevard, and to the frustration of area residents, the collision warrant is not met.

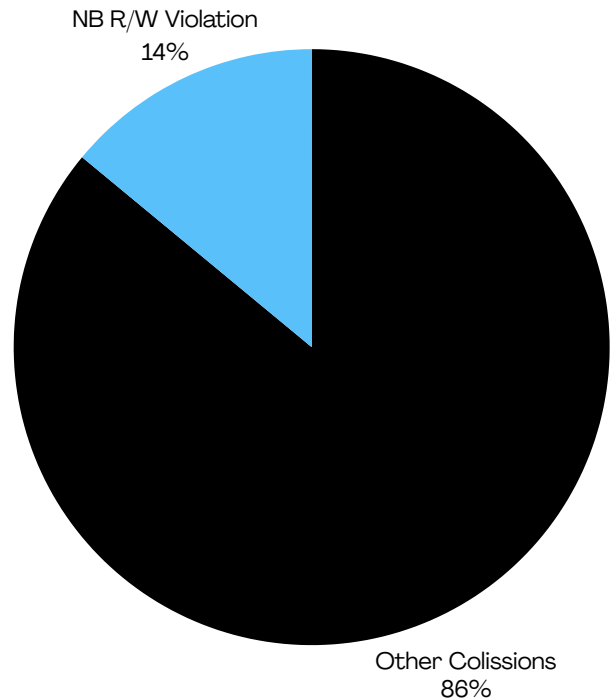
An analysis of data spanning approximately 13 years (data aggregated from January 1, 2013 through April 30, 2026) revealed a statistically high number of accidents at the general location of 5th and Harbor, which is why so many residents in the area are calling for the light to be changed. However, the specific Northbound right of way violation that would warrant a change of signal to a protected left turn occurred an average of less than 2 times in any given 12 month period during that 13 year span. This indicates a change in the Northbound traffic light is unlikely to significantly reduce traffic accidents in the region, and therefore inappropriate - at least according to the data.

Evaluating for Traffic Signal Warrant at 5th Avenue and Harbor Boulevard - Northbound Harbor turning Westbound onto

Date	Time	Cause	Fault/Notes
12/7/2013	11:23 AM	Unsafe speed	Rear-end going S on Harbor
2/10/2014	7:20 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Making a left turn onto 5th, hit by driver proceeding East
3/3/2014	2:34 PM	Auto R/W Violation	N/S Broadside
4/30/2014	2:04 AM	Driving under the influence	Single vehicle accident
6/4/2014	6:51 AM	Unsafe speed	NB rearend
6/17/2014	4:19 PM	-	Head-on collision, both drivers N/S turning left onto 5th E/W
9/4/2014	7:30 AM	Auto R/W Violation	East bound left turn
10/22/2014	5:40 PM	Hazardous Movement	SB rearend, inattention
7/31/2015	5:38 PM	Auto R/W Violation	N/S Headon
11/15/2015	2:24 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Making a left turn onto 5th, hit by a driver proceeding South
12/4/2015	10:59 PM	Pedestrian violation	West/South collision involving pedestrian-related violation
3/20/2016	1:48 PM	Unsafe speed	NB rearend
10/25/2016	7:05 AM	Hazardous Movement	NB Sideswipe
10/30/2016	5:15 PM	Unsafe speed	SB rearend
11/7/2016	6:47 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Making a left turn onto 5th going East, hit by NB driver
3/10/2017	2:53 AM	-	EB/NB collision
6/17/2017	1:46 PM	DUI	NB rearend
7/10/2017	3:44 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Making a left turn onto 5th, hit by SB proceeding straight
10/8/2017	5:16 AM	Unsafe speed	Single vehicle, hit object

Date	Time	Cause	Fault/Notes
11/22/2017	7:54 AM	Improper Turning	NB w/ impairment turning left onto 5th
6/8/2018	10:20 PM	Auto R/W Violation	WB making left turn onto Harbor, hit by EB right turn
6/30/2018	5:20 PM	Auto R/W Violation	SB making left turn onto 5th EB
7/12/2018	5:30 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Making a left turn onto 5th, hit by SB proceeding straight
10/30/2018	9:55 PM	Auto R/W Violation	SB broadside
1/20/2019	9:09 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Making left turn onto 5th, SB hit proceeding straight
3/17/2019	3:27 PM	Auto R/W Violation	EB left turn onto 5th, NB hit
6/23/2019	11:12 PM	Pedestrian violation	WB w/ impairment
10/5/2019	1:50 PM	Unsafe speed	SB rearend
10/22/2019	9:21 PM	Pedestrian violation	N/S Broadside
10/24/2019	7:37 AM	Unsafe speed	NB rearend
12/4/2019	3:46 PM	Unsafe speed	SB rearend
12/10/2019	5:59 AM	Improper Turning	Head-on collision
1/6/2020	2:45 PM	Auto R/W Violation	EB left turn onto 5th, WB hit proceeding straight
5/31/2020	9:42 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Broadside
7/6/2020	4:48 AM	Hazardous Movement	WB w/ fatigue/sleepiness hit object
7/10/2020	10:53 AM	DUI	EB rearend
3/15/2021	11:15 AM	Auto R/W Violation	EB left turn onto 5th, WB hit proceeding straight
3/18/2021	5:49 PM	DUI	SB w/ impairment hit object
6/28/2021	8:32 PM	Auto R/W Violation	EB left turn onto 5th, WB hit proceeding straight
7/22/2021	11:15 PM	DUI	Hit object w/ impairment

Date	Time	Cause	Fault/Notes
11/22/2021	12:23 PM	Unsafe speed	SB rearend
1/3/2022	11:53 AM	Following too closely	Rearend WB right turn
3/6/2022	8:54 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Head-on collision
3/30/2022	7:59 PM	Auto R/W Violation	Head-on collision
5/13/2022	5:31 PM	Hazardous Movement	SB sideswipe
10/17/2022	8:06 AM	Unsafe speed	NB sideswipe
11/17/2022	7:01 PM	DUI	NB making left turn WB w/ impairment; broadside
1/25/2023	7:40 AM	Following too closely	NB rearend
4/4/2023	2:35 PM	Improper Turning	SB/EB Broadside
9/30/2023	8:31 PM	Unsafe speed	Overturned
11/11/2023	6:09 PM	Driving under the influence	Head-on collision/ SB/WB
5/8/2024	4:25 PM	Unsafe speed	SB rearend
6/6/2024	6:31 PM	Driving under the influence	WB 5th w/ impairment, hit object
11/15/2024	11:51 PM	Auto R/W Violation	SB broadside
12/13/2024	11:43 PM	Driving under the influence	SB rearend
12/20/2024	8:03 PM	Auto R/W Violation	NB head-on collision w WB driving straight
1/31/2025	6:55 PM	Auto R/W Violation	WB broadside collision w NB driving straight
3/20/2025	8:40 PM	Auto R/W Violation	NB making left turn WB; broadside
5/22/2025	7:45 PM	Following too closely	SB broadside
1/12/2026	7:32 PM	Unsafe speed	WB broadside collision w NB driving straight
2/3/2026	1:11 AM	Unknown	Head-on collision w fixed object



Source: Oxnard Police Department

RESIDENT RECOMMENDATIONS



City of Oxnard Public Works and Traffic Staff is unlikely to break from recommendations provided by the Department of Transportation without meeting the specific criteria as outlined in the MUTCD. This is likely to be deeply frustrating to residents in the Oxnard Shores and Dunes neighborhoods because of their anecdotal experiences with high volumes of serious traffic accidents resulting in injuries, and even some fatalities.

There is no collision warrant to add warning signage or reflective backplates

Residents should consider pressing City officials and traffic staff to add additional features backed by evidence to reduce traffic collisions in lieu of signal changes. Warning signage and/or yellow reflective backplates do not require a collision warrant.

To address concerns at the specific anomalous permissive left signal, signage highlighting LEFT TURN YIELD ON GREEN may be appropriate. Other signals across Ventura County in similar scenarios and speed limits have this instructional signage affixed appropriately to signals, and have seen improvements in perceived safety. To address collisions in the area overall, affixing yellow reflective backplates to traffic signals at 5th and Harbor that currently do not have them is an additional strategy tied to a reduction in traffic accidents.

While not the turn signal-specific change area residents may wish to see, shifting focus to calling for supported strategies lacking specific collision data and criteria will likely yield improved resident satisfaction, as well as an anticipated reduction in overall accidents at the intersection.

CASE STUDY 2: AVALON HOMES AND RELATED PROPOSALS

A planned housing development in the Oxnard Dunes area, located at the Northeast corner of Beachcomber Street and Harbor Boulevard - bound in part by 5th Street - is expected to request of the Oxnard City Council to pay in excess of \$2.4M in fees in lieu of developing affordable housing as a part of the development. Proponents of in lieu of fees argue this allows for developments to come to market at a quicker rate, and claim it benefits the community overall by providing necessary affordable housing in regions it is most needed. However, available evidence suggests in lieu of fees are merely a developer loophole, and fail to address affordable housing in a manner that is fair and timely. Because fees would go directly to the City of Oxnard for affordable housing elsewhere, projects utilizing those funds would be public (raising the costs to as much as four times what the developer would potentially pay), and result in a statistically longer timeframe to come to completion.

The City of Oxnard has also seen a significant rash of high cost housing developments in recent years. In addition to this planned development, the Panorama apartments located near The Collection have piqued resident concerns as a phased-in opening of the units revealed rents at these “luxury” apartments run 1.5x to 2x the current market rates. This highlights a pressing concern with respect to the end goal of the Avalon Homes development, which - in absence of affordable housing units planned to create a balance of price points across the 56-unit development - may in turn price out average Oxnard residents in need of housing.

Though these complexities are not the two, key areas residents hold the greatest levels of concern, which area officials argue are not backed by available data:

1. The ongoing management of the homeless encampment currently located at the property;
2. Use and management of the planned 39.5 acre open space that is a part of the development.

RESIDENT RECOMMENDATIONS



City of Oxnard Planning Commission has moved forward with the Avalon Homes proposal; however, in May 2026, the Oxnard City Council is expected to take up the issue of the in lieu of fee for the project. Residents may consider advocating for a rejection of the in lieu of fee, and demanding a clearly outlined path for the maintenance and security of the 39.5 acre open space planned as a part of the development.

The Avalon Homes developer says they are not an affordable housing developer; however, they are building on a property that already has a significant population need for affordable housing (the recurrent homeless population living in the region).

With no evidenced plan to address the encampment in a meaningful and permanent way, all indications suggest that encampment will likely continue on the open space portion of the property. 60% of Oxnard's unhoused are on waiting lists for affordable units. It is therefore only appropriate that the City of Oxnard reject the request for in lieu of fees and require affordable housing to be built for the current need in the region.

Developers often utilize gifting of open space as tax deductions to offset any fees or costs incurred in the process of a development. This is only possible if the approval of the development is not contingent on the open space. A growing body of evidence; however, suggests that these types of "gifts" often result in mismanagement and burdensome expenses to taxpayers, since open space is typically endowed to municipal or regional public organizations. This is especially burdensome when homeless encampments already exist on the property - such that Oxnard is currently experiencing with the Avalon Home property.

The most likely ongoing challenge with the management of this open space will be addressing the existing unhoused population in the region. This highlights an additional argument in favor of rejecting in lieu of fees in the interest of providing on-site affordable housing for those individuals.

CASE STUDY 3: HOUSING OVER AN ABANDONED OIL FIELD

On the adjacent corner of 5th Street and Harbor Boulevard in the Oxnard Shores and Oxnard Dunes region of the City, an additional development is underway over an old, abandoned oil field. This field once saw both permitted and unpermitted dumping of toxic chemicals and substances. While remediation efforts have been underway for years, now, newly emerging science on the behaviors of so-called forever chemicals - in particular in regions with projected ground water table rise - may result in ongoing concerns around soil vapors and vapor intrusion. All units planned for this particular development have been required to include passive vapor intrusion barriers.

Similar to other regions of Oxnard where ongoing monitoring of potential toxic contamination and plumes persists, residents are encouraged to follow up with local authorities for ongoing testing in area wells. This includes ongoing demands for the City of Oxnard to permit testing in a timely manner, monitor the City sewer system of potential vapor intrusion, and hold regular educational events for area residents to be aware of and understand the ongoing issues in the area.

The Oxnard Shores and Oxnard Dunes regions of the City of Oxnard - located in general at the corner of 5th Street and Harbor Boulevard and surrounding areas - offers numerous examples of where data can be conflicting, subject to speculation, or run contrary to anecdotal experiences by residents over a long period of time. This highlights the need for a more nuanced approach in policymaking, one that calls on local officials to be malleable to alternative measures, improved communications, and variable mitigations in the interest of the public good. Imposing alternative mitigations and/or education campaigns when quantitative data conflicts with qualitative analysis is directly tied to improved attitudes towards local government, and a restoration of public trust. Residents are therefore reasonable to expect such measures be taken to address their concerns, and City officials would see improved trust in government and resident satisfaction in kind.

FURTHER READING & REFERENCES

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DISCLOSURES

HEATHER CHRISTENA SCHMIDT COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS, and no individuals within it, were paid by any individuals or organizations in the creation of this document.

CONTACT

Heather Schmidt, M.PA, CySA, C.DA
heatherschmidtmpa@gmail.com
805/561.2776

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Community Consulting
HeatherChristenaSchmidt.com

