



## **RESEARCH AND PLANNING:**

Located in the heart of the City of Santa Clarita, the quaint and historic region of Old Town Newhall is the City's "work-in-progress" arts and entertainment district. After being designated as a redevelopment area, the City devoted nearly \$40 million dollars to the revitalization of Old Town Newhall.

Post redevelopment, Old Town Newhall is home to multiple events held throughout the year. The award-winning year-round event series, Thursdays@Newhall, serves as a catalyst to attract residents to Old Town Newhall's Main Street on a weekly basis and hopes to break the stigma that Old Town Newhall is an unsafe area, especially after dark. Eclectic restaurants, live theaters, retail stores, flower shops and more line the sidewalks of Main Street.

A relatively new event held in Old Town Newhall is the City of Santa Clarita's annual *Light Up Main Street* celebration. For over 20 years, a community tree lighting was held near the main entrance of the local hospital five miles away. After renovation plans for the hospital included the removal of the beloved evergreen tree that was lit every year, the City of Santa Clarita implemented the first Light Up Main Street celebration in 2013. Reported in the 2014 public opinion poll, 46 percent of Newhall residents felt "things to do" should be a priority for the City. Hence another reason to establish the Light Up Main celebration in the neighborhood of Old Town Newhall.

With an allocated budget for décor only, the trees lining Main Street in Old Town Newhall were adorned with thousands of lights and two over-the-street colorful holiday displays that crossed overhead on Main Street. Anchoring Main Street's festive display was the City's 23-foot Christmas tree. All lights remained off and dark until the official turning on of the lights at the Light Up Main Street celebration on November 21, 2015.

Because so many families had looked to the hospital's tree lighting as their holiday tradition, one goal for the Communications team to tackle was to attract new and young families to Light Up Main Street in hopes of starting new holiday traditions in the City's Old Town Newhall.

Another goal for Communications, as with most events, was to increase attendance at the event, drawing more members of the community to Old Town Newhall to kick off the holiday season and begin holiday shopping. In its first year, the event attracted between 200 and 300 attendees, followed by approximately 800 people in its second year. With a steady growth, City staff was unsure of how to gauge the interest of the community for the third year of the event. The Communications division turned to social media, initially adding Light Up Main Street to the City of Santa Clarita's Facebook page as an event and ending up with a surprising 5,000 members of the community digitally RSVPing for the event.

With the majority of the event's budget being allocated for decorations, stage and sound, the Communications team was able to heavily promote the event through social media at very little cost. Print ads were also purchased in local publications

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Quality of life in Santa Clarita is important to City leaders and equally as important to residents. In a 2014 public opinion poll, 82 percent of residents rated the quality of life in Santa Clarita as excellent or good. In the same poll, 76.5 percent of residents expressed satisfaction with the City's special events. In order to exceed expectations of its residents, the City of Santa Clarita looked to make the event better than years prior by adding new and exciting aspects to the night's celebration.



With a steady increase of residents RSVPing to the Facebook event, City staff was seeing a more rapid response than expected. The week before the event, 4,000 community members had clicked "Going" on the Facebook event. With the event planned with just one block of Main Street closed to through traffic, City staff had to come together to create a larger space to accommodate the dramatic increase in anticipated attendees. Staff from the City's Traffic and Streets divisions was brought into a follow up meeting to discuss possible road closures and detours for the event.

Revealed in the 2014 public opinion poll, 70 percent of respondents were satisfied with the job the City is doing with getting information out on City programs and services. Since the 2014 survey, the City has added a surplus of communication channels. With the added channels, Communications was able to notify residents of road closures, detours and parking options were communicated to residents immediately through press releases, Santa Clarita's City Briefs blog and the City's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter channels. Communications also worked with the local radio station to do on-air interviews during drive time to alert listeners about closure, detours and parking options.

For the event, Communications organized local popular food trucks, holiday-related activities for children, commemorative photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus and an hour of festive dance and musical performances from local groups with the Mayor of Santa Clarita serving as the emcee. At the culmination of performances, fellow members of the City Council joined the Mayor on stage to officially turn on the lights to transform Main Street into a winter wonderland.

The Light Up Main Street event was heavily promoted on the City's social media channels including Facebook (12K likes), Twitter (12K followers) and Instagram (2K followers). In addition, the event was on the City's OldTownNewhall.com, which received over 6,000 page views in November 2015.

#### **RESULTS AND EVALUATION:**

Nearly 5,000 people filled the streets of Old Town Newhall, many of which had not been to Old Town Newhall or did not even know it existed and promised to return once they saw how nice and safe the area is. Attendees enjoyed refreshments from popular food trucks, an hour of merriment and performances, participated in holiday ornament decorating and shared holiday wishes with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Hundreds of commemorative photos were printed during the evening.

The popular Facebook event reached a total of 453,000 people, had 51,000 views and nearly 9,000 engagements. If it had not been for the Facebook event, the City would not have been as well prepared for the 5,000 attendees.

#### **QUOTES FROM CITY COUNCIL AND STAFF:**

"It has been wonderful to see the Light Up Main Street event grow to what it is today. Standing on stage and looking out at a sea of people as far as I could see was a great feeling. There was so much joy filling the streets of Old Town Newhall. I'm already looking forward to next year!"

-Dante Acosta, City of Santa Clarita Mayor Pro Tem

"My kids grew up going to the tree lighting at the hospital and were so disappointed that they didn't get to share that same experience with their children. When the City started the tree lighting in Newhall, my son and daughter-in-law were so thrilled to start a new tradition with their family."

-Julie Skinner, City of Santa Clarita Executive Secretary



**PROJECT MATERIALS**



NOV  
21

Light Up Main Street!

Public · Family · Hosted by City of Santa Clarita Government

Edit ...

Saturday, November 21, 2015 at 6 PM  
about 3 months ago

Old Town Newhall  
Newhall, CA 91321 [Show Map](#)

GUESTS		
2.9K	5.3K	4.9K
interested	went	invited

INSIGHTS

453K reached   
0 new this week

51K viewed   
0 new this week

8.9K engaged   
0 new this week

Updated 2 seconds ago

Mark your calendar and check it twice! Old Town Newhall will be transformed into a dazzling winter wonderland on Saturday, November 21.

Thousands of lights, a 23-foot tree and lighted displays will illuminate Old Town Newhall when Santa Claus helps Santa Clarita Light Up Main Street!

Presented by Valencia Auto Center and Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital, visitors can enjoy live performances from local groups, food trucks and photo opportunities with Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus.





City of  
**SANTA CLARITA**

Join Mayor Marsha McLean, Mayor Pro Tem Bob Kellar and Councilmembers Dante Acosta, TimBen Boydston, and Laurene Weste as they

## LIGHT UP MAIN STREET

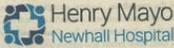
in  
**OLD TOWN NEWHALL**

**Saturday, November 21 at 6:00 pm**

Help kick off the holiday season at the official tree and Main Street lighting event! Enjoy holiday entertainment, a visit from Santa, food trucks, and other free family-friendly activities. Come early and enjoy the free **Old Town Newhall Sip N' Shop** event on **November 21 from 3:00 to 6:00 pm** with specials and promotions from select Old Town Newhall retailers.



Sponsored by




**OldTownNewhall.com**

**City of Santa Clarita Government**  
Published by Carlyle Crawford [?] · November 14, 2015 ·

#DidYouKnow the City will transform Old Town Newhall into a winter wonderland next Saturday, November 21? Join the free fun at the annual Sip 'N Shop from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Light Up Main Street at 6:00 p.m. for food, drinks, Santa Claus and thousands of twinkling lights!  
[www.oldtownnewhall.com/light-up-main-street](http://www.oldtownnewhall.com/light-up-main-street)



6,953 people reached Boost Post

174 Likes 12 Comments 73 Shares

Like Comment Share

**City of Santa Clarita Government**  
Published by Kasey Norton [?] · November 23, 2015 ·

Thank you to everyone who helped us kick off the holiday season at Saturday night's Light Up Main Street event! The festive lights in Old Town Newhall will be up through the season, so be sure to take a stroll down Main Street to enjoy them. A big thank you to our sponsors, Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital and Valencia Auto Center, for helping support the event and offer crafts and photos with Santa.



5,283 people reached

193 Likes 9 Comments 3 Shares

Like Comment Share

Betty Ramsey-Castro We drove down Main St. Tonight to take a look. It was beautiful. Good job 🙌  
Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · November 23, 2015 at 9:31pm

Ruben Rosales



Unlike · Reply · Message · 3 · November 24, 2015 at 3:42am

Adam Hoggatt



Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · November 25, 2015 at 10:19am

Adam Hoggatt



Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · November 25, 2015 at 10:09am

