



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 8, 2018

Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

Riverside City Manager Al Zelinka Announces Reorganization of Executive Staff

Changes include elevating two Department Heads to Assistant City Manager; cutting one Assistant City Manager position; creating two Deputy City Managers; saving \$150,000

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – City Manager Al Zelinka has reorganized the executive staff of the City of Riverside to bring an even stronger focus to top priorities and customer service while also cutting \$150,000 in costs.

The changes include elevating two department heads – Lea Deesing and Rafael Guzman – to the post of Assistant City Manager and creating two Deputy City Manager positions, which will be filled by Carlie Myers and Moises Lopez. In the process, Zelinka is cutting one Assistant City Manager position, which he held before being named City Manager in late May, and repurposing the position of Intergovernmental Relations Officer previously held by Lopez.

The changes will allow the City Manager’s Office to use the same number of people to accomplish more work with a greater level of emphasis on priorities that have been established by Mayor Rusty Bailey and the Riverside City Council through the strategic planning process known as Riverside 2.1. The reorganization will expand the ability of the City Manager’s Office to better serve the Mayor, City Council, residents and businesses in Riverside, while reinforcing the organization’s performance and financial health.

“I am excited to create a team that is committed to public service while promoting teamwork and the spirit of innovation throughout our organization,” Zelinka said. “These public servants are devoted to finding better ways to deliver critical services to our residents and business community, and I am proud to lead such a team, and our entire City family.”

Deesing previously worked as Riverside’s Chief Innovation Officer, overseeing the Innovation and Technology Department. Guzman was the Director of Community and Economic Development. Myers most recently worked as Principal Management Analyst in the City Manager’s Office, while Lopez has spent the past three years as Intergovernmental Relations Officer in Riverside.

“I applaud City Manager Zelinka for doing more with less for the benefit of Riverside residents and business owners.” Mayor Bailey said. “His ability to increase services while cutting costs by promoting proven professionals from the home team speaks volumes about how he is approaching his new duties as City Manager.”

Zelinka said he promoted Deesing and Guzman because of their unique abilities within the City’s 2,400-member workforce. Deesing is very well-regarded in the community for her ability to use technology to modernize operations and provide the public with greater access to information, including through the EngageRiverside.com portal. Guzman is known for streamlining the development process in Riverside to attract and retain investment in the city. Under his leadership, Riverside has created a One Stop Shop that enables business people who want to create jobs in Riverside to get through the entitlement process faster and more efficiently in one location.

“Lea and Rafael are known for their strong leadership of their respective departments and for providing a high level of customer service, which is the first priority of our elected leadership,” Mayor Pro Tem Chris MacArthur said. “I am confident they will continue a tradition of excellence in this role, which is crucial to the overall success of our city.”

The Deputy City Manager positions are new to the current structure of the City Manager’s Office, but have been utilized in Riverside in past administrations. These two positions will absorb some of the workload that was being carried by the third Assistant City Manager post, which is being eliminated.

Moving forward, Zelinka will work directly with the Mayor and City Council while providing oversight of the daily administration of the City; Riverside Public Utilities; the Office of Organizational Performance and Auditing; and the Office of Communications.

Deesing will oversee the following departments: Police, Fire, Library, Museum, Innovation and Technology, Finance.

Guzman will supervise: Community and Economic Development; Public Works, Parks, Recreation and Community Services, Human Resources, General Services, and the Community Police Review Commission.

In the Deputy City Manager roles, Myers will be responsible for an expanded approach to Ward Action Teams and a future City Ombudsman program. Lopez will handle intergovernmental relations; and the Office of Homeless Services. His previous position, Intergovernmental Relations Officer, is being repurposed into the Deputy City Manager job.

All Assistant City Managers and Deputy City Managers are responsible for providing assistance to the Mayor and City Council as needed.

“Customer service, financial stewardship and teamwork are everyone’s job within our organization, and these changes are designed to emphasize and celebrate that fact,” Zelinka said. “I am confident this approach will yield exceptional benefits for our community, and I look forward to implementing these changes immediately.”

Deesing and Guzman each will be paid \$241,620. Exact salaries for Myers and Lopez have not been determined because the positions have not been formally approved by the City Council. City Council members have been apprised of the idea, and will be asked to approve the reestablishment of the Deputy City Manager classification on June 19.

Interim directors for the departments previously managed by Deesing and Guzman – Innovation and Technology, and Community and Economic Development – will be named at a later date.