COACHELLA VALLEY PUBLIC CEMETERY DISTRICT

Quarterly Newsletter

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New Cemetery Hours Begin for Fall and Winter

As the sun sets earlier during Fall and Winter, the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District will begin its seasonal adjustment to cemetery closing times. These changes help visitors plan their visits while there is still sunlight throughout the fall and winter months.

Beginning September 1, the cemetery will close at 7:00 p.m. This schedule will remain in effect through September 20, with closing times continuing to adjust as daylight decreases throughout the fall.

Visitors are encouraged to keep the seasonal schedule in mind when planning trips to the cemetery, particularly during the late afternoon and evening hours.

The District adjusts its closing times throughout the year to make the most of available daylight and support a safe, welcoming environment for visitors, staff, and those maintaining the cemetery grounds.

The next scheduled closing times are:

September 1–20: 7:00 p.m.

September 21–October 11: 6:30 p.m.

October 12–31: 6:00 p.m.

November 1–December 31: 5:30 p.m.

We appreciate everyone's cooperation and encourage visitors to plan ahead as the seasons change.

Understanding Grounds Policies: Animals

Why Animals Are Not Permitted

The District recognizes the important role pets play in many families and households. To preserve the dignity of the cemetery and help maintain a peaceful and respectful environment for everyone who visits, animals are not permitted on cemetery grounds, with the exception of service animals as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The ADA provides specific protections for service animals, which are dogs individually trained to perform work or tasks for a person with a disability. Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and pets do not meet the ADA definition of a service animal and are not permitted on cemetery grounds.

This policy is rooted primarily in respect for the families and friends whose loved ones are interred here. The District has heard from families who find it deeply upsetting when an animal urinates or defecates on or near a grave. While we understand that many pet owners take great care to keep their animals well-behaved and under control, the District cannot predict how every animal may respond in a cemetery setting. For this reason, the policy must be applied consistently to help ensure the cemetery grounds remain a respectful place for everyone.

Your understanding helps us preserve the peaceful setting that makes the cemetery a meaningful place for remembrance and reflection.

Looking Ahead, With Purpose: *2026–2027 District Budget*

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District's 2026–2027 budget reflects the District's continued focus on responsible financial stewardship while investing in the cemetery's long-term needs.

For the fiscal year, the District anticipates approximately $4.76 million in revenue and approximately $4.70 million in combined operating and capital expenditures, resulting in a projected year-end surplus of approximately $68,000.

A significant portion of the budget supports the services and operations that our communities rely on and keep the cemetery running each day, including grounds maintenance, interment services, staffing, security, equipment, and the ongoing care of District facilities. The budget also sets aside funding for projects designed to address existing needs and prepare for long-term projects.

Among the year's major priorities are the rehabilitation of existing cemetery roads and renovation and leveling work in older cemetery sections, where shifting sand has affected the appearance and maintenance of gravesites.

The District will also begin early landscaping work in preparation for a future outdoor columbarium and has budgeted for operational equipment and new shade structures to improve conditions for those attending services.

The District remains committed to balancing current service needs with responsible planning for the future.

Through careful budgeting, long-term planning, and the pursuit of outside funding opportunities, the District continues working to maintain a high level of service while protecting the financial resources entrusted to it by the community.

The District's annual Budget Book provides the community with a detailed look at its financial plan and priorities for the coming year. The 2026–2027 Budget Book is currently in production and will be released in September, with the completed document posted to the District's website in the Transparency section.

www.coachellavalleycemeterydistrict.gov/district-transparency

New Federal Funding Paves the Way

Road Construction Update

A major investment in the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District's infrastructure is moving forward, with $1 million in federal Community Project Funding secured through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to support rehabilitation of the cemetery's existing roadway system.

The road rehabilitation project was originally bid in 2024 as part of the District's ongoing effort to improve aging internal roads throughout the cemetery. In early 2026, the District received confirmation that the $1 million in federal funding had been approved with the support of Congressman Raul Ruiz.

The federal award provides a significant benefit to the District and local taxpayers, substantially reducing the amount of local funding needed for the roadway improvements. However, accepting federal funding also means meeting additional procurement and construction requirements that were not part of the original 2024 bidding process.

To ensure the project meets those requirements and maintains the District's eligibility for the funding, the Board of Trustees authorized the project to be rebid using updated federal specifications.

The revised construction bid package was released in July, and the District is accepting proposals through September 2, 2026. Once the competitive bidding process is complete, staff will evaluate the proposals and bring the project forward for the next steps toward construction.

While the additional federal requirements have extended the project timeline, the $1 million award represents a substantial outside investment in the cemetery's infrastructure. The District currently anticipates construction beginning later in 2026 or early 2027 and will continue to provide updates as the project moves forward.

Pictured above, from left to right: Marcos Coronel, Jr., Trustee Marlene Navarro-Lupian, Cemetery Services Manager, Donna Ayala, Cemetery Services Specialist, Ernesto Rosales, Board Chair, Congressman Raul Ruiz, Judy Vossler, Vice-Chair, Dr. Bruce Underwood, Trustee and Jason Wilberts, Maintenance Supervisor

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