



Enhance La Jolla hits the ground running with repainting, tree well and news rack projects



Enhance La Jolla authorized a plan to repaint a guardrail at Girard Avenue and Prospect Street. (Courtesy)

By ASHLEY MACKIN-SOLOMON

JAN. 26, 2021 10 AM PT

Enhance La Jolla, the nonprofit that oversees the local Maintenance Assessment District, is starting the new year with some big plans.

At its Jan. 21 meeting online, the board approved plans to repaint a guardrail overlooking Scripps Park and improve the safety and appearance of tree wells. It also created an ad-hoc committee to look at the possible placement of newspaper rack corrals.

Enhance La Jolla administers the MAD with authority to enhance city-provided services, including landscape maintenance, street and sidewalk cleaning, litter and graffiti abatement and additional trash collection, and to privately fund and complete capital improvement projects in public spaces, such as upgraded trash cans, bench installation, sign augmentation, park improvements, more public art and tree canopies on main thoroughfares.

Enhance La Jolla President Ed Witt said 2020 “saw improvements in the process of enhancing La Jolla.”

“We worked with our vendors to improve their services, and that brought about some changes,” he said. “MAD Manager Mary Montgomery and I spent a good deal of time and dialogue walking The Village with our vendors to ensure that they are working up to the standards that we would expect.”

Witt asked people who live and work in The Village to report problems to the board through the website enhancelajolla.org.



A tree well on Girard Avenue has been filled with large rocks to mitigate a trip hazard and improve aesthetics. (Courtesy)

In addition to the supplemental cleanup services that MAD provides, Witt said he had received four bids to repaint a guardrail at Girard Avenue and Prospect Street that is “rusty and peeling.” Opting for the bid from La Jolla volunteer Chris Cott, the board voted to authorize the paint job on condition that the paint lasts the next few years.

Witt also discussed plans to temporarily fill empty tree wells, or ones with gaps between the sidewalk and the trees, with large rocks. Some of the empty tree wells have already had rocks placed in them because Witt said they posed a trip hazard.

“There are tree wells and spaces in the sidewalk where people are walking every day. In almost every one, there is a tree there, but there are one to six inches of drop based on the size of the well and the size of the tree,” he said. “Part of what we are trying to do is not have a hole in the sidewalk.”

Witt offered to purchase additional rocks where needed in the rest of The Village, rent a truck and install them to minimize costs, with the hope to have the project complete by summer. The board voted to authorize Witt and Montgomery to proceed with the effort.

Witt also assembled an ad-hoc committee to propose locations for news rack corrals following an effort to remove unsightly and unkempt newspaper racks last year. Groups of newspaper racks could be placed so they are easier to maintain, “rather than have one here, here and here,” Witt said.

The committee — composed of Enhance La Jolla member and *La Jolla Light* President and General Manager Phyllis Pfeiffer and members Ann Dynes and Peter Wagener — will present a recommendation in coming months.

Other Enhance La Jolla news

San Diego Economic Development Program Manager Luis Ojeda said the city has “a couple of things going on” that may affect the MAD due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Chiefly, a budget deficit of close to \$154 million may result in reduced city maintenance services. “When there are cuts ... baseline services may be impacted,” he said. He said departments across the city are asked to make budget cuts and that “I’m going to pay close attention to where these cuts will be and will keep this board updated on the progress of that.”

Witt said “anyone would expect there to be budget cuts based on what’s going on. The MAD, in my opinion, becomes even more important to The Village of La Jolla. If the city does have to cut back on services, I’m sure we will have a lot of conversations about that and we will work together to maintain and continue to enhance La Jolla.”

Enhance La Jolla meets quarterly. The next meeting dates for 2021 are April 15, July 15 and Oct. 21. ♦