

Code Enforcement Chief Macias named as May's City Manager Leadership Award recipient

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison awarded the City Manager Leadership Award for May to Chief of Code Enforcement Rene Macias.

"Rene is always willing to step in and help out staff and the community, and has been an exceptional employee and leader for his division," Farrell Harrison said. "While Rene can bring humor and joy to his job, he is also a great problem solver. For example, it was through his leadership and the work of his Code Enforcement team, that we were able to get illegal street vending under control before it became a larger issue. I appreciate him and am so glad to give him this award."

Rene began his career with the City of Costa Mesa in 2005 as a Rec Leader Field Ambassador. He began his journey with the City's Community Improvement Division in December of 2012 as a Code Enforcement Officer.

This is his second City Manager Leadership Award as he received the award in 2015.

He was promoted to Senior Code Enforcement Officer in November 2016 and then promoted to Chief Code Enforcement Officer in September 2023.

Prior to becoming a Code Officer in Costa Mesa, Rene worked as a part time Code Officer and a Police Service Officer for the City of Placentia.

Rene grew up in Santa Ana California. He graduated from Santa Ana High School. He also graduated from Santa Ana College with an Associate's Degree and obtained a bachelor's degree from

Costa Mesa to Consider Hosting Raiders for 2024 Summer Training Camp

The City of Costa Mesa is currently engaged in discussions with the Las Vegas Raiders, who have expressed interest in using the Jack Hammett Sports Complex for their 2024 Summer Training Camp.

The City Council will discuss a potential one-year agreement at the Tuesday, May 7 meeting.

“Costa Mesa is proud to be one of only two cities in the country to host an NFL team’s summer training camp in a publicly owned facility,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “Jack Hammett is a treasure and we are excited to potentially have a new NFL team training here.”

Mayor John Stephens agreed.

“I’m pleased to welcome the Las Vegas Raiders and their loyal fans, ‘Raider Nation’ to the great city of Costa Mesa for training camp this summer,” Mayor Stephens said. “The Raiders and Costa Mesa share a commitment to excellence, and our partnership will greatly benefit the community. Many thanks to Newport-Mesa School District, especially Costa Mesa High School, for collaborating with us in this endeavor. To quote Al Davis, ‘Just win, baby!’”

As part of the proposed agreement, the Raiders would pay \$165,000 in rent to the City along with other significant

community contributions that include:

- \$600,000 in improvements to the fields at the complex
- Team Junior Training Camp for kids ages 6 to 12
- 100 tickets for local students to attend an NFL game in Southern California
- Donation of outdoor weight training equipment to Costa Mesa High School
- A New Mobile Recreation Van for programs in underserved areas, and
- A \$10,000 donation to a local youth sports team

The Jack Hammett Sports Complex's fields typically undergo renovation during the summer months, ensuring no disruption to regular youth sports teams utilizing the facilities.

Starting in mid-July, the team will use the fields at the Complex for its training camp and will bring fields No. 3 and 4 up to current NFL standards. Additionally, the team has committed to hosting public practices, providing fans with an opportunity to witness their favorite players up close.

The City and the Raiders plan to work closely together to ensure there are minimal disruptions to the community and neighborhoods around Jack Hammett Sports Complex.

Given that the training camp will coincide with the annual OC Fair, the City and the team will collaborate on a comprehensive plan for managing parking and traffic in the area.

Fairview Park steward Kelly

Dalton is given the City Manager Leadership Award for April

Assistant City Manager Cecelia Gallardo-Daly and Deputy City Manager Alma Reyes together presented the City Manager Leadership Award for April to Fairview Park Administrator Kelly Dalton.

“Kelly’s combination of education and experience in environmental and regulatory compliance, ecology, and project management has been instrumental in managing the diverse resources of Fairview Park, which is so important to our City and residents,” Gallardo-Daly said. “We are lucky to have someone with his skills and I am happy to present him with this award.”

Dalton was first hired by the City’s Public Works Department in 2015 as the Public Right of Way Coordinator, and since then had promoted through the ranks to the level of Associate Engineer.

Dalton has over 10 years of interdisciplinary experience in the fields of environmental compliance, stormwater management, and civil and environmental engineering.

During his tenure with the Engineering Division, he administered the City’s stormwater compliance program in addition to supporting the City’s capital improvement program and various special projects, which included assisting with Fairview Park projects.

This experience led Dalton to be selected as the Fairview Park Administrator in the Parks and Community Services Department in November 2021.

Since his time in the department, Dalton has taken on the lead of multiple restoration initiatives including major grant funded projects, the Fairview Park Master Plan update and community-based partnerships which includes serving as the staff liaison to the Fairview Park Steering Committee.

Additionally, Dalton has been instrumental in developing working relationships with regulatory agencies, and maintaining partnerships with various community groups, including Coastal Corridor Alliance, Orange County Model Engineers, Fairview Park Alliance, Sea and Sage Audubon Society, and Harbor Soaring Society.

Prior to his tenure with the City, Dalton worked for the Environmental Resources Division of Orange County Public Works, where he led grant-funded projects and supported regulatory compliance programs for urban stormwater.

In addition, Dalton previously worked for a private firm that specialized in lake management and maintenance services, and as a plant research and laboratory assistant during his undergraduate tenure.

Dalton has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Natural Resources from Cornell University, a minor in Spanish, and a Master of Science in Land Resources and Environmental Sciences from Montana State University.

**Veteran Parks Leader Selected
as new Parks & Community**

Services Department Director

Costa Mesa City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison announced that Brian Gruner, a 24-year veteran of municipal government, has been appointed as the new Director of Parks & Community Services.

“After conducting a nationwide search, Brian quickly became our top candidate to lead our Parks & Community Services Department,” Farrell Harrison said. “I look forward to working with him as we continue to provide high-quality recreational services to the Costa Mesa Community.”

Gruner has worked in the field of Parks, Recreation and Community Services for over 24 years, starting as a part-time recreation leader and promoting through the supervisory ranks. He has extensive experience in the management of Parks, Recreation and Community Services, including the oversight of multimillion-dollar budgets, capital improvement projects, strategic planning, community outreach, partnership development and arts and cultural programs.

Mayor John Stephens welcomed Gruner to the City of Costa Mesa.

“Parks and Community Services is a vital function in Costa Mesa and our residents expect top-notch facilities and services,” Mayor Stephens said. “I’m confident Brian will be a great fit here and I look forward to working with him on our recreation initiatives.”

Prior to his arrival in Costa Mesa, Gruner served as the Parks and Recreation Superintendent for the City of Fairfield, where he managed the after school and pre-school programs, including a \$800,000 ASES Grant, oversight of activities, programs, and events at the Adult Recreation Center and a \$3 million budget.

He has also worked for Laguna Woods Village as Recreation and Special Events Director and for the City of Mission Viejo as

the Community Services Supervisor.

A graduate of Mission Viejo High School, he has lived in Orange County for 37 years and is happy to be returning to Southern California.

“I’m excited to be relocating back to Orange County and being part of the City of Costa Mesa team,” Gruner said. “Having grown up in Orange County, I have fond memories of Costa Mesa from competing in tennis tournaments at the Costa Mesa Tennis Center, enjoying the Orange County Fair and Swap Meets, shopping at South Coast Plaza, playing golf at the Costa Mesa Country Club and enjoying the natural beauty of Fairview Park.”

Gruner holds a Bachelor’s Degree from Cal State Fullerton in Business Management and a Master’s in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix.

City brings aboard three new managers for Public Works, Emergency Services and Finance

The City of Costa Mesa is happy to announce the appointment of three new top-level government veterans, Patrick Bauer as the City’s new Deputy Director of Public Works, Delcie Hynes as the new Emergency Services Manager and Mark Khou as the new Budget and Purchasing Manager in Finance.

“I am so thrilled to bring aboard these three outstanding

professionals who will fill critical roles here in Costa Mesa,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “Their experience and background will help guide us for many years in public works, emergency services and budgeting and finance.”

Deputy Director of Public Works Patrick Bauer



Bauer has over 18 years of experience within public works and has worked on projects including facilities construction, street projects, storm drains, and more.

In his new role, he will be responsible for developing a Facilities Management Master Plan for all City facilities and managing the City’s fleet of vehicles rolling stock valued at more than \$8.5 million and solid waste programs. The City will further benefit from his experience in managing projects and working with consultants and contractors to modernize City facilities such as fire stations, community centers and our City assets.

Bauer comes to Costa Mesa via the Orange County Fire Authority, where he served as the Construction and Facilities

Division Manager for nine years. Prior to that, he was an Associate Engineer in Costa Mesa Public Works from 2005 to 2014.

Bauer has a Master of Business Administration from Arizona State University and a Master of Environmental Health and Safety from the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Emergency Services Manager Delcie Hynes



Hynes has worked in the Emergency Management field for over 20 years in various municipalities and is a National Emergency Management Advanced Academy graduate.

In her new role, Hynes will be responsible for the City's disaster preparedness in coordination with all City departments, and other state and local agencies and organizations. She will oversee disaster planning, trainings and exercises to keep staff and the community updated on preparedness strategies and systems. Hynes will also manage the City's Emergency Operations Center.

Prior to joining Costa Mesa, Hynes was the Emergency Manager for the Orange County Social Services Agency for 12 years. She

oversaw the county's mass care and shelter efforts where she collaborated with 34 cities, multiple special districts, numerous non-profit organizations and other county, state and federal partners to help ensure the needs were met in a county with a population of over 3 million.

Previously, Hynes was the Emergency Services Coordinator for the cities of Gardena and Stanton. She was previously an instructor of Emergency Management at Cal State University, Long Beach.

Hynes holds a Master's Degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland, and a Bachelor's Degree in Justice Studies from Arizona State University.

Finance Budget and Purchasing Manager Mark Khou



Khou has over 20 years of finance experience, with 13 years of budget management experience with multiple Southern California agencies with extensive experience in management of budgets, procurement/purchasing, strategic planning, contracts, special projects, grant writing, communications, social media, and marketing.

In his new role, Khou will oversee the Budget and Purchasing Divisions in the Finance Department with an annual combined operating budget of \$180 million in all funds.

Prior to joining Costa Mesa Khou worked for the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services in multiple finance roles, the Long Beach Marinas and Beaches and the City of Laguna Beach.

He holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration (MPA) and a Bachelor's Degree in journalism both from California State University, Long Beach.

Costa Mesa residents sought to apply for Planning Commission seat

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking one resident to serve on the Planning Commission:

The Planning Commission functions as an advisory body to the City Council on issues related to the long-term growth and development of the community, on requests for general plan amendments, rezones, specific plans, environmental impact reports and amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Commission has authority to take final action on a variety of planning applications, including conditional use permits, variances, planned development projects, and tentative tract and parcel maps. The Commission meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month. The City is recruiting for one member (Appointment by Council Member Arlis Reynolds),

for a term expiration of January 2027. For further information, contact Gladys Gonzalez at (714) 754-5327.

Application Process – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Commission Application Form from the City Clerk’s Office or from the City’s website (www.costamesaca.gov/apply).

The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa, California, 92628-1200; emailed to cityclerk@costamesaca.gov; or hand-delivered to the City Clerk’s Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa. The deadline is 5 p.m., Friday, April 5, 2024. The appointment is tentatively scheduled for the April 16, 2024 City Council meeting.

Associate Engineer Cristina Oquendo is the City Manager Leadership Award recipient for March

Assistant City Manager Cecilia Gallardo-Daly presented the March City Manager Leadership Award to Associate Engineer Cristina Oquendo.

“Cristina is well-known, admired, and respected by all her coworkers due to her unselfish, warmhearted, creative, and enthusiastic personality,” Gallardo-Daly said. “She always plays a pivotal role in the planning and successful execution of team building activities and events for the Public Works Department. I was thrilled to present her with this award.”

Oquendo began her career with the City of Costa Mesa in November of 2003 as an Engineering Intern.

Thanks to her motivation, commitment, and dedication, Oquendo has risen high, currently holding the title of Associate Engineer in the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department.

Her responsibilities include the oversight and management of CIP projects, from design to construction, such as the Parkway Maintenance, Street and Alley Rehabilitation Project.

Oquendo also manages and oversees the updating of the City's Pavement Management Plan through the comprehensive reporting and surveying of pavement conditions citywide.

She is also known as a "foodie," and enjoys playing tennis, snowboarding, and mountain hiking. She has hiked to the peaks of Half Dome in Yosemite and Angel's Landing in Zion National Park.

She graduated from California State University of Fullerton with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering with an emphasis in construction management and is currently pursuing her Professional Engineer's license.

Captain Maldonado blazes trail for City Manager

Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Fire Captain Eliasar Maldonado with the February City Manager Leadership Award.

Maldonado is a Costa Mesa native and a graduate of Estancia High School, where he played basketball for four years.

“I admire Captain Maldonado’s dedication to the youth of this very community where he was raised and attended school,” Farrell Harrison said. He is passionate about the fire profession and has been an outstanding mentor to our Fire Cadets. We are lucky to have him, and I am thrilled to give him this award.”

Maldonado became a Fire Explorer for the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue department (CMFR) during his junior year of high school. After being in the program for two years, he decided this was the path he wanted to follow and registered at Santa Ana College for the Fire Technology Program.

He became a reserve fighter with Santa Ana Fire Department after completing the fire academy in 2002. After testing with numerous departments, as luck would have it, it was his hometown of Costa Mesa who offered him a firefighter position in July 2004. He was promoted to Captain in February 2019

Throughout his tenure with the City and the Fire & Rescue Department, he has remained active with many committees within the department and has a strong passion for teaching and training. He was a part of the department’s legacy Fire Explorer Program, now updated to the Fire Cadet Program, and he continues to be at the helm of the program, coaching, leading, and mentoring Costa Mesa youth.

Chief Stefano said this about Captain Maldonado, “he is an exceptional individual on all levels, highlighted by his

exceptional ethical leadership, inspiring work ethic, and his powerful example of what success looks like, particularly as it relates to a healthy work-life balance and placing the highest priority on his family. Eliasar is a shining example of our absolute best and what the Costa Mesa Fire Family is all about.”

Maldonado holds an Associate’s degree in Fire Science and Fire Administration from Santa Ana College. He is actively pursuing his Bachelor of Arts degree in Organizational Leadership at Bradman University.

Costa Mesa awarded over \$7.9 Million in OCTA grants for expanded bike lane network

COSTA MESA – The City has been awarded three Complete Streets Program grants totaling \$7.9 million from the Orange County Transportation Authority to create three interconnected, separated bike lanes as part of a major expansion of the City’s bicycle network.

Costa Mesa is the only jurisdiction in Orange County to receive three separate Complete Streets Program grant awards, with a total funding allocation of \$7,918,000.

“We are grateful for these grants from OCTA, which will make our streets safer, including for bikers and pedestrians,” said Mayor John Stephens, who also serves on the OCTA Board of Directors. “Costa Mesa’s Public Works department did a wonderful job positioning the City for this needed funding. These funds will improve our connectivity throughout the City, especially through our growing bicycle network.”

The first grant valued at \$1.76 million will provide the City with funds to construct a multipurpose Class I bicycle trail along Adams Avenue from the Santa Ana River to Royal Palm Drive.

A second grant valued at \$4.2 million will provide funds to construct a Class IV separated bike lane along Adams Avenue from Harbor Boulevard to Fairview Road.

Finally, a third grant, totaling \$1.94 million will provide funds to design and construct a Class IV separated bicycle lane along Fairview Road from Fair Drive to Adams Avenue.

The three connected projects will enhance the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on streets used by residents of all ages and abilities to access the Santa River Trail, Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa High and Middle Schools, Mesa Verde Center, and the Orange County Fairgrounds.

In August 2023, the OCTA Board of Directors approved guidelines for the \$55 million Complete Streets call for projects using federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funds.

The OC Complete Streets Program is intended to support local-agency projects in Orange County that further a complete streets goal and have a transportation nexus. The City of Costa Mesa submitted three projects and secured grant funding for all.

The Adams Avenue project between Fairview and Harbor will begin construction next fiscal year. The Fairview Road project will begin design next fiscal year and construction the following year. The larger Adams project between Santa Ana River and Royal Palm will start in Fiscal Year 2026-27.

MEDIA CONTACT

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City extends recruitment of volunteers needed to serve on City Committees until March 18

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents to serve on City Committees.

Application Process – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Committee Application Form from the City Clerk’s Office or from the City’s website (www.costamesaca.gov/apply). The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa, California, 92628-1200; emailed to cityclerk@costamesaca.gov; or hand-delivered to the City Clerk’s Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa. The deadline is 5 p.m., Monday, March 18, 2024. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the April 2, 2024 City Council meeting.

The committees needing volunteers are listed below:

Animal Services Committee: This committee meets monthly and provides advice and recommendations to the City Council on animal services issues, promotes pet licensing, and assists with planning and execution of animal-related community events. The City is recruiting four members for a 2-year term. For further information, please contact Recreation Coordinator Jessica Torrejon at (714) 754-5128.

Active Transportation Committee: This committee meets monthly and helps plan and implement an Active Transportation network

for the City by improving bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the City. The committee also assists with the review, update and implementation of the city's Active Transportation Plan and evaluates the bikeability and walkability for the City in order to make recommendations to the City Council. The City is recruiting six members for a two-year term. For further information, please contact Active Transportation Coordinator Brett Atencio Thomas at (714) 754-5275.

Finance and Pension Advisory Committee: This committee meets monthly and provides advice to the City Council on issues related to significant financial matters. The committee advises annually on the adoption of the City's budget, the allocation of any budget surpluses, the City's investment performance and policies, multi-year forecasts presented by City staff to the City Council, and adjustments under consideration at the time of the mid-year budget report. The City is recruiting four members for a four-year term. Applicants shall have pension knowledge or shall be residents or individuals that conduct business within the City and have a background that includes experience in securities trading, financial planning, banking, auditing, accounting, or a closely related and relevant field. For further information, contact Executive Assistant Dina Wild at (714) 754-5243.

Housing and Public Service Grants Committee: This committee meets twice a year and helps to promote understanding of the community development process and activities funded by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Additionally, the committee rates and ranks applications for CDBG public service grants, ultimately developing funding recommendations for City Council recommendations. The City is recruiting four members for a two-year term. For further information, contact Grant Administrator Mikelle Daily at (714) 754-5678.

Mobile Home Park Advisory Committee: This committee meets

quarterly and addresses issues that will help improve the quality of life in mobile home parks and review matters concerning mobile home parks in the City. The City is recruiting for one park owner or their representative, two mobile home park residents, and one independent citizen at-large, all for a four-year term. For further information, contact Principal Planner Phayvanh Nanthavongdouangsy at (714) 754-5611.

Sandbags are available for residents to combat flooding

The rain is not done yet. Another torrential downpour is expected tonight Feb. 7.

To combat with flooding around your home, the city's maintenance service crews have made sandbags available for free to Costa Mesa residents in the southeast corner of the City Hall parking lot at 77 Fair Drive.

The location is self-service and bringing your own shovel is suggested as supplies could be limited. The number of sandbags is limited to 15 sandbags per household.

✗ No commercial use please.

City crews will patrol potential flooding spots to make sure catch basins are clear of debris and operational. Crews are also ready to respond to other weather-related incidents. Please report flooding issues to 714-754-5252 or on our Costa Mesa 311 mobile app.

City Council meeting canceled due to inclement weather

The Feb. 6, 2024 City Council meeting has been canceled due to the continuing severe weather conditions in the region that have a formal Emergency Declaration by the governor for nine counties including Orange County. Further, the National Weather Service extended its Flash Flood Advisory through Wednesday and issued warnings for the public to avoid all travel unless absolutely essential.

All items on the agenda will be moved to the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting on February 20, 2024.

City employees are attending to emergency operations and response as needed and our public safety and Public Works teams are monitoring the situation and working to respond to road incidents, clear downed trees and debris and to assist those in need. #CostaMesaNews

For emergencies, please call 911. Here are important safety tips and resources:

- ✓ Don't drive or travel during heavy rain or flooding, if possible.
- ✓ Stay away from streams, rivers and flood channels and do not walk, bike or drive through high water.
- ✓ If you must drive, please drive safely and slowly, don't tailgate, and don't drive into high water.
- ✓ Be prepared for possible power outages.
- ✓ Stay informed by following the City's social media and signing up for emergency alerts including warnings and evacuation notices at [CalAlerts.org](https://www.calalerts.org).
- ✓ Sandbags are available for residents and businesses at the Costa Mesa City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa.