Jennifer Le named Director of Economic and Development Services

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison has appointed Jennifer Le, a key figure in assisting local businesses navigate the many challenges resulting from COVID-19, as the City's new Director of Economic and Development Services.

"Jennifer has played a critical role as our local businesses attempted to maneuver through the financial challenges related to the pandemic," Farrell Harrison said. "She has been a trusted member of our team and I am thrilled to know she will be leading the Economic and Development Services Department."

Le had been serving as the acting director following the retirement of Barry Curtis on July 31. Prior to that, she served for three years as the second in command of the Department and has worked in planning and local government for over 20 years.

She has demonstrated excellent leadership and expertise during her tenure with the City and has played a vital role in several high profile issues including short-term rentals, oversight of cannabis manufacturing businesses permitted under Measure X and an update to the Housing Element. Most recently, Le has been at the helm of navigating several economic development issues brought on by the pandemic, including assisting South Coast Plaza with the establishment of an outdoor shopping pavilion and outdoor dining for local restaurants.

"I am honored to continue to serve the Costa Mesa community in this new capacity. I appreciate the opportunity not only to continue my work with the City's leadership group, but also to lead a talented team in the Economic and Development Services

Department," Le said. "We have a number of challenges ahead of us and I embrace the opportunity to help guide the City Council as they make important decisions regarding economic recovery, housing policy, and more."

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. She also worked for the County of Ventura and in private consulting prior to that. Her focus on creative solutions and customer service have made her a very valued member of the Costa Mesa team.

Her expertise includes both development services and long-range planning, as well as historic preservation, subdivision, CEQA/NEPA compliance, community outreach, and GIS.

Le has a Bachelor's degree in Geography/Environmental Studies from UCLA and a Master's degree in Environmental Science and Management from UC Santa Barbara.