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
Tony Dodero
(714) 754-5288
tony.dodero@costamesaca.gov