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VENTURA BREEZE

Your Hometown Paper

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Image courtesy of Ventura College Foundation
Empowering Futures: Ventura College Foundation Gets \$75K Grant to Reduce Education Costs for Aspiring Healthcare Professionals

Ventura College Foundation Receives \$75,000 Grant from Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco

The Ventura College Foundation received a \$75,000 grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco (FHLBank San Francisco). The funds will enable the Ventura College Foundation and Ventura College to implement a Pathway to Health Careers for Low-Income Students program.

The grant will fund the conversion of course textbooks into zero-cost digital formats and contribute to a lending library for equipment such as microscopes, calculators, lab coats and safety goggles.

“Courses that lead to jobs in health-care such as nursing require expensive books and materials that often create a financial barrier for low-income

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Court Upholds Continued Closure of Main Street in Downtown Ventura



Image by Michael Gordon

Court ruling supports keeping Main St. closed.

A Ventura Superior Court judge has upheld the decision to permanently close portions of Main Street to vehicles in downtown Ventura, reversing an earlier order that sought to reopen the area. Judge Matthew P. Guasco issued a tentative decision on January 8, 2025, in response to a lawsuit filed by local property owners who opposed the closure.

The judge concluded that the City of Ventura’s decision to permanently close Main Street was justified and supported by evidence, including public surveys and staff recommendations. According to Judge Guasco, the closure was deemed beneficial for the community, as it allowed for

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Mental Health Services Act & Proposition 1

by Carol Leish, MA

The goal of Proposition 1, which Californians passed in March 2024, is “Aiming to strengthen California’s behavioral health system by funding mental health treatment, substance use disorder services, and supportive housing with additional focus for veterans and individuals facing homelessness. They will be ensuring equitable access to these essential services, that are critical, as the state works to address both housing insecurity and behavioral health needs across diverse populations.” (<http://calbudgetcenter.org>).

Proposition 1 won’t be effective until July 1, 2026. When it goes into effect, it will replace the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) with the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA). BHSA will focus on the areas of 1) Housing; 2) Full-Service Partnership (FSP), for a higher level of outpatient care; and, 3) all other Behavioral Health Services. Substance Use services will also be allowed in all these 3 categories, which is new. Many details related to implementation are still needed from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to support all 58

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Images courtesy of City of Ventura

Construction is well underway on the Park. #BuildingCommunity.

Westpark Skatepark Construction on Track for Spring 2025 Completion!

Exciting progress at the Westpark Skatepark. Construction began in October and is on track for completion by spring 2025. This project is possible thanks to a \$1.9 million grant from the Proposition 68 Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program, a \$10,000 fundraising effort by our local skate community, and \$322,000 from Fund 18 - Parks & Recreation Improvements.

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Mental Health Services Act Continued from page 1

counties, in California, in their implementation of Proposition 1. Areas still awaiting guidance include Housing, Early Intervention, Prevention, etc.," according to, Courtney Lubell MA, PMP, LSSBB, the Special Projects Mental Health Services Act/Behavioral Health Services Act Manager for Ventura County Behavioral Health.

"The implementation of Proposition 1 by July 1, 2026, will likely entail a restructuring of programs within the Ventura Behavioral Health department to align with these new state requirements. Essentially, all 58 county Behavioral Health departments within California will be restructuring their entire behavioral health systems to align with Proposition 1's priorities and funding requirements" according to Ms. Lubell.

Ms. Lubell emphasized that, "Phase 2 of BHSA implementation, which focuses on Stakeholder engagement will occur in early to mid-2025, as soon as guidance is given by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). Currently we are working with Ventura County Public Health, the local Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan (Gold Coast) and other local health partners on a community needs health assessment survey. This survey can be found at: [vchca.org/public-health/2025/01/18/your-voice-matters-take-the-ventura-](http://vchca.org/public-health/2025/01/18/your-voice-matters-take-the-ventura-county-health-needs-survey)

[vchca.org/public-health/2025/01/18/your-voice-matters-take-the-ventura-county-health-needs-survey.](http://vchca.org/public-health/2025/01/18/your-voice-matters-take-the-ventura-county-health-needs-survey)

From this survey, we will learn about the types of community needs related to Behavioral Health services and be able to focus on those needs in support of the integrated plan for Proposition 1 implementation within the county." All Ventura County residents are encouraged to take the survey in order to help ensure that important services remain, and new required programs meet county needs.

Ventura County Behavioral Health has created a Proposition 1 website to provide ongoing updates for the public. It can be found at vchca.org/behavioral-health/proposition-1/.

"In addition to the department's focus on Proposition 1 assessment and implementation, Ventura County Behavioral Health is continuing to implement the goals of the current 3-year plan of the Mental Health Services Act, in collaboration with the community," according to the MHSA/BHSA Manager, Ms. Lubell. "This activity also provides information about which behavioral health needs should be focused on. An annual update will be published in the Spring of 2025, under the MHSA 3-year plan." For more information on this effort Community Planning Meetings will be taking place in February. A list of those meetings can be found at www.wellnesseveryday.org.

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