

Rental assistance program offered by Orange County Housing Authority

The Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) will be accepting applications for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) waiting list beginning Sept. 18 through Sept. 29.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and enables OCHA to subsidize monthly rent payments for qualified applicants.

[Click here for more information.](#)

City Manager names Executive Assistant Laura Fautua the City Manager Leadership Award winner

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Parks & Community Services Executive Assistant Laura Fautua with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of September.

“I think it is such a great story that Laura was a participant in the City’s recreation after school program when she was in grade school,” Farrell Harrison said. “That experience led her to join the Recreation Leader in Training Program. In her 13 years since, she has proven to be a huge asset in the Parks &

Community Services Department and has demonstrated a love and passion for the department and the City and community. The proof of her dedication can be seen with the series of promotions she's received over the years. I'm so happy to present her with this award."

It was in 2010 when she was officially hired on as Recreation Leader. Ever since, she has worked for various programs including the ROCKS program, Day Camps, Youth Sports, Teens and Facilities.

In 2016, Fautua was promoted to Office Specialist working the recreation front counter here at City Hall. She began facilitating program registrations, special event permits, and general park inquiries. In 2018, she became Office Specialist II and was instrumental in the transitioning of the department's responsibility for processing animal licenses as well as helping to take on block party permits.

In 2021, Fautua was promoted yet again to Executive Assistant, where she not only has been a tremendous help to the department on a number of projects but continuously is improving administrative processes and procedures for the whole department.

She also helps to manage all the departments commissions and committees (which totaled six for a period of time) with agendas, reports and minutes.

Fautua was born and raised in Costa Mesa. She attended elementary, middle and high school as well as Community College right here in the City. She has a bachelor's degree from Cal State Fullerton, where she majored in Child and Adolescent Studies.

Daughter of Norma Hertzog, describes her mom in a letter to the Costa Mesa community

Norma Hertzog, the City of Costa Mesa's first woman Council Member and Mayor, passed away on Aug. 21 at the age of 94. Her daughter, Elaine Burkert, wanted the residents of Costa Mesa to know more about her mom's story. Here is her account below:

Dear Residents of Costa Mesa

What is the "inside story" of Norma Hertzog Wagner that adds to her already inspirational legacy of 94 years?

What led her to shatter glass ceilings as the first female councilwoman and mayor of Costa Mesa? What gave her, a high school dropout, the business acumen to operate two pre-schools? What led her to be a community visionary who helped to make Costa Mesa a destination and wonderful place to raise a family? Was it nature or nurture? As one of her four kids, I'd say both.

Her dad was very smart, a talented musician, and clever with his hands. Her mom was not an intellect. Her strength was her Christian faith, sense of justice, and perseverance. She stopped a ring of counter fitters, successfully sought a private audience with the President of Mexico, spoke out at church that was exhibiting racism, and raised three children as a divorcee.

Mom's family moved from Canada to Mexico during her 3rd and 4th grade years. She said, "I didn't learn much because my parents couldn't afford to send us to private schools." Upon returning to Canada, her 5th grade teacher said to her, "You're sweet but stupid." Mom disagreed with being stupid.

She completed eighth grade.



She was elected president of the local Red Cross club at 11 years old. She said, "I knew that I couldn't be a secretary or treasurer because of my lack of skills. I DID know that I could organize people!" Her organizational skills continued with the local YWCA where she was instrumental in leading events involving an average of 1,500 youth a night!

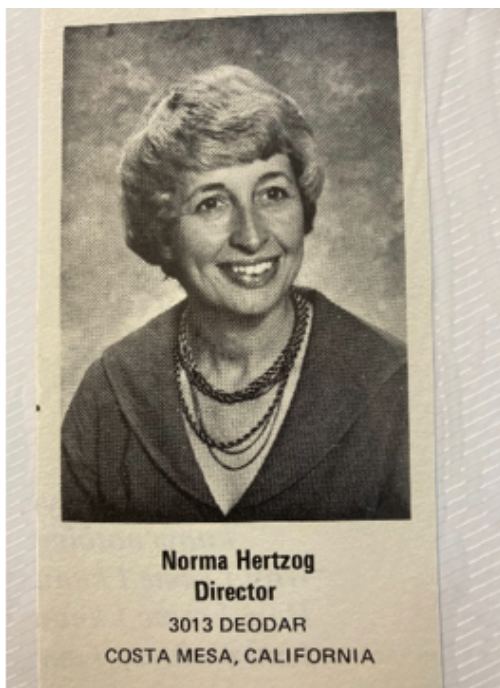
Her next great adventure (one of her favorite phrases) was to be the first female on a weekly radio show. She was only 16 years at the time. One of her mentors – who knew she didn't have a "dad" in her life, gave her a subscription to Time Magazine which helped with her education. Mom rarely wasted opportunities to keep learning.

Seeking a vocation, mom met with a highly credentialed university professor who suggested she "sweep the floors at Woolworths after hours." Her response? "That's just one person's opinion and they're wrong!" She chose to work with preschooler's because "they don't care if I have a degree; but

how I feel about them.”

She was hired at a nursery school where her employer noticed her tremendous work ethic and arranged to pay for one semester of university education. Eventually she left Canada for California and worked with children of movie stars. She continued learning at California universities but never obtained a degree beyond eighth grade.

Mom was a risk-taker. She opened Mesa Verde Preschool in 1962 and not long after West Bay Preschool. With both, she overcame significant challenges due to her lack of formal education and available finances. She never advertised yet both schools always had a waiting list. I recall so many stories of children who benefited from her programs. For example, an 18 year old stopped by Mesa Verde one day to speak with her. He said, “I just want you to know that the three years I spent here were the best of my life.” He came from a very dysfunctional family.



Mom believed the Lord never asked her to do anything without providing the needed resources. Oh, if only I had time and space to share more stories with you as readers!

In 1973, two professional campaign managers learned that she was a “first-timer” running for city council. They offered to help. She won the campaign and glass ceilings kept breaking.

Costa Mesa now has strong female leadership at all levels and has had several female mayors. Serving Costa Mesa has been the most significant aspect of her life. Even in her last months, she would chat with her friend and former mayor Mary Hornbuckle about Costa Mesa. She watched the ribbon cutting for the “Norma Hertzog Community Center” during a stay in the hospital and that gave her a much-needed boost!

My mom was guided by her faith in God, a strong and creative mind, a clear sense of justice, and a VERY wacky sense of humor that carried her through her battle with breast cancer and other challenges.



As her earthly life came to an end, her greatest joy came from knowing that she had made a difference – or was making a difference – in the lives of people around her. She often made the nursing staff laugh with her funny faces and expressions.

Mom’s life had to be purposeful. She never sat still because

there was always a new “great adventure” that God was calling her to undertake. I pray that her life continues to inspire others to achieve their God-given dreams! I’m grateful to have been one of her children.

Warmly,

Elaine Burkert (nee Wing, Hertzog)

No residential street sweeping during Labor Day week

Due to the observation of the Labor Day holiday, there will be no residential street sweeping Sept. 4 – Sept. 8 2023.

This coincides with the Costa Mesa Sanitary District, which also observes this holiday by pushing trash collection back one day. This results in residential gutter lines being cluttered with trash cans making it impossible for street sweeper operators to do an efficient job. There should be no parking citations issued during this time.

Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule the week of Sept. 11.

In lieu of street sweeping, the following is a list of tasks that clean streets operators will be conducting next week.

- Citywide alley street sweeping
- Sweeping of park parking lots and other city owned facilities
- Accident call outs and special request

- 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.

Mayor John Stephens issues statement on passing of former mayor Norma Hertzog

It is with great sadness that we have learned of the passing of the City's first woman Council Member and Mayor Norma Hertzog.

Norma passed away on Monday Aug. 21 at the age of 94 at her home in New Jersey.

In July of 2021, I was honored to participate in the unveiling of the Norma Hertzog Community Center, which along with the remodeled Lions Park Playground (Airplane Park), marked the final chapter on a \$36.5 million, world-class campus that is now the jewel of Costa Mesa's Westside. Through the Norma Hertzog Community Center, Norma will be remembered in Costa Mesa for generations to come.

Norma had provided a video message for all of us that day and personally appeared via Zoom from New Jersey to greet the crowd gathered for the opening. It was a blessing to see her on screen.

Norma was the owner of two local preschools, Mesa Verde and

West Bay, when she ran for City Council and won in 1974 with the campaign slogan “A different point of view.” She was officially appointed Mayor by her colleagues in 1977 and served two terms, ending her council service in 1986.

Besides being the first woman Mayor, Norma is credited with spearheading the move to bring South Coast Repertory theater to Costa Mesa, and the Segerstrom Performing Arts Center soon followed. Norma also received the Mayor’s Award in 2014.

We send our deepest condolences to her family and we are all going to miss her dedication to public service, her great smile and sense of humor. Thank you, Norma, for all you did for Costa Mesa and may you rest in peace.

Norma and her first husband Roger Hertzog had four children, John Hertzog and Sue Ward, predeceased, Elaine Burkert (Ron) who live in Dumont, NJ, Carolyn Feters (Paul) who live in Palm Desert. She is also survived by six grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren and five step grandchildren and 13 step great grandchildren from her marriage to Charley Wagner.

Services will be planned in her home state of New Jersey.

Senior Management Analyst Jakher receives City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Senior Management Analyst Hadassa Jakher with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of August.

“Hadassa is the consummate utility player and supports the

City Manager's Office in various tasks including public relations, outreach, finance, and budgeting capacities," Farrell Harrison said. "She is a pleasure to work with and is an exceptional member of our team and our entire CostaMazing family."

In addition to supporting Administration, Communications & Marketing, and Constituent Services Teams, she has also assisted in myriad special projects with the City Manager and Deputy City Manager, including the Strategic Plan – one of the most important documents aside from Budget.

She has been instrumental in the area of communications, especially bilingual communications as she has assisted in the translation of over 35 Spanish-language materials. She has created monthly social media plans and collateral for cultural festivities such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Women's History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Month.

She is always thinking ahead and developing creative ways to improve employee morale. Some of these ideas have transformed into events and programs coordinated by the City Manager's Office. Most notably, Jakher has assisted divisions within the department in "clean up" invoices in certain accounts and took on the development of a better flow of processes.

Jakher joined the City team in 2019 as a part-time Council Aide and assisted City Council with constituent services, outreach, and response to requests. In March 2020, she was promoted to full-time Management Analyst and in April 2023, she was promoted to Senior Management Analyst.

Before joining Cost Mesa, she was a planning intern for the City of Menifee. She also served as a Public Service Fellow for the Western Riverside Council of Governments.

Jakher has a Bachelor of Arts in Government and Spanish and minors in Latin American Studies, International Relations, and

Law & Society from Cornell University. While at Cornell, she studied abroad and was a Political and Economic Intern for the US Consulate General Barcelona. Jakher also has her Master's in Public Administration from USC and is pursuing a law degree at Western State College of Law.

Modified City Hall Counter Hours

Due to the high impact weather in the area, City hall counters will be closed Monday, Aug. 21. These counters include:

- Planning
- Building
- Code
- Business Licenses
- Engineering
- Transportation

The counters will be open again on Tuesday, Aug. 22.

Please be prepared for heavy rain and report any flooding, fallen trees and other storm-related issues to 714-754-5252.

Be advised that City team and CMFR remain well-prepared and are continuously monitoring the situation. Below are key pieces of information and links to websites for real-time updates:

- Residents should anticipate periods of heavy rain, Sunday afternoon/evening into Monday.
- Residents should prepare for high winds, and secure outdoor items, watch for the potential of downed power lines, uprooted trees and roof issues (this is specific to mobile homes, sheds and out buildings).
- Modeling shows wind gusts 20-50 mph sustained once the storm hits
- Rain expectations have increased from 2 to 4 inches
- Sand bag availability at City Hall beginning Aug. 18, 2023 in the south east area of City Hall parking lot.
- For the non-emergency information line, please call 714-754-5252
- For up-to-date power outages, please visit the SCE website at <https://www.sce.com/>
- To remain up-to-date and for preparedness recommendations, please visit Ready OC at: <https://www.readyoc.com/>
- Please signup for alert messages through Alert OC at: <https://member.everbridge.net/453003085613900/login>

Please visit the following link for current up- to-date weather info. You can customize to your zip code: <https://www.weather.gov/sgx>

**Costa Mesa to Receive \$50,000
Climate Adaptation and
Resiliency Grant from**

SoCalGas

Southern California Gas Company has awarded Costa Mesa \$50,000 to conduct a crucial climate vulnerability assessment for low-income and disadvantaged communities that may be disproportionately impacted by climate change.

The \$50,000 grant is the only one awarded in Orange County and is part of SoCalGas's Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Planning Grant created to assist cities.

The Energy and Sustainability Division, under the City Manager's Office, is in the process of developing Costa Mesa's first Climate Action and Adaptation Plan – a comprehensive strategy and roadmap to help address the impacts of climate change.

"We are embarking on an exciting journey to develop our first climate action and adaptation plan that prioritizes equity and community resilience, said City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison. "I want to express my gratitude to SoCalGas for awarding the City of Costa Mesa the climate adaptation and resilience grant. It will enable our city to expand our work in developing an inclusive climate action plan that specifically addresses the needs of vulnerable community."

The climate plan will put equity at the center of the planning process, and will identify greenhouse gases reduction and adaptation measures that enhance public health, community resilience and promotes the creation of local green jobs.

The grant will supplement the council approved climate plan budget, and will allow the City to do targeted outreach and engagement to vulnerable and underrepresented communities in Costa Mesa.

The Division of Energy and Sustainability is responsible for developing and implementing citywide programs and initiatives

that reduce Costa Mesa's carbon footprint, increase resource efficiency, minimize waste generation, and enhance the natural and built environment.

The sustainability team works with various City departments, community-based organizations, regional and state agencies, and the business community to build a stronger, more sustainable and equitable city together.

Click [here](https://www.costamesaca.gov/government/departments-and-divisions/public-works/sustainability) for more information
<https://www.costamesaca.gov/government/departments-and-divisions/public-works/sustainability>.

Code Enforcement Officer Andy Godinez presented with City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Code Enforcement Officer Andy Godinez with the July City Manager Leadership Award.

“Andy is one of the most popular Costa Mesa employees both here at City Hall and in the community,” Farrell Harrison said. “He’s a pure joy to work with and he always greets his fellow employees with a smile. His daily goal is always to serve the community and he often is able to achieve this through simple, kind and informational communication. As someone who grew up in Costa Mesa, we are fortunate to have his institutional knowledge and commitment to the City he loves. I am thrilled to be able to present him with this

award.”

Godinez has been working in Costa Mesa since 2008, when he started part time in Parks & Community Services in the afterschool program at Whittier Elementary School, the same school and program he attended growing up on Costa Mesa’s Westside.

He later transferred to the Concierge Desk and worked for the City Clerk’s Office before being promoted to a full-time Code Enforcement Officer in 2018.

From day one, as a Code enforcement officer, Godinez has projected his love for this City, his home. He has worked feverishly to learn the job. He is extremely thorough in his approach while maintaining a balanced demeanor when dealing with the public.

Aside from his duties as a code enforcement officer, he is often sought out by other City departments to help in community engagement meetings where he brings his home town background to make people at ease.

His intuitional knowledge as well as his community involvement has allowed him to be such a positive face forward of the City’s operations that creates a community trust that is often very difficult to achieve.

Godinez says he enjoys working for Code Enforcement because he likes developing his community. He looks at every resident, business owner and person he encounters in Costa Mesa as his neighbor first.

It is never a dull day in Code Enforcement, from illegal marijuana dispensaries, to CUP enforcement, to hoarding conditions, to substandard living conditions, there is always something interesting to tackle. Godinez considers himself a “nerd” about Costa Mesa’s history, so researching the history of permits and developments in this city are right up his

alley.

At the end of the day Godinez is happy to have an opportunity to leave a “thumbprint/huella” on the community and hopefully the service he provides makes a difference.

Godinez is a graduate of Newport Harbor High School and he met his wife Iris, who is also a lifelong Costa Mesa resident and current City employee, while working in Parks.

Costa Mesa residents sought to serve on City Commission

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents to apply to serve on the following City Commission:

Planning Commission: The Commission meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month and advises on planning, land use, and development matters. The Commission is the final decision-making body for certain discretionary land use approvals such as design review and conditional use permits. The Commission also functions as an advisory body to the City Council for Zoning and General Plan amendments. The City is recruiting for one member (Appointment by Council Member Marr), for a term expiration of January 2027. For further information, contact Administrative Assistant Anna Partida at (714) 754-5612.

Application Process – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Committee/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., Thursday, July 20, 2023**. The appointment is tentatively scheduled for the **August 1, 2023** City Council meeting.

Street sweeping cancelled from July 4 through July 7

Due to the observation of the Independence Day Holiday on Tuesday July 4, there will be no residential street sweeping the rest of the week through Friday July 7, 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 July 10.

The following are a list of task 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 request.
- 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.

Lead Maintenance Worker Andrew Lucio presented with City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Lead Maintenance Worker Andrew Lucio with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of June.

“Andrew sets a great example as a member of the Maintenance Services Division and our Costa Mesa team,” Farrell Harrison said. “Whenever I see him he is always smiling and exudes a great attitude. I am happy to present him with this award.”

Lucio joined the City team in 2016 as a part-time General Aide II assigned to the Parks and Landscape Maintenance Section. Lucio was quickly promoted to a full-time Maintenance Worker in 2017 and assigned to the Graffiti Abatement team.

Lucio spent the next few years under the tutelage of Gaetano Russo, who was the Lead Maintenance Worker in Graffiti Abatement at the time. He was dedicated to learning all that he could from his mentor.

This dedication led him to be assigned as Acting Lead Maintenance Worker for the team following Gaetano’s retirement in 2021. Lucio excelled in his new role that first year and provided a nearly seamless transition. He was officially promoted to permanent status in August of 2022.

In addition to his regular duties as the lead Graffiti

Abatement team member, Lucio was instrumental this past year in assisting the section with the most recent bus stop maintenance service agreement by providing a detailed mapping system along with a Google maps location spreadsheet.

Lucio and his team also pressure wash on a regular basis: parks and playgrounds, high-traffic sidewalks, high-traffic bus stops and fulfill additional requests as needed.

The Graffiti team received over 6,500 graffiti-related calls, which is a 2,500 increase over the previous year.

Despite the incredible increase in workload, Lucio still comes to work each day with a smile on his face and a positive attitude that reflects how much he enjoys serving the Costa Mesa Community. Lucio can be heard regularly saying "I love my job".

Lucio enjoys working out in the field and all the positive feedback from residents in our community. From sandblasting walls to pressure washing concrete, to color-matching building walls, no task is too tough for Lucio.

He credits his team and the community here in Costa Mesa, as the reason he calls Costa Mesa a "Home away from Home."