



VENTURA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

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Formation of a Community Services District in Oak Park

Frequently Asked Questions

Proponents of the formation of a community services district (CSD) in the community of Oak Park have expressed a desire for a new CSD to assume responsibility for several community services that are currently provided by various public agencies. These include all the services currently provided by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (Rancho Simi) within the Oak Park area, all the services provided by County Service Area 4 (CSA 4), and some of the services provided by the County of Ventura in Oak Park. The proponents plan to circulate a petition and, should the petition effort be successful, seek LAFCo approval of the formation of a new CSD, the dissolution of CSA 4, and a detachment from Rancho Simi.

Community members may have questions about this process. Below are some of the questions that we have received and others that we anticipate, as well as our responses to those questions. The information regarding the potential services that are proposed to be provided by a new CSD comes from written communications from, and statements made by, the proponents of the formation of a new CSD.

LAFCo and CSDs

1. What is LAFCo?

LAFCo stands for Local Agency Formation Commission. There is a LAFCo in each county in the state. Created by the State Legislature in 1963, LAFCos are independent state agencies that have been granted sole authority over the formation and dissolution of special districts (such as CSDs and CSAs) and changes to the jurisdictional boundaries of cities and most special districts (including recreation and park districts). LAFCo also determines what powers a district may exercise and what services a district may provide.

2. What is a community services district (CSD)? What is a county service area (CSA)?

A CSD is usually an independent special district governed by an elected board of directors that, subject to LAFCo approval, can be authorized to exercise any of the powers and services that are listed in the CSD principal act (Govt. Code § 61100). A CSA is a County-dependent special district governed by the County Board of Supervisors that, subject to LAFCo approval, can be authorized to provide any governmental service and facility within its boundaries that the county is authorized to perform and that the county does not perform to the same extent on a countywide basis (Govt. Code § 25213). Though the potential powers/services of a CSD are expansive, they are generally more limited than those of a CSA.

3. What is the process to form a new CSD in Oak Park?

LAFCo controls the district formation process. The process to form a CSD in Oak Park was the subject of a presentation made by Ventura LAFCo staff to the Oak Park Municipal Advisory Council on January 29, 2026. The recorded presentation is available to view on the Oak Park MAC YouTube channel [here](#) (beginning at the 1:12:00 time mark)

4. Have other CSDs been formed in Ventura County? What about in other counties? If so, would they serve as precedents for the formation of a CSD in Oak Park?

There are no precedents to forming a new CSD in Ventura County.

Two CSDs exist in Ventura County: the Channel Islands Beach CSD and the Bell Canyon CSD. Two other CSDs (the Lake Sherwood CSD and the Montalvo CSD) were dissolved by LAFCo several years ago. The Channel Islands Beach CSD and Bell Canyon CSD were formed in 1982 and 1984, respectively. Since then, the law under which CSDs operate has undergone significant revisions, the latest of which occurred in 2006. Current LAFCo law became effective in 2000. Because the formation of a new CSD would be subject to different laws, policies, and requirements than those that were applicable in the 1980s, the formation of a new CSD in Oak Park would follow a different process than what was applicable when the existing CSDs were formed.

In addition, the formation of a CSD outside Ventura County by another LAFCo would not serve as a precedent for the formation of a CSD in Ventura County. All LAFCos are independent public agencies: each has its own policies, practices, processes, staff, and legal counsel. LAFCos operate independently from one another. Also, the local circumstances that lead to the formation of a CSD are unique to each county. Though the formation of a CSD in another county may be informative, the actions of another LAFCo would in no way set a precedent for Ventura LAFCo. The formation of a new CSD in Ventura County would be consistent with applicable state law and local polices, as determined by Ventura LAFCo.

Services Provided by a New CSD

5. Could a new CSD in Oak Park provide all of the services currently provided by Rancho Simi?

There are two powers in CSD law that would allow a new CSD to provide the services currently provided by Rancho Simi. These are that a CSD may “[a]cquire, construct, improve, maintain, and operate recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, in the same manner as a recreation and park district formed pursuant to the Recreation and Park District Law” and “[o]rganize, promote, conduct, and advertise programs of community recreation, in the same manner as a recreation and park district formed pursuant to the Recreation and Park District Law.” (Govt. Code §§ 61100(e) and (f)). In order for a new CSD to assume these services, it would need to secure an adequate source

of funding to acquire the parks and recreational facilities from Rancho Simi and to provide the services.

6. Could a new CSD in Oak Park provide all of the services that are currently provided by CSA 4?

A new CSD in Oak Park would probably not be able to provide all of the services currently provided by CSA 4. For example, CSA 4 currently provides streetlighting and landscaping in public rights-of-way. A new CSD in Oak Park can be authorized to “[a]cquire, construct, improve, maintain, and operate street lighting and landscaping on public property, public rights-of-way, and public easements.” (Govt. Code § 61100(g)). However, the streetlights and street landscaping areas in Oak Park are owned by the County. In order for a new CSD in Oak Park to obtain and exercise this authority, the County would need to relinquish ownership and/or control of these facilities and landscaped areas to the new CSD. Even if the County were open to considering doing this, there appear to be limitations given that the facilities/landscaped areas are primarily or entirely located within County-owned road rights-of-way.

7. Can the CSD assume Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) and Volunteers in Policing (VIP) service responsibilities from CSA 4?

CERT and VIP services are not listed among those that a CSD can provide, pursuant to CSD law. Because CERT and VIP services consist of assisting emergency organizations and emergency personnel, a CSD that is not authorized to provide any emergency services could not be authorized to provide CERT or VIP services. For the new CSD to provide CERT in support of fire protection services, it must obtain the authority to “[p]rovide fire protection services, rescue services, hazardous material emergency response services, and ambulance services in the same manner as a fire protection district, formed pursuant to the Fire Protection District Law... (Govt. Code § 61100(d)). Similarly, VIP service can be provided only as part of a CSD’s authority to “[p]rovide police protection and law enforcement services by establishing and operating a police department that employs peace officers...” (Govt. Code § 61100(i)).

8. Can a new CSD in Oak Park assume school crossing guard and street sweeping services from CSA 4? How about other street-related services currently provided by the County, such as parking enforcement and oversized vehicle regulation?

It is unlikely that a new CSD in Oak Park could provide these services, as they are not listed among those that a CSD can provide pursuant to CSD law. The new CSD could provide these services only if it first obtains the authority to “[a]cquire, construct, improve, and maintain streets, roads, rights-of-way, bridges, culverts, drains, curbs, gutters, sidewalks and any incidental works.” (Govt. Code § 61100(l)). Once this power is authorized, the CSD would be able to provide these services that are found under the Vehicle Code and Streets and Highways Code (Govt. Code § 61103). But, because the County owns the street and road facilities in Oak Park as part of the County road network, in order for the CSD to exercise this authority, the County would have to relinquish ownership and control of them to the new CSD. Only then could the CSD provide these services. Under this scenario, the CSD would also

be required to provide all aspects of owning, maintaining, and operating the road network and appurtenant facilities within the CSD. The County's relinquishment of ownership/control of its roads as described here would be unprecedented.

9. If the new CSD is unable to assume all of the services currently provided by CSA 4 (such as streetlights, street landscaping, school crossing guards, street sweeping, CERT, and VIP), would CSA 4 still be dissolved?

If CSA 4 is still needed to provide any of these services, as is likely the case, it could not be dissolved.

10. Can the new CSD obtain the authority to exercise several powers and provide multiple services upon formation, even if it hasn't identified adequate funding for all of those services or does not plan to provide all of those services soon after formation?

No. LAFCo can authorize the new CSD to exercise only those powers and provide only those services for which a feasible plan for the services has been provided and for which sufficient revenue for the service has been secured or will be secured upon formation (Govt. Code § 61014). Any proposed powers/services that are to be exercised in the future and would require a yet-to-be secured funding source cannot be approved. These powers/services would be considered "latent services or powers" and their exercise subject to LAFCo approval in the future (Govt. Code §§ 56050.5, 61002(h), and 61106).

Funding for CSD Services

11. How do CSDs fund the services they provide?

Funding for services by a CSD is usually generated through: (1) a share of the 1% ad valorem property tax from properties within the district, (2) special taxes, (3) benefit assessments, and/or (4) user fees.

12. How much property tax would the new Oak Park CSD receive?

LAFCo would determine the amount of property tax to be transferred to the new CSD (Govt. Code § 56375(o)). The new CSD could expect to receive less property tax revenue for the services contemplated to be provided than the amount of property tax that is currently spent on the services provided within Oak Park (Govt. Code § 56810). It would receive no property tax revenue for any services that are not currently provided in Oak Park by CSA 4 or the County.

Should Oak Park be detached from Rancho Simi and the CSD take over recreation and park services, the CSD would receive 100% of the portion of the 1% ad valorem property tax generated within Oak Park that was directed to Rancho Simi in the previous fiscal year (Govt. Code § 56810(d)). Any funds expended by Rancho Simi within Oak Park that exceeded this amount would be retained by Rancho Simi. Any funds needed by the CSD to acquire real property currently owned by Rancho Simi within Oak Park, such as parks, open space, and other facilities would require additional revenue sources.

In the likely scenario that CSA 4 is not dissolved, for each service that the CSD assumes from CSA 4 and the County, the CSD could expect to receive only a portion of the amount of property tax that CSA 4 or the County spent on that particular service within Oak Park in the previous fiscal year (Govt. Code § 56810(c)). CSA 4 and the County would retain the proportional amount of property taxes spent on the services that each would continue to provide. For any service that is proposed to be provided by the CSD that is not currently provided in Oak Park by the County or CSA 4 (such as utility undergrounding, fire protection, or telecommunications), the CSD would receive no property tax revenue.

13. What would happen to the benefit assessment that currently provides most of the funding to cover the services provided by CSA 4?

The new CSD could expect to receive only that portion of the benefit assessment that the CSA spent in the prior fiscal year on the services that the CSD would assume. As with property taxes, the remainder of the benefit assessment would continue to be collected by the CSA to cover the services that it would continue to provide.

14. Would the amount of property tax revenue and the portion of CSA 4's existing benefit assessment to be transferred to the new CSD be adequate to fund the current level of service provided to Oak Park?

Probably not. As indicated above, less property tax revenue than what is currently spent on the services in Oak Park would be available to the new CSD to provide the same services currently being provided. In addition, it has been reported that CSA 4's benefit assessment may soon no longer be adequate to cover services at their current levels. Therefore, it can be reasonably assumed that the portion of the benefit assessment that would be transferred to the CSD would likely be inadequate in the near future.

15. How could the new CSD cover the costs for services at their existing levels, increased levels of service, or entirely new services?

The CSD would need to identify and secure additional sources of funding, such as a special tax to be paid by residents of Oak Park and/or a new or increased benefit assessment to be paid by property owners in Oak Park. Both would be subject to approval by voters.

If you have additional questions about the LAFCo process, please contact Kai Luoma, LAFCo Executive Officer, at kai.luoma@venturacounty.gov or (805) 654-2575. You may also visit the Ventura LAFCo website at www.ventura.lafco.ca.gov.