

Costa Mesa Assistant City Manager Susan Price to Retire

Assistant City Manager Susan Price announced this week that she is retiring after an impressive 20-year career in the government sector.

“Susan is a highly respected leader and trailblazer in the field of homelessness in Orange County. Her success in this area has set a high bar throughout her tenure in Costa Mesa,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said.

“Her outstanding credentials, past leadership roles and experience in the fields of public health and homelessness played a highly valued role in opening the City’s permanent Bridge Shelter, a successful collaboration with the City of Newport Beach, the Motel 6 Project Homekey collaboration with the State and County and the Network for Homeless Solutions,” Farrell Harrison continued. “I applaud her accomplishments and contributions in the region and in the City of Costa Mesa. We wish her continued success in retirement and all future endeavors.”

Price’s work in government included Community Public Health initiatives for walkability, bike-ability and community garden projects along with her decades of experience in developing and administering homeless services, housing programs and community health initiatives that continued in her role in Costa Mesa.

“Costa Mesa is such a great City, it’s been a challenging few years operating amidst the pandemic and civil/political unrest,” Price said. “I’m so proud to have been a part of this chapter where so much progress has been made. I have appreciated the opportunity working with Lori Ann and the leadership team to deliver results. I plan to continue my work

on homelessness well into the future.”

Price, often referred to by the media as Orange County’s “Homeless Czar” was a perfect fit when she was hired to be the City’s second-in-command just under three years ago.

She arrived in the County of Orange in May of 2016 amid much fanfare as she had previously led successful efforts in the City of Long Beach’s Health and Human Services Department to address high-profile issues like homelessness, housing and public health.

During her tenure in Orange County she designed, developed and implemented 600 new emergency shelter beds to help address the encampment crisis, influenced a culture change in the county to effectively address homelessness across sectors and created unique strategies to effectively respond to homelessness in one of the largest counties in the country.

Price has spearheaded many capital improvement projects, tracked key legislative priorities related to the Fairview Development Center and managed complex, grant-based budgets during her career in government.

“With Susan’s departure, Nate Robbins, Costa Mesa’s Neighborhood Improvement Manager, will be assuming most of the responsibilities related to homelessness,” shared Acting City Manager Dan Stefano. “Nate and the entire team are already leaning in strong and it will be a seamless transition, as the team has been working together with Susan for the past year on these programs without pause.”

As for filling the position as Assistant City Manager, it will be filled through a formal executive recruitment process.

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