

CITY OF VENTURA

NEWS RELEASE

501 Poli Street
Ventura, CA 93001

For Immediate Release

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**Ventura City Manager Announces Six Appointments
for Executive Team**

Ventura City Manager Alex D. McIntyre has named six new appointments to fill key vacancies on his executive team. The new positions include assistant city manager, deputy city manager, community development director, finance and technology director, public works director, and Ventura water general manager.

Filling the positions is part of the City Council's goal to strengthen and stabilize the organization. During the Council's goal setting in January, Mr. McIntyre committed to complete the hiring of the executive team by June; the new hires will assume their roles next month.

"These experienced managers stood out in their fields as leaders and professionals," said Mr. McIntyre. "Their talent and management skills will help the City achieve our current goals, focus on the future and emphasize excellent services to our residents." These appointments will complete the City's 12-member executive team.

The new executive team members include:

Assistant City Manager Akbar Alikhan

Akbar Alikhan has been appointed Assistant City Manager after a national search. He is a Ventura County native and recently worked as General Manager for Channel Islands Beach Community Services District for two years, before that he worked with Raftelis Financial Consultants, where he provided financial planning and utility rate consulting services to agencies throughout the State. He started his career in the City of Thousand Oaks Public Works Department.

Mr. Alikhan holds a bachelor's degree in economics and a Master of Public Administration, both from Cornell University.

In his new role Mr. Alikhan will oversee three key City department operations including Community Development, Public Works and Ventura Water. According to

Mr. McIntyre, “he will be tasked with providing the leadership support to these three new department heads as well as a catalyst to provide enhanced coordination among them.”

He is scheduled to begin with the City on June 17, 2019. He replaces Dan Paranick who left in August 2018 for Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District; Barry Fisher has served in the interim role.

Community Development Director Peter Gilli

Peter Gilli was selected as Community Development Director. He has more than 20 years of municipal government experience serving as Deputy Director of Community Development, Acting Planning Manager, Zoning Administrator, and Senior Planner among other assignments during his tenure with the cities of Thousand Oaks, Santa Maria, Mountain View, Cupertino and San Jose.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in city and regional planning from California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

The community development director oversees more than 42 employees who are responsible for planning and zoning, building and safety, code enforcement and housing and redevelopment. Community Development also works with various city commissions that help advise the City Council regarding growth and development in the city.

Mr. Gilli is scheduled to begin sometime in June. He replaces Jeff Lambert who left the City in January 2019 for the City of Oxnard; David Ward and Peter Lyons have served in the interim role.

Deputy City Manager Barry Fisher

Additionally, through a reorganization, Mr. McIntyre has created a permanent Deputy City Manager position and appointed Barry Fisher to that assignment. Recently, Mr. Fisher served as the acting Assistant City Manager.

Mr. Fisher will oversee the offices of Economic Development, Safe & Clean, Communications, and Disaster Preparedness. He will also manage the City’s state and federal legislative programs.

Mr. Fisher is the former Director of the Ventura County Health Care Agency. He will begin his duties on June 10, 2019.

Finance & Technology Director Michael Coon

Michael Coon of Richwood, Texas was selected as Finance & Technology Director. He previously served as City Manager of Richwood, Texas for two years, and Assistant to the City Manager in City of Lake Jackson before that. He started his career with the City of San Antonio, Texas Office of Management and Budget.

He holds a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Public Administration both from Brigham Young University.

Mr. Coon will be responsible for the development and oversight of the City's \$301 million budget. He will oversee all financial activities including financial planning and analysis, information technology, purchasing and contracts, and treasury.

Mr. Coon is scheduled to begin with the City on June 3, 2019, He replaces Gilbert Garcia who left in April 2018 for the City of Huntington Beach; Assistant Finance and Technology Director Mary Eckman has served in the interim role.

Public Works Director Phillip Nelson

Phillip Nelson has been appointed to the position of Public Works Director. He has more than 30 years of engineering services experience in the private and public sector and has resided in Ventura County for many years. He previously served as manager of facilities projects, director of facilities and engineering, director of engineering services and director of planning and facilities, among other assignments during his tenure with the County of Ventura, Amgen, and Conejo Unified School District. Additionally, he served as a civil engineer corps officer in the U.S. Navy.

Nelson is a registered professional civil engineer in the State of California and has a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from Iowa State University and a Master of Science in civil engineering from University of Washington.

The Public Works Director oversees more than 90 employees who design, construct, inspect, improve and maintain the City's infrastructure, including traffic lights, sidewalks, street lights, roadways, land development, solid waste, storm water and parking operations. The City's 2018-2024 Adopted Capital Improvement Plan contains 140 capital improvement projects with a total of \$695 million. A total of \$60.3 million is planned in capital improvements for the new fiscal year.

Mr. Nelson is scheduled to begin with the City on June 3, 2019. He replaces Tully Clifford who left in May 2018 for the City of Camarillo; Fleet and Facilities Manager Mary Joyce Ivers has served in the interim role.

Ventura Water General Manager Susan Rungren

Susan Rungren has been promoted to Ventura Water General Manager. She has been serving as the interim general manager since January and before that was appointed to Ventura Water Assistant General Manager in May 2018.

Ms. Rungren began her career with the City of Ventura in 1999 as the Utilities Engineer for the City's Water and Wastewater Divisions and has served as the Water Resource Manager for seven years. She is a licensed Professional Engineer with professional affiliations including the Association of California Water Agencies of Ventura County and the Association of California Water Agencies. Rungren has a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Oregon State University.

In her new role, Mrs. Rungren will oversee the water and wastewater operations, and work to meet long term water supply demands. Ventura Water has an operating budget of \$62.2 million and is undertaking two ambitious, yet critical projects to improve and stabilize water resources and wastewater disposal for the City: the State Water Interconnect and VenturaWaterPure.

Rungren will manage a staff of 108 full time employees. She replaces Kevin Brown who left in January 2019.

Mr. McIntyre himself only joined the organization 6 months ago. "The past 18 months have been a turbulent time for the City. These important changes in leadership will provide the necessary settling affect the City needs right now," comments Mr. McIntyre. "I'm looking forward to working with this new team and providing the leadership to the overall organization so that we can continue to provide the important work our community expects of us."

For more information, contact City Manager Alex D. McIntyre at 805-654-7740.

This release can be found on the city's website at www.cityofventura.ca.gov###