

# Temporary 50-bed bridge shelter opens in Costa Mesa

The City of Costa Mesa officially opened a 50-bed temporary bridge shelter on a portion of the Lighthouse Church property at 1885 Anaheim Avenue that will be a first step toward cleanup and restoration of Westside neighborhoods while addressing the issues of helping individuals up and out of homelessness.

“By opening this bridge shelter, we are taking a compassionate and caring approach toward individuals experiencing homelessness,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “But at the same time, we need to keep the safety and security of our entire community as our top priority. Living on a sidewalk is inhumane. It’s not good for anyone forced outside and it’s not good for maintaining the quality of our community.”

Mayor Katrina Foley announced the opening of the bridge shelter at a 9 a.m. press conference Friday April 5. The mayor was joined by Federal District Court Judge David Carter, Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris, Mayor Pro-Tem John Stephens, Council Members Arlis Reynolds, Andrea Marr and Manuel Chavez.



Council Member Reynolds, who represents District 5 where the shelter resides, also spoke and told the crowd how much it meant to her to see this shelter open in the same place she grew up.



Also in attendance were Acting City Manager Tammy Letourneau, Parks & Recreation Director Justin Martin, who was instrumental in planning the shelter, City Attorney Kim Barlow, Police Chief Rob Sharpnack and Fire Chief Dan Stefano, Lighthouse Church Pastor Phil Eyskens and several city leaders and staff members from every department.

As of time of the press conference, there were already approximately 20 clients living in the bridge shelter and receiving services from city outreach workers and shelter operator Mercy House, an experienced, well-respected operator who will ensure the facility is a reservation-based model along with 24-hour security and neighborhood management covering a half-mile radius.

Establishing this 50-bed bridge shelter option for those experiencing homelessness will provide the number of necessary shelter beds that the City of Costa Mesa is expected to create based on a proposed settlement agreement in the OC Catholic Worker lawsuit that in turn would restore the city's ability to enforce trespassing and anti-encampment ordinances.

The new bridge shelter expands what is an already existing inclement weather shelter at the Lighthouse Church into a reservation-based, high-security temporary solution to offer shelter beds to those in need.

The city has installed security fencing around the facility, increased lighting in the area, cleaned and sanitized streets, sidewalks and parks where necessary, and added modular trailers for restrooms, showers, storage of personal belongings, and space for shelter beds.

Additionally, bridge shelter clients will be offered resources for job training and placement services, mental health assessments, health and dental care, substance abuse treatment and connections to permanent housing all while working on their plan to obtain housing.

The temporary bridge shelter is expected to operate for approximately one year when city officials anticipate a new permanent facility will open.

In March, the Costa Mesa City Council voted unanimously to allocate \$6.925 million for the purchase of an industrial warehouse at 3175 Airway Avenue that will be evaluated as a potential permanent bridge shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa.

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# **HR Analyst Julie Schall presented with City Manager Leadership Award**

Acting City Manager Tammy Letourneau presented Human Resources Analyst Julie Schall with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet event on Thursday March 28.

“I am very pleased to present this award to Julie,” Letourneau said. “I really appreciate her efforts to build back our Police Department staffing levels and admire how she credits her success to a team effort between her HR and PD colleagues. I am impressed with her hard work, dedication and teamwork.”

Schall joined the Costa Mesa team in 2007 and is currently assigned to the Police Department focusing on priorities in the Training and Recruitment Bureau as the department continues to hire and develop staff. Due to the hiring requirements and standards in law enforcement, proactive staffing efforts are critical and her HR role has added efficiency to the hiring and onboarding process for the department.

In addition to her role as a police recruiter, she provided HR services, Public Services, and Recreation Departments. Through the years, she would work closely with additional departments in helping them with staffing needs and other projects.

In 2007, she was part of the implementation team that moved the City from paper applications to on-line applications with the NEOGOVsystem. Over the past 12 years, she has processed over 690 new hires and 125 promotions for the City.

Prior to joining the City of Costa Mesa, she worked in Human Resources for the cities of Santa Clara and Anaheim. Schall graduated from San Francisco State University with her

bachelors in 2001 and her masters in 2003. For her master's thesis, she worked with the San Francisco Police Department on the topic of "Team Work and Community Policing."

Acting City Manager Letourneau also welcomed several newly hired employees and recognized two for promotions.

Ines Galmiche is a new Intern working in the Planning Division of the Development Services Department, and Ben Castillo is a new Fire Protection Specialist in the Fire Department.

Amy Ramirez is a new Recreation Leader II in our Parks & Community Services Department and is assigned to the Senior Center. Chasen Gaunt is one of several new Police Officers.

In promotion news, Jerry Hildeman has been promoted to Police Lieutenant in the Police Department, and Eliasar Maldonado has been promoted to Fire Captain with the Fire Department.

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## **John Wayne Airport Town Hall meeting set for April 6**

A meeting regarding flight paths and airport noise at John Wayne Airport will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Community Room of the Newport Beach Civic Center.

Join Orange County Supervisor Michelle Steel, Newport Beach Mayor Diane Dixon, and representatives of John Wayne Airport for a town hall meeting on Saturday, April 6, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

County of Orange staff will provide updates on:

- Flight paths

- Airport noise
- John Wayne Airport General Aviation Improvement Program (GAIP)

The meeting will be held in the Civic Center's Community Room, 100 Civic Center Drive, Newport Beach, California 92660.

The County of Orange is accepting reservations. RSVP to [tiffany.kim@ocgov.com](mailto:tiffany.kim@ocgov.com).

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## **Fairview Bridge and 405 Freeway closures scheduled for both Friday March 15 and Saturday March 16**

OCTA and Caltrans will fully close the Fairview Road bridge overpass in Costa Mesa overnight on Friday March 15 and Saturday March 16 for demolition activities connected to the I-405 Improvement Project. The 405 Freeway will be fully closed overnight Saturday from 10 p.m. until 9 a.m. Sunday March 17.

The full freeway closure, along with overnight closures of the Fairview Road bridge and adjacent freeway ramps and connectors, are necessary to demolish part of the bridge over the freeway. The closures are scheduled from approximately 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. on March 15-16 and 10 p.m. to 9 a.m. March 16-17, weather permitting.

During the freeway closure, drivers will be detoured off the freeway at the Fairview Road off-ramps and back onto I-405

past the Fairview Road bridge.

[Click here for local detours.](#)

[Click here for freeway detours.](#)

Other overnight closures include:

- Northbound SR-73 to northbound I-405 connector
- Northbound I-405 off-ramps to Susan Street and Harbor Boulevard
- Northbound I-405 on-ramp from Fairview Road
- Southbound I-405 to southbound SR-73 connector
- Southbound I-405 and SR-73 on-ramps from Fairview Road
- Detours will be in place to guide drivers around the closures

Drivers should expect delays in the area and are encouraged to use alternate routes if possible. Up-to-date closure and construction information is available on the project's interactive map at [octa.net/405map](http://octa.net/405map).

The Fairview Road bridge is the fifth of more than 18 bridges to be built, widened or replaced as part of the project, which will speed up travel times on I-405 between Costa Mesa and the Los Angeles County line, an area traveled by more than 370,000 vehicles a day.

The bridge is expected to take approximately two years to reconstruct. It will be demolished and reconstructed in two stages, allowing it to remain open to traffic during construction.

Once completed, the Fairview Road bridge will continue to have 10 traffic lanes, along with sidewalks and bike lanes in both directions. Traffic lanes and sidewalks will be widened, and a 4-foot-wide center median will be added to the bridge.

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# 405 Freeway and Fairview Road Bridge set to Close Overnight Saturday in Costa Mesa

OCTA officials announced Thursday that the 405 Freeway at Fairview Road in Costa Mesa is scheduled to fully close overnight on Saturday, March 9 and Saturday, March 16, as part of the I-405 Improvement Project.

The full freeway closures, along with overnight closures of the Fairview Road bridge and adjacent freeway ramps and connectors, are necessary to demolish part of the bridge over the freeway. The closures are scheduled from approximately 10 p.m. to 9 a.m. on March 9-10 and March 16-17, weather permitting.

During both overnight freeway closures, drivers will be detoured off the freeway at the Fairview Road off-ramps and back onto I-405 past the Fairview Road bridge.

[Click here for local detours.](#)

[Click here for freeway detours.](#)

Other overnight closures include:

- Northbound SR-73 to northbound I-405 connector
- Northbound I-405 off-ramps to Susan Street and Harbor Boulevard
- Northbound I-405 on-ramp from Fairview Road
- Southbound I-405 to southbound SR-73 connector
- Southbound I-405 and SR-73 on-ramps from Fairview Road
- Detours will be in place to guide drivers around the



closures.

Drivers should expect delays in the area and are encouraged to use alternate routes if possible. Up-to-date closure and construction information is available on the project's interactive map at [octa.net/405map](http://octa.net/405map).

The \$1.9 billion I-405 Improvement Project will add one regular lane in each direction between Euclid Street and I-605, and a second lane in each direction in the center of the freeway from SR-73 to I-605 that will combine with the existing carpool lanes to form the 405 Express Lanes.

The Fairview Road bridge is the fifth of more than 18 bridges to be built, widened or replaced as part of the project, which will speed up travel times on I-405 between Costa Mesa and the Los Angeles County line, an area traveled by more than 370,000 vehicles a day.

The bridge is expected to take approximately two years to reconstruct. It will be demolished and reconstructed in two stages, allowing it to remain open to traffic during construction.

Once completed, the Fairview Road bridge will continue to have 10 traffic lanes, along with sidewalks and bike lanes in both directions. Traffic lanes and sidewalks will be widened, and a 4-foot-wide center median will be added to the bridge.

This 16-mile segment of I-405 is one of the most heavily traveled stretches of highway in the nation, and both the regular lanes and carpool lanes are heavily congested during rush hour and on weekends. The project is critical to accommodate expected employment, population and housing growth throughout the region.

It currently takes drivers about an hour to travel this section of freeway during rush hour, and without the project, the commute is projected to double in the next 20 years. Once

the project is finished in 2023, it is expected to take about 30 minutes to drive the 16 miles during rush hour in the regular lanes and about 15 minutes in the 405 Express Lanes.

People are encouraged to visit the project website at [www.octa.net/405improvement](http://www.octa.net/405improvement) to sign up for construction alerts via automated call, text message or email.

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## **City Council votes 7-0 to purchase property near airport that could become permanent bridge shelter**

In a unanimous vote, the Costa Mesa City Council agreed to allocate \$6.925 million for the purchase of an industrial warehouse at 3175 Airway Avenue that will be evaluated as a potential permanent bridge shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa.

“I’m really proud of the work the council and the staff has done,” Mayor Katrina Foley said just prior to the vote. “We have done really good work that is meaningful and will create long-lasting safety in our community and save people’s lives. It’s literally been something that no other council has addressed to get people off the streets and into housing.”

At 29,815 square feet, the building is more than sufficient size to operate a best practices shelter. The building includes approximately 5,510 square feet of office built-out,

lobby, reception areas, private offices, storage areas, break room and restrooms.

The purchase helps bring to close an exhaustive effort to find a property and satisfy the terms of a settlement agreement with the plaintiffs in the OC Catholic Worker case and the expectations of Federal District Judge David Carter for Costa Mesa to provide 62 emergency shelter beds, which is based on the city's 2017 Point-in-Time count numbers. That case was settled this past Monday March 4.

Since September of 2018, the city staff has conducted extensive research and analysis of nearly 50 properties throughout Costa Mesa.

Prior to making this purchase, the City of Costa Mesa reached an agreement with the Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene to operate a 50-bed temporary bridge shelter on a portion of property located at 1885 Anaheim Avenue. Additionally, the city has already approved an application by College Hospital to open a 12-bed crisis unit, satisfying the 62-bed number.

The temporary Lighthouse Church bridge shelter, which is expected to begin operations in early April, will be run by a combination of city community outreach staff and staff from Mercy House, an experienced, well-respected shelter operator who will ensure the facility is a reservation-based model along with 24-hour security and roving neighborhood patrol covering a half-mile radius.

If a permanent shelter is ultimately opened at the 3175 Airway property, Mercy House will also be the operator and will adhere to the same reservation-based model and security measures as will be implemented at the Lighthouse temporary shelter.

Staff believes the Airway Avenue property is the best option for purchase and further evaluation and creates the least amount of impact to the surrounding community. The property is

2,050 feet away from residential, 2,300 feet away from the closest school and 2,900 feet away from the closest park.

Mayor Foley credited the “enormous” amount of work being done by city staff and City Council members to get this accomplished.

In particular, she noted the behind-scenes-work of Mayor Pro Tem John Stephens and District 5 Council Member Arlis Reynolds, who spent many hours of volunteer time educating the community about the need for the bridge shelter.

To help offset the cost to the city’s General Fund, city staff has identified \$3.3 million in projects currently budgeted in the Capital Improvement Fund (Fund 401) which can be paid for using Park Development Fees.

In addition, because the building has two addresses, meters and separate entrances, the City Council could explore dividing the building, roughly in half, and lease the additional space to a tenant for approximately \$200,000 a year, which will offset some of the operating costs of the shelter.

“We still have much work to do to address regional solutions for the lack of mental health services for the chronically homeless in severe mental crisis and to identify permanent supportive housing solutions,” Mayor Foley said. “I look forward to partnering with my colleague Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris to once and for all address this important community concern.”

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# Costa Mesa settles lawsuit in Orange County Catholic Worker case

The City of Costa Mesa reached a settlement agreement with the plaintiffs in the Orange County Catholic Worker case on Monday March 4, 2019, ending a more than year-long lawsuit that has resulted in the city moving forward with plans for a 50-bed bridge shelter.

“This is a historic day for the City of Costa Mesa,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “For nearly 20 years I’ve heard residents express concerns about the impacts and lack of shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness in our city. I am extremely proud of my City Council colleagues and the city staff who have worked tirelessly for the last three months to find compassionate solutions for those experiencing homelessness while at the same time making a commitment to improve and restore safety in our communities.”

The settlement, signed by Mayor Foley, was approved by Federal District Judge David Carter, who had given direction to the city to provide 62 shelter beds, which is based on the city’s 2017 Point-in-Time count numbers. Costa Mesa has already satisfied the need for 12 of its 62 required beds by approving an application from College Hospital to operate a 12-bed crisis unit.



**Mayor Foley, right, and City Attorney Kim Barlow hold up signed settlement papers.**

Additionally, the city has reached an agreement with the Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene to operate a 50-bed temporary bridge shelter on a portion of the property located at 1885 Anaheim Avenue.

The court has also agreed that once those shelter beds are available, the city can offer shelter to individuals experiencing homelessness, and in turn step up enforcement of the city's anti-encampment ordinance. In addition to housing those in need, it is hoped that the City's parks will also be more available to local residents for recreational use.

The city is working toward an early April opening of the

temporary bridge shelter at the Lighthouse.

According to the settlement agreement signed Monday, in addition to providing shelter beds, the city of Costa Mesa will pay \$24,000 in attorney fees to the Elder Law and Disability Rights Center and will make a monetary settlement in the amount of \$7,500 to plaintiff Melissa Fields to use for housing.

Monday's settlement puts to rest any claims against Costa Mesa in the lawsuit filed by the Orange County Catholic Worker and other entities on Jan. 29, 2018. The suit was filed against the City of Costa Mesa and the cities of Anaheim, Orange, Santa Ana and the County of Orange regarding encampments along the Santa Ana River trail. All of these cities have now settled the case. All of those cities have either opened or will open emergency housing shelters.

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**Mayor Katrina Foley and Mayor Pro-Tem John Stephens issue statements on reports of Newport-Mesa students saluting swastika on social media**



# CITY OF COSTA MESA

P.O. BOX 1200, COSTA MESA, CALIFORNIA 92628-1200

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FROM THE PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

## **Mayor Katrina Foley**

“There is no place for hateful symbols of swastikas and Nazi salutes in our community. Glorifying or even joking about these symbols contradicts the values we share as a diverse community. Normalizing these symbols as a joke is dangerous. We must challenge this kind of bias. We cherish our city’s Jewish community, as well as people of all backgrounds, religions, ethnicities, genders and more. This abhorrent anti-Semitic activity is divisive, unbecoming of our community and leads ultimately to hate and discrimination.

While we take seriously and object to this hateful activity, I discourage vilification of these teens. Instead, we need to seriously address why teens in our community might think these types of hateful symbols are acceptable or funny and worthy of selfies. We must use this incident as an opportunity to work with our school district leaders to encourage schools to implement better anti-bias and anti-hate content in their curricula and in extra-curricular activities. In partnership with the Anti-Defamation League, the Orange County Human Relations Commission, our faith-based organizations, and other leaders, we must develop comprehensive programming so that students can empathize with people different than themselves. Diversity is not a challenge, it’s a strength.”

## **Mayor Pro-Tem John Stephens**

“The atrocities of the Holocaust and the sacrifices of our World War II veterans must never be forgotten, but apparently some of our children are not getting the message. That’s a real problem. We cannot tolerate hate in our community, and we have to make a commitment to promote love and kindness in



Costa Mesa.”

Mayor Foley noted that the Newport-Mesa school district has issued an alert via email to district administrators and board members after reports of the event surfaced. District officials met with school administrators and a crisis team Sunday to determine a course of action. In response, the Newport-Mesa School District is holding an open forum for members of the Estancia, Costa Mesa, and Newport Harbor High School communities co-led by Dr. Sean Boulton, Newport Harbor High School Principal, Dr. Jake Haley, Costa Mesa High School Principal, Mr. Mike Halt, Estancia Principal and Rabbi Reuven Mintz–Chabad Center for Jewish Life. The event will take place at 6:00 p.m. Monday March 4 in the Newport Harbor High School Theater. English to Spanish translation will be available at the event.

Corona del Mar High School will host an event on that campus at 6 p.m. Thursday March 7.

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## **Fire Capt. Fred McDowell receives February’s City Manager Leadership Award**

Assistant City Manager Tammy Letourneau presented Fire Capt. Fred McDowell with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet event on Thursday Feb. 28.

“It’s because of leaders like Capt. McDowell that the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue team continues its longstanding reputation of excellence,” Letourneau said. “As part of our core group of first responders who are on the front line of saving lives and

property, I thank him for his service to our community.”

McDowell joined the city of Costa Mesa as a firefighter in 1998 and was promoted to fire engineer in 2002 and fire captain in 2015. He is active on many committees and has a passion for teaching and training. He continues to serve with the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue honor guard, which he joined in 1995 prior to being hired, and is currently preparing to become a certified Battalion Chief. He was recently selected as the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue “Supervisor of the Year.”

Prior to joining Costa Mesa, he interned at the Fountain Valley and Huntington Beach fire departments.

McDowell graduated from Cal State Fullerton in 1993 with a double major in education and music performance. As a musician, he worked throughout the Southern California area at such places as Disneyland and Knott’s Berry Farm.

It was while preparing to complete his teaching credential that he did a ride-along with the Santa Ana Fire Department that changed his life. He then went back to school at Santa Ana College and graduated from the fire academy.

In addition to honoring McDowell, Letourneau welcomed several new members of the staff as well as a new promotion.

The new staffers in the City Manager’s Office include Management Aides Albert Ruiz and Ivis Torres, both of who support the City Council. Also introduced was new Chief of Staff Connor Lock

In Human Resources, Caroline Tse is the new office specialist II, and in Development Services, Monique Arredondo is one new code enforcement officer.

Kristin Stevens is the new management analyst in Fire & Rescue and Nicholas Spector the recreation leader II in Parks & Community Services. Jason Corlett and Judy Malouf are new police records technicians.

In Public Services, Mathew Ballew is the new Management Aide, Nader Noorani a new engineering technician II and Andrew Lucio is a new maintenance worker.

Finally, Letourneau honored longtime fire leader Chris Coates who has been promoted to battalion chief.

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## **Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue launches new Chaplain Program and hires new chaplain**

Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano announced that the Fire & Rescue department is launching a new Chaplain Program and Pastor Josh Harrison has been appointed as the department's fire chaplain.

"The Chaplain program is a long overdue addition for us and we are very fortunate to have Josh and his family as a part of our fire family now," Chief Stefano said. "We look forward to the leadership and support Josh will share with us and the community."

Harrison, formerly the teaching pastor at Rock Harbor Church, was first introduced to the community at the opening of Fire Station No. 1 last year and he was immediately called upon thereafter to help provide support following the passing of Fire Capt. Mike Kreza.

The department's Chaplain program is another important step forward to actively support the mental health and wellness of the firefighters. The program will be managed by Fire Capt. Kevin Reddy, who was instrumental in developing the program

and bringing it to life, and supported by a core team of Costa Mesa firefighters.

The new Chaplain program follows the introduction of the Firefighter Peer Assistance Program which was initiated in 2017, with Fire Engineer Mike Ruhl leading that program for the department. CMF&R has also participated in an annual fitness and wellness program through the regional fire academy (Santa Ana College), and will continue to increase efforts to better address cancer prevention and awareness for all fire service professionals.

Pastor Harrison lives in Costa Mesa with his wife, Heather, and their three kids, Buzè, Marta, and Elijah. They have lived in Costa Mesa for the better part of the last 25 years.

Harrison moved to Costa Mesa from northwest Montana in 1995 to attend Vanguard University and never left. He graduated from Vanguard with a bachelor's degree in English literature in May of 1999, and he and Heather (whom he met at Vanguard) were married a month later.

After graduating, Harrison began working at Vanguard as an IT Technician and stayed working in the IT department at the university for the next eight years. During that time, he went to graduate school at Vanguard to work toward a master's degree in Biblical Studies, emphasizing Biblical languages. Also, during this time, he began working more directly with students, leading them on short-term service trips to Mexico and East Africa. In 2006, he and his wife moved to England, where Harrison studied at Oxford University and graduated with a master's degree in Jewish studies.

After a year overseas, they moved back to Costa Mesa and shortly after returning adopted their daughters from Ethiopia. Upon returning to the area, Harrison got another job at Vanguard University, this time as the Mission Director, recruiting, equipping, training, and pastoring students

through short-term service teams sent both locally and globally.

During this time, he worked with a variety of charitable organizations across our community, many of which are based in Costa Mesa. After four years of serving in this capacity, Harrison left Vanguard University and began working at Rock Harbor Church in Costa Mesa, where he served as the teaching pastor throughout most of last year.

Throughout his tenure at Rock Harbor, he was involved in the local community in a variety of ways: pastoring community members, praying at Costa Mesa City Council meetings, working with charitable organizations in the City, and now preparing for his next pastoral role.

The Harrisons and their kids love the city of Costa Mesa and spend the vast majority of their time here. Heather Harrison serves as the Middle School Principal at Mariners Christian School.

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## **Erosion from rain storms forces temporary Fairview Park trail closures**

With the recent heavy rains and expected additional storms, the bluffs at Fairview Park are experiencing substantial erosion, which has created a health, safety, and environmental hazard and is now forcing the city to close off the bluff trail beginning Tuesday Feb. 26 through Friday March 8.

At its Feb. 5 meeting, the City Council approved emergency

funding to support installation of a temporary berm along the bluff trail . The berm will prevent further erosion and will keep water on the mesa and in the vernal pools, instead of draining off the bluffs.

The project is now at the construction phase, which will require closure of the trail between Pacific Avenue and the stairs leading to Talbert Park.

Heavy equipment and workers will be on site along the trail daily (M-F) from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Additional trails in the park are seasonally closed because of protected species in the vernal pools.

Due to these closures, park visitors cannot walk the entire loop of the park on the mesa.

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## **Agreement Finalized to Rent Lighthouse Church for Bridge Shelter**

The City of Costa Mesa has reached an agreement with the Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene to operate a 50-bed temporary interim bridge shelter on a portion of their property located at 1885 Anaheim Avenue.

The City Council voted to approve the terms of a lease agreement with the church at its Feb. 19 council meeting. Representatives from the Church of the Nazarene then agreed to the terms of that lease agreement on Thursday Feb. 21.

“This is a great first step toward the cleanup and restoration

of our Westside neighborhoods, while at the same time addressing the humane option of helping individuals up and out of homelessness,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “We look forward to this productive partnership with Lighthouse Church that is truly in the best interest of both parties.”

Establishing this bridge shelter option for those experiencing homelessness will provide the number of necessary shelter beds that the City of Costa Mesa is expected to create based on a proposed settlement agreement in the OC Catholic Worker lawsuit that in turn would restore the city’s ability to enforce trespassing and anti-encampment ordinances.

The new bridge shelter basically expands what is an already existing inclement weather shelter into a reservation-based, high-security temporary solution to offer shelter beds to those in need.

The temporary Lighthouse Church bridge shelter will be run by a combination of city outreach staff and staff from Mercy House, an experienced, well-respected operator who will ensure the facility is a reservation-based model along with 24-hour security and neighborhood management covering a half-mile radius.

The agreement between the city and the church provides upgrades including creating security fencing around the facility, increasing lighting in the area, cleaning and sanitizing streets, sidewalks and parks where necessary, and adding modular trailers for restrooms, storage of personal belongings, and space for shelter beds.

Additionally, unsheltered individuals will be offered resources for job training and placement services, mental health assessments, health and dental care, substance abuse treatment and connections to permanent housing all while working on their plan to obtain housing.

The city continues to pursue commercial property for a

permanent bridge shelter in the northeast portion of the city near John Wayne Airport.