

Finance's Elsa Barajas receives the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of August

At the August Meet and Greet, Assistant City Manager Cecilia Gallardo-Daly teamed with Deputy City Manager Alma Reyes to present the Finance Department's Permit Processing Specialist Elsa Barajas with the City Manager Leadership Award.

"I truly appreciate Elsa's positive attitude and communication style which allows her to provide exceptional customer service," Gallardo-Daly said. "She has responded to thousands of inquiries in person, over the phone and via email in both in English and Spanish. She quickly identifies customer needs, problem-solves, and offers alternative solutions and her colleagues describe her as a team player, hardworking and reliable. I am thrilled to present her this award."

Barajas began her service with the City as temporary staff in April 2022 to assist the Treasury Division in reviewing and issuing Business Licenses. A few months later, Barajas was permanently hired as the new Permit Processing Specialist. She is the frontline staff member at the Finance front counter.

Barajas has been instrumental in implementing key projects with the Finance Department. Her many responsibilities include processing Business License requests, issuing Operator Permits (Food Trucks), Sidewalk Sale Permits, Sidewalk Vendor Permits, Firework Stand Permits, Seasonal Agricultural Permits, verifying State Contractor's Licenses and ensuring businesses have a valid Sellers Permit in compliance with the City's Municipal Code – which is key to the City receiving its Sales Tax revenue.

Barajas also serves as the Department's subject matter expert for the implementation of TESSA. She's embraced this role and used her experience at the City of El Segundo during their LMS implementation and worked diligently on questionnaires, user-testing, legacy data, training guides and finally a successful Go-Live.

In January, Barajas was asked to fill-in for the City's Cashier position, where she handles all cash register payments made to the City, manages transactions, generates daily reconciliation, and closes balance sheets.

Barajas is a graduate of El Rancho High School in Whittier and has attended Rio Hondo College.

Costa Mesa's free Independence Day Community Celebration is almost here!

The City of Costa Mesa is hosting a FREE Independence Day Community Celebration on Wednesday, July 3 from 5 p.m. to 11p.m. at the OC Fair & Event Center.

Bring your own picnic, lawn chairs and blanket and create a memorable day as we celebrate our nation's independence! Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

Highlights Include:

- 9:30 p.m. Fireworks Show
- Free Entry and Parking

- Exciting Contests
- Delicious Food & Drinks
- Fun Kids Activities
- Live Music by Tijuana Dogs and 80's All-Starz

Please Note:

- Glass containers and bottles are prohibited.
- No hard-sided coolers or outside alcohol permitted.
- Let's keep the celebration safe for everyone!

Don't miss out on this spectacular community event. See you there!

Location: OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa – Lot A

CMTV's Ron Dam takes the spotlight for June's City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison honored CMTV Multimedia Specialist and Videographer Ron Dam with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of June.

"Ron is an extraordinarily talented camera operator, editor and video producer," Farrell Harrison said. "He and the CMTV team have successfully partnered on video projects with every department and every elected official in the city, making

everyone and every department in the city consistently look good. Thanks for spotlighting our City and our employees. I'm thrilled to give him this award."

Dam is noted for being able to take not so exciting public service content and transform it into viewer-friendly informative and entertaining videos. His video handiwork has become a featured highlight at the City's annual Employee Service Awards, turning employees into "actors."

His many duties include broadcasting meetings, writing scripts, shooting and editing videos, creating animations and his artistic work can be found on many of our "public facing" communication platforms, including Channel 3, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Granicus.

His combination of expert production and storytelling skills have helped make CMTV a nationally recognized operation, resulting in dozens of regional and national governmental video awards.

Dam started in Costa Mesa as a part time video production specialist in April of 2013. He has a bachelor's degree from Cal State Long Beach, with a major in journalism and minor in Chinese.

When he's not creating videos, he spends time as a longtime member of a "Taiko," or "Japanese percussion instrument" drumming group, performing shows at community events throughout Southern California.

Street sweeping cancelled during Memorial Day week

Due to the observation of the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 27, there will be no residential street sweeping the entire week as Costa Mesa Sanitary District also observes this holiday pushing trash collection back one day.

This results in residential gutter lines being cluttered with trash cans making it difficult for street sweeper operators to do an efficient job. Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule starting the week of June 3. No parking citations will be issued during this time.

The following are a list of tasks that Clean Street's operators will be conducting next week.

- City wide alley street sweeping
- Sweeping of park parking lots and other city-owned facilities
- Accident call outs and special requests
- Night route sweeping on all arterial streets

For more information, residents can call the city's street sweeping hotline at (714) 327-7471, which has been updated with this information.

Costa Mesa Resident Sought for Parks and Community

Services Commission Seat

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking one resident to serve on the Parks and Community Services Commission.

The City is recruiting for one member (Appointment by Council Member Loren Gameros), for a term expiration of January 2025 for the Parks and Community Services Commission.

The Commission meets on the second Thursday of each month and serves as an advisory body to the City Council and works with various City departments on issues pertaining to parks, parkways, recreation, and community services. For further information, contact Laura Fautua at (714) 754-5009.

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., Monday, June 3, 2024. The appointment is tentatively scheduled for the June 18, 2024 City Council meeting.

MEDIA CONTACT

Tony Dodero

(714) 754-5288

tony.dodero@costamesaca.gov

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.