



Orange County Cemetery District

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MARCH – APRIL 2026

Gypsum Canyon Cemetery Development Project Update

Since the last update, District staff along with the cemetery development design team have been working on changes to the mass grading and Phase 1 development plan in an effort to make the project as cost efficient as possible.

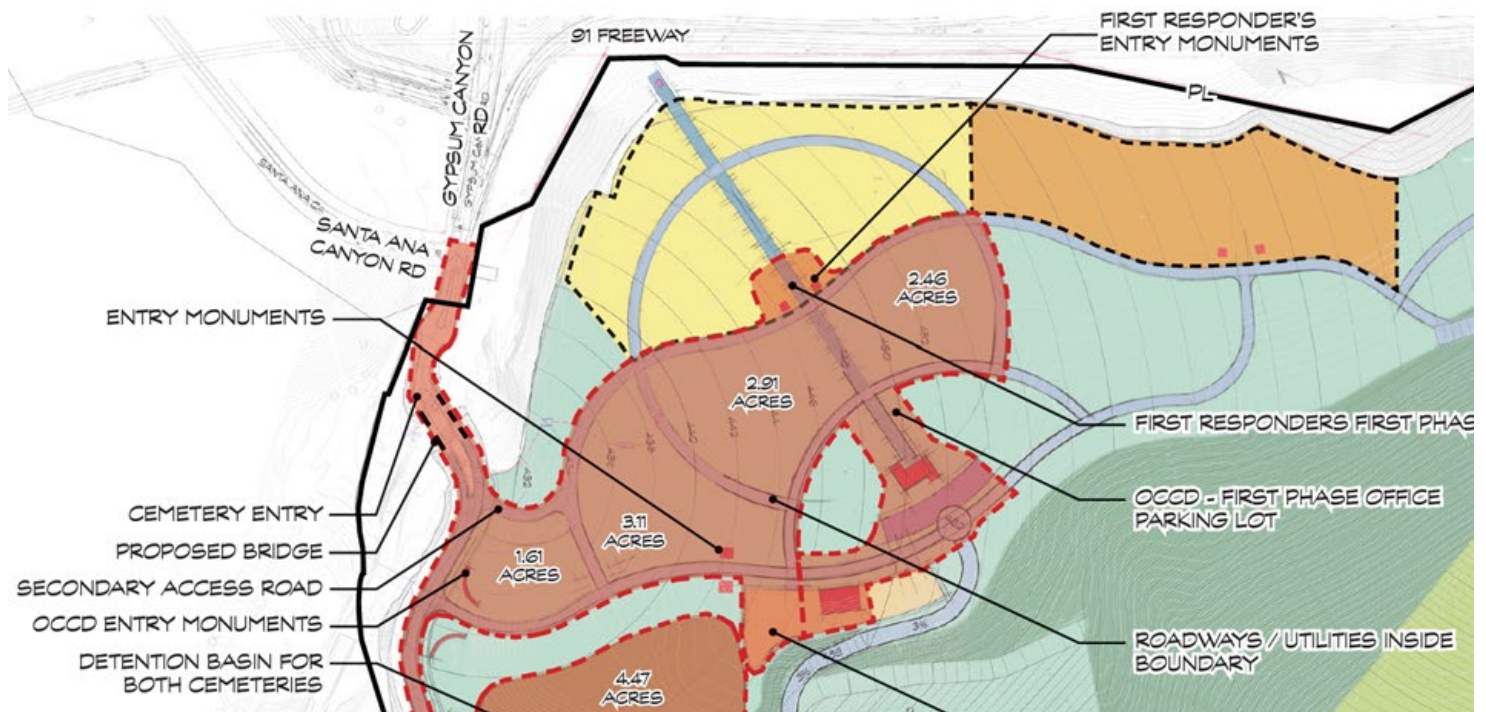
One of the changes is the creation of smaller development pads for both the public and State Veterans cemeteries which will then be phased in over the next 50 years. The exhibit below shows the proposed public cemetery Phase 1 of the Gypsum Canyon Memorial Park which will

include a total of 10-15 acres of in-ground casket and cremation spaces, and above ground niches that will line the walkway from the office and eventually up to the flag pole reflection area.

An office building and maintenance facility will be constructed for the administration, customer service and operations staff along with all of the equipment to maintain the grounds. Trees, bushes and flowers will line the access roads that meander through the property.

The District has also authorized the Anaheim Public Utilities to begin the bidding and construction of the electrical and water utility lines that will provide service to the property from the point of connection on E. Santa Ana Canyon Road to the entry. This portion of the project is set to begin construction in July 2026.

The development team is working to complete construction plans to submit to the City for their review and approval by Fall 2026. It is estimated that grading for Phase 1 may begin as early as May 2027.



Proposed First Phase (in red) of the District's Gypsum Canyon Memorial Park located in Anaheim Hills (exhibit created by RJM Design Group)

Woodruff & Smart Retained as District's New Legal Counsel

Last fall, the District's long-time General Counsel, Steven Quintanilla informed the District that his firm would be stepping away from public cemetery law and would no longer be able to provide counsel as of December 31, 2025. Over the last fifteen years, Mr. Quintanilla has been an excellent resource for the District and we certainly wish him well with all his future endeavors.

After considering several firms to replace Quintanilla and Associates, the Board of Trustees accepted a proposal from Woodruff & Smart, APC located in Costa Mesa. The firm has extensive experience advising regional districts such as the Orange County Fire Authority, the Orange County Transportation Authority, and Midway City Sanitary District to name just a few. It is well versed in California's Public Cemetery District Law, Health & Safety Codes, and related

regulations specific to Special District governance and operations.

The three key team members who will be working with the District are David Kendig, Mark Monachino, and Barbara Raileanu.

Mr. Kendig has over thirty years of experience handling complex municipal law, professional and consultant service agreements and real property transactions.

Mr. Monachino is a Principal with the firm and also has over thirty years of experience, including two decades focused on real property matters, real estate transactions, negotiations, and property related issues.

Barbara Raileanu is head of the firm's labor and employment department and brings over twenty years of experience advising and

defending clients in all aspects of labor and employment matters.

As the Gypsum Canyon Cemetery Development gains momentum, we will be relying heavily on the expertise of Woodruff & Smart to advise the District on a property transfer agreement with CalVet for the land that will be occupied by the State Veterans Cemetery, cost sharing agreements with CalVet and the County of Orange for the development of shared infrastructure such as roads and utilities, as well as assistance on the myriad of construction and consultant agreements in which the District will engage.

There is much work ahead, but we are excited to partner with Woodruff & Smart and confident that we will successfully navigate toward the completion of Gypsum Canyon Memorial Park.

Anaheim Cemetery Hosts Historical Tour Sponsored by MUZEO

The Anaheim museum and cultural center known as MUZEO and former Trustee Cynthia Ward, organized a private walking tour at Anaheim Cemetery on January 24th.

During the tour, Ann Nepsa and Melanie Goss led a group of about 20 to 25 people who spent the morning exploring Anaheim's pioneer history, classical architecture and the graves of notable city founders and veterans dating back to 1867.

Ann Nepsa and her daughter, Melanie Goss, are a dedicated mother-daughter team known as the "Cemetery Angels." They volunteer their time to preserve and research Orange County's historic cemeteries. During the tour, attendees were able to go inside the Community Mausoleum as well as the four smaller family mausoleums which are typically closed to the public.

The District wishes to thank MUZEO and Ann and Melanie for volunteering their time to share Anaheim's rich and



vibrant history with all those who attended.

MUZEO is home to Anaheim's historic Carnegie Library and also offers a versatile gallery space that hosts concerts, workshops, and innovative exhibits in art, history, culture and science. To learn more please visit: <https://muzeo.org>.

El Toro Memorial Park Hosts Garden of Innocence Service for Six Infants

The Garden of Innocence is a not for profit organization dedicated to ensuring that the remains of abandoned and unidentified deceased infants receive respectful burials.

On February 24th, six little ones were placed at El Toro Memorial Park's Garden of Innocence. Volunteers lovingly name each infant and select a beautiful poem to be read for each child during the ceremony.

The program began when the Knights of Columbus Honor Guard, the Orange County Sheriff's Department and bagpiper Tress Maksimuk escorted the urns to the

Garden in a touching processional. Rev. Jerry Moore delivered a message and special music was provided by Coty Hitchcock. To close the program white doves were released in honor of the infants.

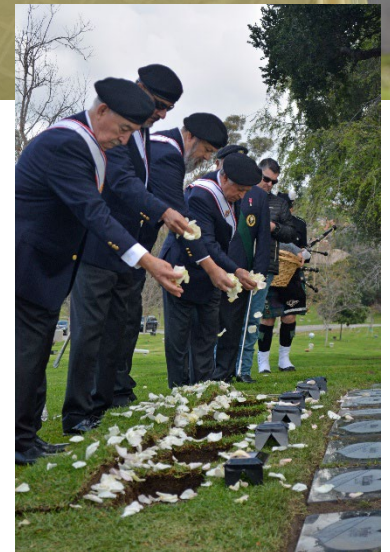
Special thanks to McCormick & Son Mortuary and all the volunteers dedicated to making sure these little lives are not forgotten.

Garden of Innocence is always looking for support and volunteers. To learn more please visit their website:

<https://www.gardenofinnocence.org/goi-orange>



Beautiful, handmade wooden urns hold babies Clement, Adrian, Francis, Daniel, Rose, and Tommy. The Knights of Columbus, scatter rose petals on their graves.



El Toro Groundskeeper Adan Reyes to Retire After Almost 30 Years of Service!

El Toro Memorial Park Groundskeeper, Adan Reyes has good reason to smile! He recently announced to the District that he will be retiring after almost thirty years of dedicated service.

During his long career, Mr. Reyes has worked as a Groundskeeper at all three of our cemeteries. The District has also relied heavily on skills and knowledge as an Irrigation Specialist.

Adan looks forward to enjoying life by spending more time with his wife, Elisa and his three children Jessica, Stefany, and Adan, Jr.; finally having time to get to all those projects around the house; and traveling to Mexico and planning a European vacation.

Adan's last day will be March 19th, so if you see him on the grounds, be sure to wish him well! His experience, knowledge, and outstanding work ethic will be greatly missed by us all!



El Toro Memorial Park Groundskeeper, Adan Reyes

El Toro Memorial Park Extended Visitation Begins March 8, 2026

Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 8th. Before heading to bed on Saturday the 7th, don't forget to "spring forward" by setting your clocks ahead one hour.

Daylight Saving Time also marks the beginning of extended visitation at El Toro Memorial Park. Starting on

Sunday March 8th, the gates at El Toro Memorial Park will remain open until 7:00 p.m.

We ask that you help our security team close the gates in a timely and efficient manner, by exiting the park at or before 7:00 p.m. Please do not enter the park just before closing.

This will cause delays and make it more difficult for staff to ensure everyone has exited before locking the gates for the night. We appreciate your cooperation.



ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT

March/April Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees for the Orange County Cemetery District typically holds regular meetings the first Tuesday of every month at 10:00 a.m. at the District Office located at 25751 Trabuco Road, Lake Forest, CA 92630. Members of the public are welcome to attend and may also join Board Meetings remotely. Instructions to join remotely are posted on the agendas.

Agendas are available at least 72 hours prior to each meeting and are also posted on our District website at: www.occemeterydistrict.com. In March and April, meetings will be held as follows:

- **Tuesday, March 3rd at 10:00 a.m.**
- **Tuesday, April 7th at 10:00 a.m.**

If you have any questions or need additional information please contact the District Secretary, Mary Funk at (949) 951-9102 ext. 110.

Flower Removal and Holiday Schedule

Every Wednesday, groundskeepers remove and discard flowers and decorations throughout all three cemeteries. Families are encouraged to remove their flowers and/or decorations on Tuesday night. You can then place the flowers back on the space on Thursday morning. Please remember that the District policy only allows for three items to be placed on gravesites. This includes the use of in-ground flower vases. If gravesites exceed the number of allowed items, staff may remove and discard the excess items at any time. Items should not exceed 21" in height. Items should be placed within 12" of the bottom of the marker. Please do not leave items of great monetary or sentimental value on gravesites as the District cannot prevent theft.

Throughout the year, various holidays are recognized with extended periods between full park clean-ups. During these times, we ask that you place fresh water in the vase every four to five days to eliminate mosquito breeding sources, which can cause serious health issues. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



In honor of Persian New Year, Passover, and Easter flowers may be placed on Thursday, March 19th and must be removed by Tuesday, April 14th.

During this time, light clean-ups will still occur each Wednesday and only flowers that are obviously wilted will be removed. During full park clean-ups everything on gravesites is discarded. Please be sure to remove items you do not want discarded before the cemetery closes on Tuesdays.

The 2026 Cemetery Grounds Wednesday Clean-up Calendar is available on our website at www.occemeterydistrict.com. Click on the tab for Flowers, Markers and Rules for more information.

CEMETERY VISITATION HOURS

**Anaheim Cemetery,
Santa Ana Cemetery and
El Toro Memorial Park
are open for visitation, seven days a week,
from 8 am to 5 pm.**

**El Toro Memorial Park's Extended Visitation
will begin again on Sunday, March 8, 2026,
with gates closing at 7 pm.**

Cemetery Offices are open M-F, 8 am to 5 pm.

**All offices are closed on the
weekends and on holidays.**

The Orange County Cemetery District provides affordable interment services for County residents and taxpayers. We strive to maintain the beauty and dignity of the grounds while preserving their historical and cultural value for the benefit of all.

The Trustees and staff of the Orange County Cemetery District are committed to the following values:

- Integrity ■ Respect ■ Responsiveness
- Empathy ■ Transparency

