

THE PIPELINE

News from the Ventura County Public Works Agency

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From the Director's Desk

Jeff Pratt,
Public Works
Agency Director



Dear Friends,

One of the best parts of working for the VCPWA is watching Ventura County become a better place to live, every day. The recent construction of the Piru Town Square Skate Park is a prime example of how we make this happen. This award-winning project improved a blighted, underutilized piece of land, thanks to grants from both state and federal agencies. Through this project we were able to make it not only beautiful but useful as well.

Also in this issue, news about a groundbreaking. A ceremony, complete with gold shovels, was held on June 5 to celebrate the Donlon Road Realignment Project in Somis. This long-awaited project has been in the planning stages for many years, and involves moving the entire roadway hundreds of feet to create a safer intersection.

And finally: We work hard to keep our community safe and its infrastructure running smoothly, but even so, emergencies will always happen. Where would we be without our First Responders? Augustine Godinez III is one of these vital personnel. As Superintendent in the Water & Sanitation Department, his professionalism and dedication shines. Thank you, Augustine — and thank you everyone else who makes Ventura County a great place to call home.

All the Best,


Jeff Pratt
Director

Award of Excellence Piru Town Square Skate Park Project

With summer in full swing, it's the perfect time to remind families to enjoy the Piru Town Square Skate Park. The skate park design emulates the agricultural and railroad heritage of the community by incorporating a stylized railroad trestle, simulated rails, and citrus farming.

The Ventura County Public Works Agency proudly received an Award of Excellence at the 2014 California Park and Recreation Society Conference and Expo, held in Sacramento, CA, March 10-13, 2015, for the Piru Town Square Skate Park Project. The project transformed a blighted piece of land near the town square into a community-centered and safe place for youth to gather. The park is lit to facilitate use in the evenings and includes

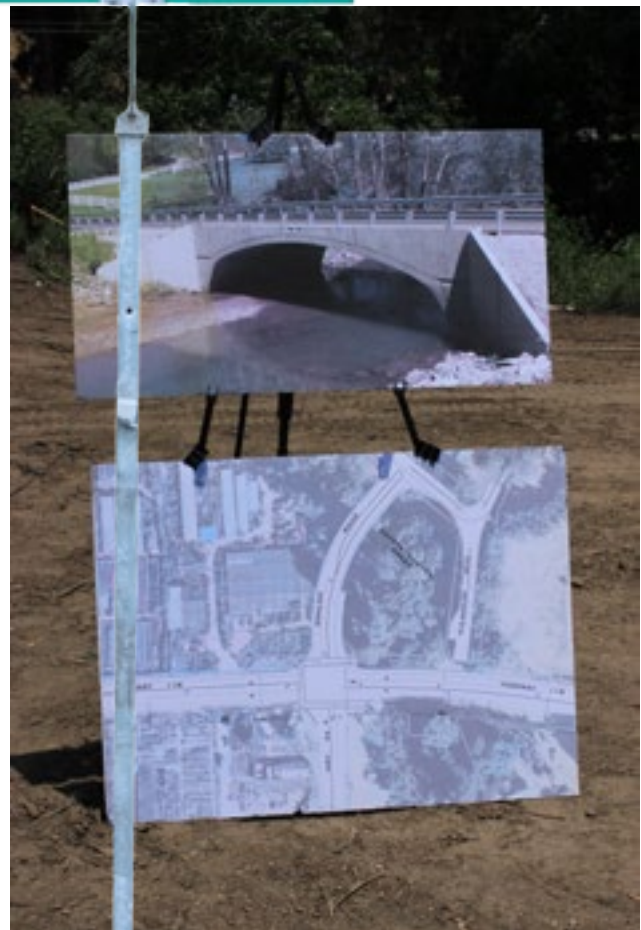
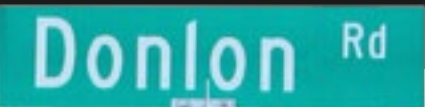
a walking path connected to the existing town square to work cohesively with the surrounding structures and community.

Community outreach and participation were key in designing the park to reflect different elements of the community. "The CPRS awards program is the highest recognition our agency can receive and our award is a credit to the collaboration of many community and County staff members that made this happen. We are honored to receive this award on behalf of the County community," says VCPWA Director Jeff Pratt. The million-dollar project was funded through a combination of State Housing Related Parks Program Grant funding and Federal HUD Community Development Block Grant funding.





Donlon Road GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY



The show of support was tremendous for the highly anticipated groundbreaking ceremony for the Donlon Road Realignment Project in Somis on June 5. The event was attended by more than 60 community members, dignitaries, and law-enforcement officers who share VCPWA’s vision for a safer and more efficient roadway.

Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks, Ventura County Transportation Commission Vice Chair Keith Millhouse, Mayor of Camarillo Bill Little, Somis Municipal Advisory Councilperson Barbara Kerkhoff, and Save our Somis leader Clyde Pratt all helped commemorate the event by offering the attendees a glimpse of the history, foresight, and careful planning that went into the project. VCPWA Transportation Director David Fleisch was the Master of Ceremonies for the event.

Supervisor Parks spoke about the leadership, community, and collaboration that were required to develop a solution to an ongoing traffic issue. “This is about the accumulation of five decades of grassroots efforts,” said Parks. Barbara Kerkhoff put her decades of effort into perspective by pointing out that her currently white hair was black when she first began campaigning about the ongoing issue.

To signify the launch of the new construction project, the key contributors and supporters ceremonially dug into the soil with gold shovels. “We’re excited to be breaking ground on this long-awaited project,” explained David Fleisch. “The community of Somis has been requesting these road enhancements for quite some time and we’re delighted to finally be able to meet their needs. Our goal is to complete the safety improvements within eight months for the thousands of motorists who frequent this roadway.” During construction, work that could impact traffic along Route 118 will be done at night to minimize disruption of traffic.

The purpose of the project is to improve safety at the intersection by eliminating the offset between Donlon Road and Somis Road. Construction will move Donlon Road 200 feet to the west to connect its alignment with the existing traffic signal on Highway 118 at Somis Road (Highway 34). The signal will then become a standard four-way intersection, with Donlon Road extending to the north; the old intersection at Donlon Road will be closed. The project will add much longer left-turn lanes in both directions on Highway 118, as well as eight-foot shoulders to the highway.



First Responders SPOTLIGHT

Augustine Godinez III



Public Works personnel were officially added as first responders in 2005 by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Public Works personnel also serve as part of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Agency Operations Center (AOC) when activated. We want to continue to recognize and thank all of our dedicated staff who go above and beyond in an emergency.

Augustine Godinez III, Public Works Superintendent in the Water and Sanitation Department, has worked with VCPWA for 31 years. Augustine oversees the operation and maintenance of the wastewater treatment facilities, reclaimed water system, and five separate sewer collection systems for the department. This includes specifically three wastewater treatment plants, tertiary treatment facilities, the recycled water distribution system, SCADA systems, 10 sewer lift stations, and 149 miles of sewer lines with 11,672 sewer lateral connections.

Late one night, Augustine received a call for a high-level alarm at one of the VCPWA main lift stations during a heavy rain event. "We had lost SCE power and the backup generator did not come on, and all the while the level in the wetwell was rising," recalls Augustine. "I had to manually turn on the portable standby pump in order to maintain the level and prevent raw sewage from overflowing. I had to then determine why the power was out, why our generator did not come on, and then get our equipment operational, all the ingredients for a very busy and stressful situation." Every day, VCPWA staff work together to ensure the public has continued and safe services. We thank Augustine and each and every one of you for your dedication, professionalism, and commitment as First Responders.

