

Costa Mesa Sanitary District opens new pharmaceutical waste drop box

Following recently passed legislation and the corresponding closure of the Ramsay Rexall Pharmacy and Harbor Compounding pharmaceutical drop boxes, Costa Mesa Sanitary District (CMSD) installed a new pharmaceutical waste drop box at the district headquarters.

To dispose of medication in Costa Mesa, stop by the CMSD Headquarters located at 290 Paularino Avenue, Costa Mesa. Pharmaceutical waste will also be accepted at various Orange County drop sites on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2017, the National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.

The list of drop sites, which are coordinated by the Drug Enforcement Administration, are available at https://www.dea.gov/divisions/cead/programs/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html.

New median project on Placentia Avenue underway

Beador Construction Co., Inc. has started construction of the partially grant funded Placentia Avenue Median Improvement project, between Estancia High School and Adams Avenue, this week.

This project with the construction of a landscaped median on

Placentia Avenue will improve the streetscape adjacent to Fairview Park and Estancia High School. The raised median will also improve the traffic operations on Placentia Avenue as it will provide an overall appearance of a narrower roadway, which consequently provides a traffic calming effect.

During the first three weeks, Placentia Avenue, from Estancia High School to Adams Avenue, will be restricted to one-lane in both directions. The electronic traffic information signs located at each end of the project limits on Placentia Avenue will provide up-to-date traffic conditions to the community.

The project is scheduled for completion by spring 2018.

City enhances web site with new pages designed to assist residents in finding resources

The city's website staff has created a number of new web pages and features to assist residents using the website and to better highlight city initiatives.

One addition has been a page dedicated to issues around group homes and sober living. On this page, residents can learn about city ordinances and rights of those who live in group homes. [Click here to view that page.](#)

Point in Time Count shows Costa Mesa's homeless population dipped to 103

The results of the Point in Time survey of homeless by the nonprofit service organization 211oc indicates Costa Mesa's homeless population has dropped to 103 individuals, a decrease from the last count by Vanguard University in February of 2016 that counted 158 homeless on Costa Mesa's streets.

That Vanguard study was reported on here.

As always, there are many factors that have helped with this positive change. A key factor for Costa Mesa is the City's Network for Homeless Solutions, which since 2013 has helped house nearly 300 people who were previously homeless.

The Network for Homeless Solutions is a collaborative effort among city outreach workers, code enforcement, police and park rangers, community churches, and non-profit and private organizations to address homelessness in Costa Mesa. The network works daily to assist homeless and educates community members and businesses on how to best manage the issues that arise from homeless populations.

Additionally, a recent survey by the County of Orange found that of the 422 individuals living in the homeless encampment along the Santa Ana River near Angels Stadium, only five of them or 1.6 percent stated Costa Mesa was the last place they called home. This demonstrates that Costa Mesa's homeless is not necessarily contributing to the larger countywide problem.

The Point in Time count of homeless individuals in the county was conducted by the nonprofit service organization 211oc and began on the night of Jan. 27, 2017 and continued until the next morning. There was a 40% increase in volunteers helping

21loc to conduct the count (1,184 people), which represents a 47% increase in the number of mapped areas covered, making this the most comprehensive and detailed count ever completed.

To see the city's Point in Time Report prepared by 21loc click [here](#).

Costa Mesa, with a population of 113,000, represents approximately 3.6% of the total population in the county. That 3.6% number is reflective of nearly the same ratio of the city's homeless population in the entire county, which is at 4%.

This brief report provides information for Costa Mesa on the estimated number of people who were experiencing unsheltered homelessness within the city on the morning of the 2017 Point-In-Time Count.

The estimates were derived using the total unsheltered PIT count as well as census data indicating the 2016 estimated poverty population of the city (see Appendix for a discussion of the data and assumptions used). In addition to the total number of people experiencing homelessness who were unsheltered, the table below provides additional estimates of that population in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, and race.

As the table below indicates, three people in families experiencing unsheltered homelessness and 100 unsheltered individuals (a total of 4% of the all people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in the County of 2,584 individuals) are estimated to have been in Costa Mesa. Single adults were primarily: over 24 years old, male, and Caucasian. The family household had two adults over 24 years old and one child under 18 years old.

The Table below illustrates both family and adult only households

City	Pop	Pov Rate	Est #people unshel	Est % people unsheltered
Costa Mesa	113204	14.5%	103	4%
County	3,172,532	13.0%	2,584	100%

The Point in Time count is mandated by Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be conducted at least every two years, and includes counting those sleeping in both sheltered (emergency shelter and transitional housing) and unsheltered locations.

Orange County, and the cities within Orange County, were further interested in the geographic distribution of the people experiencing homelessness. Because the location of shelters varies throughout the County, the only information that is useful to report at a city level is people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. The full PIT report can be found at <http://www.211oc.org/>.

**City bond sale a huge success
and will save taxpayers**

hundreds of thousands of dollars in payments beyond the millions already projected

Last Wednesday Oct. 4, Costa Mesa officially went on the bond market for the Lions Park Projects and the 2007 COPs refinancing. A total of \$29.8 million in bonds were offered for both the project and refinancing of existing debt.

Orders were exceptionally strong. A diverse mix of investors including 33 investor accounts and many individual investors ordered six times the amount available. As a result, the City was able to obtain better pricing (lower interest rates) resulting in additional interest cost savings over the life of the bonds.

Final pricing results in a total of \$29.7 million in bonds and compares to our Sept. 19, 2017 Council agenda report as follows:

- True interest cost is 2.76% vs. 3.11%.
- For the 2007 COPs, the new annual payment averages \$1.76 million, which equals a savings of \$514,000 vs. the prior estimated savings of \$503,000 per year.
- Total savings from the refinancing increased to \$4.625 million over the remaining nine years compared to \$4.524 million previously reported.
- For the new money portion, the annual payment averages \$1.084 million compared to \$1.133 million previously estimated and compared to the former 2003 COPs payment of \$1.24 million which was the original target not-to-exceed amount when staff took the first financing concept to Council nearly two years ago.

The success of this financing plan is credited to members of the City Finance department, Public Services and the City Manager's office as well as outside advisors including Fieldman-Rolapp, Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth and Stifel Nicolaus & Co.

Pictured above is the city's bond financing team of Interim Finance Director Steve Dunivent, policy and legal analyst Michelle Manu with Chelsea Redmon and Anna Sarabian of Fieldman-Rolapp.

I-405 expansion work to take place this week

As part of the I-405 Improvement Project, OCTA announced that beginning Monday Oct. 9, construction work will take place from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. at the following locations:

- NB I-405 HOV inside lane from MacArthur Boulevard to SR-73
- NB I-405 merge lane from Bristol Street to South Coast Drive
- SB I-405 / SR-73 connector to Bear Street
- SB I-405 near Harbor Boulevard to Fairview Road
- Fairview Road bridge
- Harbor Boulevard bridge

OCTA in cooperation with The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is widening the San Diego Freeway (I-405) between State Route 73 (SR-73) and Interstate 605 (I-605). The project will improve 16 miles of I-405 between the SR-73 freeway in Costa Mesa and I-605 near the L.A. County line.

Residents encouraged to take part in the OC Fair & Event Center's Strategic 5-Year Business Plan

In conjunction with the 10-year Master Site Plan, OC Fair & Event Center will be launching a Strategic 5-Year Business Plan to develop our organizational goals.

Fair & Event Center officials will be seeking input at two open community discussions on how the OC Fair & Event Center can further support its mission of developing programs focused on community, education and agriculture.

If you're an interested neighbor, educator, member of the agricultural community, non-profit leader or business associate, your input is appreciated.

Join OC Fair & Event Center officials on the following dates:

- Wednesday, Oct. 18 from 2:30-4:30 p.m. or Thursday, Oct. 19 from 7-9:30 p.m.

RSVPs are not required. If you're unable to attend but would like to provide input, please email your thoughts and ideas to CommDept@ocfair.com.

Mobile Recreation Program officially launches

The Parks and Community Services Department recently launched the return of the Mobile Recreation program at Shalimar Park.

More than 75 kids from the surrounding neighborhoods had the opportunity to engage with staff and recreate in an area that isn't typically conducive for outdoor recreation.

The program will take place at Shalimar Park on Mondays and Fridays, Lions Park on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and at Ketchum-Libolt Park on Wednesdays during the month of October.

The Daily Pilot featured a story on the program here: <http://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/news/tn-dpt-me-cm-mobile-rec-program-20170926-story.html>.

Median Landscape Improvements completed on California Street in Mesa Verde North

Public Services recently completed landscape improvements to the Mesa Verde North median located on California Street.

The City's contractor, Empire Landscape, replaced over 3,000 square feet of sod with drought tolerant plants. This project conserves water and beautifies the Mesa Verde North neighborhood.

Walk to School day returns to three local schools on Wednesday Oct. 4

After a four-year hiatus, Walk to School Day will return in Costa Mesa on Oct. 4 at three elementary schools in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District.

The schools taking part in this year's event are the following:

- College Park – [Click here for route details and times for this school.](#)
- Kaiser – [Click here for route details and times for this school.](#)
- Victoria – [Click here for route details and times for this school.](#)

City elected leaders, staffers from the Fire and Police Departments, Public Services and the City Manager's Office will be out that day to assist families as they walk their children to school.

The first Walk to School Day – called Walk Our Children to School Day – was held in 1997. Since then, it's come a long way. In May 2012, the first-ever National Bike to School Day was celebrated across the USA. Event organizers have reported that this one-day event has led to great changes such as long-term walking and bicycling programs, new sidewalks and pathways, enforcement of unsafe driving behaviors and needed policy changes at schools and in communities.

Finance Department's Christine Tsao latest to receive City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Tom Hatch presented accounting supervisor Christine Tsao with the September City Manager Leadership Award at this month's Meet and Greet on Thursday Sept. 28.

"Christine is a part of our top-notch Finance team that continues to earn awards for excellence in budgeting and just recently helped us bring our Standard & Poor's ratings to Triple A status," City Manager Hatch said. "I truly appreciate the leadership and dedication that Christine brings to her job each and every day."

As Accounting Supervisor, Tsao is in charge of year-end closing and assists in the annual financial audit and CAFR preparation. She also oversees accounts payable and payroll and serves as the backup payroll coordinator when necessary.

She is universally described by her co-workers as always positive, gracious, responsive and willing to help. She has been especially helpful in assisting the interim assistant finance director. She works very hard and is efficient, prompt and accurate.

In her service to the City, Tsao has been responsible for various accounting assignments, including reconciling the

City's monthly bank accounts, accounting for the City's capital assets, filing the quarterly federal grant claim report, and preparing journal entries for accounting transactions into the general ledger. She was also very involved in the Successor Agency dissolution accounting process in 2012.

Tsao joined the City of Costa Mesa in 2001 and worked as an accountant for six years and was promoted to Accounting Supervisor in 2007.

Prior to joining the City, Tsao worked for two years at Arthur Andersen, one of the world's largest accounting firms at the time, as an accounting information system auditor. Then she joined another regional CPA firm, specializing in Governmental Accounting services.

As a lead auditor, Tsao conducted financial audits in many different cities and special districts in southern California before she took her first government job as an accountant in the city of San Clemente.

Tsao received her bachelor's degree in Business Administration, majoring in accounting, from Eastern Michigan University in 1992. She continued studying and earned her master's degree in Management Science Information Systems from Cal State Fullerton in 1995. She also has been a Certificated Public Accountant in the State of California since 2000.

In addition to Tsao, City Manager Hatch welcomed several new employees and congratulated others on promotions and one on her retirement.

Robert Matsuura joined the city as a Human Resources Technician, Jeffrey Tol is the new Building Technician II in Development Services, Lily Lorenzana is the new Management Analyst for IT and Ashley Avalos has been hired as a Recreation Leader II.

Hatch recognized Kelly Dalton, Irina Gurovich and Christina Oquendo, who were all promoted to Assistant Engineer and Cherie Pittington, who recently retired as Senior Communications Supervisor after 31 years with the city.

Standard & Poor's raises Costa Mesa's credit rating to its highest level of AA+

The City of Costa Mesa received excellent financial news this week as its credit ratings with Standard & Poor's jumped from AA to AA+, the highest possible rating issued by the financial services company for this type of financing.

The new improved ratings were issued in a report that came out today. This upgraded rating is the direct result of significant research by Standard & Poor's during many meetings and discussions with Costa Mesa administrative and finance staff to analyze the city's financial procedures and practices.

The high rating will allow the city to get the best rate possible for the sale of bonds that will be used to complete the Lions Park Projects.

"This is great news for the city and this AA+ rating assures the taxpayers of Costa Mesa that we will be able to complete the Lions Park projects with lower financing costs," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Congratulations to the current and former city councils, city staff and the Finance and Pension Advisory Committee for the prudent fiscal policies and management that helped us achieve this accomplishment."

The Standard & Poor's report also credited the effort to responsibly manage city reserves and debt. Indeed, Standard & Poor's report cited several reasons for this top rating.

[Click here](#) to see the full report.

According to Standard & Poor's, the following findings played into the rating being raised to the top level.

- Very strong economy, with access to a broad and diverse metropolitan statistical area (MSA);
- Very strong management, with strong financial policies and practices under our Financial Management Assessment (FMA) methodology;
- Strong budgetary performance, with operating surpluses in the general fund and at the total governmental fund level in fiscal 2016;
- Very strong budgetary flexibility, with an available fund balance in fiscal 2016 of 54% of operating expenditures;
- Very strong liquidity, with total government available cash at 81.8% of total governmental fund expenditures and 26.4x governmental debt service, and access to external liquidity we consider strong;
- Strong debt and contingent liability position, with debt service carrying charges at 3.1% of expenditures and net direct debt that is 21.9% of total governmental fund revenue, as well as low overall net debt at less than 3% of market value, but a large pension and other postemployment benefit (OPEB) obligation; and
- Strong institutional framework score.