

# Case is built for Carpenter to get City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison has presented the City Manager Leadership Award for January to the Police Department's Property and Evidence Supervisor Barbara Carpenter.

"This is a critical job in the department when it comes to prosecuting those who commit crimes in our City. Her commitment to excellence, proactive approach to challenges, and dedication she has shown for our organization and those she has served before us, is one to be commended. I very much appreciate her expertise in this area, and I am happy to present her with this award."

Carpenter has been in this role for the past 13 years. Her career in Property and Evidence has spanned over 25 years, where she has made lasting impacts on the multiple agencies she has served.

Carpenter is an active member of the California Association for Property & Evidence and has served as the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Carpenter initially began her career as a Cadet with Westminster Police Department before serving as a Community Services Officer with the Newport Beach Police Department for 10 years.

She then transitioned into the world of Property and Evidence where she worked as a P&E Technician for the Tustin Police Department before being hired as a P&E Supervisor in 2010 with the Costa Mesa Police Department.

Carpenter has excelled in maintaining a well-organized and secure property and evidence facility. Her in-depth understanding of chain of custody protocols, ensures the integrity of evidence throughout the entire process and aids in the successful prosecution of some of the most violent offenders.

Most recently, Carpenter successfully managed a large-scale project to reconfigure the agency's offsite P&E rooms as a result of grant funds awarded to our agency through Proposition 69. She and her amazing team successfully navigated the complicated logistics of remodeling a 2,000 square foot location.

That is no easy task to safely secure and move thousands of items of evidence that are critical to the mission's success. In addition, Carpenter has championed to procure new P&E software for the agency which was successfully adopted and will be implemented this coming year.

Carpenter holds a bachelor's degree in family development and family studies from Cal State Long Beach

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## **Costa Mesa Economic and Development Services Director Jennifer Le Accepts New Job with The Irvine Company**

**COSTA MESA** – Economic and Development Services Director Jennifer Le has accepted a new role as the Senior Director of

Entitlements for the Orange County-based development firm, The Irvine Company, City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison announced on Friday Jan. 5.

“Jennifer is an exceedingly competent and experienced development services professional who has led multiple major projects for the City. Her outstanding legacy of accomplishments will be remembered here for years to come,” Farrell Harrison said. “She has been a highly valued member of our team, and I also consider her a close friend. While I’m very happy that she was selected for this vital position at The Irvine Company, her talents will be missed immensely by all of us at the City and community we serve.”

Since becoming the Director of the City’s Economic and Development Services Department in December of 2020, Le has led the City’s planning and development staff through major initiatives, including the recent launch of TESSA, the City’s new online permitting system, master planning of the State-owned Fairview Developmental Center, and the adoption of retail cannabis regulations following voter approval of Measure Q.

She helped navigate implementation of the City’s landmark sober living ordinances and the planning and visioning for future housing opportunities in Costa Mesa through the City’s Housing Element.

She also assisted local businesses as they maneuvered through multiple challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns, including the administration of a \$2 million small business grants program that provided \$5,000 to \$10,000 in grants to small businesses during the pandemic.

Prior to Le’s appointment as Director, she served for three years as the second in command of the Department. Before her arrival in Costa Mesa as the Assistant Director of Development Services in November 2017, she spent 16 years with the City of Orange.

Her focus on creative solutions and leadership qualities have

made her a valued member of the Costa Mesa leadership team. Her expertise includes both development services and long-range planning, as well as historic preservation, subdivision, CEQA/NEPA compliance and community engagement.

“It has been my honor to serve the Costa Mesa community for the last six years” Le said. “I was fortunate to be able to lead such a talented team and I’m grateful to the City Manager and the City Council for their leadership and support during my tenure. It was not an easy decision, but I know I am leaving the Department in capable hands.”

Le’s last day with the City will be Jan. 22. After Le’s departure, Assistant City Manager Cecilia Gallardo-Daly will serve as the interim Director of Economic and Development Services.

The City will hire an executive search firm to conduct a national search for a new Director to fill this essential position. In the meantime, Gallardo-Daly, who is a development services expert with over 27 years of experience in planning and development, will oversee the Department’s operations and special projects.

#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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## **Street Sweeping is cancelled for Christmas Day, Monday, Dec. 25**

Due to the observation of Christmas Holiday, there will be no residential street sweeping on Monday Dec. 25.

No citations should be written on that day.

Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule, starting on Tuesday, Dec. 26.

Have a great holiday!

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## **Sandbags available for residents only at City Hall**

A large and cold Pacific storm is scheduled to arrive in Costa Mesa and the OC Region today through Friday Dec. 22. Rainfall totals are anticipated to be 1 to 3 inches along the coastal regions, 1 to 2 inches in the valleys and 1 to 3 inches in foothills. This storm could bring strong winds and heavy rainfall. Thunderstorms and heavier rainfall rates are possible. Additional storms are possible through the Holiday week.

To assist residents, 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.

Click **here for instructions**.

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.

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# **City Manager Leadership Award goes to IT's Senior Programming Analyst Brandon Nguyen**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented this month's City Manager's Leadership Award to Brandon Nguyen, a Senior Programming Analyst in IT.

"I really appreciate Brandon's positive attitude," Farrell Harrison said. "He always treats everyone with respect and genuinely loves helping his co-workers. It was his dedication that helped ensure that our new Land Management System TESSA was successfully launched. I am happy to present him with this award."

Nguyen started at the City of Costa Mesa IT department in October 2022 as a Senior Programmer Analyst. He was assigned to the LMS project, also known as TESSA, right away, and quickly became the key person with a deep understanding of LMS Data Conversion.

Since then, he had worked on a variety of tasks under the LMS Project. His projects include migrating legacy data to TESSA, building new reporting servers, and implementing and troubleshooting the LMS system. Nguyen's onboarding and hard work with the other LMS team staff secured a successful implementation,

Nguyen came to Costa Mesa from the City of Westminster where he worked as a Senior Application Specialist. He successfully implemented and launched LMS for City of Westminster in 2020 and utilized his LMS experience in implementing Costa Mesa's LMS project.

He also implemented a variety of projects for the Westminster Police Department in 2021, including WPD Audit System, Follow-up System, and Homeless Outreach.

He is a hardworking and accountable person who is always ready to learn. He works well with the team to complete tasks on time. When a team project encounters a roadblock, he is excellent at proposing work-around solutions so his team has more time to work on issues and workflow is not impeded.

Nguyen is originally from Vietnam and moved to the United States in 2010. He earned an Associate of Science degree in Computer Science from Orange Coast College in 2012 and a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from UCI (University of California, Irvine) in 2014.

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## **Development services executive named as Costa Mesa's new Assistant City Manager**

Costa Mesa City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison is pleased to announce the appointment of experienced government

executive and development services professional Cecilia Gallardo-Daly to be Costa Mesa's next Assistant City Manager.

After a nationwide search, Gallardo-Daly, who was formerly the Assistant City Manager for the City of San Clemente, quickly became a top candidate for the position. Her years of experience in Planning, Economic Development, Building, Code Enforcement, Park Ranger Services and Homeless Outreach make her an outstanding fit for this role.

"Cecilia impressed us with her extensive record of accomplishments and nine years of executive management experience," City Manager Farrell Harrison said. "She is results-driven and puts a premium on customer service, which is an important function of our work here. Her 28 years of experience in successfully managing complex and controversial issues and projects will make her a valuable asset to the City and the entire Costa Mesa community. I'm thrilled to have her join our team."

Gallardo-Daly most recently served the City of San Clemente as the Assistant City Manager, and prior to that as the Community Development Director, where she was responsible for implementation of San Clemente's vision and policy as it relates to land use, economic development, environmental and historic preservation and coastal resiliency.

She is also experienced in land-use planning, development project facilitation, architectural review, historic and environmental preservation, General Plan implementation, social service and housing programs and climate and adaptation planning.

"I'm pleased that Cecilia will be our new Assistant City Manager," Mayor John Stephens said. "Her years of experience in economic development, land-use planning and housing will enhance our talented City team. I look forward to working with Cecilia as we continue to improve the great City of Costa



Mesa.”

Prior to joining the City of San Clemente in 2015, Gallardo-Daly worked as a Planning and Environmental Permitting Consultant for local agencies from 2001 to 2013.

Before that, she served in several capacities with the City of San Diego, holding the titles of Deputy and Assistant Director of the Development Services Department, Program Manager for the City Planning and Community Investment Department and Senior Planner.

She has also held planning roles for the cities of Austin, Texas and Rancho Cucamonga, Rosemead and Sierra Madre in California.

“I am very much looking forward to this great opportunity as I thrive in environments that embrace innovation, public service and customer service. I am eager to bring my creative skills, technical expertise and new ways of providing continued economic, cultural and social vitality to the City of Costa Mesa.”

Gallardo-Daly has a Master of Arts Degree in Urban Planning and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from UCLA.

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**Veteran government affairs  
and business leader named  
Costa Mesa’s new Community**

# Relations Manager

Costa Mesa City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison announced that veteran government and business leader Lawrence “Broc” Coward has been named the City’s new Community Relations Manager.

In this role, he will assist with constituent services, collaborate with City Council and City staff to strengthen community relations and engagement efforts to foster greater partnership opportunities with the City’s residents, business community, faith-based organizations and government partners.

“Broc is a seasoned professional with 25 years of experience in the public and business sectors who will further our connections and enhance our community engagement and customer service efforts,” Farrell Harrison said. “I’m so excited that he is now part of our team.”

Coward comes to the City of Costa Mesa from the Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA), which manages two of the City’s 12 business improvement districts, where he held the title of Chief Operating Officer for seven years. He is experienced in both public and private sector management and has a broad understanding of finance, business advocacy/improvement, crime prevention strategies, special events, and public policy.

“Costa Mesa is a dynamic city with an engaged resident population, very supportive Council, and dedicated City staff,” Coward said. “I’m humbled by the opportunity to serve this community and motivated to build on the good work that’s already taking place.”

During his tenure at DLBA, Coward helped lead the community-based business improvement district with its \$5 million budget, committed to improving and promoting local businesses through a wide range of programs and services provided above the basic services offered by the city. His responsibilities

included oversight of “clean and safe services,” capital improvement projects, development of special promotions and events, marketing and outreach campaigns.

Previously, Coward worked as the Chief of Staff for then Long Beach Vice Mayor and Council Member Suja Lowenthal; as well as, Chief of Staff for the L.A. Unified School District Board of Education, District 7 and Field Representative for then Assembly Member Alan Lowenthal, Assembly District 54. His experience working directly with elected officials at both the City and State levels, as well as for a Board Member of the second largest school district in the nation, will bode well for Costa Mesa.

Coward is also experienced in constituent services and public policy, drafting legislation, parking strategies, bikeway and mobility, water conservation and economic development.

Coward holds a Master’s Degree in Political Science from Cal State Fullerton and a Bachelor’s Degree in Political Science from UC Santa Barbara.

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**City and School District  
partner to provide access to  
fields adjacent to Harper  
Park**



Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) officials have partnered with the City of Costa Mesa to open the school's fields adjacent to Harper Park, located at 1768 Tustin Ave, Costa Mesa. Public access to the fields is available after school hours, which is 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and weekends for families to recreate and enjoy the outdoors.

NMUSD and the City of Costa Mesa are committed to providing the community with access to open space at Harper Park while ensuring student safety during school hours. The District and the City have been working collaboratively to better serve students and the community.

The City hired a park ranger to monitor the field and park during school hours and educate community members about the open space opportunities beyond Harper Park on weekdays after school hours and weekends from 8 a.m. to dusk.

The District and City are pleased to provide access to the larger school fields adjacent to Harper Park during non-school hours for recreational opportunities for students and residents, while the fields will continue to host school and city-sponsored programs and youth sports organizations permitted by the City.

The District and City will work closely in the coordination of activities and field use permits at Harper Park and adjacent fields. Please contact the City's Parks & Community Services Department at (714) 754-5300 to learn more about the use of facilities after school hours or visit the NMUSD Use of School

Facilities Webpage.

NMUSD and the City of Costa Mesa will continue to prioritize school and city programming while offering open space opportunities to residents. For the safety of students and residents visiting Harper Park, it is important that everyone uses this space responsibly to help ensure continued access to the school fields during non-school hours.

Community members and organizations play an important role in ensuring the safety, cleanliness, and enjoyment of the park and adjacent fields by keeping pets on a leash and using City-supplied waste bags and trash receptacles at the park to remove pet waste and litter.

NMUSD and the City of Costa Mesa thank you for your support in our commitment to balance and better serve the needs of students and the community.

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## **Street sweeping to be cancelled during Thanksgiving Holiday**

Due to the observation of the Thanksgiving Holiday, there will be no residential street sweeping Thursday Nov. 23 and Friday Nov. 24.

No citations should be written on those days.

Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule, starting the week of Nov. 27.

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# **Veteran legislative leader named Costa Mesa's new Governmental Affairs Manager**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison announced that veteran legislative affairs leader, Jay Barkman, has been named the City's new Governmental Affairs Manager.

"We are looking forward to having Jay fill this much-needed role to build even stronger relationships with other government agencies and our elected officials at the County, State and Federal levels," Farrell Harrison said. "Jay will also be a huge asset in helping the City build short and long-term legislative priorities under the policy direction of the Mayor and City Council and City leadership."

Barkman has 25 years of legislative experience and comes to Costa Mesa from the Orange County Fire Authority where he held the title of Legislative Affairs Manager/Grant Administrator and worked on Federal processes to secure legislation and increased funding for OCFA and the region's Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces, among other priorities.

"I am honored to have this exciting opportunity to serve the Mayor and City Council and leadership team here at Costa Mesa and most importantly work to benefit all city residents," Barkman said. "As a student at Orange Coast College and a regional partner with OCFA, I've witnessed Costa Mesa flourish to become a destination where people want to live, work, and play. I look forward to helping the City achieve its strategic plan goals through its legislative priorities and platform."

Barkman previously worked as a Senior Consultant for the

Assembly Housing Committee and he started his career as a Legislative Aide for the California State Assembly.

In this role, he will he work closely with the City Manager and Council to plan, implement and respond to local, State and Federal legislative, regulatory and policy priorities affecting the City of Costa Mesa.

He will be in close communication with Congressional and State legislative and municipal government offices. He will also be instrumental in coordinating efforts with the City's lobbyists to acquire additional grant funding for the City's various departments and initiatives.

In his previous roles, Barkman's professional achievements include securing \$4.5 million for OCFA from Assemblywoman Petrie-Norris and \$16.95 million for OCFA from Senator Dave Min.

Barkman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Public Administration from Cal State Fullerton.

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## **Mayor Stephens named to the OCTA Board of Directors**

Costa Mesa Mayor John Stephens was elected by representatives of the 10 cities of Orange County's Fifth Supervisorial District to serve as a Director on the Orange County Transportation Authority's Board of Directors.

"I am honored to be elected to this important position by my peers," Mayor Stephens said. "Transportation, including public transit, is a critical issue for District 5 and the entire

county, especially as our population ages and the expense of owning and operating a car increases. I look forward to working with my fellow Directors to increase bus routes and ridership and to improve our freeways, streets and roads.”

This appointment is for a two-year term that will begin Jan. 1, 2024.

The Orange County Transportation Authority’s Board of Directors consists of 18 members. The OCTA Board is responsible for the coordination of a number of transit services, approval of plans for public mass transit (bus and rail) systems and working on all transportation capital and service priorities.

The OCTA board is also in charge of the administration of the County’s voter-approved half-cent sales tax for transportation to capital project delivery related to freeway improvements, local street, and road improvements and rail and transit service countywide.

Stephens has served as Costa Mesa’s Mayor since March 2021 and was elected to a two-year term as Mayor of Costa Mesa in November of 2022. Prior to becoming Mayor, Stephens was elected to the Costa Mesa City Council in 2016, and served as Mayor Pro Tem from 2018 to 2020.

Stephens earned a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration and Marketing from Cal Poly Pomona and a law degree from the UC Davis Law School. He has been a practicing trial attorney in Orange County for 34 years, and currently is a partner with the Costa Mesa law firm, Stephens Friedland, LLP.

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# Fire Chief Stefano inducted into the inaugural class of the Cal Chiefs Hall of Fame

The City of Costa Mesa is proud to announce that Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano has been inducted into the inaugural class of the California Fire Chiefs Hall of Fame 2023.

The California Fire Chiefs Association (CalChiefs) recently established the California Fire Chiefs Hall of Fame (HOF) to honor and celebrate lifelong contributions and achievements of Fire Chiefs who have gone above and beyond to enhance the California Fire Service.

“Fire Chief Dan Stefano is a blessing to the City of Costa Mesa,” Mayor John Stephens said. “He has served our community with distinction as our fire chief for over 10 years. During that time, he has developed a department that is second to none. Chief Stefano is a role model, not just in the Fire & Rescue Department, but throughout the city staff. He is definitely a first-ballot Hall of Famer who well deserves this prestigious honor.”

Chief Stefano and OCFA Chief Brian Fennessy are among the few chiefs who have been named to the Hall of Fame while still working in the field. The majority, which includes inductees dating back to 1919, have retired before receiving the honor or have been recognized posthumously

A few Orange County notable inductees include retired Fire Chiefs Chip Prather (OCFA), Tim Riley (Newport Beach), Jeff Bowman (Anaheim and OCFA), and Ronny J. Coleman (San Clemente, Fullerton and California State Fire Marshal). Coleman was recognized in a celebration of life memorial service this past September.

"I am beyond humbled and unbelievably honored to be included with this amazing group," Chief Stefano said. "This honor really speaks to the talented teams and organizations that I have been so fortunate to have been a part of throughout my professional career and, at the heart of it all, my incredible family, friends and professional colleagues, all of whom I am very grateful for every day."

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison was thrilled to hear of Stefano's induction.

"We are so very fortunate in Costa Mesa to have Chief Stefano's leadership and steady hand directing our Fire & Rescue Department," Farrell Harrison said. "He is a true leader that is highly regarded both in Orange County and throughout the State for his experience, leadership and courage. On a personal note, I am thankful for his friendship and his commitment to the City of Costa Mesa. We are all better for knowing him. Congratulations to Fire Chief Dan Stefano on this incredible accomplishment."

With a far reaching and diverse range of organizations in the nomination process, CalChiefs ensures a wide-ranging and all-inclusive perspective when selecting inductees, highlighting the significance of each Fire Chief's induction. By creating this Hall of Fame, CalChiefs brings public awareness to the sacrifices and dedication of the premier leaders in the fire service industry and inspiring others to follow suit.

For more on the CalChiefs Hall of Fame please visit this website <https://www.calchiefs.org/page/halloffame>.