



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

Planning Veteran Mary Kopaskie Joins Riverside as City Planner

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Mary Kopaskie, who has over 30 years of land use and environmental planning experience in both the public and private sector, will join the City of Riverside later this month as City Planner.

Kopaskie comes to Riverside from San Diego County, where she has served as Chief of the Advance Planning Division since 2016. She oversaw long-range planning projects that included the County's Climate Action Plan, Sustainable Groundwater Management Plans, Multi-Species Conservation Program, Community Plan updates and regulation/code updates. Her first day is July 27.

In Riverside, Kopaskie will oversee all aspects of the planning division which includes current planning, advanced planning, planning information and historic preservation. She will also be responsible for continuing the success of the award-winning One Stop Shop and Development Review Committee (DRC). She will report to David Welch, Interim Director of Community & Economic Development.

“On behalf of the Community & Economic Development Department, we look forward to working with Mary as she guides the Planning Division to achieve successful projects that will minimize barriers to investment while upholding the quality of life in the City of Riverside,” Welch said.

Prior to joining San Diego County, Kopaskie worked internationally for 12 years as a planning expert with the countries of Qatar and the United Arab Emirates in their new planning departments. She was instrumental in completing the update of the Abu Dhabi Plan 2030 and worked on community redevelopment and specific area plans for several cities and neighborhoods in both Qatar and Abu Dhabi. While abroad, Kopaskie oversaw the preparation of the Seychelles Country Comprehensive Plan that included a downtown redevelopment plan for the Capital City of Victoria.

“I am excited to serve as Riverside's City Planner and look forward to the opportunity of working together with City leaders, staff and residents to achieve the City's vision and ensure high quality planning that respects and enhances Riverside's unique character while facilitating exceptional levels of investment,” Kopaskie said.

Before moving abroad, Kopaskie worked with a planning and design firm in Buffalo, NY. While with the company, she worked for communities throughout the United States and Canada and oversaw projects to include the downtown redevelopment plans, large-scale master plans and design based regulations.

Kopaskie will play an important role in Riverside as there are several projects and development underway in downtown and within the community. She will also oversee the General Plan Update, Northside Specific Plan and Marketplace Specific Plan initiatives.

Kopaskie received her B.A. in Geography from the State University College of New York at Plattsburgh and her Master of Urban Planning from the University at Buffalo, New York. She has been certified through the American Institute of Certified planners (AICP) since 1991.

Kopaskie's salary will be \$140,844.