

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**  
**2015 MAYOR'S AUDIT REPORT**

**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**

- Established with the Finance Department the PARS Pension Obligation Trust Fund to help address the City's unfunded pension liability
- Began work on a feasibility study of the Civic Center Master Plan
- Created new City website with updated branding. Developed new Hidden Gems logo and tag line in support of increased economic development
- Coordinated the Downtown Streetscape Grand Opening and created a Shop Dine Explore La Mesa promotion
- Human Resources and the Finance Department to implement a mechanism to track all employee hours to determine eligibility for healthcare under the Affordable Care Act (ACA)
- Implemented and administered the part-time sick leave policy which allows all part-time staff to receive 24 hours of sick leave annually once they meet eligibility requirements, including the development and coordination of part-time hours tracking
- Completed and published Employee Handbook to be given to all new hires at orientation in June
- Received \$193,782 general liability refund from insurance pool as a result of positive claims history
- Worked with a consultant to update the City's ADA Transition Plan in April
- Created a process for Risk Management to review all agreements/contracts from every City department, as well as all certificates of insurance between the City and others, to ensure appropriate indemnification language and that insurance limits match executed agreements/contracts to reduce the City's liability risk
- Updated old City computers from XP desktops to Windows 7
- Enhanced the City's wellness program for employees with new health and fitness challenges to motivate employees to exercise and eat healthier food
- Paid the final debt service for the Waite Drive park property
- Secured a \$1.9 million dollar grant to open Junior High Drive in support of the new Boys and Girls Club project in West La Mesa

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- Completed developer selection process and obtained Council approval of an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement between the City of La Mesa and Westmont Development, LP to develop a Residential Care Facility for the Elderly.
- Successfully negotiated the economic deal points and the framework for an Agreement to Lease and Ground Lease (pending Council review and approval).
- Moved forward with plans to upgrade parking technology and parking citation processing services to improve both customer service and internal operational efficiency. Implementation will follow in early 2016.
- A Zoning Ordinance Amendment updating animal regulations approved by the City Council in 2016.
- Obtained a grant from the SDG&E Emerging Cities Program grant (\$61,500) for the preparation of a Climate Action Plan.
- Participation commenced in five Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs: HERO, Figtree, CaliforniaFIRST, Ygrene and the California Municipal Finance Authority. PACE Programs provide property owners and businesses with financing options for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and water conservation upgrades.
- The City acting as the Successor Agency, obtained Department of Finance approval of the Successor Agency's Long Range Property Management Plan, which will allow the La Mesa Boulevard Municipal Parking Lot to be transferred to the City of La Mesa and retained for use as a public parking lot.
- Adopted zoning ordinance amendments to revise parking requirements and establish an optional parking in-lieu fee program in the Downtown Commercial zone. These initiatives are intended to promote economic development and business growth in the downtown village.
- Completed a five-Year Consolidated Plan for Community Development establishing 2015-2019 funding priorities for CDBG and HOME programs.
- Compliance of code violations achieved for the Eastridge Open Space area.

### **Recent Entitlements**

- Chick-Fil-A restaurant and 5,825 square foot retail pad building at 8200 Parkway Drive
- 110,346 square-foot StorQuest self-storage facility at 8265 Commercial Street
- Restaurant and brewery, Depot Springs, at 9160 Fletcher Parkway
- 30-unit apartment development at 7140 Saranac Street
- 66-unit apartment development at 5120 Baltimore Drive

### **Construction Activity of Note**

- Underway: 198-unit apartment development at 7380 Parkway Drive
- Underway: 11-unit single-family development at the intersection of Keeney and Mohawk Streets
- Recently completed: 36-unit single-family PRD, La Mesa Meadows, on Highfield Avenue
- Recently completed on a 15-unit single-family PRD on Stanford Avenue
- Recently completed on a 6-unit single-family PRD on Lowell Street
- Recently completed on an 60-unit mixed use development, Palm Terrace, on Palm Avenue

### **Building (12/31/2015)**

- Total number of building and fire permits issued is 1,721, an increase of 39% from 2014.
- Total construction valuation of permits is \$24,209,000, compared with \$50,999,000 from 2014.
- Total permit fees collected is \$772,574, compared with \$943,100 in 2014, a decrease of 22%.
- Total number of photovoltaic solar permits issued is 555 compared with 272 of 2014, an increase of 104%.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

- The La Mesa Municipal Pool offered free community activities including a Dive-In Movie as well as April Pool's Day and the World's Largest Swimming Lesson which promoted water safety education and drowning prevention.
- This year almost 200 volunteers came out to help tidy up the parks in La Mesa. Altogether, volunteers removed about 3.8 tons of green waste plus a quarter ton of trash from our City parks.
- A series of six Community Wellness Workshops funded through Kaiser Permanente were held throughout 2015. Workshop topics included: Yoga, Boot Camp, Brain Games and Nutrition. There was an attendance of over 138.
- Provided oversight for 20,265.60 volunteer hours throughout all City departments providing service enhancements to the community without additional cost for those enhanced services.
- Rides 4 Neighbors program completed 9,998 one-way trips and 11,605 volunteer hours with 114, 889 estimated miles. Raised \$276.40 at a fundraiser held at The Hills in La Mesa. Awarded \$800 from the East County Senior Service Providers.
- Various special events provided both youth and adults a positive and fun experience to include: Fun with Physics - 275 in attendance, La Mesa Flag Day Parade - 1,700 in attendance, Movie in the Park and Dive In Movie had a combined attendance of over 650 and Sunday's At Six - 2,100 in attendance with an extra concert scheduled for International Relations.
- Provided three transit training sessions to the community empowering residents to use the bus and trolley.
- Organized and led 22 Walking Wednesdays with residents to walk audit proposed urban trails, engage residents and support local businesses.
- Sustained the Safe Routes Walk & Roll Intergenerational Program to recruit older adult volunteers to act as the "Eyes on the Street" as students walk and bicycle to and from school. Safe Routes volunteers contributed over 1,000 volunteer hours in 2015. This program received the 2015 Helen Putnam Award.
- Educated students on bicycle handling and safety through bicycle rodeos held at local elementary schools and a community bicycle rodeo.
- Successfully held the first Connect La Mesa Block Party providing community engagement, education and resident feedback opportunities on the existing and proposed urban trails and climate action plan.
- Awarded \$992,500 in Smart Growth Incentive Program (SGIP) funding through SANDAG to enhance public infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists on North Spring Street.
- Hosted the ground breaking for the Lookout At Legacy Park.

## FINANCE

- Successful completion of the 2015 annual audit and issuance of Financial Statements for the City and Successor Agency, receiving a “clean” audit opinion on both.
- Implementation of GASB 68, Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions.
- Successful completion of the 2015 Single Audit of our federally funded grants. Received a “clean” audit opinion.
- In conjunction with the City Manager’s office and with the assistance of the City departments, produced the 2015-2017 Biennial budget that reflected improved revenues and maintained essential City services at current levels.
- Continued implementation of AB 1X 26 (Dissolution of Redevelopment), AB1484 (Clean-up Bill), and SB107 (Revisions Bill) to include:
  - Preparation of the Recognized Obligation Payment Schedules (ROPS) for the upcoming 2015-2016 fiscal year.
- Completed the 2015-2016 fee schedule update.
- Public bids were held for mobile command vehicle outfitting, marketing and communications services, Microsoft enterprise agreement renewal, and parking citation and permit processing/payment collection.
- The purchase order process was streamlined to reduce processing time and paper use.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **Administration and EMS**

- Processed \$59,042 in La Mesa grant reimbursements
- Maintained fiscal accountability for the EMS division which continued to operate the Advanced Life Support First Responder program with no impact to the City's General Fund.
- In conjunction with Regional Cooperative Care Program, provided "Hands Only CPR" training to over 1,564 citizens in La Mesa in 2015

### **Operations, Training & Support Services**

- Continued to the participation in the development and delivery of the annual County Wildland Preparedness drill that provides training for over 850 firefighters from throughout the region
- Through our participation in the Heartland Training Facility, firefighters received the following specialized training in 2015:
  - Annual Hazardous Materials refresher training
  - Annual Wildland Firefighting

### **Fire Prevention**

- Completed all motel/hotel inspections and noted 237 violations.
- Completed extensive inspection of Grossmont Hospital.
- Completed all school inspections

### **Emergency Preparedness**

- Conducted 42 presentations utilizing existing public events to promote preparedness with 867 participants
- Assembled a collaborative team to include Public Works, Police Department, Dispatch Centers, and SDG&E to:
  - Develop an El Niño preparedness, response, and recovery plan
  - Conduct El Niño Community Forums
  - Develop El Niño materials
  - Develop an El Niño Public Service Announcement

- Develop and conduct a public information campaign (featured on KNBC & KUSI news 4 times, the Union Tribune 2 times, KOGO radio 5 times, the La Mesa Courier, and the East County Californian)
- Internal Preparedness training was provided to better prepare City workers as emergency responders. An EOC exercise was conducted in May simulating a major power outage.
- Trained and utilized CERT volunteers for public presentations (i.e. Oktoberfest, National Night Out, etc.).
- Initial development of City staff family shelter in the event of an evacuation.

### **Fire Services Joint Powers Agreement**

- Developed Vision Statement for Heartland Fire & Rescue JPA.
- Heartland Fire & Rescue obtained an ISO Class 1 rating. ISO is an independent company that rates fire suppression services across the United States. Insurance companies use the ISO rating to determine insurance rates for their customers. ISO scores Fire Departments from a 1 to 10 scale, with 1 being the best. Of 48,855 Fire Departments in the United States, there are only 97 departments recognized at the time of this report who share this honor of being rated the best of the best as a Class 1 department.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

- New Mobile Command Vehicle (MCV) was deployed. The new MCV is compact, yet large enough to house equipment which is needed for police events; such as probation sweeps (AB109), SRT missions, Homeland Security events, DUI Checkpoints, disaster response and critical incidents. This vehicle has an attached camera, which can be elevated 20' in height, and has the capability of 360 degree panoramic view of the local area. One of the key features of the new MCV is the ability to utilize the Downlink system, which allows "real-time" video footage from the county EOC, neighboring Police and Sheriff's EOC's, and law enforcement helicopter footage. This is imperative during all critical incidents, natural and man-made disasters (fires, acts of terrorism) and pre-planned events (probation sweeps).
- A Police Department pilot program to abate abandoned vehicles from City roadways and private property began in the fall. It concentrated on four specific areas within the City that had multiple previous abandoned vehicle concerns and also continued to address current City-wide citizen complaints. This pilot program, which used the AVA funds to staff additional personnel on overtime, was successful in minimizing on-going issues in those designed areas and efficiently addressed incoming citizen concerns regarding abandoned vehicles. The AVA Program began officially in November and has the potential to make a significant positive change in this quality of life issue over the next decade that the funds are available.
- The Police Department received UASI grant funding to purchase and install a VirTra Firearms Simulator in the upstairs build-out area of the Police Station. The simulator was installed in March 2015 and is open to east county law enforcement agencies to be used for training purposes.
- Three Kidz Watch Academies were offered that empowers children to be more observant of their surroundings, enabling them to become safer.
- The Police Department held their annual "Citizen's Academy." This three-day introduction into the how the Police Department operates received many accolades from the 25 participants which included City of La Mesa business and community leaders.
- "Coffee with a Cop" was introduced to La Mesa this year. Officers were on hand to meet with citizens in an informal setting to develop stronger community/police relationships over a cup of coffee.
- The Police Department launched its Facebook page during this fiscal year.
- 2015 brought on many changes in personnel to the Police Department. The Police Department hired a new Chief of Police, four police officers, two dispatchers, one Community Service Officer, one Police Service Technician, one Police Services Specialist, and two Parking Control Officers. One Captain, one Lieutenant, and one Sergeant were promoted and one Captain retired in 2015.

## **PUBLIC WORKS**

- The Public Works Department completed six public infrastructure projects with a total combined value of \$8.3 million dollars in 2015. This includes sewer and storm drain improvements in and around Collier Park, on Palm Avenue, Fourth Street and Upland Street; reconstruction of 117,180 square feet of concrete streets on Cinthia Street, Carolyn Drive, Rosarita Drive and Wetherly Street in maintenance zone 5; street and drainage improvements on King Street; street improvements at the intersection of Glenira Avenue and Glen Street; and, the Downtown Village Streetscape Improvement Project.
- A street lighting ceremony was held in December to commemorate the completion of the long awaited Downtown Village Streetscape Improvement Project. Project construction spanned a 16-month period and included curb, gutter and sidewalk replacement; new storm drain facilities and water quality devices; street trees, tree grates and irrigation installation; lighting enhancements; new street furniture; and, street improvements such as asphalt overlay, crosswalks and striping.
- The Department was awarded \$1,897,400 in grant funding for infrastructure improvements in 2015. The City received \$992,500 from the SANDAG Smart Growth Incentive Grant Program for pedestrian and bicyclist safety enhancements along North Spring Street between University Avenue and the I-8 interchange and an additional \$904,900 in grant funds from the Highway Safety Improvement Program to replace the traffic signal fiber optic cable throughout the city.
- Public Works maintenance crews installed new drought-resistant landscaping at City Hall and the Community Center entry way and upgraded the Calsense irrigation equipment at several parks and median areas to help meet California's 25 percent water conservation and reduction requirement. Maintenance staff cleaned 2,700 feet and removed 20 yards of brush and overgrown vegetation in two open drainage channels in preparation for El Nino.
- The Department continues its efforts to maintain effective and efficient traffic circulation and transportation throughout the city. As part of the annual street maintenance program, more than 1,314,840 square feet of slurry seal in maintenance zone 6 and 823,450 linear feet of roadway striping were completed in 2015. Speed tables were installed on Harbinson Avenue to help reduce speeds and calm traffic in the neighborhood. Construction is nearly complete on several street improvement projects including, a federally funded Safe Routes to School grant project to install two sidewalk segments on Maryland Avenue between Lake Murray Boulevard and Parkway Drive and intersection improvements at signalized intersections near five La Mesa schools, and to install traffic signal upgrades and intersection improvements on University Avenue at Harbinson Avenue.