

Agreement Finalized to Rent Lighthouse Church for Bridge Shelter

The City of Costa Mesa has reached an agreement with the Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene to operate a 50-bed temporary interim bridge shelter on a portion of their property located at 1885 Anaheim Avenue.

The City Council voted to approve the terms of a lease agreement with the church at its Feb. 19 council meeting. Representatives from the Church of the Nazarene then agreed to the terms of that lease agreement on Thursday Feb. 21.

"This is a great first step toward the cleanup and restoration of our Westside neighborhoods, while at the same time addressing the humane option of helping individuals up and out of homelessness," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "We look forward to this productive partnership with Lighthouse Church that is truly in the best interest of both parties."

Establishing this bridge shelter option for those experiencing homelessness will provide the number of necessary shelter beds that the City of Costa Mesa is expected to create based on a proposed settlement agreement in the OC Catholic Worker lawsuit that in turn would restore the city's ability to enforce trespassing and anti-encampment ordinances.

The new bridge shelter basically expands what is an already existing inclement weather shelter into a reservation-based, high-security temporary solution to offer shelter beds to those in need.

The temporary Lighthouse Church bridge shelter will be run by a combination of city outreach staff and staff from Mercy House, an experienced, well-respected operator who will ensure

the facility is a reservation-based model along with 24-hour security and neighborhood management covering a half-mile radius.

The agreement between the city and the church provides upgrades including creating security fencing around the facility, increasing lighting in the area, cleaning and sanitizing streets, sidewalks and parks where necessary, and adding modular trailers for restrooms, storage of personal belongings, and space for shelter beds.

Additionally, unsheltered individuals will be offered resources for job training and placement services, mental health assessments, health and dental care, substance abuse treatment and connections to permanent housing all while working on their plan to obtain housing.

The city continues to pursue commercial property for a permanent bridge shelter in the northeast portion of the city near John Wayne Airport.