

# THE PIPELINE

News from the Ventura County Public Works Agency

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## From the Director's Desk

Jeff Pratt,  
Public Works  
Agency Director



Dear Friends,

It's with great excitement that we unveil our new Ventura County Public Works website! Aside from the updated look, the new website features a much more user friendly interface that makes it easier to navigate and find information.

This month we feature the Oxnard Pallet Company, one local business that has benefited from an exciting program called the Recycling Market Development Zone. We are proud to support them, because this sort of industry is vital if we are going to build a better future for our planet and generations to come.

Speaking of "green" initiatives, we highlight the ways Ventura County is becoming more bike friendly every day! Read our article on bike paths to find out where we are adding paths now and in the near future.

Also in this issue, we interview VCPWA's JoeAnn Heredia about the Lean Six Sigma programs. As we work to become more efficient in our PWA divisions we're happy to highlight our success stories.

Finally, I'll be looking for you at our upcoming Public Works Picnic on September 27 at Soule Park! Join us with a 50s flair for delicious food, games (for bragging rights), and enjoy a great day! See you all there!

All the Best,

Jeff Pratt  
Director

## OLD *becomes* NEW

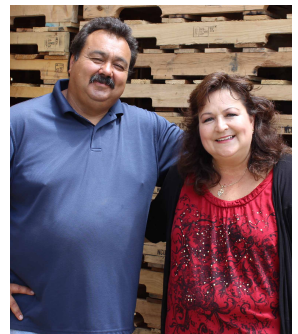
What's old can be new. Today's businesses know, more than ever, how important sound environmental practices can be. One of the most exciting programs managed by the Integrated Waste Management Division of the Ventura County Public Works Agency (VCPWA) is the Recycling Market Development Zone, or RMDZ, program. This statewide initiative offers help to local businesses that are re-processing, re-manufacturing, and marketing products that are either made from recycled materials or made with less material than previously used. Businesses receive a variety of state and local incentives and assistance, such as:

- **Low-interest loans and finance assistance**
- **Permit assistance**
- **Location assistance**
- **Materials for manufacturing**

Also available for the eligible businesses are: business plan assistance, product promotion, consulting services, and incentives for hiring and training workers. If a business makes new products out of recycled materials, processes recyclables in such a way that their market value is increased, repairs items that would otherwise become waste, or makes products using less materials and less waste, they may also qualify for low-interest loans or grants. Since 1993, the RMDZ program has helped local businesses secure over \$16 million in loans and \$11 million in grants and other financing, according to David Goldstein, who administers the state-sponsored program in Ventura County.

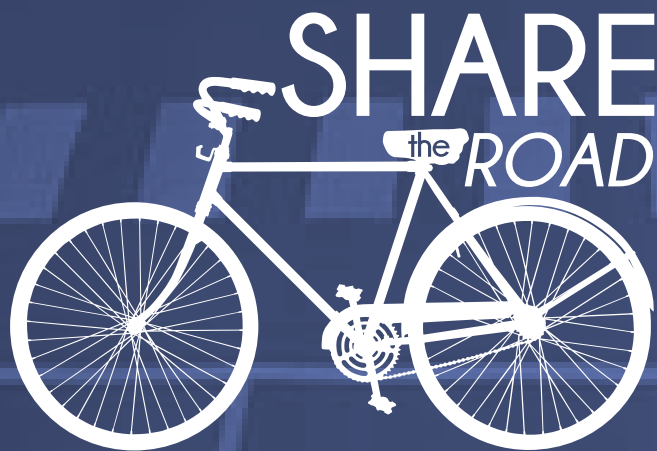
Oxnard Pallet Company, owned by Beatrice and Elias Vasquez, is one example of a business that has benefitted from the RMDZ. "Many companies collect and re-sell standard pallets, but Oxnard Pallet Company

is different," noted Goldstein. "Oxnard Pallet Company recovers pallets that would otherwise be wasted." A \$145,000 RMDZ loan funded equipment that helps Oxnard Pallet Company pull apart broken and odd-sized pallets, which the company then reassembles into standard pallets. They then heat treat the pallets, removing insects so the pallets can be used to export agricultural products all over the world. Any wood that is too far gone to be made into a new pallet is trucked to a commercial composting facility, where it is ground into garden mulch.



The company started 21 years ago, when Elias was in the trucking business and Beatrice worked in the banking industry. They saw a need for this business that makes money by conserving resources and helping customers reduce disposal costs.

Beatrice shared that there were a number of folks from VCPWA that were instrumental and helpful in connecting her with additional recycled material, much needed equipment, and conveyers so the pallet remanufacturing work is moving faster and smoother, with more ergonomic and additional recycling capabilities. "We had great support from the folks at VCPWA, specifically David Goldstein and others who were instrumental in our march to have a better ability to recycle and reclaim reused valuable wood pallets," said Vasquez. "The RMDZ has a number of great programs business owners should look into." Call David Goldstein at 658-4312, or go to [wasteless.org](http://wasteless.org) for more information.



Bicycling is the perfect way to enjoy the lovely scenery and interesting sights in Ventura County. You'll get a different perspective than you would in a vehicle, and improve your fitness too! Currently we have over 350 miles of bicycle lanes throughout the County, and we are adding more every day. Here is a list of new existing and future projects that will make Ventura County even more bicycle friendly.

#### *New Bike Lanes:*

- Pleasant Valley Road: From State Route 1 to Las Posas Road
- Santa Clara Avenue: From Central Avenue to Los Angeles Avenue (SR 118)
- Lomita Avenue: From Rice Road to 90 feet south of Besant Road
- Wendy Drive: From Borchard Road to 120 feet south of Lois Avenue

#### *Coming Soon:*

- Las Posas Road Bike Lanes Phase 1: From Laguna Road to Pleasant Valley Road
- Las Posas Road Bike Lanes Phase 2: Laguna Road to State Route 1
- Santa Ana Road Bike Lanes and Pavement Widening (Milepost 0.05 to Milepost 1.70)
- Santa Ana Road Bike Lanes and Pavement Widening (Milepost 3.81 to State Route 150)
- Casitas Vista Road: From Ventura Avenue to Santa Ana Road

#### *All Bike Paths Are Not Created Equal*

Before you strap on your bike helmet, you should know about Ventura County's three different types of bike lanes.

- **Class I:** Separate from motor-vehicle traffic, perfect for family-friendly cycling.
- **Class II:** Striped, painted lanes next to motor-vehicle routes; bike-only lane but not separated by a buffer.
- **Class III:** Marked by green signs, safe for bicycles but may be shared with motor vehicles.

*If you are driving in a motor vehicle next to bicycle lanes, please be cautious and share the road!*

## GET THE APP!

Plan your bike trip with Ventura County's **FREE Bike Lanes App** for your smartphone! The *Ventura Bikeways Map* app is a GPS-based program that pinpoints the bike lane nearest to a cyclist's location and offers directions in real time. You can also access a summary of your trip, detailing mileage and average speed — perfect for those biking for fitness. Other features include safety tips, bike laws, and color-coded path descriptions. It is available for iOS and Android platforms, so visit the iOS App Store or Android Market to download it today.





As we learned in May 2014's issue of *The Pipeline*, Lean Six Sigma is a set of techniques and tools for process improvement that is used by trained team members within the organization ("Masters," "Black Belts," "Green Belts," and "Yellow Belts"). We spoke with Green Belt JoeAnn Heredia from VCPWA's Transportation Department on how Lean Six Sigma has improved her work and productivity.

# Q&A

**Q** What is your favorite aspect of the Lean Six Sigma program?

**A** Lean Six Sigma is a methodology based on simplicity. It creates a common language within an organization. If we are all striving to improve/make a difference, the possibilities are endless.

**Q** How has Lean Six Sigma changed your work environment?

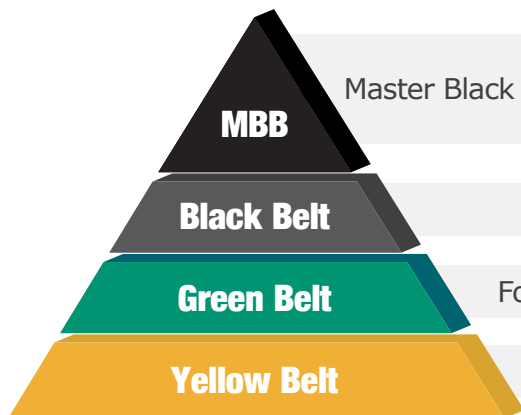
**A** With Lean Six Sigma we become more efficient and effective. Lean Six Sigma becomes second nature. I question if the steps taken

are necessary, is there a benefit? Are our processes simplified or are they complicated?

**Q** How has Lean Six Sigma improved productivity for you, your coworkers, and the customers?

**A** The choices we make today affect us tomorrow. With Lean Six Sigma we are given the tools to work together, to look for ways to improve and solve problems. Lean Six Sigma gives employees a voice and the tools to make a difference. The benefits of improvement not only affect the Section in which you work but also the departments, the Agency, the County, and ultimately the public.

## LEAN SIX SIGMA ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE



Master Black Belt trained with at least two years' experience; teaches Lean Six Sigma

Full-time project leader

Focus on tools usage, DMAIC, and Lean principles application

Lean Six Sigma awareness

## Look at us, we've been in for a makeover!

Our new website brings a fresh, modern look and feel with a service-oriented focus designed to help the public find information and services using an easy-to-navigate structure. The site is best viewed using a computer, laptop, or tablet. A mobile version will be coming soon.

**[vcpublishpublicworks.org](http://vcpublishpublicworks.org)**

