

New library construction meeting milestones

The Lions Park Projects construction continues and scheduled milestones are being met.

The steel reinforced concrete foundations, and infrastructure for water, sewer, gas and power utilities for the new library have been surveyed and constructed.



The structural steel frame system for the building has been erected, welded, bolted, inspected, and secured in place. The framework for the large, oval shaped sky light above the future staircase is taking form. The aesthetic arches of the building's exterior are now visible.

On March 7, the concrete for the library's first floor was constructed, including all utility penetrations, elevator pit and connections to its adjacent vertical components. On March 19, the concrete for the second floor of the building was placed. Underground storm drain construction is also underway for the new, one-acre park.

Bristol Street Project Achieves Another New Milestone

Improvements on the Bristol Street Project has achieved a new milestone. Striping of the newly paved section of Bristol Street between Baker Street and Randolph was completed and all median curbs have been installed.

A traffic signal was installed at the intersection of Bristol Street and Sobeca Way, at the CAMP and Pep Boys driveways.

This newly installed signal will allow for controlled crossing of pedestrians between the east and west sides of Bristol Street and improve traffic operations. Traffic engineers will be monitoring this location and adjusting the signal timing as needed to coordinate with other traffic signals in the vicinity.

Landscaping and irrigation improvements will be completed over the next four weeks.

Public Services launches new

website to keep residents updated on Capital Improvement Projects

Public Services is working closely with the Communications and Marketing team to share updates on the city's major Capital Improvement Projects.

A few of the City's large projects include the Bristol Street Improvements Project, the Lions Park Projects, the Arlington Drive Improvements Project, and the Fire Station No. 1 Reconstruction.

As part of this collaboration, there is a new webpage available at www.costamesaca.gov/CIP that features some new project fact sheets.

Visit this webpage for frequent updates.

A day of gratitude and giving thanks

It was Thanksgiving Day 2015.

Katlyn Soltys crawled her way out of the Santa Ana riverbed, where she had been living near the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Brookhurst Street, and into Costa Mesa's Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene.

She was approaching her 26th birthday and had already racked up 14 brutal years of addiction to alcohol, heroin, crack and

meth. A Michigan native, she had let drugs destroy her relationship with her family.

But it was on this day of gratitude and giving thanks that she realized she needed to end the cycle of destruction.

So a friend took her to the Lighthouse for breakfast where she met church staff members Tim Brown and Ronnie Steen. She instantly felt love at the church. She thought that this is where she needed to be to get her life back

"It was the kindness I felt from everyone," she said. "It had been a real long time since anyone had been that nice to me."

But Brown and Steen had bad news for her. They told her the Lighthouse was a men's only facility. She left the church dejected and sad but after wandering the streets of Costa Mesa, she returned later that day with this message for the church staff.

"I looked at Tim and said, 'I'm going to die if you don't let me live here,'" Soltys said.

So the two Lighthouse workers prayed about it and decided to let her stay. They set up a little cot in their sanctuary kitchen area where Soltys stayed and did whatever work they wanted her to do. She cooked and attended their meetings.

"I'm just thankful that during this time in my life their doors were open for me," she said. "I felt like I was a person to them. Even though I was a woman in a men's facility I felt just as equal. My heart felt full."

For Lighthouse Church Pastor Phil Eyskens, who works daily with the city's Network for Homeless Solutions, Soltys is just one of many his ministry touches on a regular basis.

"When I was first assigned as pastor of the Lighthouse over seven years ago, I soon came to the conclusion that this unique church was more than just a church, but it was also a

mission,” said Pastor Phil Esykens. “Katlyn’s story is one of the many success stories we have realized here at the Lighthouse, as we strive to offer a hand-up approach in this rubber-meets-the-road ministry. Go Katlyn, go!”

Through Soltys’ connection at the Lighthouse, she met another church worker, Lindah Miles, who helped her get into a sober living facility in Palm Springs. That ended up being a life-changing and lifesaving moment and Soltys has never looked back.

After spending 90 days in the Palm Springs rehab facility, Soltys moved into another one in Garden Grove called Gabe’s Home, named after the son of Pastor Joe Furey of His Place Church in Westminster who died of a heroin overdose. She now lives in a Huntington Beach apartment with her fiancé, who also got clean after years of addiction.

Soltys ended up in California at the age of 23 after her mom kicked her out of their Michigan home and sent her to a rehab facility in Temecula that she eventually also got kicked out of.

She spent three years bouncing in and out of rehab homes and living in Oceanside, San Diego and Costa Mesa before giving up drugs for good on that Thanksgiving Day in 2015. But for someone who had spent more than a decade hooked on alcohol and drugs, the pathway to sober living and a life off of the streets was more difficult than imagined.

“I was kind of shell shocked,” she said. “The readjustment of coming back and having a roof over my head was really uncomfortable. I didn’t know what to do. You don’t get that many success stories from homelessness. What is life after homelessness? I felt that overwhelming feeling.”

Then she got busy. She got a sponsor through Alcoholics Anonymous. She got a job at a law firm in Irvine and would take the bus every morning to work at 5 a.m. She said even

though it was long hours, the job gave her a safe place to be every day and she was grateful to have the opportunity.

She worked there a year and a half and then her life changed again. Her son Levi was born.

"I look at Levi now and I think how could I ever see a life without him," she said. "I love my family and I realize how much love my family has for me and I couldn't imagine ever going back."

Indeed, after years of emotional trauma, after years of distrust and anger, she has mended fences with her family and now speaks to her mother every day and says her mom is her best friend. She credits that to her sobriety and how former addicts look back at the damage they have done and instead become what she called "other-centered."

"I can't imagine what I put my family through," she said. "If I have a bad day and I ever think about getting high, I think about my family and I wouldn't want to put them through that again."

Today, Soltys feels the drive to help others who are in the shoes she once was in. She says the best part of her sobriety is that she can be a sponsor in AA. She helps women go through the 12 steps. She hopes that someday the Lighthouse Church will have a place for women to seek help from addiction and she also hopes someday to make a career out of helping others.

"It helps me to help them," she said. "They are helping me more than I'm helping them and they don't even know that. I've done a lot of fun things in sobriety."

Things continue to look brighter and brighter for her. After eight years without a driver's license she got hers reinstated this past February, and the next day her fiance's boss gave her a car.

She attributes all of this to a higher power.

“My story is much related to God,” she said. “I didn’t plan to stop using that day. I didn’t plan to leave the riverbed that day. I really enjoyed being homeless. I really enjoyed using drugs. I’m telling you it was God.”

Arlington Drive Improvement Project reaches another milestone

The Arlington Drive Improvement Project reached another milestone.

The curb and gutter delineating the roadway along the south side of the street is complete and the pavement along the south side from the Davis School site entry to Newport Boulevard has been base-paved.

Two-way traffic on Arlington Drive is now restored and will remain open through the project’s completion.

Nearly all the underground work is complete and the contractor will finish base-paving the remainder of the street later this week.

Lastly, work on the bioswale, landscape improvements, and construction of the bicycle trail will begin soon.

Public Services completes parkway, sidewalk and trail projects

Public Services recently completed the installation of new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant wheelchair ramps at the intersection of Carnegie Avenue and Swarthmore Lane.

This was part of the city's ongoing effort to enhance citywide accessibility and meet ADA requirements. In addition to installing wheelchair ramps, the project also included reconstruction of the cross-gutter and splash pad to improve drainage at this location.



Public Services also recently completed the reconstruction of the parkway drain at Wellesley Lane near Fairview Road (see before and after photos). The project entailed demolition of the deteriorated parkway culvert and reconstruction of a parkway drain to meet the city's standards. In addition to improving drainage conditions in the cul-de-sac, the project also included minor improvements to deteriorated sidewalk to eliminate displacements.

Improvements to the Harbor Boulevard Cornerstone Bicycle Trail at Fairview Development Center was also completed recently. The improvements included the Fairview Developmental Center planter reconfiguration that reduced the planter size and the installation of concrete in its place to ultimately provide a larger turning radius for bicyclists.

First pet adoption through the city's new animal care system is a success

The city's move to the new Newport Center Animal Hospital for shelter services has so far yielded favorable results and improved customer service.

As part of this new operation, the city has also partnered with Priceless Pet Rescue to handle pet adoptions because Newport Center Animal Hospital is currently not set up to do adoptions.

City staff facilitated the first pet adoption out of the shelter through the no-kill Priceless Pet Rescue. Jack the schnauzer mix was adopted by Danielle Rudd, pictured above on the right.

"Already Jack is fitting in perfectly and is loving going to the park for walks and getting tons of cuddles," Rudd said. "Words cannot express how thankful I am to welcome Jack in my life. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for working tirelessly to ensure she was placed in an awesome home with me

and my mom.”

Residents interested in adopting pets can visit this page for more information

Gisler Park playground gets freshened up

Public Services Maintenance staff recently began its annual winter renovations that include citywide preventative and routine maintenance at city parks. The Gisler Park playground was the first of this season to receive a fresh layer of playground chips.



Thirty-five yards of this material were spread throughout the playground by Brightview (formerly Marina Landscape), the city's landscape maintenance contractor.

The additional playground chips provided an overall aesthetic and safety improvement to the park.

Public Services keeps alley refurbishing rolling along

Public Services is halfway complete with the \$1.2 million citywide alley rehabilitation project. The city contracted with Black Rock Construction, who began the project in September 2017.

The project includes rehabilitation of 10 alleyways, which includes 145,000 square feet of new concrete improvements. The new pavement section replaces old asphalt with concrete containing fibrous, which are strength reinforcing additives designed to provide an extended service life under the stresses of passenger vehicles and trash trucks.



To date, the following alleyways are complete: 19th Street Alley located between 19th Street and Flower Street, from Orange Avenue to Westminster Avenue; Flower Street Alley located between Flower Street and Broadway, from Orange Avenue

to Westminster Avenue. Several Broadway alleys were also completed including one located between Broadway and Magnolia Street, from Raymond Avenue to Tustin Avenue; another located between Broadway and Magnolia Street, from Westminster Avenue to Santa Ana Avenue; and another located between Broadway and Magnolia Street, from Orange Avenue to Westminster Avenue.

The following alleys are anticipated for completion by summer 2018: Flower Street Alley located between Flower Street and Broadway, from Westminster Avenue to Santa Ana Avenue; Mace Avenue Alley located between Mace Avenue and Ginger Avenue, from Caraway Drive to Wintergreen Place; another Flower Street Alley located between Flower Street and Broadway, from Orange Avenue to Fullerton Avenue; Sterling Avenue Alley located between Pomona Avenue and Wallace Avenue, from Sterling Avenue to W 20th Street; and another Sterling Avenue Alley located between Pomona Avenue and Wallace Avenue, from W 20th Street to W 19th Street.

Police Department staff increases bring needed additions to several specialty assignments

The first deployment shift change for 2018 for the Costa Mesa Police Department has taken place, resulting in some exciting and new additions to several key specialty assignments.

The Traffic Safety Bureau gained a second traffic sergeant position to fill a long-time vacancy. This sergeant position will functionally oversee the department's traffic officers,

part-time traffic aides, and the traffic investigator position. With the breadth and volume of traffic-related issues throughout Costa Mesa, this additional sergeant will provide considerable expertise and oversight to a unit that continues to see growth.

The Police Department also saw expansion of the Community Policing Unit with the addition of a third officer. The Community Policing Unit was relaunched in late 2016 with new priorities and responsibilities to include, first and foremost, concentration on homeless outreach and liaison with the city's Homeless Outreach Team. They also tackle other community issues and provide support to Patrol Services and other units throughout the department. For the first time, the Community Policing Unit will now have officers in the field seven days a week.

The Gang Investigations Unit also experienced milestone growth with the return of a gang sergeant and addition of two gang investigators, for a total of four. Enhanced staffing will allow the Gang Investigation Unit to return to an independently operating unit under the Investigative Services Bureau. Much like the Community Policing Unit, the Gang Investigative Unit has expanded its presence and impact throughout the week.

Public Services completes Victoria Street wall closures

The City Council received numerous safety concerns from residents adjacent to the wall openings on both Raleigh Avenue and Victoria Street related to transients who sleep and/or

loiter, use drugs and alcohol consumption, public urination and graffiti vandalism.

Additionally, concerns were also brought up to city staff regarding the use of neighborhoods containing such wall openings for additional parking for the apartments located on the other side of the wall. Consequently, the City identified seven wall opening locations on Victoria Street and one wall opening location on Fairview Avenue to close off.

Public Services contracted with Horizons Construction Company, Inc. to close off arterial wall openings at these locations. The project consisted of demolishing the existing sound wall obstructions, curb and gutter, and sidewalks; and the construction of new, reinforced masonry-block sound walls, wall foundations, sidewalks, curb and gutter, and other work required to properly transition to the new improvements.

Public Services completes intersection safety lighting upgrades

During December 2017, Public Services contracted with Express Energy Services to upgrade 374 existing intersection safety lights from high pressure sodium to light emitting diode (LED) fixtures.

The fixtures were replaced between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. The LED's will enhance the visibility at the intersections and are more energy efficient and sustainable, thereby reducing the City's electrical and maintenance costs.

The installed LED's are eligible for rebates through the Southern California Edison rebate program. The City anticipates receiving an estimated rebate amount of \$95,145.