

# **\*Update: Costa Mesa City Council names Lori Ann Farrell Harrison as next City Manager**

After a four-month, nationwide search, the Costa Mesa City Council voted at its Tuesday May 7 meeting to name Lori Ann Farrell Harrison, the Assistant City Manager from nearby Huntington Beach, to be the next City Manager.

“Ms. Farrell Harrison’s background in government as well as the private sector is extensive and diverse. Her resume impresses, as well as her thoughtful, inclusive and collaborative approach to governance,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “Her experience as a finance director for a larger city prepared her for the challenges ahead to ensure Costa Mesa plans for a fiscally sustainable future, with quality services and facilities for the community, and no increased taxes on residents. We look forward to introducing her as our leader to take Costa Mesa to the next level as we work to restore our neighborhoods and parks, improve public safety, modernize, and develop a plan for fiscal sustainability.”



Farrell Harrison, a local government expert with 28 years of experience in the public and private sectors, has been the Assistant City Manager in Huntington Beach since 2017. In that role, she was responsible for coordinating complex initiatives in many aspects of city government with an emphasis on fiscal sustainability, transparency and process improvement. She also worked with the City Manager in the daily oversight of the city's 10 non-elected departments including police, fire and public works.

Additionally, she has served as chief advisor to the City Manager, the seven-member City Council and the elected City Attorney, City Treasurer and City Clerk. She has also been a leader in citywide homelessness efforts, and has led successful labor negotiations with the city's eight employee associations covering 987 full-time employees.

"It is an extraordinary honor and privilege to be offered the position of City Manager for the City of Costa Mesa, known for its cutting-edge initiatives, commitment to public safety, emphasis on transparency in government, and dedication to the arts," Farrell Harrison said. "I am truly excited about the opportunity to put my 28 years of experience to work in

leading such an excellent organization under the direction of Mayor Foley and the City Council.”

Prior to her role as Assistant City Manager, Farrell Harrison served as the Chief Financial Officer for the City of Huntington Beach for seven years, overseeing a total budget of \$344 million. She was instrumental in helping the City reduce its unfunded liabilities, bringing certain retirement benefits essentially to 100 percent funded status during her tenure.

She is also attributed with achieving a “AAA” rating for the City from Fitch Ratings due to her leadership, financial acumen and expertise.

She previously served as the City Controller, and later as the Chief Financial Officer, for the City of Long Beach, the sixth largest City in California. In that capacity, she was responsible for working with 23 department heads in managing a City Budget of \$2.3 billion.

Earlier in her career, she worked for the State of New York and later the City of New York’s Administration for Children’s Services overseeing the \$2.0 billion budget for child protective, adoption and day care services.

In addition, she currently serves on the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners, the five-member governing body for the Port of Long Beach. The Port of Long Beach is the second largest container port in the country, responsible for \$180 billion in international trade.

Her leadership skills have resulted in numerous awards including the Association of California Cities-Orange County Chapter’s Golden Hub of Innovation Award and the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers’ Innovation Award for her plans to reduce pension-related unfunded liabilities. She was also nominated for CFO of the Year by the Orange County Business Journal in 2016.

Farrell Harrison holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and a Bachelor's Degree from Barnard College of Columbia University. She is fluent in Spanish. In her free time, she enjoys skiing and snowboarding and traveling with her husband and their four teens.

Farrell Harrison anticipates starting her role as City Manager by the first of July.