

# Chinese city leaders visit Costa Mesa to learn more about CERT

City and Fire Department leaders were pleased this week to host a contingent of Chinese government leaders from the city of Chengdu, who visited Costa Mesa as part of a multi-week, fact-finding mission on the best practices of Community Emergency Response Teams or CERT.

Brenda Emrick, the city's CERT manager who has visited Chengdu several times last year for training purposes, said the group was in the United States on a study tour sponsored by The Asia Foundation.

Welcoming the group to Costa Mesa along with Emrick was Mayor Steve Mensinger, CEO Tom Hatch, Police Chief Rob Sharpnack and CERT leaders from the State of California and the cities of Huntington Beach, Long Beach, Downey and Irvine as well as members of The Asia Foundation.

Chen Liuting, who represented The Asia Foundation, said the visitors from Chengdu were all emergency managers who had prior training from the Federal Emergency Management Association. She said the city of Chengdu in the Sichuan Province of China has a population of 13 million people.

"It is a big city with lots of responsibilities," she said. "That's why there are here to learn more about CERT."

The past two weeks the group has been studying at the University of Maryland, before winding up in Costa Mesa on Tuesday and Wednesday. During their visit to Costa Mesa, the group got a tour of the city's Emergency Operations Center as well as a visit to Orange Coast College to learn about campus-based CERT.

The trip also included workplace seminar as well as a visit to South Coast Plaza for lunch at Lawry's and dinner at Maggiano's.

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## **Costa Mesa City Council takes a public stand against Proposition 57**

The Costa Mesa City Council unanimously passed a resolution opposing Proposition 57 and joined a growing chorus of cities, law enforcement officials and district attorneys who oppose the ballot measure that will reduce prison sentences and allow more opportunities for convicted felons to apply for parole.

[Click here to read the resolution.](#)

Also, in a letter to Gov. Jerry Brown, Costa Mesa Mayor Stephen Mensinger took direct aim at the statewide initiative, which is backed by the governor.

"Proposition 57 will undermine the work that has been put into stopping sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking and weakens legislation protecting victims," Mensinger wrote. "Important legislation such as the Victim's Bill of Rights, Mary's Law, Californians against Sexual

Exploitation Act, and the Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Act will become weaker if Proposition 57 passes.”

[Click here to read the entire letter.](#)

Costa Mesa joins the League of California Cities, prominent Police Chiefs, District Attorneys and law enforcement agencies and associations throughout the state in ardent opposition to the Proposition 57, which appears on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Like many cities in the state of California, Costa Mesa is feeling the effects of statewide laws and ballot measures that aimed to lessen the prison population but have in turn put more criminals back on the street prematurely.

According the League of Cities, California has experienced increased and sustained property crime in the aftermath of the 2011 public safety realignment and the passage of Proposition 47 in 2014, leading to an increasing number of crimes being treated as misdemeanors, aggravating a pre-existing shortage of beds in county jails, and resulting in an increasing number of offenders being at liberty on the streets of California’s cities.

The league also points to reports in the Los Angeles Times that show violent crime rose in California by 10% in 2015, a figure corroborated by crime statistics maintained by the state’s Department of Justice, which indicate that over 15,000 more violent crimes occurred in California in 2015 than in 2014.

At its Oct. 4 meeting, the City Council voted 4-0 to approve a resolution officially opposing Proposition 57, citing its potential to further increase levels of violent crime.

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# **Fire Station No. 1 Reconstruction project going out for bids**

The Fire Station Reconstruction Project has been advertised for construction bids. The bid opening is scheduled for Monday, Oct. 24. The Public Services Department has been working closely with the Fire Department and WLC Architects for more than a year to develop construction documents for this reconstruction.

The scope of work includes demolition of the existing station, and construction of a new, 12,000-square-foot station equipped with a three-bay and double-deep apparatus room, dorm rooms, administrative offices, kitchen, dining room, day room, physical training room, EMS training room, mechanic shop area, and emergency medical supply room. Additional site features include an emergency generator, fuel station, hose drying tower, and a City emergency supply storage unit.

Construction will commence shortly after the holidays in the first quarter of 2017.

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## **Chapoline needs a new home**

A 2-year old Terrier mix, Chapoline looks scruffy, but his personality is anything but- this little guy loves going for walks, is very curious and would make the perfect cuddle

buddy. For more information on Chapoline or to schedule a visit today, please [click here](#).

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## **Bring candy to City Hall to ensure families of the 1/5 Marines have a fun Halloween**

The City of Costa Mesa and the Military Affairs Team have launched a Halloween candy collection drive for Marine families.

The City will be collecting unopened individually wrapped candy to celebrate Halloween with the Marines of the First Battalion Fifth Marine Regiment and their families at Camp San Mateo for a trunk or treat event.

The collection point will be at the concierge desk in the Costa Mesa City Hall Lobby, 77 Fair Drive.

Candy collection will last until Thursday Oct. 20.

If individuals from the public are interested in participating or have questions about donations, please call Dan Baker at 714-754-5156 for additional information.

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# Candidates and ballot measure proponents have new sign ordinance to follow

As campaign season heats up and political signs are prominent throughout the city, residents may not be aware that the City Council adopted a new ordinance this year governing the placement of campaign signs.

Under the new ordinance, political campaign signs are now considered “non-commercial portable signs” in the City of Costa Mesa. Non-commercial portable signs are defined as: Any sign which can be moved from place to place which is not permanently affixed to the ground or to a building that is not used for commercial purposes.

Examples of non-commercial signs generally include, but are not limited to, signs that promote a political or religious viewpoint, and signs commenting on public officials(s) or matter(s) of public discourse.

Non-commercial portable signs may be displayed in Costa Mesa if they comply with Costa Mesa Municipal Code Section 13-123.

To learn more about **non-commercial portable signs** and **commercial portable signs**, **here is the link** to the Sign Code.

Below are answers to some Frequently Asked Questions about political signs and the new ordinance:

**Q: When may non-commercial portable signs be posted?**

**A:** In the six weeks before the upcoming Nov. 8 election, non-commercial portable signs may remain in the public parkways without any weekday restrictions. Non-commercial portable signs may also be placed on private

properties, subject to the same time frames as those placed in public parkways – including the six-week extension before the election. Commercial portable signs are still only allowed to be installed in the public rights-of-ways between 6 a.m. Friday and 6 p.m. Sunday.

**Q: Where may the non-commercial portable signs be posted?**

A: The signs may be posted on any landscaped parkway, or on private property with the consent of the property owner, lessee, or occupant.

**Q: Where are non-commercial portable signs not allowed to be posted?**

A: Signs may not be posted on: Utility poles; roadway signs; traffic control boxes; bus shelters; in tree wells; center median islands; overhanging a curb, sidewalk, or driveway or anywhere that obstructs visibility of pedestrian or vehicular traffic; within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, intersection of an alley, street, or highway; or within 15 feet of a driveway. Additionally, they may not be posted in front of public facilities such as libraries, schools, city hall, and parks and must be placed a minimum of 100 feet away from any polling place.

**Q: What happens to non-commercial portable signs that are not legally posted?**

A: City staff will remove signs posted in violation of the Municipal Code. Signs will be stored for 10 days and then can be disposed of unless the owner of the seized sign contacts the City's Code Enforcement Division within that 10-day period.

**Q: When must non-commercial portable signs be removed?**

A: Signs must be removed within 10 days after the election.

**Q: How will a sign owner know whether the City or a vandal**

**removed a sign?**

A: Signs removed by the City are tracked and stored as noted above. The owner can contact the Code Enforcement Division at 714-754-5623.

**Q: What are the size limits for non-commercial portable signs?**

A: In public rights-of-ways, signs may not exceed 5 square feet in area with a maximum height of 3 feet above grade. On private properties, non-commercial portable signs may not exceed 5 square feet in area with a maximum height of 6 feet above grade.

**Q: Are there any restrictions regarding non-commercial banners?**

A: Since the Sign Code is currently silent as regards to non-commercial banners, they are subject to the same requirements as a commercial banner except that no permit is required. They may be placed only on a building or freestanding sign; identification must be placed on signs; they may be installed up to 6 weeks before the applicable election; and they must be removed within 10 days after the election.

**Q: Does the City require a security bond to be posted to ensure removal of non-commercial portable signs following the election?**

A: No, the City does not require a security bond for non-commercial portable signs. However, the owner of the signs must affix their name, address, and telephone number on the sign prior to installation.

Maximum area permitted for:

- Residential zones: 0.5 square feet per dwelling unit/100 square feet maximum per site
- All other zones: 0.5 square feet per lineal foot of building frontage facing the street; minimum 25 square

feet per tenant with a maximum of 75 square feet per tenant.

If you have any further questions, please call Code Enforcement at 714-754-5623.

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## **Ribbon cutting, bike parade planned for new multipurpose trail opening on Oct. 8**

City officials plan to christen the new Harbor Boulevard Cornerstone Bike Trail on Saturday Oct. 8 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and bike parade that will begin on the new multipurpose trail and continue along for a 3.75-mile trek.

The event will take place between 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. near the intersection of Fair Drive and Harbor Boulevard.

Parking will be available in the Fairview Developmental Center parking lot.

At the event, a dedication plaque will be unveiled that contains the names of the City Council members, City CEO and City Engineer.

The mayor and members of the council are expected to be in attendance.

Immediately after the plaque unveiling, members of the public can take part in a free bike registration and a raffle for a new bike. In addition, the public is invited to participate in

the bike parade.



The improvements to the trail, which spans the west side of Harbor Boulevard between Fair Drive and Merrimac Way, consisted of the removal of the old asphalt trail and concrete sidewalk, and construction of a 12-foot wide, colored concrete multipurpose trail.

Low-level lighting and a new irrigation system has been installed and the turf was replaced with drought tolerant shrubs, ground cover, boulders and mulch. Sixteen Queen Palms and 31 box trees have also been planted.

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# **Santa Ana River Sand Management Project begins**

The OC Public Works department has begun work on the Lower Santa Ana River Sand Management project. The project involves removing up to 840,000 cubic yards of accumulated sand in the lowest 3.5 miles of the Santa Ana River to maintain design flood protection. Beach compatible sand will be taken to various beaches within Orange County for beach nourishment. This is a reoccurring maintenance project that was last done by the Army Corps of Engineers in 2004/05.

This current maintenance effort began late August/early September this year and will take about six months to complete. As part of the 2004/05 maintenance work and this current work, the county's contractor needs to close off the east bike path between PCH and Victoria/Hamilton bridge to the public because the contractor will be using this reach of the bike path for access to adjacent staging areas and access to equipment within the river. The west side bike path/trail will remain open. The contractor will prepare and implement a bike/pedestrian detour plan.

A bike detour plan sign will be installed at various locations along the Santa Ana River east levee. The metal sign will be installed at both ends of the closure and three locations upstream for advance notification to trail users. The county will post this detour map on the OC Parks website and OC Public Works website to inform the public of the upcoming closure. This sign is in addition to the DETOUR and TRAIL CLOSURE signs installed at both ends of the closure.

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# Meet Mabel

Adopt a friend fur-life, like Mabel. She is a sweet 6 pound Chihuahua with a calm and quiet demeanor. She is the sort that would love to spend her days cuddled up on a lap or just hanging out.

Contact the Orange County Humane Society for more information and to schedule your visit with Mabel today.

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## Partnership to build school in Africa launched for second year

Students and teachers at Mariners Christian School are not deterred in their goal to help their peers on the other side of the world. As of June 2016, they had collected \$25,000 for Christ the Center Ministries in Gulu, Uganda, to build two classrooms in their brand new middle school, as well as support their feeding program. In year two, their goal is to help build a chapel and auditorium as part of the new school in Africa.

Middle School Principal Heather Harrison is encouraged that this service project is continuing in its second year – prompted by the students themselves. Mrs. Harrison had met with the United States Directors for Christ the Center Ministries based in Uganda, and learned of their vision to provide educational opportunities for the very least in a third world area and the powerful mission of their faith-based organization. Harrison's original vision for this effort did

not include two consecutive years of partnership.



The enthusiasm is just as strong among students and staff at MCS in this second year. To kick off the fundraising, MCS is hosted a “Lunch on the Lawn” event on Friday, September 23, where families were invited to join their students for lunch. Proceeds from the event will directly benefit the school in Gulu.

“This is a fantastic opportunity to continue teaching our students to look beyond their current ‘world’ and see how Christ’s love through them can impact others,” commented Head of School Troy Moore.

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# The Community Emergency

# Response Team Program Celebrates 30 Years of Service to Local Area

This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Community Emergency Response Team program and to celebrate, the Federal Emergency Management Agency partnered with California Volunteers, NBC Universal, and other CERT partners across nation to host a National CERT conference in Universal City earlier this month.

CERT Program Coordinators from Costa Mesa (Brenda Emrick), Newport Beach (Matt Brisbois), Huntington Beach (Brevyn Mettler) and Laguna Beach (Jordan Villwock) were an integral part of the National CERT Conference and have all played key roles in the success of CERT.

The recent CERT conference provided an opportunity to pay tribute to the contributions of the extraordinary community volunteers locally and across the globe, as well as an opportunity to recognize the leaders of the CERT programs they serve locally, and at the state and national levels.

“Brenda, Matt, Brevyn, and Jordan have individually and collectively gone well above and beyond to represent our respective agencies and the communities we serve in an exemplary manner,” Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano said. “We are extremely fortunate to have this talented foursome working together to train and develop our CERT volunteers to assist our first responders in making our communities and the entire region more actively prepared for any emergency or disaster.”

CERT program partners from throughout Orange County in fire and law enforcement have supported and taken part in state-

sponsored instructor training courses and are assets in the development of citizen preparedness drills and exercises to improve and enhance the resiliency of the people in Orange County.

There are more than 28 Orange County city-sponsored CERT programs including Teen, Campus and Workplace programs registered on the National CERT website. Orange County CERT programs have been recognized nationally by FEMA for their training, best practices activities, and program organization. For additional information on a CERT program near you, please contact your local fire department or law enforcement agency.

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## Meet Jordan

A curious and spunky guy, Jordan is a 12-year old Jack Russell who loves being outside. To visit with Jordan or for more information, contact the Orange County Humane Society today.