The City of Norwalk continues to monitor developments regarding Governor Newsom’s broad use of his “Emergency Powers.” These actions initiated by the State and implemented by the County have had far reaching effects on our residents. The City Council has taken a proactive approach to ensuring residents are both informed and protected by these decisions.

These decisions supersede local authority in Norwalk, and unfortunately some of these decisions have had a direct impact on our community.

The City of Norwalk was informed by Los Angeles County officials that temporary interim housing for “Project Homekey” would commence on January 12th. The Project Homekey site in Norwalk is located at 10646 Rosecrans Avenue (Motel 6). Those taking up temporary residence would be formerly homeless individuals from the region. County officials indicated that plans are to have all 55 rooms occupied by March 1st. The Salvation Army will be the service provider responsible for the program at this site.

In addition to housing, there will be minor medical services and mental health counseling onsite. Norwalk City staff will maintain communication with both County and Salvation Army officials to ensure those in the program abide by the safety protocols in place.

The “Project Roomkey” site in Norwalk, located at 12500 Firestone Boulevard (Saddleback Hotel), will be operational until June 2021. However, in late December Gov. Newsom announced that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will permanently fund California’s Project Roomkey program for the duration of the pandemic.

There are no new updates on the annex, formerly known as the California Youth Authority facility on Bloomfield Avenue. There are currently forty-three female patients housed there who tested COVID-negative. In other news, the California Department of Social Services (DSS) announced the use of six statewide Residential Alternate Care Sites, including one in Norwalk, which is located at 11515 Firestone Boulevard.

The facilities are licensed as Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFES) or Adult Residential Facilities (ARFs) and are being commissioned in an effort to relieve hospitals dealing with the surge in coronavirus patients. Residents from Milpitas in Northern California have attempted to mitigate the effects of Gov. Newsom’s “Emergency Powers” decisions. Their legal case was recently dismissed in court.

Meanwhile, the lawsuit against Gov. Newsom over his use of executive power continues. State Assembly members James Gallagher (Yuba City) and Kevin Kiley (Rocklin) are fighting back against a California appellate court’s decision in November to grant a stay of a lower court’s injunction against the Governor. A new court date is pending approval.

The City of Norwalk mourns the passing of former Norwalk Mayor, City Councilmember, Planning Commissioner, businessman, and philanthropist, Luigi Vernola. Luigi passed away on New Year’s Day at the age of 76 due to complications of COVID-19.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 56 years Joan, his son Thomas J. Vernola, and his daughters Lisa M. Vernola-Salas and Kristina A. Vernola-Freesmeier, in addition to his 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Luigi received his education in the Norwalk School District, graduating from Norwalk High School in 1964. While a student at Norwalk High, Luigi met his future wife, Joan Yacabowich. They married in 1965 and remained residents in Norwalk, where they raised their children. At the age of 20, Luigi purchased his first service station, the first of many, including garages and a towing service.

Luigi began his public service in the 1980’s when he was appointed to the Norwalk Planning Commission. In 1987, Luigi was appointed to fill the vacant seat left by Councilmember Cecil Green who had been elected to the California State Senator, leaving his council seat vacant. Luigi was proud to fill the temporary seat and eventually ran for, and won, the city council seat in the general election.

As a local businessman, he knew firsthand the responsibilities of running a successful company and city. He made fiscal accountability his top priority. As a councilmember, he was always committed to improving public safety and community engagement as crucial components to the health and success of Norwalk.

Luigi would later serve again on the Norwalk City Council from 2013-2020. He served as Mayor several times throughout his public service tenure and most recently served as Mayor from 2017-2018.

Time and again, Luigi demonstrated his dedication to the city he loved. He founded and cofounded several nonprofits to promote worthy causes, both in Norwalk and around Los Angeles County. One such nonprofit is the Santa Slingshot Foundation, which was exceedingly special to Luigi. As part of this program, Luigi would host a breakfast event wherein children could eat breakfast and visit with Santa Claus and they would also receive a gift. During the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, Luigi would give out over 600 turkeys and other food items to senior citizens and families throughout the community.

Luigi also helped establish The Friends of the Norwalk Sheriff’s Station, an organization that helped the families of our law enforcement community, who had loved ones injured or killed in the line of duty.

Shortly after 9/11, Luigi had a monument erected and dedicated to the first responders of Norwalk’s area. He placed life-size statues of a firefighter, deputy sheriff, California Highway Patrol officer and one of Norwalk’s own public safety officers. He also helped establish the Hometown Heroes Banners that line Norwalk’s city streets to honor their local servicemen and women.

Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen

Now Open!

We are thrilled to welcome Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen to Norwalk! The restaurant is located at 12623 Norwalk Boulevard and offers popular items such as their signature chicken, tenders, sandwiches and sides. The restaurant will also offer curbside pick-up and delivery services. Make a plan to check out our newest restaurant in town!
The City of Norwalk wants to hear from you as we consider these important questions for the future of the heart of our City. When the vision is complete, we anticipate making changes to zoning and taking other actions to implement the vision over the years to come.

To participate in shaping the vision of the Heart of Norwalk, we invite you to:

- Follow “HeartOfNorwalk” on Facebook and Instagram
- Take our community survey at HeartOfNorwalk.com
- Join our community workshop on Thursday, February 18 at 6 p.m.
- Where you will get the chance to help design the community yourself!

The project boundaries for the zones are as follows:

**Zone 24** - Rosecrans Avenue to the north, Carmenita Road to the east, and triangulated by the I-5 Freeway to the south

**Zone 27** - Excelsior Drive to the north, Pioneer Boulevard to the east, Alondra Boulevard to the south, and Gridley Road to the west

**Zone 32** - Alondra Boulevard to the north, Norwalk Boulevard to the east, 166th Street to the south, and Pioneer Boulevard to the west

The City of Norwalk awarded construction contracts to CJ Concrete Construction for Zone 24 ($610,627) & Zone 27 ($1,585,300) respectively, and awarded a construction contract to Kalban Inc., for Zone 32 ($663,170). This project will include concrete improvements to address deteriorated or unpaved alleys; repair curb ramps to current ADA standards; replace slotted cross gutters, remove and replace displaced curbs, gutters and sidewalks to address uneven surfaces hazards and water ponding issues on the roadway. The project has 60 working days for each zone to complete the work. The Notice to Proceed was issued for the three projects mid-January 2021 and are estimated to be completed in mid-April 2021.

The paving phase of the Local Street Rehabilitation Program for all three zones was split due to the magnitude of the operations and most importantly, to reduce the inconvenience to the residents in the neighborhood. Zone 24 is approximately 4.7 miles of paving; Zone 27 & Zone 32 have 4.9 miles and 5.5 miles. The first half of the pavement work is currently advertising bidding with bids due early Feb 2021. Award of construction contract is scheduled for early March 2021. The second half of the pavement work is scheduled to advertise by the end of January 2021 and scheduled for award in early April 2021. Paving operations will be scheduled to start shortly after completion of the concrete improvements.
COVID-19 Vaccine Scam Awareness

If someone attempts to contact you to sell you a COVID-19 vaccine or offer to get you vaccinated before you are eligible, this is a SCAM. Do not pay any money for such an offer. Currently, the vaccine is only being offered to healthcare workers, individuals who live in a long-term care facilities, and persons over the age of 65. The COVID-19 vaccine is being distributed to all members of the public in a transparent and organized manner. Below are some red flags to be aware of so that you or your loved ones do not fall victims to these scammers:

- Someone offers to move you into an earlier schedule to get the vaccine for a fee.
- Someone tries to sell you a place on a COVID vaccine waiting list.
- Someone you meet on the street, online, on social media, or knocking on your door tries to sell you the vaccine directly.
- You get calls, texts, or emails about the vaccine. The caller asks for your personal or financial information, it can be your Social Security, bank account or credit card number. NEVER share these numbers or other personal information with an unknown caller or in a text or email.
- You see ads for fake vaccines or “miracle cures” using vitamins or other dietary supplements. Scammers promote these even though they have not been proven to work. The FDA has issued warning letters to many companies for selling products that claim to prevent, treat, or cure COVID-19.
- If anyone that isn’t a doctor, health care clinic, pharmacy, or County health program, offers you a vaccine – think twice and check with your doctor.

To stay up to date with County vaccine information, sign up for the Vaccine Newsletter at http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/vaccine/

Source: Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Illegal Dumping is Unacceptable:
Call it in and Report it

Property owners, as well as tenants, are responsible for properly disposing of their trash and bulky items. Please be aware of your trash pickup day and make arrangements prior to moving out. We want to keep our community looking pristine and this requires everyone to do their part and take pride in their neighborhood.

To request a bulky item pick up, contact Athens Services at 888-336-6100 or online at athensservices.com/bulky-item-pickup/
You may also report illegally dumped bulky items by calling Athens at 855-864-1007.
To report illegal dumping in progress, please contact Public Safety at 562-929-5732.

Catalytic Converter Theft

Across the region, local law enforcement has seen an increase in reported catalytic converter thefts. Catalytic converters are on thieves’ radars because they contain expensive precious metals like platinum, palladium, and rhodium. These recyclable materials can be easily “scraped” for a quick profit. Catalytic converter thieves generally target trucks or SUVs because the higher ground clearance allows for easier access underneath the vehicle. However, sports cars and sedans may also be targeted.

We do not want you or your loved ones to fall victim to these thieves. Here are some tips to assist in preventing thieves targeting your vehicles:

- When possible, park in well-lit areas and close to building entrances.
- If you have a garage at your house, park your car inside and keep the garage door shut.
- Have the catalytic converter welded to your car’s frame, which may make it harder to steal.
- Consider engraving your vehicle identification number (VIN) or license plate on the catalytic converter — this may help alert a scrap dealer that it was stolen and make it easier to identify the owner.
- Calibrate your car’s alarm to set off when it detects vibration.
- Look into investing into a catalytic converter anti-theft device installed on your vehicle.
- When possible, park in the view of your home security cameras.

Source: Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department

Keeping Our Streets Clean

We would like to remind residents to be courteous and keep the street sections in front of their homes clean if they cannot move vehicles on their scheduled street sweeping day. The City has currently suspended street sweeping parking enforcement due to the current regional stay-at-home health order until further notice. We appreciate everyone’s effort in helping us keep our streets clean and free from accumulation of leaves, dirt and debris.

In observance of Presidents’ Day, there will be no street sweeping on Monday, February 15. Street sweeping will not be made up. Trash will be collected as scheduled.

Cadet of the Month

Cadet Miranda Sandoval has been a part of the Cadet Program since August of 2017 and has completed over 610 community service hours. Cadet Sandoval enjoys the program because it shaped her into a more confident individual. Cadet Sandoval finds her leadership qualities were instrumental in this caper!

Officer Jauregui

On January 2, 2021, Officer Jauregui assisted the Norwalk Sheriff’s Station in the arrest of a suspect who had stolen a vehicle. Officer Jauregui used her training, quick action and superb instincts when she observed a van acting suspiciously. She maintained her composure when providing the Sheriff’s Station with the location of the suspect/vehicle and coordinated with responding Deputies until their arrival, ultimately leading to a successful arrest. Thank you Officer Jauregui for your valuable role in this caper!
Angel Tree Supporters
A special thanks to those involved in making the holidays special for the many children selected to participate in the Angel Tree Project. The success of Angel Tree would not be possible without the support of each and every one of YOU!

Diamond
Dhami & Dhami Corp. 7-Eleven Inc. Tom and Marie Jackson

Silver
Golden State Water Co. Norwalk Community Coordinating Council Norwalk Lions Club Norwalk Senior Citizens Center, Inc. Precision Diagnostic Imaging Inc.

Major
Alontra Senior Citizen Club Bajans & Friends For Health & Education, Inc. Gordon & Marilee Stelthenhagen Lynne McIntosh Norwalk Auto Auction Norwalk Transit Stuff-A-Bus Shin IL Presbyterian Church

General

Elementary Schools
Chevez Johnston New River Preschool Cresson Laleland Nuffer Sanchez Dolland Lampton William Orr Studabaker Edmondson Moffitt Padddison Morrison Romeo

Angel Tree Sites
Alba Professional Services/H&R Block American Legion Auxiliary Unit #359 Communication Workers of America Carroll Family Daycare Edna Baldovinos Faith Reform Church John Glenn High School Joyland Preschool L.A. County Fire Department Station #20 L.A. County Sheriff’s Department – Norwalk Station Liberty Tax Service – Karina Miranda Norwalk La Mirada Unified School District Norwalk Chamber of Commerce Norwalk Superior Court OFIR Orthodontics Ordinary Family Child Care Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Ruiz Family Daycare Sales Family Daycare Sue Fry Sunny Day Learning Center TLC Learning Center United Methodist Church

51 Supporter Sites

Sustainability CORNER
AB 1826 Mandatory Organics Recycling

For businesses and multi-family residences with 5 or more units:

- January 1, 2016: Mandatory organics recycling program* implemented.
- April 1, 2017: If you generate: 8 cubic yards of organics you are required to have an organics recycling program in place.
- January 1, 2019: If you generate: 4 cubic yards of organics you are required to have an organics recycling program in place.
- January 1, 2021: If you generate: 2 cubic yards of garbage you are required to have an organics recycling program in place.

*This law requires that as of January 1, 2016, businesses and multi-family residential dwellings with five or more units implement an organics recycling program. Ambler Services has recently visited all Norwalk businesses that are subject to the requirements of AB 1826. Unfortunately, many local businesses are not yet in compliance with this law. If your business or multi-family is not recycling organics, please call Ambler Services at 888-336-6100.