

Public encouraged to attend Open House to learn more about proposed bridge shelter

The City of Costa Mesa is inviting the public to attend a special Open House on Wednesday Jan. 30 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Costa Mesa Senior Center to discuss a temporary bridge shelter at the Lighthouse Church of the Nazarene at 1885 Anaheim Ave. Participants will have the opportunity to review proposed bridge shelter plans, share thoughts and provide input, and hear from City staff, public safety, community partners and shelter operation experts.

The meeting is a result of the Costa Mesa City Council voting unanimously on Tuesday, Jan. 15 to move forward with a plan to partner with the Lighthouse Church and expand what is an already existing inclement weather shelter into a high-security, temporary facility.

Establishing this bridge shelter option for those experiencing homelessness will provide the 50 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 powers to enforce trespassing and anti-encampment ordinances.

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

Through this temporary shelter arrangement with the Lighthouse Church, the city will invest in the property creating security fencing around the church, and adding portable buildings for restrooms, storage of personal belongings, offices and space

for shelter beds.

Unsheltered individuals will be offered job training and placement services, mental health assessments, health and dental care, substance abuse treatment and connections to permanent housing.

Costa Mesa has been a leader on this issue since 2013, with the inception of the Network for Homeless Solutions – which includes City staff and representatives of faith-based organizations and local non-profits. The network meets weekly to discuss specific cases and developments in our efforts to reduce homelessness in Costa Mesa and has helped to house more than 300 individuals as well as reconnected about 90 with family or loved ones.

To learn more, please join us at the Open House or visit our website at www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness.