

# City Council seeks applicants for District 3 Planning Commission seat

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking interested individuals from the District 3 community to serve on the Planning Commission. All applicants must be a registered voter in District 3.

**Planning Commission** – The Commission meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month and advises on planning, land use, and development matters.

The Commission has the authority to review: 1) regulations pertaining to the future growth, development, and beautification of the City with respect to public and private projects; 2) consistency with municipal plans to ensure that future growth and development do not impede upon sanitation, public utilities, and transportation facilities; 3) the location and design of proposed buildings, structures or works; and, 4) the design and improvement of proposed subdivisions of land.

The Commission is the final decision-making body for certain discretionary land-use approvals such as design review, conditional use permits, and land divisions. The Commission also functions as an advisory body to the City Council for Zoning and General Plan amendments. The vacancy is due to the recent resignation of a member. The appointed term will expire February 2023. Applicants must be a registered voter in District 3.

**Application Process** – Residents from District 3 who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Commission Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website

(<http://www.costamesaca.gov/apply>).

The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa, California, 92628-1200; faxed to (714) 754-4942; emailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@costamesaca.gov); or hand-delivered to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa. The deadline is **5 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 3, 2019**. The appointment is tentatively scheduled for the Oct. 15, 2019 City Council meeting.

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## **Costa Mesa's Shelter Model Successfully Houses the Homeless**

As the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter nears six months of operation, its unique model has successfully transitioned 18 clients from homelessness into permanent housing.

And that's not all. Six additional clients will be opening the door to a new home and a new future by late October.

"Costa Mesa is leading the way with a successful shelter model that helps those experiencing homelessness find housing," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Earlier this year, the City Council took a courageous step to create a Bridge Shelter. It was the humane and right thing to do and the result has been a significant improvement to our community and neighborhoods."

Since its opening on April 5, the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter has been providing shelter and case management services for up to 50 individuals daily.

Clients at the Bridge Shelter have ranged from college students to senior citizens and are from all walks of life including those who have lost everything, have a mental health diagnosis, suffer from addiction or need temporary shelter to get back on their feet.

One of the clients who was successfully housed is Gerald, a 59-year-old Orange County native who has spent most of his life in mental hospitals or living on the streets. Unable to get consistent treatment or access to medication, Gerald unfortunately became a casualty of the system.

After entering the Bridge Shelter, case managers helped stabilize his condition until the proper mental health placement was found. He is now in permanent supportive housing where he is finally receiving proper medical and mental health services.

Gerald was a beneficiary of Costa Mesa's "Housing First" philosophy, which establishes a Housing Plan aimed towards securing permanent housing to end homelessness for all clients.

To carry out the "Housing First" philosophy, the City adopted an operating model where expert shelter operator Mercy House works alongside the City's client case management staff for optimal results.

"This unique model, which separates day-to-day shelter operations from client case management, has undoubtedly been the catalyst to our success," City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. "The numbers speak for themselves. Many cities throughout the county, and even the state, are looking to Costa Mesa for advice on how to address the root causes of homelessness while enforcing their anti-camping ordinances."

A key part of the hybrid model is the expectation that each client at the Bridge Shelter is required to meet with their case manager no less than once per week. If they are not

following through on the steps of their Housing Plan they run the risk of being exited from the shelter. Fortunately, many clients are exceeding those expectations and meet with their case manager 2-5 times per week, resulting in better outcomes.

Since April, more than 130 individuals, including 11 veterans, have received services from the Bridge Shelter. City case managers have assisted those clients with nearly 1,500 linkages to healthcare, County resources, social services, job connections, legal services, mental health resources, transportation and other services.

By embarking on this plan, the Costa Mesa Police Department was permitted to reintroduce enforcement of the City's anti-camping ordinances on public property. The City was also able to settle with the plaintiffs in the OC Catholic Worker lawsuit that was filed when the County of Orange cleared the Santa Ana River homeless encampments.

"I am proud of the City Council and City staff for all the work they have done to create this successful Bridge Shelter," Farrell Harrison said. "Our City Council's unanimous call to action to address homelessness in the City is money well spent. We still have more work to do, but we are definitely on the right track. I look forward to the opening of our permanent facility next spring and helping more clients end the cycle of homelessness."

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**Being kind nets local Costa Mesa High school student the**

# Mayor's Award

At the Tuesday Sept. 3 City Council meeting, Mayor Katrina Foley presented Costa Mesa High School student Rebekah Robeck with the Mayor's Award to honor her for being the founder of the Let's Be Kind movement that has taken off throughout the school district.



Rebekah started the movement by sharing 200 slices of pizza to her Costa Mesa Middle School classmates.

[Click here to learn about her organization.](#)

“Tonight we are very honored to recognize Rebekah,” Mayor Foley said. “She has raised more than \$9,000 to purchase 2,100 Let’s Be Kind T- shirts for every student, faculty, and staff member on both Costa Mesa Middle School and High School campuses. The program has since spread to several other campuses in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District and is projected to reach more than 20,000 students across more than 30 campuses this year.”

For more about Rebekah watch the video below.

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# **It's better to be 'Prepared, not Scared,' when it comes to emergencies**

As part of National Preparedness Month, the City of Costa Mesa will be sharing tips, videos and ideas on how to prepare for an emergency over the city's website and the city and public safety social media channels.

This year's theme is "Prepared, not Scared," and the city will link to resources from ReadyOC, AlertOC and the federal site Ready.gov to help the public prepare and stay informed of emergencies.

Costa Mesa and the entire county are prone to many disasters, including earthquakes, wildfires, landslides, flooding, terrorism, gas or chemical leaks, and more.

Download the free ReadyOC app to make a family emergency plan and get a checklist for what to put in your emergency kit. AlertOC is an emergency notification system that keeps Costa Mesa and all Orange County community members informed of immediate natural threats to the community.

Stay one step ahead of emergencies by signing up for AlertOC today.

For more information, please visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website Ready.gov

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# Judge issues another ruling in support of Costa Mesa's group home laws

In yet another victory for the City of Costa Mesa, Federal Judge James Selna denied a motion for a preliminary injunction against the city's group home ordinances filed by sober living home operator SoCal Recovery.

"This is just one more affirmation that we as a City Council have done the right thing for our residents to protect both patients and our residents from unscrupulous operators," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Our law has withstood major challenges so far and we will continue to enforce it vigorously. It has become a model for other communities to follow."

The City's laws, passed beginning in 2014, regulate sober living home operators in single family neighborhoods, limiting the number of residents to six or fewer and maintaining a 650-foot buffer between non-licensed sober living homes. The laws also regulate sober living home operators in multi-family zones, requiring a separation requirement to avoid converting neighborhoods into institutional-like settings. The City implemented the laws to protect the entire community from operators of unlicensed facilities which exposed residents to dangerous conditions and created public nuisance concerns.

SoCal Recovery is a for-profit corporation that operates sober living residences in Costa Mesa, including properties located at 783 Hudson Ave., 208 Cecil Place, 175 E. 21st St., and 157 Del Mar Ave. SoCal Recovery does not currently operate any State-licensed or certified residential care facilities in Orange County.

SoCal Recovery asked the city to alter its application of the ordinances to allow the organization to operate its sober

living facilities. That request was denied. After having its request to operate denied by the city, SoCal Recovery filed suit against the city in July of 2018, alleging the city's group home ordinances violate the Fair Housing Act.

The latest ruling by Judge Selna follows on the heels of his ruling in July and a jury's unanimous verdict in December of 2018 that rejected a challenge to the city's group home ordinance by Yellowstone LLC.

Yellowstone, along with another sober living home operator and an industry trade group, alleged that the city's ordinances are discriminatory and violate the Fair Housing Act.

In the SoCal Recovery case, the city was represented by the law firms of Everett Dorey, LLP and Jones & Mayer.

In the Yellowstone court case, the City of Costa Mesa was represented by lead trial attorney Jennifer Keller of Keller/Anderle LLP.

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## **Street sweeping to be postponed for one week due to Labor Day holiday**

Due to the observation of the Labor Day holiday on Monday, there will be no residential street sweeping Sept. 2 through Sept. 6, 2019.

This coincides with the Costa Mesa Sanitary District, which also observes this holiday by pushing trash collection back one day.



This results in residential gutter lines being cluttered with trash cans making it impossible for street sweeper operators to do an efficient job. There should be no parking citations issued during this time.

Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule the week of Sept. 9.

In lieu of sweeping streets, the following are a list of task that clean streets operators will be conducting next week.

- City wide alley street sweeping
- Sweeping of park parking lots and other city owned facilities
- Accident call outs and special request
- Night route sweeping on all arterial streets

For more information, residents can call the city's street sweeping hotline at (714) 327-7471, which has been updated with this information.

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## **Bridge Shelter Success: Shirley's story**

Shirley is a Bridge Shelter senior client who previously wound up on the streets after a divorce where she found herself having to solve her medical problems and ward off criminals all on her own.

After years of living without a home, Shirley eventually entered the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.

It wasn't an easy entry at first. Shirley twice decided to leave the facility because she wasn't yet ready to move

forward with her housing plan; but, the shelter's outreach and in-reach workers had compassion for her and convinced her not to give up hope for a life inside.

Fortunately for Shirley, she was recommended for a voucher by the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) and her case manager was able to collect the rest of her documentation to turn into OCHA for her housing voucher.

She is now retrieving and completing the necessary paperwork to get her housing voucher and has sent the documents to OCHA.

Only by stabilizing this client through the availability of a shelter bed and a coordinated and compassionate approach to case management, will he/she be able to complete her housing plan.

Shirley's story is just one illustration of how the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter staff team is going above and beyond to get clients onto a path of hope.

For more information about Costa Mesa's efforts to end homelessness, please visit our website at [www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness](http://www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness).

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## **State legislature unanimously votes to name portion of 55 Freeway after Capt. Mike Kreza**

On Monday, Aug. 26, the California State Senate approved Resolution SCR 21 to name a portion of the 55 Freeway after

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Captain Mike Kreza, who was fatally struck by a vehicle while riding his bike off duty in November of 2018.

The freeway will be named the Costa Mesa Fire Captain Michael Kreza Memorial Highway from 19<sup>th</sup> Street in Costa Mesa to MacArthur Boulevard.

“Fire Captain ‘Ironman’ Mike Kreza will always be in our hearts and now his memory will be imprinted within the gateway to the community for which he loved and served for 18 years,” Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano said. “The Costa Mesa fire family is grateful for this incredibly special tribute to Captain Kreza, an honor we will all treasure, most notably his wife Shanna and their daughters Kaylie, Layla, and Audrey.”

Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley also expressed her gratitude for the honor.

“It is so fitting that there will now be a memorial highway that runs through our city bearing the name of Capt. Mike Kreza,” Mayor Foley said. “He was a distinguished Costa Mesa firefighter and much-loved family man, whose character, integrity, and singular commitment to Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue earned him the respect and admiration of his fellow firefighters, the members of the greater Costa Mesa community and the countless other individuals whose lives he touched.”



SCR 21 was first introduced by Orange County state Senators Patricia Bates and John Moorlach, and Assembly Members Bill Brough and Cottie Petrie-Norris were the principal co-authors in the state Assembly. SCR 21 passed both houses unanimously and has gained widespread support statewide, starting at home with the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Department, the Costa Mesa Firefighters Association, the City of Costa Mesa, California Professional Firefighters, and the California Fire Chiefs Association.

Once SCR 21 is officially chaptered, the installation process will be discussed and steps to move forward will be set into motion.

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# ARTventure to mark five years of showcasing local arts and entertaining families

The Cultural Arts Committee along with the Parks and Community Services Department are proud to host the fifth annual ARTventure event.

This free two-day cultural arts event is scheduled for Friday Sept. 6 and Saturday Oct. 7 at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in the beautiful, multi-tiered glass lobby of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall.



This one-of-a-kind juried exhibition of art, will showcase the work of local artists in a variety of media, including but not limited to: oil, watercolor and acrylic paintings, metal sculpture, wood and leather crafting, fashion, photography, fiber art and mixed media.

Friday, Sept. 6 from 5 to 9 p.m. will be an amazing evening filled with art, live music, and refreshments as we celebrate



the incredible talents of local artists with an opening reception and awards presentation. Then on Saturday, Sept. 7 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m families will be treated to a day full of live art entertainment, including musical, theatrical, literary, culinary, and hands-on demonstration.



This free community event is organized in partnership with the City of Costa Mesa and The Segerstrom Center for the Arts, highlighting Costa Mesa's "City of the Arts" motto.

For event details, parking information or to RSVP, visit [www.ARTventureCM.com](http://www.ARTventureCM.com).

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# Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter Partner Profile: Serve the People

Serve the People is a private non-profit organization located in Santa Ana that provides health care services to people who struggle to find a doctor, dentist, optometrist or a counselor for care. Their mission is to provide the physical, mental, emotional and mentoring needs of the poor, children, sick, needy, uneducated, oppressed and lost people regardless of race, religion or gender.

Last week Serve the People coordinated the visit of a Mobile Vision Clinic at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter where shelter clients were provided free vision tests and glasses.



Partnerships with organizations like Serve the People allow the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter team to better serve those experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa.

Many volunteer opportunities are available at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter. These opportunities are an easy way for the public to take an active role and help create positive change

in the community. For more information, please contact AlyssaS@mercyhouse.net.

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# **Management and Analysis of City Budget Pays off for Haston**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Amber Haston with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet at City Hall on Thursday Aug. 22.

“Amber has proven to be a critical member of the Finance and greater City team,” Farrell Harrison said. “I am very impressed with all she does and appreciate her hard work and dedication and I know her colleagues do as well. Congratulations to Amber for a job well done.”

Haston joined the Costa Mesa team in May of 2017 as a Management Analyst in the Public Services Department. She transferred into the Finance Department in December of 2018.

Upon her arrival in Finance, she has reinvented the role of the Finance Department Management Analyst, focusing on key special projects and performing complex financial analysis and forecasting. Additionally, she continues to provide budget support to all budget liaisons, as well as assistance in forecasting as part of the surplus/deficit projections for FY 2018-19. She served as a critical lead budget team member, and worked with Public Services to develop the Capital Improvement Program budget.

Concurrently, due to her purchasing experience, she was also



asked to step in, along with Purchasing staff, to serve as the Buyer and dedicated Management Analyst for procuring items for the temporary Bridge Shelter in order to meet the City Council goal of opening the shelter by April 2019. Her involvement was instrumental to the successful opening.

Some of her other key responsibilities include developing and managing the Finance Department's budget and procurements, reviewing all City staff reports for fiscal impacts on behalf of the Finance Department, and work on special projects. Some of these special projects include the Citywide Fee Study and Cost Allocation Plan, updating the Capital Asset Needs Ordinance, implementing vendor and bid management software, and preparation and implementation of an electronic signature policy.

Haston attended Colorado State University and holds a bachelor's degree in business management with a specialization in Public and Non-Profit Management.

In addition, City Manager Farrell Harrison welcomed Jacqueline Nguyen as the new Buyer and Louis Li as the new Budget Specialist in the Finance Department.

In Parks & Community Services, Caitlin Huerta and Wendy Pacheco are new Community Services Leader III working at the Senior Center.

Also in Parks and Community Services, Emily Pulaski has been promoted to Recreation Specialist and Amir Ardalan has been promoted to Senior Lifeguard at our Downtown Recreation Center.

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# Bridge Shelter Success: Samuel's Story

When the Network for Homeless Solutions first contacted Samuel in 2014, it was learned that he suffered from a traumatic brain injury and depression exacerbated by chronic drug use. At one point, Samuel was able to maintain housing in the City and also participate in a variety of odd jobs and volunteer church activities.

But soon things took a turn for the worse. The cumulative effects of his chronic drug use caught up with him. His erratic behavior caused his roommates to evict him. He eventually lost his apartment and became estranged from his family. He became violent and blacked out after excessive drinking and drug use, to the point where others could not be around him.

Fortunately for Samuel, his link to County Mental Health made him eligible to get a housing voucher. After he lost his apartment, he was able to enter the Bridge Shelter and begin working on stabilizing his behavior and getting treatment for his chronic drug use.

Additionally, while his case manager was working hard on behavioral interventions to try to reverse negative behaviors, Samuel also found an apartment unit where vouchers were accepted. Samuel was able to move into the apartment last week with the help of Bridge Shelter partners and NHS members Trellis and Fresh Beginnings Ministries, who emptied out his storage locker and helped to move his furniture.

As staff has found in the past, getting into housing is only the beginning from those facing both mental health and substance abuse challenges. A program offering wrap-around support by both Costa Mesa outreach workers and community

partners is essential for ensuring future housing stability.

Costa Mesa's outreach team is hopeful that Samuel will have many happy years in his new apartment. NHS outreach staff and volunteers are dedicated to ensuring that his housing remains stable by offering weekly visits and assistance in managing treatment and other mental health programs.

Best of luck to Samuel as he continues on this road to recovery. He is just one of many successful clients who is benefitting from the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter and Network For Homeless Solutions, which are changing lives for the better every day.

For more information on Costa Mesa's efforts to aide individuals experiencing homelessness, please visit our website [here](#).