

# Costa Mesa to receive \$630,000 grant toward making streets safer

The U.S. Department of Transportation has awarded a \$630,000 Safe Streets and Roads for All grant to the City of Costa Mesa to develop a Safe Routes to School Action Plan.

The grant will provide the City with funds to develop a comprehensive safety action plan with specific implementable project concepts to enhance safety on streets used to access each of the Newport-Mesa Unified School District campuses located within the City.

Costa Mesa is one of seven jurisdictions to receive this federal grant funding in Orange County, and will receive nearly 25% of the total funding allocated to the county.

“The City of Costa Mesa is excited to receive this grant award from the USDOT for safer walking and biking to school and encourage healthy and active transportation options for students in our community” said Mayor John Stephens. “As the popularity of walking and biking increases in Costa Mesa, we look for opportunities to improve safety and mobility for vulnerable roadway users including school aged children.”

Fifth District Council Member Arlis Reynolds, who has led the way on advocating for safe street programs for Costa Mesa, was also happy to see the City get this funding.

“That we won one of the largest grant in Orange County signifies our focus and leadership on street safety for our community,” she said. “This grant is a huge win for our community, especially our students and their families, and sets us up for significant safety improvements on walking and biking routes to school.”

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established the new Safe Streets discretionary program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over the next five years.

This first funding cycle of the grant program, announced on Feb. 1, 2023, will award \$800 million to 510 communities across the United States.

The program focuses on implementing low-cost roadway safety treatments and action plans to increase the safety of all roadway users.

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## Costa Mesa Residents sought to serve on City Committees

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents to serve on the following City Committees:

**Animal Services Committee:** This committee assists with the planning of animal related events, explores and provides recommendations to improve animal services, and promotes pet licensing within the City. The City is recruiting for three regular members for a two-year term. For further information, please contact Recreation Coordinator Jessica Torrejon at (714) 754-5128.

**Active Transportation Committee:** This committee assists with the review, update and implementation of the city's Active Transportation Plan in order to make recommendations for their improvement to the City Council. The City is recruiting for five regular members for a two-year term. For further

information, please contact Active Transportation Coordinator Brett Atencio Thomas at (714) 754-5275.

**Fairview Park Steering Committee:** This committee provides advice to the City Council regarding the implementation of the Fairview Park Master plan and impacts of Measure AA on Capital Improvement Program projects, maintenance and activities. The City is recruiting for three regular members for a four-year term and one alternate member for a four-year term. For further information, please contact Fairview Park Administrator Kelly Dalton at (714) 754-5135.

**Finance and Pension Advisory Committee:** This committee provides advice to the City Council regarding events and issues which may affect the financial status of the City. It also evaluates annual and long-term pension and financial impacts from changes in CalPERS contribution rates and/or actuarial schedule changes. The City is recruiting for five members for a two-year term. Applicants shall have pension knowledge or shall be residents or individuals that conduct business within the City and have a background that includes experience in securities trading, financial planning, banking, auditing, accounting, or a closely related and relevant field. For further information, contact Executive Assistant Stella Giragossian at (714) 754-5243.

**Historical Preservation Committee:** This committee serves to maintain, preserve, educate and promote the city's historical resources. The City is recruiting for five regular members for a two-year term and one alternate member for a one-year term. For further information, contact Recreation Supervisor Kevin Stoddart at (714) 327-7561.

**Housing and Public Service Grants Committee:** This committee meets on an as-needed basis and helps to promote community understanding of the activities funded by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) with a focus on social service grants. The

City is recruiting for five regular members for a two-year term. For further information, contact Grant Administrator Mikelle Daily at (714) 754-5678.

**Mobile Home Park Advisory Committee:** This committee addresses issues that will help improve the quality of life in mobile home parks and to review matters concerning mobile home parks in the City of Costa Mesa. The City is recruiting for two park owners or his/her representative, two mobile home resident owners, and one independent citizen at-large all for a two-year term. For further information, contact Principal Planner Phayvanh Nanthavongdouangsy at (714) 754-5611.

**Application Process** – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Commission Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website ([www.costamesaca.gov/apply](http://www.costamesaca.gov/apply)).

The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa, California, 92628-1200; emailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@costamesaca.gov); or hand-delivered to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa.

The deadline is 5 p.m., Thursday, March 9, 2023. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the March 21, 2023 City Council meeting.

#### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Tony Dodero

(714) 754-5288

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# Costa Mesa streets will get a little bit slower as speed limits lowered in 17 segments

Costa Mesa drivers will need to slow down as City officials are lowering the posted speed limits on 17 segments throughout the City, in accordance with a recent engineering and traffic survey for speed limits and state law.

These speed limit reductions reflect recent laws governing speed limits and the City's goals to improve the safety of all our residents, whether on foot, on bikes or in vehicles, where applicable. Additional reduction measures will be made in June 2024.

"Costa Mesa is leading the way when it comes to keeping pedestrians, bikers and drivers safe," Mayor John Stephens said. "Thank you to our Public Works team for undertaking this important, life-saving initiative."

The speed limit reductions align with the City Council's enhance safety and reduce collisions as we build out our bikeway and walkability infrastructure.

"I'm thankful for the state laws that allow these speed limit reductions," said Council Member Arlis Reynolds, who has championed safe streets for bicyclists and pedestrians. "This is just one step of a multi-pronged approach our city is taking to make our streets safer for everyone."

And Public Works Director Raja Sethuraman cited the safety factor of lowering the speed limits.

"Reduced speeds will benefit all travel modes by improving safety and operations along several major corridors throughout the City," Sethuraman said.

The speed limits will be lowered on the following 17 street segments:

- 16th Street from Whittier Avenue to Placentia Avenue (35 mph to 30 mph)
- Adams Avenue from Royal Palm Drive to Harbor Boulevard (45 mph to 35 mph)
- Adams Avenue from Harbor Boulevard to Fairview Road (45 mph to 40 mph)
- Anaheim Avenue from 19th Street to Superior Avenue (30 mph to 25 mph)
- Avenue of the Arts from Sunflower Avenue to Anton Boulevard (35 mph to 25 mph)
- Baker Street from Red Hill Avenue to Airway Avenue (40 mph to 35 mph)
- Harbor Boulevard from 19th Street to Newport Boulevard (35 mph to 30 mph)
- Hyland Avenue from MacArthur Boulevard to Sunflower Avenue (40 mph to 35 mph)
- Mesa Verde Drive East from Adams Avenue to Harbor Boulevard (40 mph to 35 mph)
- Newport Boulevard Northbound from Bristol Street to Del Mar Avenue (45 mph to 40 mph)
- Newport Boulevard Northbound from Santa Isabel Ave to 22nd Street (45 mph to 40 mph)
- Paularino Avenue from SR-55 to Red Hill Avenue (40 mph to 35 mph)
- Placentia Avenue from 19th Street to 18th Street (40 mph to 35 mph)
- Randolph Avenue from Bristol Street to Baker Street (25 mph to 20 mph)
- Red Hill Avenue from Baker Street to Bristol Street (50 mph to 45 mph)
- Royal Palm Drive from Baker Street to Adams Avenue (30 mph to 25 mph)
- Whittier Avenue from 19th Street to City Limits (35 mph to 30 mph)

Signage changes to the posted speed limits are underway by Maintenance Services Division staff.

For any questions, please contact Sethuraman or Jennifer Rosales, Transportation Services Manager at 714-754-5343.

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## **City reports \$4.3 million surplus and \$83 million reduction in pension liability**

The City of Costa Mesa announced a \$4.3 million General Fund surplus for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, despite three years of an ongoing global pandemic and without the use of reserves.

On Tuesday, Feb. 7, the City Council was presented with the City's audited Annual Comprehensive Financial Report that also reflected a sharp decline of almost \$83 million in the City's net pension liability.

"This positive financial report is a truly a team effort," Mayor John Stephens said. "I want to thank my City Council colleagues for their shared dedication to Costa Mesa's financial health. The City Manager and the Finance Director also deserve a lot of credit. This is the type of performance you can expect when you hire the right people, put them in the right positions and give them the freedom to do what they do

best.”

According to the report prepared by the City’s Finance Department, the City showed revenues of \$165.7 million compared to expenditures of \$161.4 million. The surplus was attributed mostly to sales tax revenue increasing by \$13.5 million year over year, and the transient occupancy tax (hotel tax) increasing by \$4.1 million over the prior fiscal year, as travel restrictions implemented during the pandemic were lifted.

“I am excited about the outstanding financial results achieved for FY 2021-22,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “This outcome proves that Costa Mesa, under the leadership of the City Council, and under the direction of Carol Molina as the City’s Finance Director, is serious about its long-term financial sustainability. I could not be more proud.”

As of June 30, 2022, the City has a total General Fund Balance of reserves of \$57.8 million. This exceeds the City Council’s adopted General Fund Reserve goal of \$55.0 million by almost \$3 million, a noteworthy achievement.

“This achievement is a result of a strong leadership team dedicated to outstanding public service while remaining financially prudent” Finance Director Molina said. “I would like to thank the City Council for their vision and commitment to sound financial practices that make strong fiscal results possible.”

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**New applications are being**



# accepted for Community Development Block Grants for 2023-24

The City of Costa Mesa is accepting applications from interested, tax-exempt nonprofit organizations operating within its jurisdiction that provide public services that benefit low- and moderate-income Costa Mesa residents and are eligible for grant funding under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

HUD has not notified the City of its actual 2023-2024 grant; however, for planning purposes, an estimated \$140,000 in CDBG funds may be available on a competitive basis for public services for fiscal year 2023-2024. The application and related instructions are available on the City's website here: [Public Service Grants Program | City of Costa Mesa \(costamesaca.gov\)](#).

Applications must be submitted to the City of Costa Mesa Housing and Community Development by 2 p.m., Monday, Feb. 13, 2023. Late applications will not be accepted.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [mikelle.daily@costamesaca.gov](mailto:mikelle.daily@costamesaca.gov) or (714) 754-5678 prior to the application deadline.

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# **Sandbags available for residents at Costa Mesa City Hall**

As a big winter storm approaches, Costa Mesa and the region, the city's maintenance service crews have made sandbags available at City Hall in case of flooding.

Sand bags are available for free to Costa Mesa residents in the southeast corner of the City Hall parking lot at 77 Fair Drive. The location is self-service and bringing your own shovel is suggested as supplies could be limited. The number of sandbags is limited to 15 sandbags per household.

No commercial use please.

[Click here for instructions.](#)

Also, the Costa Mesa Sanitary District will have a sandbag station at the Robin Hamers Yard, 1741 W. Wilson Street. Sand and bags are provided, but residents will need to bring their own shovel.

City crews will patrol potential flooding spots to make sure catch basins are clear of debris and operational. Crews are also ready to respond to other weather-related incidents.

Please report flooding issues to 714-754-5252.

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## **Costa Mesa residents sought**

# to Serve On City Commissions

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents to serve on the following City Commissions:

**Parks and Community Services Commission:** This Commission meets monthly, and advises and makes recommendations to the City Council on matters pertinent to public parks, recreation programs, equipment, facilities and improvements in operation and administration for the benefit of the residents of the City.

The City is recruiting for three members (Appointments by Council Members Andrea Marr, Manuel Chavez, and Arlls Reynolds), each for a four-year term and one member (Mayor John Stephens' appointment) for a two-year term.

For further information, contact Executive Assistant Laura Fautua at (714) 754-5009.

**Arts Commission:** This Commission meets monthly, and consists of seven Council-appointed positions. Selection for the Arts Commission is at large, with a minimum of four Costa Mesa residents, and/or up to three non-residents involved with the Arts. Interested candidates will be required to complete an Arts related questionnaire highlighting their individual interests and/or accomplishments related to the Arts.

The Arts Commission represents the Council's desire for ongoing policy focus, along with responsible oversight of the City's investments in the Arts.

To align with the motto of "City of the Arts", the City acknowledges the vital role the Arts play in the community. The general objectives of the Arts Commission shall be to ensure that the City of Costa Mesa is a place where creativity can flourish; a place where imagination, inspiration and innovation are held in high regard; a place where Arts

Education is essential to all; and a place where Arts and Culture can promote civic pride and enrich the daily lives of the Costa Mesa community.

The City is recruiting for one member for a four-year term (Appointment by Council Member Don Harper).

For further information, contact Arts Specialist Laurette Garner at (714) 754-5300.

**Planning Commission:** The Commission meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month and advises on planning, land-use, and development matters. The Commission is the final decision-making body for certain discretionary land-use approvals such as design review and conditional use permits.

The Commission also functions as an advisory body to the City Council for Zoning and General Plan amendments.

The City is recruiting for three members (Appointments by Council Members Marr, Chavez, and Reynolds), each for a four-year term and one member (Mayor Stephens' appointment) for a two-year term.

For further information, contact Administrative Assistant Anna Partida at (714) 754-5612.

**Application Process** – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Commission Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website ([www.costamesaca.gov/apply](http://www.costamesaca.gov/apply)).

The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa, California, 92628-1200; emailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@costamesaca.gov); or hand-delivered to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa.

The deadline is 5 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the Jan. 17, 2023 City Council

meeting.

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

Tony Dodero

(714) 754-5288

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# **IT veteran Robert Gonzalez presented with the City Manager Leadership Award**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented IT Network Administrator Robert Gonzalez with the monthly City Manager Leadership Award.

“I am grateful to have Robert as strong a leader in our IT Department,” Farrell Harrison said. “I appreciate his positive attitude and how he treats everyone with respect, and he is known for collaborating with his colleagues on a variety of projects. I am honored to present him with this award.”

Gonzalez joined the City of Costa Mesa in July 2014 as a Network Administrator. His current projects include the Windows Server Update, implementing a secure server for the Police Department for their confidential internal affairs files, Monthly Security Updates and Patches, Mobile Data Computer deployment, RIPA integration, and New Desktop PC Deployment.

He is currently assigned to the Police Department.

Prior to joining the City of Costa Mesa, Gonzalez worked in the I.T. industry for small and large corporations, including

Environmental, Engineering, and Software Development.

He was born and raised in Orange, California. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Vanguard University, where he lived in the dorm rooms behind City Hall. When he is not working, he enjoys playing sports, being outdoors and spending his time with his three children, and coaching their sports teams.

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## **Costa Mesa voters approve Measure K to support affordable housing for local families and revitalize commercial areas**

With the certification of the Nov. 8, 2022, General Municipal Election by the Orange County Registrar of Voters and the Costa Mesa City Council, Costa Mesa residents have voted to approve Measure K, the Ordinance to Revitalize Commercial and Industrial Areas and Protect Residential Neighborhoods.

Measure K protects residential neighborhoods while enabling the revitalization of major commercial and industrial corridors such as Newport and Harbor Boulevards. It also promotes future opportunities for additional affordable housing for working and middle-class families.

With the approval of Measure K, Costa Mesa will have the

zoning and land use framework to allow for the development of affordable housing, an essential component to maintaining Costa Mesa's core value of inclusion and the City Council's goal to diversify, stabilize, and increase housing to reflect community needs.

"It's our duty to provide an opportunity for current and future generations to find housing in the community they grew up in," said District 3 Council Member Andrea Marr, who helped author the ballot measure. "Revitalizing Harbor and Newport Boulevards will help to create much-needed housing while also improving critical parts of our city."

Measure K was placed on the November ballot by a majority vote of the City Council to address housing affordability and to enhance economic development along major commercial corridors in need of revitalization.

Improving economic development and housing opportunities within Costa Mesa strengthens residents' quality of life and keeps the City thriving and vibrant, reinforcing that Costa Mesa is the ideal place to live, raise a family, and run a business for generations to come.

With new housing mandates by the State of California, Measure K helps to ensure that Costa Mesa's have a say in how the community develops, and maintains local control in land-use planning.

Measure K requires that new development projects pay their fair share of the improvements needed to mitigate potential traffic increases, including engineering and construction costs of roadway, bike paths and pedestrian facilities and traffic signal upgrades.

Measure K also enhances community involvement and oversight through design charrettes, workshops, and community surveys of any land use plans adopted or amended for any part of the defined commercial and industrial corridors.

*For more information on Measure K, please visit [www.CostaMesaMeasureK.com](http://www.CostaMesaMeasureK.com).*

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# **Costa Mesa voters return Mayor Stephens, Council Members Marr, Chavez and Reynolds to the City Council**

A new Costa Mesa City Council was sworn in Tuesday, Dec. 6 with voters electing John Stephens as Mayor and re-electing Mayor Pro-Tem and District 3 Council Member Andrea Marr, District 4 Council Member Manuel Chavez and District 5 Council Member Arlis Reynolds.

“It’s not often that the voters show their confidence in the city and re-elect our full City Council,” Mayor Stephens said. “I’m honored to be working with this team to move Costa Mesa forward and grateful to everyone who supported my campaign for Mayor. Our future is bright in Costa Mesa.”

Stephens has served as Mayor since March of 2021, when he was directly appointed by the City Council to replace former Mayor Katrina Foley, whose seat was vacated when she was elected to the County Board of Supervisors to serve the Second District.

Stephens was originally elected as a City Council Member at Large on Nov. 8, 2016 collecting the second highest number of votes in a field of seven candidates. He was sworn in on Dec. 13, 2016 and served until his term ended in December 2020.

As a resident of Costa Mesa since 1989, Mayor Stephens has



deep community ties and has served on the City's Finance and Pension Advisory Committee, the Costa Mesa High School Foundation, Costa Mesans for Responsible Government and is a founding member of the St. John the Baptist Finance and Pastoral Councils.

Mayor Stephens was born in Pasadena, and raised in San Gabriel and attended San Gabriel High School. He earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Marketing from Cal Poly Pomona, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1986. He received his law degree from the UC Davis Law School in 1989 and has been a practicing trial attorney for 33 years.

For more information please visit **Mayor Stephens' webpage here.**

Andrea Marr was first elected to City Council District 3 in 2018, becoming one of the first three Council Members along with Chavez and Reynolds to be elected by district.

"I'm thankful to the voters of District 3, who entrusted me to continue to represent them for four more years," Marr said. "We have accomplished so much to date, with the goal of making Costa Mesa a place where all residents can thrive. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with my council colleagues in the years ahead."

Prior to serving on the council the last four years, her involvement included a stint on the City's Cultural Art Committee, where she helped spearhead a number of different community art projects and events and the completion of the first-ever Arts and Cultural Master Plan. She also previously served on the Bikeway and Walkability Committee where she focused on cyclist and pedestrian safety.

Marr is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy of which she was nominated to attend by Vice President Al Gore. During her time at the Academy, she held multiple leadership positions and competed with the Academy Karate team. She was recognized for

her leadership by the Naval Academy Superintendent and graduated with a degree in Aerospace Engineering.

Marr also holds an M.S. in Engineering Management from Old Dominion University where her coursework focused on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building program. She was a 2013 recipient of the White House Champion of Change award for her work in energy as a veteran. She is a licensed professional engineer.

For more information click **Council Member Marr's webpage here.**

Council Member Chavez ran unopposed for his District 4 seat. When he was first elected in 2018, he was 23 and the youngest person to ever serve on the Costa Mesa City Council.

I am honored to once again, be elected as the Costa Mesa District 4 Council Member," Chavez said. "The fourth district is the heart of Westside Costa Mesa and I look forward to continue advocating for infrastructure improvements, more open space, and housing opportunities and assistance."

Chavez, who is currently the Constituent Services Manager for Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley, grew up on the Westside of Costa Mesa and attended local public schools through high school. While a student at Estancia High School, he became heavily involved with the Save Our Youth program (SOY).

After graduating from Estancia High School, Chavez attended UC Irvine where he double majored in political science and religious studies and became very involved with both the UCI College Democrat Club, where he was elected President his senior year, and the Orange County Young Democrats.

For more information click **Council Member Chavez's webpage here.**

District 5 Council Member Reynolds was also re-elected to her

second four-year term.

“I’m proud to have been re-elected to continue to serve the Fifth District,” Council Member Reynolds said. “This is going to be a great year. We have a lot of work in progress and a great team assembled to get the job done. I’m excited to continue our work on safe streets, providing more parks and parks access, and I look forward to the visioning process to help us address the housing challenges in this city.”

Prior to being on the Council, Reynolds served as Vice Chair of Costa Mesa’s Parks and Recreation Commission and as Commission liaison to the Fairview Park Steering Committee.

Reynolds grew up in the Freedom Homes neighborhood of Westside Costa Mesa where she attended local schools. After graduating from Estancia High School, she went on to attend the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. She also earned a Master’s Degree in Business Administration from the Paul Merage School of Business at UC Irvine.

She currently is an engineer in the clean-energy industry, specializing in evaluation of energy efficiency and clean energy projects and technologies. She is a strong advocate of the City’s bikeway and walkability efforts and has been instrumental in increasing the City’s activities to encourage community outreach and engagement.

For more information click **Council Member Reynolds’ webpage here.**

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# Street sweeping to be paused for Thanksgiving Holiday

Due to the observation of the Thanksgiving Holiday, there will be no residential street sweeping Thursday Nov. 24 and Friday Nov. 25.

No citations should be written on those days.

Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule, starting the week of Nov. 28.

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## Deputy City Clerk David Nguyen latest recipient of City Manager Leadership Award

At the November Meet and Greet, City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Deputy City Clerk David Nguyen with the City Manager Leadership Award.

“I am happy to present David with this much-deserved award,” Farrell Harrison said. “He is much appreciated as a behind the scenes employee who quietly does his work, processing approximately 1,000 public records request a year. He is always assisting other departments when needed and is dedicated to his job. We are grateful to have him on the Costa Mesa team.”

Nguyen handles the large number of public record requests the city receives and certifying compliance with the Public Records Act. While he works diligently behind the scenes, he

is very instrumental in ensuring Costa Mesa is at the forefront of transparency by providing documentation to the public.

During COVID, he assisted building and planning and completed requests for 215 building permits and plans. He also assists code enforcement by providing documentation to the officers for their cases. He has uploaded approximately 6,100 pages of historical plans into Laserfiche for Code Enforcement to access in support of their cases.

Nguyen is the lead on providing responses to subpoenas and litigation. He has reviewed approximately 4,000 emails in response to subpoenas and litigation requests. He has assisted Costa Mesa attorneys by providing documents in support of our cases.

Nguyen was born and raised in Costa Mesa, attended Costa Mesa High School. His father worked for the City for 20 years in the print shop. Nguyen got his first job in the City in 2004 in the Parks and Recreation Department. For 12 years he did just about everything including youth sports, after school programs, and Camp Costa Mesa. In 2016 he came over to City Hall as a concierge. Since then he has continued to advance first as an Administrative Secretary, and now Deputy City Clerk.