



Southwest Lake Forest

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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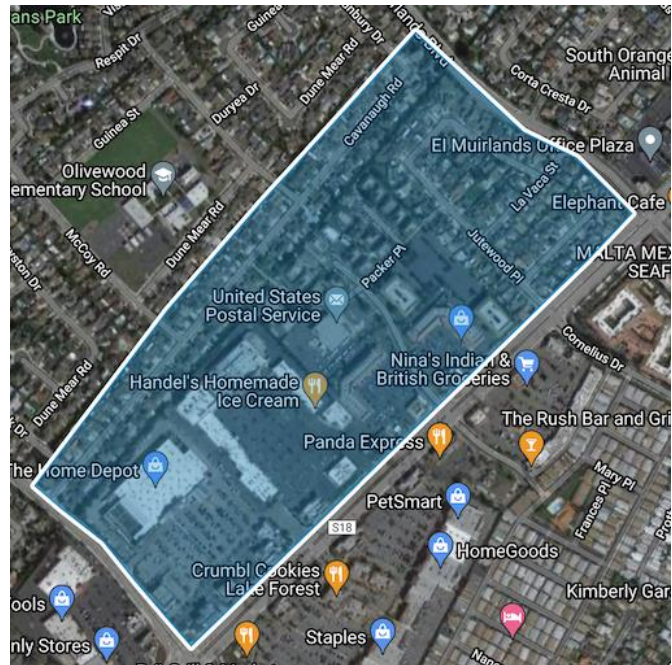
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In an ongoing effort to assess and meet the needs of residents and businesses, the City of Lake Forest conducts a satisfaction survey every two years. The 2021 survey, published in March 2021, categorized the City into four geographic areas. Of note, residents in Area 2 (Southwest Lake Forest) were less likely than their counterparts to rank their quality of life as excellent, in addition to citing problems related to parking, traffic and noise, among other concerns.

To analyze and address the root causes behind the issues reported by residents in Area 2, Lake Forest City staff spearheaded the creation of a **Neighborhood Improvement Task Force (NITF)**. The NITF is an interdepartmental partnership composed of City representatives from the City Manager's Office, Community Development, Economic Development, Public Works, Police Services and Management Services.

As its first project, the NITF selected a subject neighborhood within Area 2 for an in-depth analysis. The subject area includes the boundaries of Muirlands Boulevard, El Toro Road, Cavanaugh Road, and Rockfield Boulevard ([see map above for details](#)) and encompasses 169 single-family homes, 101 multi-family units and 175 businesses. Given its population and mixed uses, the neighborhood faces a unique set of circumstances and challenges. To assist the task force with the analysis of the subject neighborhood, **Communications LAB** was engaged in September 2021 to conduct community ascertainment with stakeholders and a focused assessment of the area.



The **Southwest Lake Forest Neighborhood Improvement Needs Assessment** presented herein captures the results of Communications LAB's efforts. The study documents quality of life issues impacting the subject neighborhood and provides key recommendations for the NITF's review and action.

NEIGHBORHOOD THEMES

While the findings of the assessment are extensive and varied, several themes were consistent throughout the review of the subject neighborhood.

- **General Need for Neighborhood Improvements**

At the conclusion of the community assessments, Communications LAB corroborated the perceptions first highlighted in the 2021 satisfaction survey. Residents in the subject neighborhood believe the quality of life in their community is lower than other areas of the City and attribute this sentiment to the vast array of issues that impact the area. From traffic concerns to property maintenance, residents generally believe that more should be done to improve their neighborhood. In **Section 5: Findings**, we explore in-depth the extensive everyday issues that contribute to this sentiment and provide specifics on problems identified. In **Section 6** of our report, each finding is accompanied by subsequent recommendations for the NITF's review.

Some of the issues identified, such as crime and issues related to homelessness, are widespread problems that impact communities throughout Orange County and the state of California. Addressing these concerns in a manner that is satisfactory to residents may prove difficult due to the general nature of these problems. Nevertheless, awareness of the City's efforts to address these issues and acknowledgment of resident concerns may help elevate resident perceptions.

- **Low Community Engagement**

During our assessment, we provided stakeholders with various opportunities to engage with Communications LAB, via online surveys, interviews, and a community pop-up. At the conclusion of our assessment, we received a dozen stakeholder surveys, with the bulk of our assessment data stemming from canvassing efforts in the subject area. While there is a clear perceived need for general neighborhood improvements, residents in the subject neighborhood were not highly engaged in providing their opinions. However, once engaged,

stakeholders who participated in this assessment were generally open to discussing the issues impacting their community and expressed an interest in the area's improvement. Many residents also acknowledged the City's efforts to conduct this neighborhood improvement needs assessment as a good "first step" and look forward to the task force's initiatives.

- **Informed and Engaged Staff**

City staff demonstrated a deep understanding of the subject neighborhood's needs and areas of concern. Most of the issues identified by City staff as problematic in the subject neighborhood were corroborated through our community assessments. Having an invested and informed team is essential, especially as the NITF develops plans for future action.

- **Us Vs. Them**

During our assessment, we encountered tension in the community from the residents in the single-family homes directed towards the residents in the multi-family units. This tension, we believe, is related to the ongoing parking problems that exist on the streets immediately adjacent to the multi-family units. There were also suggestions that the multi-family units are hubs for criminal activity. Understanding this perception as the NITF moves forward and crafts a neighborhood improvement plan will be important.

REPORT STRUCTURE

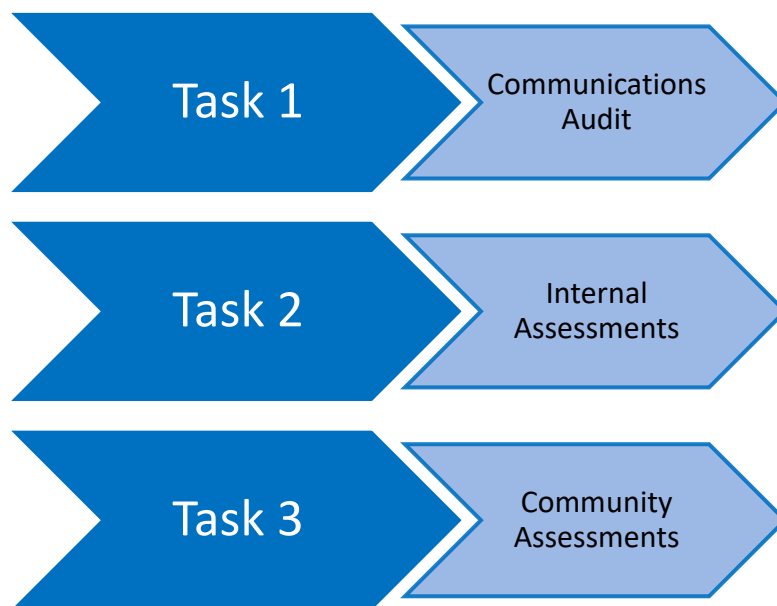
The Neighborhood Improvement Needs Assessment report is structured in six sections for ease of understanding:

SECTION I: Methodology and Tasks	
SECTION II: Communications Audit	
SECTION III: Internal Assessments	
SECTION IV: Community Assessments	
SECTION V: Findings	
SECTION VI: Key Recommendations and Look Ahead	

SECTION I:
Methodology and Tasks

METHODOLOGY AND TASKS

At the start of our study, Communications LAB established an assessment and outreach plan to evaluate the subject neighborhood and identify opportunities to enhance stakeholder perceptions and quality of life. The evaluation methodology consisted of three tasks: communications audit, internal assessments, and external assessments.



Each assessment task is elaborated upon below.

Task 1: Communications Audit

As a firm specializing in community outreach and communications, we believe that to understand community perspectives, we must also assess what messages and information is shared with residents to ensure no breakdowns or gaps are contributing to negative perceptions. With this idea in mind, we reviewed information made available by the City of Lake Forest to residents and businesses; this includes information published on the City website, social media channels, MyLakeForest app and ***The Leaflet*** magazine. During our community assessments, we also discussed communications with residents and business stakeholders to gauge their perceptions. In reviewing these communication tools, we considered the messaging, image and visual consistency,

feedback loops and effectiveness. Audit findings were recorded and will be explored in **Section 2: Communications Audit Findings.**

Task 2: Internal Assessments

Before we delved into the opinions of the subject neighborhood, we wanted first to understand how internal stakeholders view the area of interest. Given their experience servicing and working in the community, it was important to gauge the feelings and opinions of City staff and representatives before we looked outward. This internal assessment consisted of **interviews**.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Working in conjunction with the City staff, we identified key stakeholders—including department directors, department staff, community partners and elected representatives—who could give meaningful, in-depth feedback on the neighborhood of interest.

From October 15th to November 8th, our team conducted interviews with eight stakeholders which lasted on average 30 minutes, via Zoom and in person. Considering the varied experience of this diverse stakeholder pool, internal stakeholders were asked questions depending on their perceived experience; the questions are included as [Appendix A: Internal Interview Questions](#) and are categorized by stakeholder group.

Task 3: Community Assessments

The next step in our process was to obtain measurable public input—specifically from residents and business stakeholders—who could provide first-hand accounts of their experience in the subject neighborhood.

We conducted a three-pronged approach for these community assessments consisting of an **outreach letter with a survey**, **door-to-door canvassing** and a **community pop-event**. The goal of this approach was to give stakeholders several options to engage with Communications LAB.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

To introduce residents and business stakeholders to the Neighborhood Improvement Needs Assessment and encourage engagement in our process, Communications LAB mailed a letter in English and Spanish to all addresses within the subject neighborhood. The letter informed stakeholders of the NITF's mission, underscored the importance of receiving neighborhood feedback and included information on the three ways stakeholders could participate (online survey, door-to-door canvassing, or via the community pop-event event).

In preparation for distributing the outreach letter, Communications LAB worked with City staff to draft two comprehensive community surveys, one focused on residents and the other on business experiences. Both surveys explored an array of topics, from public safety to communications. The surveys consisted of 34 questions and were hosted on **SurveyMonkey**, a trusted, user-friendly platform that allows for in-depth data analysis.

To encourage honest opinions, stakeholder names were not collected as part of the surveys; however, stakeholders were encouraged to provide other identifiable information (home or business address) to allow our team to provide context to stakeholder experiences. The survey window was open for 18 days, from November 5 through November 22, 2021.

At the conclusion of this period, we received 12 surveys (eight resident and four business surveys). Copies of the surveys distributed are available as [Appendix B: Resident Survey](#) and [Appendix C: Business Survey](#).



Dear Resident,

We want to hear from you! As part of our ongoing commitment to you, the City of Lake Forest is constantly looking for opportunities to improve the quality of life for all who call our city home. To deliver on this promise, among other initiatives, since 1998, Lake Forest has engaged in a Community Satisfaction Survey to track its performance in meeting the evolving needs of residents. In response to the results of the 2021 survey, the City formed a **Neighborhood Improvement Task Force (NITF)**. The NITF includes representatives from the City Manager's Office, Public Works Department, Community Development Department and Police Services. The mission of the NITF is to research the quality-of-life issues impacting specific neighborhoods and find ways to implement improvements. **Your neighborhood has been selected as the subject of the NITF's first assessment.**

To assist the NITF in understanding issues impacting your neighborhood, the City contracted with **Communications LAB**, a third-party community outreach and public affairs firm. Over the next few weeks, Communications LAB will perform neighborhood outreach services in your area to understand your unique experience as a resident and identify what City departments can do to serve you better. With the information gathered by Communications LAB, the NITF will establish a list of neighborhood issues that require city action and formulate a work plan that includes remedies to issues addressed.

As a valued resident, your opinions and experiences are important. You can participate in this process in one of three ways:

- **Visit <https://lfbcommunitysurvey>** to fill out the Community Improvement Survey
- **Chat with CommLAB:** Communications LAB staff will visit your neighborhood over the next few weeks. Take a few minutes to chat with their team about what city issues, services, and programs are important to you.
- **Attend a Pop-Up Event:** Communications LAB will host a pop-up event on Saturday, November 13, 2021, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the small park located between Cavanaugh Rd. and Packer Place. Come learn more about the city services at your disposal and speak to Communications LAB staff about ways the city can help improve your quality of life. Saddleback Church will also be on hand sharing resources on legal aid, job support and more!



We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your participation as we look to better serve you. If you have any questions about this assessment, please get in touch with Diana Moreno at diana@communicationslab.com or by phone at (949) 215-5539, Ext. 122.

Sincerely,

Lake Forest Neighborhood Improvement Task Force

COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS (DOOR-TO-DOOR ENGAGEMENT)

Following the distribution of the outreach letter, a team of bilingual staff canvassed the subject neighborhood from November 5th to November 18th. This outreach tactic allowed us to speak to stakeholders about our assessment on behalf of the NITF and capture feedback from stakeholders who may want to share their perceptions in person. Our engagement with stakeholders varied depending on their availability and willingness to share input. Stakeholders who were not present or who did not have time to engage with our team during the door-to-door canvassing received a flyer reminding them to participate in our assessment at their leisure.



How is the quality of life in your neighborhood?

The City of Lake Forest has selected your neighborhood for its first Neighborhood Improvement Assessment. Help us understand the specific needs of your neighborhood by sharing your observations and opinions with us!

How to participate:



1. Take our neighborhood improvement survey today!
Visit bit.ly/LFcommunitysurvey online or scan the QR code on your mobile device.



2. Saturday, November 13th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
– Visit our Pop-Up Event for a chance to win prizes and learn more about City services and resources available to you! Saddleback Church will also be there sharing resources on legal aid, job support, grocery distribution services and more! Meet us at the small parkway between Cavanaugh Rd. and Packer Pl.

Stay Connected: MyLakeForest App

Search for "City of Lake Forest" in Google Play or Apple App store to connect with the City instantly and efficiently. Also, use www.lakeforestca.gov/asklakeforest to report issues or ask questions, too!



Lake Forest Neighborhood Improvement Task Force

The flyer also informed residents of the MyLakeForest application's features and encouraged them to download the platform to report issues and ask questions.

During this process, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Pequeño, who represents District 5, accompanied the outreach team on several occasions to hear stakeholder feedback first-hand. Residents were pleased to see their City representative engaged in this process.

In addition to speaking with residents, this outreach tactic allowed our team to spend time in the community to evaluate and log observations. At the conclusion of our door-to-door outreach, our team visited all residential and business stakeholders within the subject neighborhood. We conducted 50 stakeholder interviews (31 resident

interviews and 19 business interviews), which serve as a basis for this assessment.

COMMUNITY POP-UP EVENT

Before we finalized our community assessments, we wanted to provide stakeholders with an additional opportunity to engage with our team and access useful community resources. With this goal in mind, Communications LAB hosted a community pop-up event on Saturday, November 13, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in partnership with the City of Lake Forest.



The pop-up event was hosted in a central location (parkway between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place) and welcomed representatives from the City of Lake Forest, Saddleback Church, the Orange County Fire Authority, and the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

Representatives from partner agencies provided community resources, while the Communications LAB team focused on garnering additional community input. The City of Lake Forest made gift cards and prizes available for residents who engaged with the Communications LAB team to encourage participation.

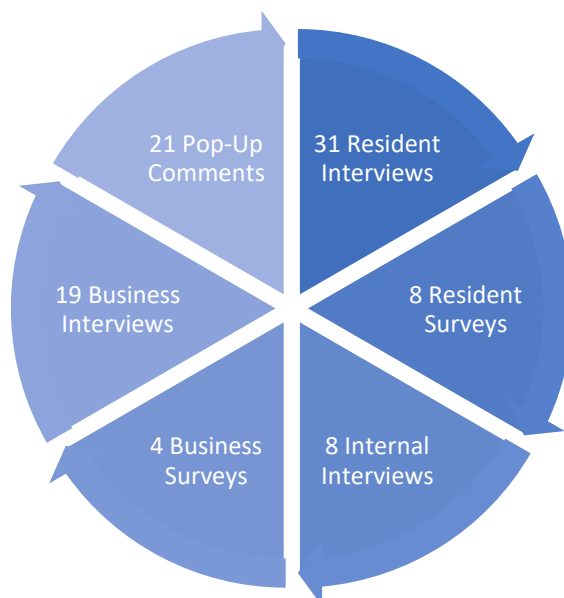




We estimate that approximately 40 residents visited the community pop-up. During the event, 21 residents provided comments for inclusion in our assessment.

Stakeholder Feedback at a Glance:

At the conclusion of our assessment, we made 91 stakeholder contacts that contributed to this report.



With the methods and framework of our assessments in place, we move on to discuss our findings.

SECTION II:
Communications Audit

COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT FINDINGS

During our communications audit, Communications LAB assessed the City of Lake Forest's existing communications to evaluate their effectiveness to community audiences. From the beginning of the audit, it was evident that the City of Lake Forest has strong communications.

Effective Use of Varied Communication Channels: We were pleased to find that the City provides information to residents through a variety of channels. This includes but is not limited to a robust website, engaging social media channels, SMS text messaging, the MyLakeForest app, *The Leaflet*, and platforms like Nextdoor. This varied approach ensures that residents who seek information can find it with relative ease.

Effective Use of Social Media: Overall, the City's social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn) were deemed to be effective in both messaging and visual consistency. The copy used to communicate with residents is clear and easy to follow.

Effective Economic Development Website: The City hosts a standalone Lake Forest Economic Development website with an array of valuable resources for businesses that is easy to navigate and provides essential information regarding topics of interest from signage to programs.

OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATIONS:

Expand In-Language Communications: Understanding that it serves a diverse community, the City website includes a Google translate plug-in that facilitates translation. During our community assessments, we made an effort to inform residents of the **MyLakeForest app** for use to report neighborhood issues. When sharing the application with residents who only speak Spanish, we were limited as there is no translation button available on the app.

Inform Community Stakeholders of MyLakeForest App: As part of our assessment, we asked residents about their awareness of the MyLakeForest app; most stakeholders reported not having heard of the app but once introduced, reported being inclined to utilize it. Residents could benefit from additional marketing to promote the app as it includes important information and provides stakeholders with tools to report community issues to City staff.

Update Code Enforcement Checklist: *The Resident Checklist for Determining Property Maintenance Code Compliance* available [here](#), offers good information but could benefit from an updated design and information.

Update Quality of Life Brochure: Overall, the City's quality of life brochure (available [here](#)) has useful information but necessitates an update. Many portions of the brochure can also be consolidated or abridged for ease of understanding.



SECTION III:
Internal Assessments

INTERVIEW TAKEAWAYS

The interviews conducted with City staff, community partners and the area representative gave numerous opportunities to share personal opinions, feelings, and observations of the subject neighborhood. Below are the takeaways and perceptions from interviews with internal stakeholders:

- **Good pulse on the community:** Staff has a good understanding of the needs of the subject neighborhood and are invested in the area's improvement. Staff understands why this area has reported a lower satisfaction rating.
- **Change is a constant:** this neighborhood has historically gone through many changes and improvements as one of the oldest parts of the City of Lake Forest.
- **High Police Services Call Volume:** This area is the police department's top area for service calls.
 - Thefts from cars and businesses were cited as common crimes and catalytic converter thefts are on the rise.
- **Parking and Traffic Woes:** This neighborhood has expressed concerns to staff about parking and traffic stemming from vehicles that cut through the community and the proximity of the multi-family residential units to the single-family neighborhoods.
 - The intersection at El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard is among the busiest intersections in the city, which may contribute to drivers utilizing Cavanaugh Road as a cut-through street.
- **Overcrowding:** There are reportedly too many people living in this area, especially in the multi-family units on Bendricon Lane, Raymond Way and Packard Place.
- **Code enforcement top calls for service:** Property maintenance, overgrown and dead vegetation.
- **Fear of reporting:** There is a perception that people are afraid to report issues to the City for fear of landlords, especially in the multi-family units.
 - A landlord reportedly shut off the water in a unit for days which tenants were hesitant to report.
 - Staff have observed violations (example: missing window screens) but are hesitant to record them out of consideration for residents.
- **The top service calls for Public Works surround issues involving homelessness-**Public Works reports receiving more calls for service to the South of the subject neighborhood.
- **Hard-working neighborhood-** staff perceive this to be a community of hard-working, blue-collar residents who do not complain unless there is an issue.
- **Us vs. Them:** There appears to be a contentious relationship between residents in the multi-family units and residents in the single-family homes, especially on Jutewood Place and Bendricon Lane.

- Staff perceive that the Mountain View project is an asset in the community.
- **Affordability:** Rent is perceived to be cheaper here than other areas of the City.
- **Gang activity:** There is an alleged gang presence on Bendricon Lane.
- **Issues involving Homelessness:** The activity of residents experiencing homelessness at El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard has improved.
- **Shopping centers in the area attract crime**, especially the presence of check-cashing businesses. There is also a lack of security guards in shopping centers.
- **Absentee landlords** contribute to the deterioration of the multi-family residences.
- **Lack of representation:** Some residents in this area felt they were not represented when the previous City council member left.
- **Lack of coordination:** Code enforcement staff perceived more coordination with the Sheriff's department in the past. They currently do not know the names of the deputies who patrol the area.

Staff Recommended Ideas for Improvement

- **Low-interest loans** for residents to conduct home repairs and improvements.
- **Annual inspections for multi-family units** to encourage the upkeep of properties and ensure compliance with health, safety, and fire codes.
- **Monthly/Quarterly Bulky Item Disposal** service should be available on a regular basis (consider distributing magnets with information on how to haul away large items).
- **Redesign and Distribute Code Enforcement Flyer** to inform residents and businesses of City's code enforcement policies.
- **"Know Your Rights" Workshops for Tenants** to increase awareness and education.
- **Mobile Recreation Trailer:** Seek opportunities for the City to bring the recreation trailer to the community, perhaps in the parkway between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place.
- **Shuttle Service from Neighborhood to Parks:** To provide residents with access to park space, a shuttle service that brings families to local parks may be beneficial.
- **Neighborhood Clean-Up:** There is an opportunity to host events that encourage residents to dispose of bulky-items and beautify areas.
- **Increase Patrolling of Shopping Centers** to discourage criminal behavior.
- **Educate Residents on Homelessness-** It may be helpful for residents to understand what can and cannot be enforced when dealing with issues related to homelessness.
- **Explore Incentives for Property Owners to maintain their businesses/complexes—** encourage them to be good neighbors.
- **Encourage Neighborhood Building** with things like neighborhood councils.
- **National Core is open to the idea of assisting the City with the management of the complexes on Packer Place, Raymond Way and Bendricon Lane.**
- **Explore ordinances to encourage landlords to use garages for parking purposes.**

Notes from s with internal stakeholders are available in [Appendix D: Internal Interview Notes](#).

SECTION IV:
Community Assessments

PART 1: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT TAKEAWAYS

During our community (door-to-door) outreach we spoke with residential stakeholders who shared their perceptions and experiences. Below are the high-priority issues consistently identified by residents. We have categorized the quality-of-life issues by street for ease of analysis and in order of perceived importance.

Cavanaugh Road

TRAFFIC



Speeding: speeding was by far the most common concern raised by residents living on this street. During our assessment, we found that Cavanaugh Road has been historically used by motorists as a cut-through street to travel from Rockfield Boulevard to Muirlands Boulevard.

El Toro Road, which runs parallel to Cavanaugh Road, is one of the major thoroughfares of Lake Forest and the intersection at El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard is among the busiest intersections in the city. Anecdotally, some residents reported assessing motorists traveling at speeds of 60 MPH+. Motorists who travel down Rockfield Boulevard come off a 40 MPH speed limit to Cavanaugh Road's residential speed limit of 25 MPH, which may contribute to the reported speeding. There were also multiple resident reports of accidents involving motorists striking parked vehicles; the motorists at fault allegedly traveled at high speeds.

The stop signs at the intersection of **Cavanaugh Road and McCoy Road** were identified by residents as ineffective, with motorists reportedly ignoring road directions. The speeding and the lack of regard for road directions in the area has resulted in a perceived danger for residents living on Cavanaugh Road and appears to be impacting their quality of life. Several residents asked for the City to consider installing speed bumps to deter high speeds on their streets or explore other traffic solutions.

“People drive so fast down our street that it’s challenging to pull out of the driveway safely, let alone allow my children to play outside.”

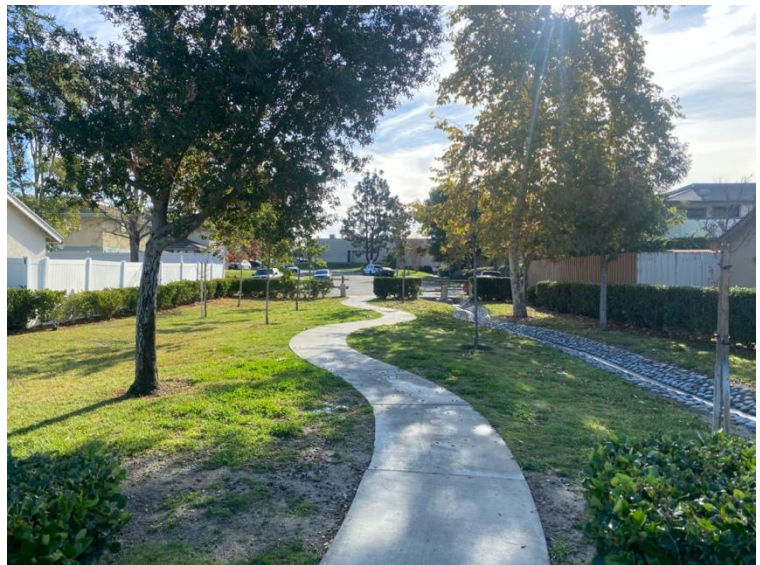
Cavanaugh Road resident.

STREET LIGHTING

Street lighting was another issue on Cavanaugh Road that residents would like to see enhanced. Several residents spoke of the darkness of the street at night, which leads them to feel unsafe walking in the evenings.

“Some of our streetlights are not working, which darken select areas of the neighborhood at night.” *Cavanaugh Road resident.*

By far, the top area identified for street lighting enhancements was the parkway located between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place. Several residents, including some that live adjacent to the parkway, reported that the lack of lighting provides an opportunity for groups of men and youth to congregate in the corners of the parkway in the evenings. These groups reportedly engage in drinking and other perceived criminal activities (drug use). Residents reported not feeling comfortable walking through the parkway at night and perceived the area to be a hub for alleged illegal activity. Some residents suggested the addition of solar lights to deter gatherings and increase safety.



PARKING

Limited on-street parking was another issue of great concern to residents on Cavanaugh Road, especially in the evenings. It is perceived that the shortage of parking is caused by two sources: 1) too many cars/drivers in the households on Cavanaugh Road 2) overflow parking from the multi-family units on Packer Place, Raymond Way and Bendricon Lane. Several residents proposed implementing permit parking as a solution to control the issue.

NOISE

Due to the proximity to the shopping centers on El Toro Road, several residents on the southside of Cavanaugh Road reported excessive and constant noise from the Twin Peaks Plaza parking lots. Home Depot and Smart & Final were identified as specific sources of noise. Residents report the businesses load/unload items at all hours of the night, which impacts their ability to sleep.

OTHER ISSUES



Crime: Several residents reported criminal activities (at least 3 catalytic converter thefts) and have installed or will be installing security cameras.

Issues related to Homelessness: Several residents reported an increased presence of homeless residents on Cavanaugh Road.

Infrastructure: A resident reported when it rains, water backs up on the northside of Cavanaugh Road which may serve as a breeding ground for mosquitos. A second resident reported “when it rains, a torrent of water comes from the underground pipes in the parkway (located between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place) and empties into the storm drain about 25 yards down McCoy Road. This results in a 2-foot buildup of water at the intersection of McCoy Road and Cavanaugh Road, which cars must move through”. Resident would like to see a storm drain placed on the eastside of the street between the parkway and McCoy Road to alleviate the problem.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on Cavanaugh Road is available as [Appendix E: Cavanaugh Road Resident Feedback](#).

Packer Place



STREET LIGHTING

Much like their neighbors on Cavanaugh Road, residents on Packer Place highlighted a need for improved street lighting, especially at the parkway between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place to deter perceived criminal activity and enhance public safety.

CRIME

Residents perceive the parkway at the end of the cul-de-sac (between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place) to be a hub for criminal activity. Several residents believe there is drug dealing occurring at the parkway.

PARKING

Several residents spoke of the lack of on-street parking availability, which compels them to park on nearby streets, the post office or shopping centers.

OTHER ISSUES

- **Property Maintenance:** a resident spoke of the issues they have with the property's balcony.
- **Noise:** resident reported noise from the Smart & Final shopping center as late as 2 a.m.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on Packer Pl. is available as [Appendix F: Packer Place Resident Feedback](#)

Raymond Way



CRIME

Raymond Way residents are reportedly experiencing increased criminal activity. There is alleged illegal activities behind the shopping centers, robberies and catalytic converter thefts are on the rise.

STREET LIGHTING

Residents believe there should be better lighting in the parkway on Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place to deter people loitering in the corners.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on Raymond Way is available as [Appendix G: Raymond Way Resident Feedback](#).

Bendricon Lane

CRIME

Several residents reported the cul-de-sac at the end of Bendricon Lane is a meeting place for gang activity and prostitution. Residents reported not recognizing the alleged gang members as living in the neighborhood. The activity at the cul-de-sac makes residents feel unsafe, especially at night. Some residents reported not going outside in the evenings out of fear.

Residents report calling police services, but response times are at times deemed “not quick enough”.



PARKING

Parking is an ongoing issue on Bendricon Lane, with a resident reporting that some vehicles are not moved for months at a time. These vehicles reportedly take up a considerable percentage of the on-street parking, which exacerbates the existing parking problem.

STREET LIGHTING

Residents adjacent to Los Andes Street report the walkway is too dark and serves as a meeting place for a group that congregates to drink within the Mountain View property. A resident that lives on Los Andes Street would like to see lights installed to enhance her family's safety.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on Bendricon Lane is available as [Appendix H: Bendricon Lane Resident Feedback](#).

Jutewood Place



PARKING

Parking was the top issue reported by residents living on Jutewood Place. Residents perceive the parking problem is amplified by the multi-family units on Bendricon Lane and adjacent streets. Some residents suggested permit parking as a solution to deter on-street parking of residents who do not live on Jutewood Place.

TRAFFIC

Streetlight at Jutewood Place/Cornelius Drive: A few residents would like to see a traffic light added at Jutewood Place/Cornelius Drive to increase safety when they enter off El Toro Road. This is allegedly an intersection with an increased number of car accidents.

Speeding: several residents reported speeding vehicles that travel beyond the established speed limit.

TRASH

Several residents reported large items are disposed of on Jutewood Place and Los Andes Street. This includes mattresses, couches, and other bulky items.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on Jutewood Place is available as [Appendix I: Jutewood Place Resident Feedback.](#)

El Perro Street

TRAFFIC

Traffic Light at Jutewood Place/Cornelius Drive: an El Perro Street resident would like to see a stoplight at Jutewood Place/ Cornelius Drive to enhance road safety.



Vehicles parked at ends of streets: residents report vehicles park too close near the end of the street off Jutewood Place. This is a problem for drivers as they must slow down significantly before turning to avoid striking parked vehicles. Residents recommend the City consider painting the end of the curb red to deter parking and enhance safety.

Bike Safety: A resident, who is an avid cyclist, was hit by a vehicle on Muirlands Boulevard. They would like to see more bike lanes and bike safety campaigns in the City.

PARKING

There are reported issues with lack of on-street parking in the evenings. It is also reportedly difficult for two vehicles to drive past each other when there are cars parked on either side of the street.

OTHER ISSUES

- **Lighting:** resident reports the neighborhood is too dark and they do not feel safe walking on their own in the evening.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on El Perro Street is available as [Appendix J: El Perro Street Resident Feedback](#)

La Vaca Street



PARKING

The top concern of residents living on La Vaca Street is related to parking. It is the perception of residents that people who park on La Vaca Street do not live in the neighborhood. Some residents reported they believe people come from as far as Saguaro Street or the multi-family units on Bendricon Lane, Raymond Way and Packer Place. The lack of on-street parking makes it difficult for residents to park. Some residents suggested permit parking to address this issue.

CRIME

There is a perceived increase in crime in the area, with a few residents reporting an increase in thefts from vehicles.

STREET LIGHTING

Residents would like to see lighting improvements on their street to illuminate areas.

La Vaca Street and Bunbury Road

STREET SWEEPING

Residents would like to see more street sweeping enforcement as some vehicles are reportedly not moving, which results in the street not being cleaned.

OTHER ISSUES

- Reports of blocked fire hydrants at night

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on La Vaca Street is available as [Appendix K: La Vaca Resident Feedback](#).

Bunbury Road

PUBLIC SAFETY

Resident reported suspicious activity at night as “people come from unknown areas and make the resident feel unsafe”.

TRASH

Resident reported trash is frequently disposed of on the street. This account was corroborated by the evaluation team during community canvassing (*see photo on the right*).

A report of the information collected during the interviews with residents on Bunbury Road is available as [Appendix L: Bunbury Road Resident Feedback](#).



PART 2: RESIDENT SURVEY TAKEAWAYS

In addition to the outreach conducted in the community, we also collected 8 resident responses via our online survey. Below are some of the key takeaways from these responses.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

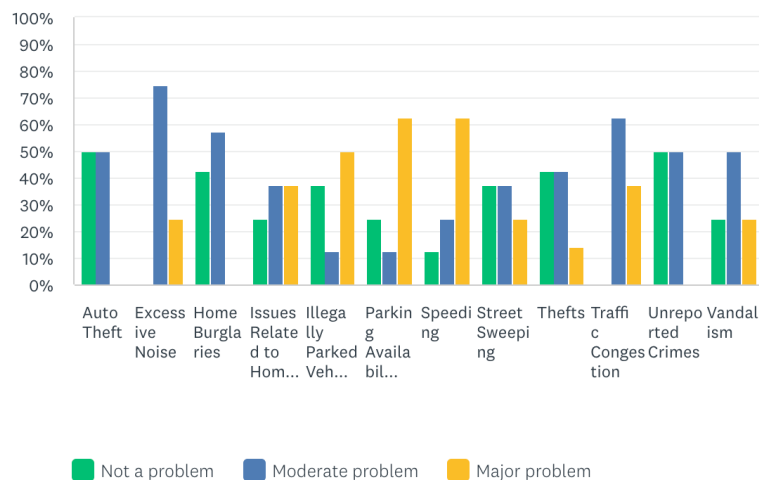
- **Mixed responses regarding safety:** When asked how safe they felt in their neighborhood, an equal percentage of residents (37.5%) reporting feeling safe and unsafe. The remainder of the residents were neutral.
- Residents like the proximity of their neighborhood to transportation (freeway).

QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

- Speeding, parking availability and illegally parked vehicles are major problems. [See chart below for details](#)
 - *Excessive speeding--60-80 MPH+ was reported by several residents living on Cavanaugh Road.*

Please rank the severity of the following issues in your neighborhood.

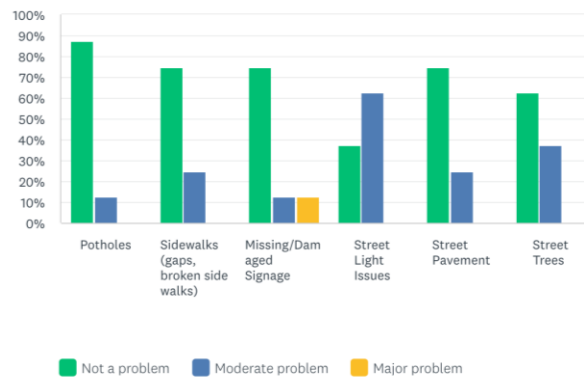
Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



- The overflow parking from the multi-family units into the single-family residential areas is a major quality of life issue for residents in the single-family homes.
- Street lighting is a top concern throughout the subject neighborhood.

Please rank the severity of the following issues in your neighborhood.

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



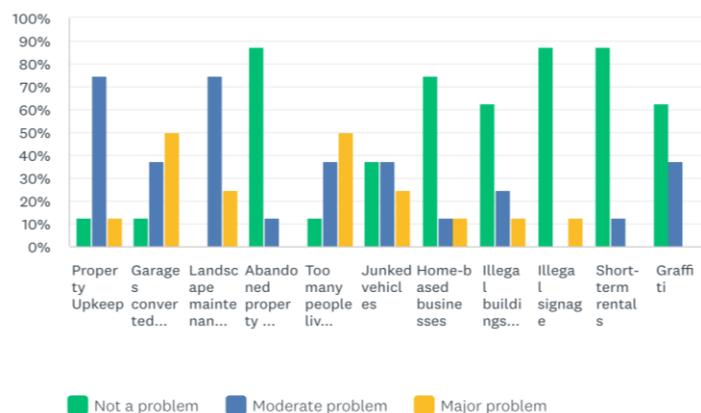
- Excessive noise, traffic congestion and home burglaries are moderate problems.
- Residents do not believe cleanliness of the neighborhood is adequate.
 - Resident reported gutters are dirty now that street sweeper only comes by twice per month.
- Landscaping was reported as the top external improvement needed by homeowners in the single-family homes.
- Residents have concerns regarding activity of residents experiencing homelessness.
- The parkway (between Cavanaugh Road and Packet Place) is a problem area where people congregate to loiter and drink.
- El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard construction fencing is an eyesore.

PERCEPTIONS

- Residents feel there is more crime in their area compared to other parts of the City.
- Residents do not feel they get the same level of attention as other areas of the City.
- Residents believe there are households in their neighborhood with too many tenants which contributes to parking problems.
- Residents believe people using garages as living spaces.

Please rank the severity of the following issues in your neighborhood.

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Residents would be interested in participating in neighborhood events, especially community fairs, holiday events, community clean-ups and community service projects.

COMMUNICATIONS

- The Leaflet and emails are the top ways to inform residents of City news.
- 60% of residents surveyed reported not knowing of the MyLakeForest app.

RESIDENT RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

- Infrastructure:** "Water from the underground pipes in the parkway empties into the street gutter and moves down toward McCoy Road. This results in a 2-foot buildup of water at Cavanaugh Road and McCoy Road. Storm drains on the east side between Cavanaugh Road and McCoy Road could help alleviate flooding at the intersection. The water buildup occurs even when there is .25 inches of rain."
- Parking:** Many residents in the single-family homes mentioned the need for the City to implement permit parking as a solution for ongoing overflow parking from adjacent neighborhoods (ex: Saguaro Condominium residents allegedly park on La Vaca Street)
- Speeding enforcement**
- Speed Bumps:** Residents on Cavanaugh Road would like speed bumps to deter speeding.
- Street Sweeping Signage** should be posted to prevent street parking on sweeping days. This results in the street not being cleaned.

- **DIY Home Repair Workshops**-especially focused on landscaping ideas.
- **Proactive Parking Enforcement** on street sweeping days.
- **Proactive Code Enforcement**
 - Residents would also like more information from code enforcement on what is allowable/a violation
- **El Toro Traffic Synchronization:** Residents would like to see increased synchronization
- **Curb Parking-** Assess streets in the project area to identify any curbs that may need to be painted red to prevent cars from parking too close to the entrance of the street, specifically the streets coming off Muirlands Boulevard and El Toro Road.
- **Sidewalk Repairs-** assess area for sidewalk repairs needed, residents reported some sidewalks are raised.
- **Safety Concerns:**
 - Fire hydrants are reportedly blocked at night.
- **Beautification Ideas:**
 - Landscaping on the corner of El Toro Road and Muirlands Boulevard to Ridge Route.
 - Residents would like more recreation areas in the area. There is currently no place for neighborhood children to play.

A copy of the complete survey responses is available in [Appendix M: Resident Survey Responses](#)

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

- **Bulky Items:** During community canvassing efforts, the evaluation team observed bulky items in common areas and spaces not intended for disposal.
- **Trash:** The evaluation team observed many trash cans with overflowing waste.



SECTION V:
Business Assessments

PART 1: DOOR-TO-DOOR BUSINESS ASSESSMENT TAKEWAYS

Understanding there is a considerable business presence within the subject neighborhood, the evaluation team canvassed the shopping centers along El Toro Road to hear directly from business stakeholders regarding their experience and observations.

Below are the high-priority issues consistently identified by business owners. We have categorized the quality-of-life issues by shopping centers for ease of analysis and in order of perceived importance.

Carlen Plaza



ISSUES RELATED TO HOMELESSNESS

The top concern expressed by business stakeholders in the Carlen Plaza shopping center involved issues related to homelessness. There is reportedly a significant presence of residents experiencing homelessness who circulate in the shopping center. At night,

some homeless residents sleep in front of the businesses and prevent entry into the businesses. There are also reports of residents defecating and urinating behind the shopping center.

CRIME

Business stakeholders report there is gang activity behind the shopping center. There are also reports of stolen items if businesses leave inventory in the back.

TRASH

There are reports of people from other areas disposing of trash items in the shopping center's bins. This activity has resulted in at least one business receiving a warning from the Orange County Health Care Agency for having an overflowing trash bin.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with businesses at Carlen Plaza is available as [Appendix N: Carlen Plaza Business Feedback](#).

Bell Tower Plaza



Bell Tower Plaza and Twin Peaks

Business stakeholders reported believing criminal activities are taking place on the second floor of the plaza.

ISSUES RELATED TO HOMELESSNESS

Like their neighbors at Carlen Plaza, we heard of concerns surrounding issues related to homelessness. This activity impacts the visibility of businesses and deters some customers from patronizing the businesses.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with businesses at Bell Tower Plaza is available as [Appendix O: Bell Tower Plaza Business Feedback](#).

Twin Peaks



ISSUES RELATED TO HOMELESSNESS

Businesses in the Twin Peaks shopping center reported a presence of residents experiencing homelessness. Although some interactions have been negative, it appears that most of the interactions this shopping center has with homeless residents has been more positive than that of businesses at Carlen Plaza. Business stakeholders at Twin Peaks did not perceive homeless residents as a threat.

CRIME

Several business stakeholders reported burglaries, break-ins, or attempts to break into their business. It was the perception of at least one business owner that the police services response times are not as quick as they could be. They would like to see additional patrolling of the area to deter criminal activities.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

A few business stakeholders spoke of the perceived selective nature of code enforcement. There are some businesses that have received warnings or citations for signage violations. In contrast, other businesses reportedly engage in more blatant prohibited activities, like hosting large unpermitted canopies in front of businesses, and are not cited. Businesses would like to see more consistent enforcement.

A report of the information collected during the interviews with businesses at Twin Peaks is available as [Appendix P: Twin Peaks Business Feedback](#)

PART 2: BUSINESS SURVEY TAKEWAYS

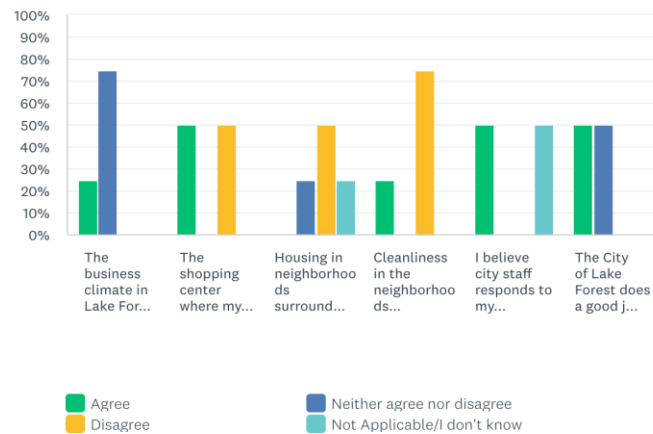
As with the resident assessments, the evaluation team also collected business feedback via an online survey. Below are some of the key takeaways from the responses.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Business stakeholders reported feeling safe at the business during the day and unsafe during the night.
- Safety concerns appear to stem from the presence of homeless residents in the area.
- Shopping centers are reportedly not patrolled by security guards.
- Residents use the shopping centers for parking at night resulting in illegally parked vehicles.
- Business stakeholders do not believe cleanliness in the surrounding neighborhood is adequate. [See chart below for details](#)

For the following statements, please indicate whether you agree, neither agree nor disagree or disagree.

Answered: 4 Skipped: 0



- Businesses reported not being aware of the City's Business Watch program.
- Businesses reported having staffing shortages.
- No business that participated in the survey reported visiting the City's economic development website.
- Stakeholders cited lighting as the top issue in the surrounding neighborhood.
- Stakeholders do not like the construction fencing at The Arbors.
- Businesses like their shopping center's proximity to the freeway
- Businesses reported not being aware of the MyLakeForest app.
- The preferred method of communication are emails.

BUSINESS STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

- Increase Patrolling
- Workshops on how to promote/advertise businesses.

A copy of the complete survey responses is available in [Appendix Q: Business Survey Responses](#).

SECTION V:
Findings



TRAFFIC

Speeding- residents in the subject neighborhood have a perceived danger involving speeding motorists in residential streets. Of particular concern are the following areas:

- **Cavanaugh Road:** Residents living on Cavanaugh Road reported a high incidence of speeding which generates a sense of insecurity. The speeding incidents anecdotally occur consistently throughout the day. The stop sign at **Cavanaugh Road and McCoy Road** was consistently deemed by residents as ineffective as motorists disregard this road direction. Cavanaugh Road's proximity to Rockfield Boulevard, which has a speed limit of 40 MPH, may be a contributing factor to the areas reported high speeds. Several residents on Cavanaugh Road suggested the addition of speed bumps to deter the reported high speeds.
- **Cut-Through Traffic:** it should be noted that residents of Cavanaugh Road also reported a high incidence of non-resident traffic problems, with motorists utilizing Cavanaugh Road to travel from Rockfield Boulevard to Muirlands Boulevard.

Traffic Light at Jutewood Place/Cornelius Drive- a few residents would like to see a traffic light at Jutewood Place and Cornelius Drive to enhance their safety when they turn into the residential areas off El Toro Road There are reportedly frequent car accidents at the intersection.

Vehicles parked at ends of streets: a few residents on El Perro Street report vehicles park too close near the end of the street off Jutewood Place. This is a problem for drivers coming from El Toro Road as they must slow down significantly before turning to avoid striking parked vehicles. There is a similar situation on La Vaca Street with vehicles reportedly parking too close to Muirlands Boulevard Residents recommend the City consider painting the end of the curb red to deter parking and enhance safety.



LIGHTING

Community Stakeholders throughout the subject neighborhood consistently spoke of the need for more lighting to enhance safety. Complaints regarding lighting range from dim lighting to insufficient lighting, which creates dark areas. The reported lack of lighting results in community stakeholders feeling unsafe to walk in the neighborhood and in the shopping centers in the evenings and at night. Of particular concern are the following areas:

- **Parkway between Packer Place and Cavanaugh Road:** Residents throughout the subject neighborhood consistently identified the parkway between Packer Pl. and Cavanaugh Road as needing additional lighting. Reportedly, the lack of lighting in the park creates an opportunity for groups to congregate and allegedly engage in drinking and perceived illegal activities including drug use. This creates a scenario where residents do not feel safe walking through the park during the evening or at night.
- **Los Andes Street:** Residents adjacent to Los Andes Street reported that the walkway is too dark and serves as the meeting place for a group that assembles to drink within the Mountain View parking lot. This activity results in residents feeling unsafe to walk through the walkway in the evenings and at night.



PARKING

Limited on-street parking was another issue of great concern to residents in the subject neighborhood. Residents in the single-family residences perceive the shortage of on-street parking is caused by two sources: 1) too many cars/drivers per household 2) overflow parking from the multi-family units on Packer Place, Raymond Way, Bendricon Lane and units across Muirlands Boulevard (Saguaro Boulevard). Some residents interviewed who live in the multi-family units confirmed they park on adjacent streets due to the lack of parking available on their respective streets. Other residents reported parking at the shopping centers.

Residents in the following streets were more likely to speak of parking concerns:

- **Cavanaugh Road and Jutewood Place-**Residents reported limited on-street parking. Residents on these streets perceive the multi-family units on Bendricon Lane and adjacent streets contribute to the parking problem.
- **Bendricon Lane-** Residents reported some vehicles are not moved for months at a time, exacerbating the current parking problem in the area.
- **El Perro Street-** In addition to limited on-street parking in the evenings, residents report it is difficult for two cars to drive past each other when cars are parked on either side of the street.
- **La Vaca Street-** There is a perception that drivers who park on La Vaca Street do not live in the neighborhood. Residents reported believing people come from Saguaro Street or the multi-family units.

Permit Parking: The top solution suggested by residents in the single-family residences to address on-street parking problems was permit parking. The

evaluation team received several inquiries from residents in the single-family neighborhoods regarding the process to implement permit parking.



NOISE

Due to the proximity to the shopping centers on El Toro Road, residents on Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place report excessive and constant noise from the Twin Peaks Plaza parking lots. Home Depot and Smart & Final were identified as specific sources of noise. Residents report the businesses load/unload items at all hours of the night, which impacts their ability to sleep.



CRIME

Residential Areas

Stakeholders in the subject neighborhood perceive increased criminal activity compared to other parts of the City. Several residents reported having been victims of thefts from vehicles and burglaries. Thefts of catalytic converters appear to be a common crime in the area, with several residents reporting being victimized.

- **Bendricon Lane:** residents reported criminal activity occurring at the cul-de-sac on Bendricon Lane, presumably **gang activity** and **prostitution**. Residents reported not recognizing the alleged gang members as neighborhood residents and believe this group comes from outside this area. These activities have been reported to the police; however, there are times when residents feel the response times are not adequate and allow the alleged criminals to get away.
- **Parkway between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place:** residents report the parkway serves as a hub for groups to gather to engage in perceived illegal activities (drug use/drug sales). Residents reported finding discarded needles and beer cans.

Shopping Centers

- **Carlen Plaza:** Business stakeholders reported gang activity behind the shopping center. There are also reports of items being stolen if left unattended in the back of the center.
- **Bell Tower Plaza:** stakeholders reported believing there are criminal activities taking place on the second floor of the plaza.
- **Twin Peaks:** Several business stakeholders reported burglaries, break-ins or attempts to break into their business. It was the perception of at least one

Areas in Need of Improvement

business owner that the police services response times are not as quick as they could be. They would like to see additional patrolling of the area to deter criminal activities.



ISSUES RELATED TO HOMELESSNESS

Several residents and business stakeholders in the subject neighborhood reported an increased presence of homeless residents. According to Public Works, their top service calls in the area relate to issues related to homelessness. Some stakeholders cited the presence of residents experiencing homelessness as a perceived safety concern.

- **Carlen Plaza:** There is reportedly a large presence of residents experiencing homelessness who circulate in this shopping center. At night, some homeless residents sleep in front of the businesses and prevent entry. There are also reports of residents defecating and urinating behind the shopping center.
- **Bell Tower Plaza:** Like their neighbors at Carlen Plaza, we heard of concerns surrounding issues related to homelessness at the Bell Tower Plaza.
- **Twin Peaks:** Although some interactions have been negative, it appears that the majority of the interactions this shopping center has with homeless residents have been more positive than that of businesses at Carlen Plaza. Business stakeholders at Twin Peaks did not perceive homeless residents as a threat.



INFRASTRUCTURE/REPAIRS

Irrigation: Resident reported when it rains, water backs up on the north side of Cavanaugh Road, causing water to collect, which may promote the spread of mosquitoes.

- **Storm Drain:** Resident reported when it rains, a torrent of water comes from underground pipes in the parkway (located between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place) and empties into the storm drain about 25 yards down McCoy Road. This results in a 2-foot buildup of water at the intersection of McCoy and Cavanaugh Road, which cars must move through. The resident would like to see a storm drain placed on the east side of the street between the parkway and McCoy Road to alleviate the problem.
- **Sidewalk Repairs:** Some residents highlighted uneven or raised sidewalks in need of repairs.



PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

A few residents spoke of the need for enhanced property maintenance in the multi-family units. During door-to-door canvassing, the evaluation team observed a need for improved maintenance, especially in some of the balconies and stairs in the multi-family units on Packer Place, Raymond Way and Bendricon Lane.

Residents in the single-family homes identified **landscaping** as the top external improvement their home needs. This was confirmed by Code Enforcement, who reported the top calls for service are property maintenance, especially relating to overgrown or dead vegetation. Absentee landlords in the multi-family units are perceived by some as contributing to the property maintenance issues in the area.



DISPOSAL OF BULKY ITEMS

Several Jutewood Place and Los Andes Street residents reported that large items are consistently disposed of in common areas, especially at the cul-de-sac on Los Andes Street. This includes mattresses, couches, and other bulky items. The evaluation team corroborated these reports during the door-to-door canvassing.



STREET SWEEPING

Some residents would like to see more street sweeping enforcement as some vehicles do not move, which results in the street not being cleaned. Due to the shift from weekly to twice per month street sweeping, this means that some areas remain unswept for weeks at a time. Some residents suggested posting signage announcing the street sweeping schedule to encourage compliance.



TRASH

Residents and business stakeholders perceive the cleanliness of the subject neighborhood as “not adequate”. During our door-to-door canvassing, our evaluation team encountered some areas with open trash bins and littering.

At Carlen Plaza, there are reports of people not associated with the shopping center who dispose of trash items in the shopping center’s bins. This has resulted

Areas in Need of Improvement

in at least one business receiving a warning from the Orange County Health Care Agency for having an overflowing trash bin.



BEAUTIFICATION

Residents The Arbors effort, but dislike the construction fencing that has been installed and deem it to be an eyesore.



PARKS

There are no parks or recreation areas within walking distance of this neighborhood. Some residents would like to see recreation areas for kids to play.

Perceptions to be Aware of:



MIXED PERCEPTIONS REGARDING SAFETY

When asked how safe they felt in their neighborhood, stakeholders living in the residential areas had mixed responses, with an equal percentage of residents (37.5%) reporting feeling safe and unsafe. Business stakeholders reported feeling safe at their place of business during the day and unsafe during the night. These safety concerns appear to stem from lighting, crime and the presence of residents experiencing homelessness in the area.



COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS LIKE PROXIMITY TO TRANSPORTATION

Residents and businesses in the subject neighborhood like their home/business's proximity to the freeway and other transportation.



LESS LEVEL OF ATTENTION

Residents in the subject neighborhood do not feel they get the same level of attention as other areas of the City.



TOO MANY RESIDENTS PER HOUSEHOLD

Residents believe there are households in their neighborhood with too many tenants, which contributes to the area's on-street parking problems.



FEAR OF REPORTING

There is a perception that tenants are afraid to report property issues to the City for fear of landlords, especially in the multi-family units.



US VS THEM

There is a perceived "us vs. them" dynamic between the multi-family and single-family residents, especially on Jutewood Place and Bendricon Lane.

SECTION VII:
Key Recommendations

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are key recommendations for the consideration of the Lake Forest Neighborhood Improvement Task Force. These recommendations are suggestions based on community feedback and Communications LAB's assessment of the subject neighborhood.

Assess Neighborhood Traffic Concerns for Action



SPEEDING

SPEEDING: Evaluate education, enforcement, and engineering methods to deter reported speeding and disregard for road directions (stop signs) in residential areas throughout the subject area.

- Assess installation of traffic calming devices to manage speeds on Cavanaugh Road.
 - **Options for consideration:**
 - Radar speed sign technology
 - Speed bumps
- Assess installation of enhancements to encourage motorist compliance at stop signs.
 - **Options for consideration:**
 - Install multiple/more prominent stop signs
 - "Stop Ahead" advance traffic control signs
 - Road markings
- Assess increased enforcement options



RED CURB MARKINGS

Evaluate whether there is a need to add additional red curb markings to deter vehicles from parking too close to the end of street on Jutewood Place and La Vaca Street, which pose an alleged danger for motorists traveling from Muirlands Boulevard and El Toro Road.



STREETLIGHTS

Evaluate the need for an additional traffic light at Jutewood Place and Cornelius Drive to enhance safety when turning from El Toro Road

Conduct Neighborhood Lighting Assessment



Evaluate and develop an action plan to improve neighborhood lighting that encourages safety and evening activities.

Improved lighting should address the priority areas at the **parkway between Packer Place and Cavanaugh Road** and **Los Andes Street**.

○ **Options for consideration:**

- Solar lights

Conduct Neighborhood Parking Assessment



Assess neighborhood parking to determine if, as reported by residents, demand exceeds capacity on the following streets:

- Cavanaugh Road
- Jutewood Place
- Bendricon Lane
- La Vaca Street
- El Perro Street

■ **Options for consideration:**

- The top solution suggested by residents in the single-family homes to address on-street parking problems was permit parking.
- Explore ordinances to encourage landlords to use garages for parking purposes.

Noise Level Education



Distribute information to businesses in shopping centers adjacent to the subject neighborhood regarding City noise ordinance and discuss noise reports during early hours with management at Home Depot and Smart & Final in the Twin Peaks shopping centers.

Implement Crime Mitigation Efforts



INCREASING PATROLLING

Evaluate the feasibility of increasing patrolling in the areas highlighted below:

- **Bendricon Lane:** residents reported criminal activity occurring at the cul-de-sac on Bendricon Lane, presumably **gang activity** and **prostitution**.
- **Parkway between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place:** residents report the parkway serves as a hub for groups to gather to engage in perceived illegal activities (drug use/drug sales).
- **Carlen Plaza, Bell Tower Plaza and Twin Peaks:** business stakeholders reported burglaries, break-ins, or attempts to break into their business.
 - Consider reintroducing business stakeholders to the **Business Watch** program.

CATALYTIC CONVERTER CRIMES

Consider year-round “Etch and Catch” programs to fight reported rise in catalytic converter thefts.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- Neighborhood Watch Program
 - Educate and encourage residents in the subject neighborhood to form neighborhood watch programs.

Infrastructure/Repairs



Evaluate and address the merits of the resident reports regarding the following issues:

- **Cavanaugh Gutter Drainage:** Water backs up on the north side of Cavanaugh Road causing water to collect which may promote the spread of mosquitoes.
- **Storm Drain:** Resident reported when it rains a torrent of water that comes from underground pipes in the parkway (located between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place) empties into the street gutter and moves like a river toward McCoy Road. This results in a 2-foot buildup of water at the intersection of McCoy and Cavanaugh Road. The resident would like to see a storm drain placed on the east side of the street between the parkway and McCoy Road to alleviate the problem.
- **Sidewalk Repairs:** Some residents highlighted uneven or raised sidewalks needing repairs. Residents were encouraged to report these recommendations via the MyLakeForest app.

Promote Enhanced Property Maintenance & Code Compliance



LANDSCAPING WORKSHOPS

To assist residents in the single-family homes who identified landscaping as the top external improvement needed in their home, there is an opportunity to provide training on how to maintain landscaping.

- **Options for consideration:**
 - City-sponsored landscaping workshops
 - Partnership with Home Depot
 - Partnership with El Toro Water District



PROMOTE PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Evaluate policies and programs to encourage property owners to maintain their properties.

- **Options for consideration:**

- **Annual inspections for multi-family units** to encourage upkeep of properties and ensure compliance with health, safety, and fire codes.
- **Explore incentives for owners to maintain their businesses/complexes**—encourage them to be good neighbors.
- **Low interest loans or programs to assist residents** in conducting home repairs and improvements.



DISTRIBUTE CODE ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION

Residents would like more information from code enforcement on what is allowable/not allowed.

- **Options for consideration:**
 - Update “Code Enforcement Checklist”. This document offers good information, but could benefit from an updated design and information.
 - **Know your rights workshops for tenants** to increase awareness and education. This may help empower tenants who may be hesitant to report landlords.



INCREASE EDUCATION AND HOST EVENTS TO PROMOTE ADEQUATE DISPOSAL OF BULKY ITEMS

Providing residents with information on how to dispose of bulky items may help deter the constant disposal of bulky items in common areas and the reported use of the bins in the shopping centers near the residential areas.

- **Options for consideration:**
 - Bulky Item Disposal Information Magnet
 - Monthly Bulky Item Pick Up



PROACTIVE STREET SWEEPING ENFORCEMENT AND SIGNAGE

Evaluate the addition of street sweeping signs to inform residents and other drivers of the sweeping schedule. This may assist in deterring vehicles who reportedly do not move their vehicles on street sweeping day. Proactive enforcement and ticketing may also serve as an additional deterrent.



INCREASE CODE ENFORCEMENT/POLICE SERVICES COORDINATION

Code enforcement staff perceived there to be more coordination with the Police Services in the past. There is an opportunity to increase coordination between departments.

- **Options for consideration:**
 - Monthly/Quarterly Code Enforcement/Police Services Coordination Meetings



IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION SPACES AND ACTIVITIES

There are no parks or recreation areas within walking distance of the subject neighborhood. Some residents would like to see the addition of recreation areas for kids to play.

- **Options for consideration:**
 - **Mobile Recreation Trailer:** host City recreation trailer in the parkway between Cavanaugh Road and Packer Place for children to enjoy on weekends or in the summer.
 - **Shuttle service** from neighborhood to local parks during the Summer.



BEAUTIFICATION

Of the 91 stakeholder contacts made, three residents had concerns about construction fencing at the Arbors. Feedback was collected November 6-12, 2021.

Raise Awareness of City's Efforts to Address Issues Related to Homelessness



In response to the reported significant presence of residents experiencing homelessness in the residential and business areas, it may be beneficial for community and business stakeholders to be informed of the City's general efforts to address this issue.

- **Options for consideration:**
 - **Virtual Workshops on Homelessness Efforts:** educate residents on City efforts to address issues related to

homelessness and what can and cannot be enforced per state law.

Opportunities to Enhance Communications



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community Stakeholders are open to the idea of participating in community events, especially community fairs, holiday events, community clean-ups, community service projects.



PROMOTE MYLAKEFOREST APP AND EVALUATE FEASIBILITY OF TRANSLATION

The MyLakeForest tool is a great resource for community stakeholders but could benefit from additional promotion. The availability of translation tools to make the app available to residents who speak Spanish or other threshold languages can further enhance communications.



PROMOTE CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WEBSITE AND WORKSHOPS

The City's Economic Development website could benefit from additional promotion so that business stakeholders see it as the valuable resource it is. Business stakeholders also reported facing staffing challenges. Workshops sharing resources and information on how businesses can navigate through a post-pandemic business world may be beneficial.

Look Ahead

With a motto of *"remember the past, challenge the future"*, the City of Lake Forest honors the achievements of the past while looking forward. The recommendations in this report provide a foundation from which City staff can continue this tradition by planning for the future of Southwest Lake Forest in the years and decades to come.

It is our belief that the City of Lake Forest has the willingness and dedication to improve the quality of life of residents seeking general improvements and that this report will result in important enhancements that further elevate Lake Forest as an ideal place to live and do business.



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