

City to issue matching contribution of \$15,000 to help Model Engineers repair vandalism

The City of Costa Mesa is pleased to announce it will provide the Orange County Model Engineers with a matching contribution of \$15,000 to help repair the vandalism of the iconic Goat Hill Junction train station that occurred earlier this week.

Inspired by a request from Council Member Loren Gameros, the Model Engineers will be able to expeditiously restore the train facilities back to normal.

"The Model Engineers and Goat Hill Junction is a Costa Mesa treasure that has created so many memories for our local children," Mayor John Stephens said. "It's outrageous that someone would vandalize the facility, but I'm happy the City is able to provide this funding to help restore and repair the train station."

Hank Castignetti, the Model Engineer's city liaison, said the funding couldn't come at a better time since they had to deal with the pandemic and loss of all revenue. They also have to repair the trestle bridge that went out after 30 years.

"It's phenomenal," Castignetti said of the funding. "We are so grateful for the City's assistance in a time of great need. In addition, we have also seen a tremendous outpouring of donations from citizens. The citizens of Costa Mesa realize what an incredible public benefit we provide to the children in this community."

Officially known as, Mackerel Flats and Goat Hill Junction Railroad, the non-profit Model Engineers club was founded by a

group of local railroad buffs in 1988 and has been operating the trains in Costa Mesa's east Fairview Park area since 1989.

Since then, several improvements have taken place at the facility that included the creation of the train station and an expansion of the train tracks to five miles that wind through the park.

The club engineers conduct public rides on the third Saturday and following Sunday of each month from 10 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. They give approximately 3,000 free rides each month.

For more information, please visit <http://www.ocmetrains.org/>