

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,

The end of the year always heralds the desire to look back over the last 12 months and take stock of things. What have we accomplished? What has made us proud? And what could we have done better?

2014 has seen many large-scale projects in various stages of completion. In this issue we highlight the progress of the J Street project, where we are strengthening our infrastructure, protecting property owners from floods, and protecting wildlife, as well as making Ventura County a beautiful place to live and work.

This Fall we completed a retrofit of the Government Center parking lot to include pervious drainage systems that collect stormwater and clean it before it returns to our natural waterways. You can read more about that in this issue, too.

On the lighter side, we've included a humorous piece about how "Everybody wants to be a Traffic Engineer." Don't we sometimes think our ideas are better?

In closing, I'd like to wish everyone a happy holiday season. May you enjoy the company of loved ones, delicious food, and the spirit of giving back. As we celebrate the New Year, let us take pride in our accomplishments, and consider what we've learned from the past as we prepare for the future.

All the best,

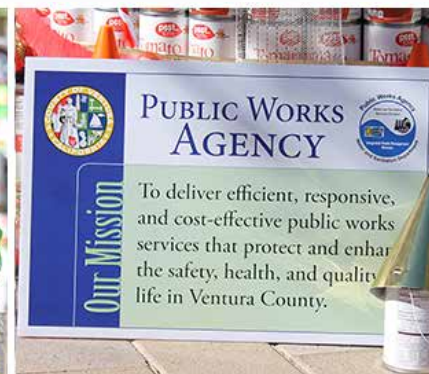
Jeff Pratt
Director

Thank you to everyone who came out to the CAN-tree Food Drive at The Collection at RiverPark for an inspirational day of giving back to our hungry friends in Ventura County.

PW CAWS, our Ventura County Public Works mascot, was on hand for all of the festivities. And, not to brag, *but our CAN-trees sure looked great!*

Our giving didn't end there! Tully challenged the Ventura County Watershed Protection District team again this year to pay it forward by sponsoring TWO families from *RAIN*, a transitional living center, through the Adopt-a-Family for the Holidays program.

The ability to warm the hearts of a homeless family in need, who would not have a Christmas otherwise, was truly a touching experience.



Building Today For Tomorrow: The J Street Drain Project

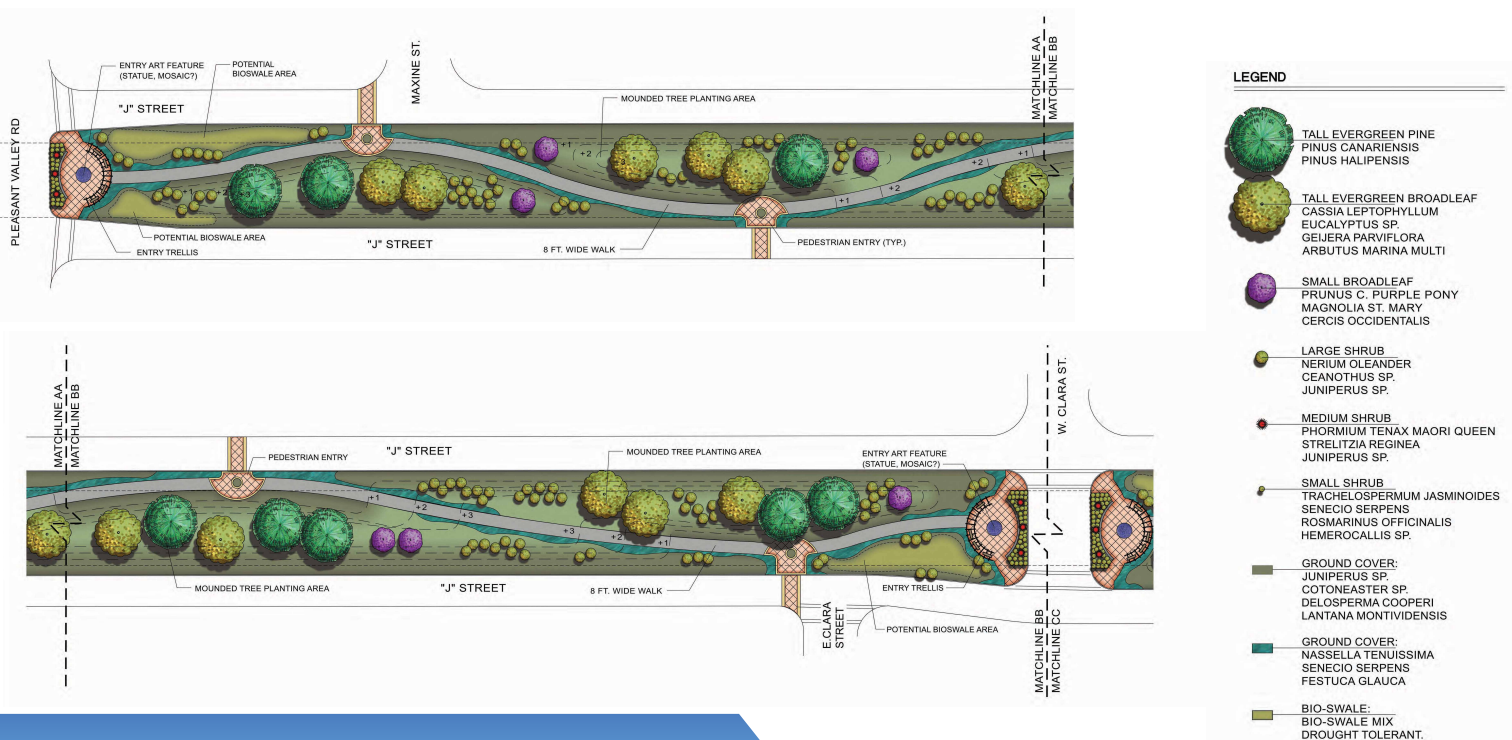
Concept Drawing of J Street Park Landscaping

Drains and culverts: maybe not the most glamorous of construction projects, but definitely among the most important. Much of Ventura County Public Works Agency's work involves water — preserving it, cleaning it, bringing it to our ratepayers, and directing it down the proper channels when it pours from the sky. During 2014 we have progressed with many projects involving water, including pervious concrete installations in parking lots; Calleguas Creek Channel and Bank Improvements Project; the Auto-Demand Response program in cooperation with Southern California Edison; and the J Street Drain Project, to name a few.

The J Street Drain Project is a major endeavor to enlarge over 12,000 linear feet of existing trapezoidal concrete channel to contain the 100-year flood; it currently holds 10-year storm flows. The project will be constructed in four phases. The first phase began in late summer 2013, and is scheduled to be completed in December

2014. The remainder of the project will be completed over the next few years. Phase 2, which stretches between Hueneme and Pleasant Valley roads, has been extensively planned and construction should begin in spring 2016. The community clamored for Phases 2 – 4 to be constructed underground (about twice the cost of an open channel) so a park could be created above it, and grant funds were secured for half the additional cost. The City of Oxnard will install the overlying linear park/multi-use trail. Design for Phases 3 and 4 is still in progress, and more grant applications will be submitted in the future.

About 2,700 linear feet are included in this first phase, between the Ormond Beach Lagoon and Hueneme Road. It's not just a drain... it's an environmental project as well, with an open channel that preserves foraging habitat for the endangered California least tern and aquatic habitat for the endangered tidewater goby, a tiny fish. What a great way to build today for tomorrow!





"Green Streets" Design for County Government Center Parking Lot Retrofit



What happens when a heavy rain falls on 39 acres of asphalt parking lot? Well, most of the time it runs into storm drains... full of pollutants such as debris, automotive fluids, metals from brake pads, fertilizer, bacteria, and more. This mixture, which is at its worst during the first heavy rains after a long dry spell, goes straight into creeks, rivers, and oceans. But thanks to the hard-working team at VCPWA, that's coming to an end.

On October 30th, David Kirby, Ewelina Mutkowska, Supervisor Linda Parks, Supervisor Steve Bennett, Tully Clifford, Jonathan Bishop, Supervisor Kathy Long, and Gerhardt Hubner gathered around to cut the ribbon on the permeable concrete in the parking lot outside of the Ventura County Government Center. This

project started in 2012 by the Ventura County Watershed Protection District and was completed this past September 2014.

"The basic purpose of the project is to capture, treat, and infiltrate stormwater and dry-weather runoff from 39 acres of impervious surface area of the parking lot," explained Ventura County Supervisor Steve Bennett.

The natural process of the water cycle involves rainfall on soil, where it's filtered and replenishes groundwater supplies. When this soil is covered by asphalt parking lots, this filtration process is interrupted. But projects such as this one, called "Green Streets" design, mimic natural processes to reduce the harmful impact of stormwater pollution on the environment.

EVERYONE WANTS TO BE A TRAFFIC ENGINEER



You drive on that road every day. So, we know you have some great ideas for improving traffic flow, safety, and even getting your neighbor to stop speeding. All of you with a drivers' license, some without, everyone on a bike or scooter, city officials, parents, grandparents, and concerned citizens put on your traffic engineer hats as we go through some of your best suggestions.

In fact, some of you have even gone as far as crafting your own one-of-a-kind road sign which, you're sure, should be adopted by everyone else with a similar situation. Especially anyone whose peacocks need a safe place to cross the road!

Q: Can I put up a "Hidden Driveway" sign to make drivers aware of my property entrance?

A: It's not really hidden, just hard to see. Try clearing some of the brush away from the curb to make it more visible. Unauthorized traffic signs on public roads are prohibited.

Comments from our "citizen" traffic engineer:

I always wanted to be a sign designer, and I have a piece of plywood and some paint, I'll make it myself.



Q: We need a "Slow – Children at Play" sign on our street to protect our kids. Can you install one for us?

A: Federal standards discourage the use of these signs. They give a false sense of security, give the impression it's OK to play in the street, and drivers ignore them anyway.

Comments from our "citizen" traffic engineer:

I have seen these signs on other streets; can we also add "Slow – Walking Dog" and "Hurry – I'm Late for Work" signs too?

Q: We need a 25 MPH speed-limit sign posted on our street, how can we get it installed?

A: We use the 85th percentile rule, which entails tracking actual vehicle speeds on a road and setting the limit at the point where 15% of cars are going faster.

Comments from our "citizen" traffic engineer:

Can you offer blank signs that we can fill in ourselves? My neighbors and I know our street best.



