City Council unanimously chooses Cecilia Gallardo-Daly to be Costa Mesa's new City Manager

The Costa Mesa City Council voted unanimously at the Tuesday, Dec. 2 meeting to name Cecilia Gallardo-Daly, a 30-year veteran of local government and urban planning, as the new City Manager.

Gallardo-Daly has served as the interim City Manager since June.

"This appointment is a testament to the steady leadership Cecilia has provided the city these past five months," Mayor John Stephens said. "Cecilia is respected by the council and city staff. She is extremely knowledgeable when it comes to running a city efficiently and smoothly. Cecilia speaks straight and follows through. Costa Mesa's future is bright, and in good hands."

Gallardo-Daly first arrived in Cosa Mesa as the Assistant City Manager in December of 2023 and has been instrumental in managing several large city initiatives such as the future of the Fairview Developmental Center and property acquisition in the Shalimar neighborhood for a future park expansion.

"Thank you to the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tem and the City Council for trusting me to be your next City Manager," Gallardo-Daly said. "I look forward to continuing to lead this very talented and capable Costa Mesa team as we continue to problem solve and seek out opportunities to benefit our residents and businesses in the months and years ahead."

Prior to her arrival in Costa Mesa, Gallardo-Daly 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 also worked as a Planning and Environmental Permitting Consultant for local agencies from 2001 to 2013.

She also 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.

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