

# City of Costa Mesa Earns Highest Award in Government Accounting and Financial Reporting

The City of Costa Mesa celebrated another financial accolade this week from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada for its Excellence in Financial Reporting award, the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting a City can receive.

The Certificate of Achievement award, which the City of Costa Mesa has received for 24 consecutive years, is for the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.

"I thank the GFOA for this prestigious recognition," Mayor John Stephens said. "This further demonstrates that we fulfilled our stated City Council goal to achieve long-term fiscal sustainability. I'm proud of my City Council colleagues as well as our City staff for making tough decisions at the right time to ensure Costa Mesa has a bright financial future."

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada praised the City for achieving this excellence award.



“This represents a significant accomplishment by Costa Mesa and its management,” said Michele Mark Levine, Director of Technical Services for the GFOA. “The report has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure” to clearly communicate the City’s financial story.”

The Achievement of Excellence Award is one of many financial wins by the City of Costa Mesa, which was one of only two cities in the county to balance its budget without the use of reserves during the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, not only did the City not use its General Fund reserves, it increased its reserves due to strong internal controls and ongoing financial prudence. With a General Fund reserve balance of \$53.5 million, Costa Mesa has emergency reserves equaling 36 percent of its General Fund expenditures, almost three times the industry baseline of 10 percent.

And the news continues to be bright as the preliminary fiscal year end numbers for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 shows the City will post a surplus of approximately \$3.6 million. Additionally, \$1.5 million was deposited into a Section 115 Trust Fund to help prepay the City’s pension liabilities earlier this year.

Standard & Poor’s Global Ratings reaffirmed the City’s AA+ long-term rating on the Costa Mesa Financing Authority lease revenue bonds in December of 2020. Standard & Poor’s cited the City’s very strong economy, management, financial policies and practices, budgetary flexibility, liquidity with total governmental available cash at 60.9% of total governmental fund expenditures, and strong institutional framework as contributing factors to its outstanding credit rating.

S&P is considered the largest of the country’s Big Three credit-rating agencies, which also include Moody’s Investors Service and Fitch Ratings.

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# **FEMA team meets with Fire & Rescue and Finance teams on Grant Management Monitoring**

Recently Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue and the City of Costa Mesa Finance team received a site visit from two members of the Grants Management Team from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Department was the recipient of the FY 2020-21 Assistance Firefighter Grant. The department applied and met the criteria of this extensive application process, consequently receiving funding for the purchase of new Self Contained Breathing Apparatus.

As part of the grant management process, FEMA sent two representatives from the Grants Management Division for an onsite meeting and grant progress review.

CMFR and City Staff were pleased to welcome Sandra Tripp (Fire Grants Management Specialist) and Connie Casto (Acting Preparedness Program Branch Chief) to the City of Costa Mesa.





After an insightful joint meeting at City Hall, the FEMA partners were provided a tour of the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Regional Training Facility were introduced to City personnel, and highlighted with a hands-on experience with all of the new SCBA's that the grant provided the department.

"It was a pleasure and a valued opportunity to meet with our FEMA Region 9 grant management partners (Ms. Tripp and Ms. Casto) and discuss the progress and monitoring of our successful AFG grant management," said Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano. "Our city team did an exceptional job collaborating for the onsite visit, inclusive of Finance Director Carol Molina and her entire team (Anna Baca, Cathleen Serrano and Jeannie Fortune), combined with the impressive work and leadership of CMFR Division Chief Jason Pyle and CMFR Senior Management Analyst/CMFR's Grant Programs Lead Kristin Stevens. We appreciate our strong partnership with FEMA and we will continue our active efforts in seeking out future grant funding opportunities."

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# Costa Mesa Television takes top honors at STAR Awards for second consecutive year

Costa Mesa Television (CMTV 3) was presented eight First Place and two Third Place awards including the top Overall Excellence In Government Programming honor for the second consecutive year at the 25th Annual STAR Awards announced on September 29.

The STAR Awards are a regional competition sponsored annually by SCAN/NATOA, which is the States of California and Nevada chapter of the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors.

The STAR Awards recognize excellence in government programming by agencies serving California and Nevada communities. Entries are judged on the basis of creativity in achieving stated objectives, technical proficiency and diversity of programming.

CMTV 3 scored the most First Place wins in the competition for the second year in a row, earning top honors in eight video production categories. Winning entries and links to the videos include:

Overall Excellence In Government Programming – First Place

CMTV Costa Mesa Television, City of Costa Mesa

Diversity/Equality/Inclusion – First Place

“Fighting For The Right To Fight – African American Experiences In WWII”

– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exoaEtcklV&t=278s>

Documentary – First Place

“Mariachi Juvenil Herencia Michoacana – Costa Mesa’s First

Mariachi Youth Group”  
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vArZcKW9ds&t=18s>  
Documentary – Social – First Place  
“Fighting For The Right To Fight – African American  
Experiences In WWII”  
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exoaEtcklVvk&t=278s>  
Food and Travel – First Place  
“Costa Mesa EATS! – Taco Mesa”  
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HosRV1BLYgQ&t=13s>  
Lifestyle – First Place  
“Costa Mesa Vintage Homes – Arts And Craftsman”  
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GUhLiJBxEI&t=575s>  
Military – First Place  
“Fighting For The Right To Fight – African American  
Experiences In WWII”  
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=exoaEtcklVvk&t=278s>  
Parks And Recreation – First Place  
“OCME Trestle Rebuilding Project At Fairview Park”  
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTCFRQHddDY&t=14s>  
Human Interest – Third Place  
“ARTventure 2021 – Jennifer Bloomfield”  
– <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkYgFmfSkoA&t=26s>  
Documentary – History – Third Place  
“Early Days Of The Costa Mesa Police Department As Told By  
Chief Roger Neth  
– [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CfBq7F\\_DYAY&t=37s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CfBq7F_DYAY&t=37s)  
A complete list of this year’s STAR Award winners can be found  
at: <http://www.scannatoa.org/2022StarWinners.html>.  
You can watch the STAR Award Presentation Ceremony  
here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Hk4TWw2nBE>.

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## **Street sweeping postponed for Labor Day week**

Due to the observation of the Labor Day holiday on Monday,  
there will be no residential street sweeping Sept. 5 – Sept. 9

2022.

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. 12.

In lieu of street sweeping, the following is a list of tasks that clean streets operators will be conducting next week.

- Citywide 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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## **City to open Cooling Center over Labor Day weekend**

While the City of Costa Mesa has not hit the threshold that requires Cooling Centers to open, in an abundance of caution, the City of Costa Mesa will open the Senior Center as a Cooling Center on Saturday, Sept. 3, Sunday Sept. 4 and Monday



Sept. 5 from 12 noon to 5 p.m. The Senior Center is located at 695 W 19th St. For information please call (714) 327-7550. The Cooling Center will offer residents a place to stay cool during this end of summer heat wave.

The Senior Center will also be open during regular business hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. tomorrow Friday Sept. 2. In addition, both the Donald Dungan and Mesa Verde libraries will be open during regular business hours on Friday Sept. 2 and Saturday Sept. 3. The Downtown Recreation Center is open for regular business on Friday. It will not be open Saturday, Sunday or Monday.

The Donald Dungan Library is located at 1855 Park Ave. (949) 646-8845. Open Tuesday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Closed on Sunday and Monday

The Mesa Verde Library is located at 2969 Mesa Verde Drive. (714) 546-5274. Open Tuesday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Closed on Sunday and Monday.

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## **High Temperatures Bring Risk of Heat-Related Illnesses**

The National Weather Services warns that temperatures in many Orange County communities are expected to reach high temperatures above 90 degrees this week, increasing the risk of heat-related illnesses for those who are more sensitive to heat.

Prolonged exposure to excessive temperatures may cause serious conditions like heat exhaustion or heat stroke and can even be fatal. Symptoms of heat exhaustion may include heavy sweating,

muscle cramps, weakness, headache, nausea or vomiting and dizziness. Warning signs of heat stroke may include an extremely high body temperature, unconsciousness, confusion, hot and dry skin (no sweating), a rapid, strong pulse, and a throbbing headache. If symptoms of heat stroke occur, immediately call for medical assistance. Move the person to a shady area and begin cooling their body with water.

Recommended precautions to prevent heat-related illnesses include:

- Drink plenty of water; don't wait until you are thirsty.
- Wear light, loose-fitting clothing.
- Stay out of the sun if possible. When in the sun, wear a hat, preferably with a wide brim, and use sunscreen.
- Avoid strenuous activities if you are outside or in non-air conditioned buildings. If you are working outdoors, take frequent rest and refreshment breaks in a shaded area.
- Never leave children, elderly people, or pets unattended in closed cars or other vehicles.
- Stay cool indoors – if your home is not air-conditioned, visit public facilities such as shopping malls and libraries to stay cool. For more information, call 2-1-1.
- If you have pets, be alert for any sign of heat stress, heavy panting, glazed eyes, or deep red or purple tongue. Never leave pets without shade, air circulation, and fresh water. Never leave pets in a vehicle.
- Check on your neighbors and on those who are at high risk to make sure they are staying cool – including seniors who live alone, people with heart or lung disease, and young children.

For more information on heat-related illnesses visit <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/default.html> or For more information on heat-related illnesses, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/>.

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## **Costa Mesa Assistant City Manager Susan Price to Retire**

Assistant City Manager Susan Price announced this week that she is retiring after an impressive 20-year career in the government sector.

“Susan is a highly respected leader and trailblazer in the field of homelessness in Orange County. Her success in this area has set a high bar throughout her tenure in Costa Mesa,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said.

“Her outstanding credentials, past leadership roles and experience in the fields of public health and homelessness played a highly valued role in opening the City’s permanent Bridge Shelter, a successful collaboration with the City of Newport Beach, the Motel 6 Project Homekey collaboration with the State and County and the Network for Homeless Solutions,” Farrell Harrison continued. “I applaud her accomplishments and contributions in the region and in the City of Costa Mesa. We wish her continued success in retirement and all future endeavors.”

Price’s work in government included Community Public Health initiatives for walkability, bike-ability and community garden projects along with her decades of experience in developing and administering homeless services, housing programs and

community health initiatives that continued in her role in Costa Mesa.

“Costa Mesa is such a great City, it’s been a challenging few years operating amidst the pandemic and civil/political unrest,” Price said. “I’m so proud to have been a part of this chapter where so much progress has been made. I have appreciated the opportunity working with Lori Ann and the leadership team to deliver results. I plan to continue my work on homelessness well into the future.”

Price, often referred to by the media as Orange County’s “Homeless Czar” was a perfect fit when she was hired to be the City’s second-in-command just under three years ago.

She arrived in the County of Orange in May of 2016 amid much fanfare as she had previously led successful efforts in the City of Long Beach’s Health and Human Services Department to address high-profile issues like homelessness, housing and public health.

During her tenure in Orange County she designed, developed and implemented 600 new emergency shelter beds to help address the encampment crisis, influenced a culture change in the county to effectively address homelessness across sectors and created unique strategies to effectively respond to homelessness in one of the largest counties in the country.

Price has spearheaded many capital improvement projects, tracked key legislative priorities related to the Fairview Development Center and managed complex, grant-based budgets during her career in government.

“With Susan’s departure, Nate Robbins, Costa Mesa’s Neighborhood Improvement Manager, will be assuming most of the responsibilities related to homelessness,” shared Acting City Manager Dan Stefano. “Nate and the entire team are already leaning in strong and it will be a seamless transition, as the team has been working together with Susan for the past year on

these programs without pause.”

As for filling the position as Assistant City Manager, it will be filled through a formal executive recruitment process.

#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Tony Dodero

(714) 754-5288

tony.dodero@costamesaca.gov

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## **Costa Mesa hires Robert Moya as Assistant Finance Director**

Finance Director Carol Molina is pleased to announce that Robert Moya, a 21-year veteran of municipal government, has been appointed as the city’s new Assistant Finance Director effective Monday Aug. 1.

Moya most recently was the Budget Manager for the City of Orange, where he held a variety of positions, including Budget Officer, Senior Administrative Analyst, Project Development Coordinator and Housing Specialist.

In his new role, Moya will assist the direction, planning and evaluation of the Finance Department, and will have oversight of the city’s budget and overall financial management functions. Some of his many duties will include supervision of staff as well as ensuring compliance and timely submission of financial reports, maintaining the City’s ledger, facilitating the preparation and review of the city’s budget, assisting the Finance Director on high priority projects, such as the Financial ERP system, and serving as Acting Finance Director when designated.

“I am humbled, excited, and grateful for the opportunity to join a City as dynamic and diverse as Costa Mesa,” Moya said. “It is truly a remarkable community, and I am looking forward to embrace the challenges and opportunities to enhance the quality of life of our residents and business community.”

Moya’s experience spans over two decades in Community Development, Economic Development, Finance, and Public Works departments. His experience in prior roles coupled with his positive attitude and strong work ethic makes Moya a solid addition to the city’s team.

Moya holds a juris doctor degree from Trinity Law School, a master’s degree in Public Administration from Cal State Long Beach and a bachelor’s degree from Cal Poly Pomona.

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## **Costa Mesa Residents sought to serve on City Commissions and Committees**

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents to serve on the following City Commissions and Committees:

**Arts Commission:** This Commission meets monthly, and consists of seven Council appointed positions. Selection for the Arts Commission will be at large, with a minimum of four Costa Mesa residents, and/or up to three non-residents. Interested candidates will be required to complete an Arts related questionnaire highlighting their individual interests and/or accomplishments related to the Arts.

The Arts Commission represents the Council’s desire for

ongoing policy focus, along with responsible oversight of the City's investments in the Arts. To align with the motto of "City of the Arts", the City acknowledges the vital role the Arts play in the community.

The general objectives of the Arts Commission shall be to ensure that the City of Costa Mesa is a place where creativity can flourish; a place where imagination, inspiration and innovation are held in high regard; a place where Arts Education is essential to all; and a place where Arts and Culture can promote civic pride and enrich the daily lives of the Costa Mesa community. For further information, contact Arts Specialist Laurette Garner at (714) 754-5300.

**Animal Services Committee:** This Committee meets monthly and assists with the planning of animal related events, explores and provides recommendations to improve animal services, and promotes pet licensing within the City. The City is recruiting for two alternate members for a two-year term. For further information, please contact Recreation Coordinator Jessica Torrejon at (714) 754-5300.

**Active Transportation Committee:** This Committee meets monthly and assists with the review, update and implementation of the city's Active Transportation Plan in order to make recommendations for their improvement to the City Council. The City is recruiting one regular member for a one-year term. For further information, please contact Transportation Services Manager Jennifer Rosales at (714) 754-5180.

**Fairview Park Steering Committee:** This Committee meets every other month and provides advice to the City Council regarding the implementation of the Fairview Park Master Plan, and impacts of Measure AA on Capital Improvement Program projects, maintenance and activities. The City is recruiting for one regular member for a three-year term, two regular members for a one-year term, one alternate member for a one-year term and one alternate member for a three-year term. For further

information, please contact Fairview Park Administrator Kelly Dalton at (714) 754-5300.

**Historical Preservation Committee:** This Committee meets monthly and serves to maintain, preserve, educate and promote the city's historical resources. The City is recruiting for two alternate members for a two-year term. For further information, contact Recreation Supervisor Kevin Stoddart at (714) 327-5300.

**Mobile Home Park Advisory Committee:** This Committee meets quarterly and addresses mobile home park issues and concerns in Costa Mesa. The City is recruiting for one independent citizen at-large for a one-year term. For further information, please contact Dan Inloes at (714) 754-5088.

**Application Process** – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Commission/Committee Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website ([www.costamesaca.gov/apply](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; 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.

Once appointed, Commission/Committee members must complete an Oath of Allegiance, administered by the City Clerk, required by Article XX, Section 3, of the Constitution of the State of California

The deadline to submit your application is 5 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2022. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the Sept. 20, 2022 City Council meeting.

#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Tony Doderio

(714) 754-5288

[tony.doderio@costamesaca.gov](mailto:tony.doderio@costamesaca.gov)



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# Senior Center Recreation Coordinator receives City Manager Leadership Award

Acting City Manager and Fire Chief Dan Stefano presented Senior Center Recreation Coordinator Enyelber Franco with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of July.

“Enyelber is an excellent leader and goes above and beyond for his team,” Stefano said as he announced his award at the monthly Meet and Greet. “He is thoughtful and has contributed to the Costa Mesa Senior Center culture of working hard to serve the community and also making it a point to celebrate his colleagues’ milestones, birthdays, and successes.”

Franco, who has an associate’s degree from Santa Ana College, began his journey with the City of Costa Mesa, Parks & Community Services Department in 2014 as a Park Ambassador before being promoted as a Recreation Specialist at the Costa Mesa Senior Center in 2016. He became a full-time Recreation Coordinator in 2019, where he oversees day-to-day operations at the Senior Center.

Franco has played an instrumental role in the Senior Center’s success by implementing new programs, operations and by building a rapport with his team and seniors.

During the COVID closures, he worked tirelessly to ensure that seniors were provided essential services and also some recreation. Franco didn’t hesitate to dress up as Santa Claus to cheer seniors up while delivering meals and stockings for the Senior Center’s home meal delivery program.

Franco has a keen eye for logistics and can map out an action plan for meetings and events after a quick walk through. Franco was responsible for creating the City's first community drive in and drive up/walk up Senior Grocery Program. His new Senior Grocery Program model was so successful that community partner Second Harvest Food Bank recommended the Costa Mesa Senior Center as a site to visit for other cities to base their program after.

Franco is the primary administrator of the Senior Mobility Program, which allows qualifying seniors to use a free taxi service anywhere in the City to get to medical appointments all over Orange County.

Due to Franco's success of running the Senior Transportation Program and his meticulous methods of record keeping, he has been asked by OCTA on several occasions to give presentations about Costa Mesa's successes to all providers of Senior Mobility Programs within the county.

When the City was awarded American Rescue Plan funding for Meal Gap Services in November 2021, Franco developed an action plan to utilize the funding to purchase grocery gift cards for the community in a short amount of time. He worked with the Finance Department to develop a recording keeping plan to ensure tracking of the funds and gift cards. \$157,000 worth of gift cards were distributed to qualifying members of the community. In addition, \$50,000 worth of shelf stable meals were distributed to the community through this program.

Enyelber not only has a passion to serve the community and his team, but also has a passion for fashion. If you are lucky enough, you will get to see his collection of cardigans, boots, and tennis shoes.

In addition to being a fashionista, Enyelber's hobbies include cycling, watching wrestling shows, collecting pins and vinyl records, and catching the latest Marvel or Star Wars movies.

He is a sports fanatic and his favorite teams include the Los Angeles Football Club, New England Patriots, Anaheim Ducks, and Los Angeles Lakers.

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## **Chief of Inspection gets issued the City Manager Leadership Award**

Chief of Inspection Ryan Bohr was presented with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of June at the July 14 Meet and Greet.

“Ryan goes out of his way to provide the same excellent customer experience from the City that he expected when he was working in the private sector,” said City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison. “He exemplifies leadership by his initiative, commitment to his work, can-do attitude, steadfast support of his team and exemplary solutions-oriented approach to customer service.”

In 2017, Bohr closed his private construction company to become a City Building Inspector for the City of Costa Mesa. He advanced to Senior Building Inspector and in 2021 was promoted to Chief of Inspection.

After finishing a long day in the field and in the office, Bohr works with our Fire Department to do emergency building inspections at night and on the weekends. And amid a severe staffing shortage he continued working tirelessly to ensure the City’s customers receive next day inspections throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to leading the inspections team, Bohr has taken on several difficult projects of his own— including performing building safety inspections for 20 of the newest stores in South Coast Plaza, the Anduril office headquarters located north of I-405, the Orange County Museum of Arts slated to open its doors later this year and several new housing projects including 585 Anton’s Halcyon House, Vivante’s new senior housing community and the LUXE apartments at the site of the former Costa Mesa Motor Inn.

In addition, Bohr performs building safety inspections for City projects including most recently the Lion’s Park playground and the updates to the Jack Hammett Sports Complex.

Bohr is perpetually helpful, always going above and beyond to help his customers and his colleagues to achieve their goals. Because of this – and so much more— Bohr is receiving the City Manager’s leadership award.

Bohr has an Associate’s Degree in Construction Technology and a bachelor’s degree in Economics and Psychology from UC Santa Barbara.

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## **Costa Mesa’s Ketchum-Libolt Park to get upgrades thanks to \$1.2 million in state funding**

The City of Costa Mesa received a \$1.2 million earmark in the FY 2022-23 State Budget thanks to Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris to upgrade Ketchum-Libolt Park, a City park on

the Westside named after two Police Officers who died in the line of duty 35 years ago.

“Assembly Member Petrie-Norris continues to respond directly to the needs of her constituents,” Mayor John Stephens said. “Recently, her tremendous support worked to secure \$2.5 million in funding to rebuild our Fire Training Center. Now she’s done it again by getting an additional \$1.2 million that we will use to upgrade Ketchum-Libolt Park. We are so very grateful for her efforts to benefit our community.”

This quaint park on the City’s Westside will be expanded into the adjacent parkway area to increase the overall footprint of the park and provide additional spaces for residents to recreate. The additional amenities will include new play equipment, picnic benches, and other park features identified by the community during the City’s outreach efforts.

“I’m so proud to have secured \$1.2 million in the California state budget for the City of Costa Mesa to upgrade Ketchum-Libolt Park,” said Assemblywoman Cottie Petrie-Norris (D-Irvine). “Adding a parkway and recreation amenities is just what the residents of Westside Costa Mesa need to live well and thrive in community.”

The park’s name is a tribute to Costa Mesa Police Officers James “Dave” Ketchum and John “Mike” Libolt, who lost their lives in a March 10, 1987, helicopter crash.

The park was built in August of 2005 to pay tribute to their many years of dedication to Costa Mesa and its residents.

“This park serves a community that is very much in need of parks and open space,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “Thanks to the \$1.2 million we are receiving, children and families on the Westside will have an upgraded park to visit while honoring the memory of these two valiant men.”