

# City Manager Newsletter By TRACKDOWN MANAGEMENT

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City Management Community"



July 2026 Special

Volume No. 20 | Issue No. 12

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Atascadero City Manager **Jim Lewis** and his family recently visited Alaska on a cruise. They do an amazing job of transforming vacations into educational travel, allowing immersive learning experiences by leveraging local history, science, culture, and language. Making vacation an active discovery of knowledge that textbooks cannot replicate. Left to right is Jim, his daughter, Gracie, son, Troy and his wife, Debi.

## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto

Please find a Special July 2026 issue of the City Manager Newsletter by Trackdown attached to this distribution letter. This issue presents information regarding the executive leadership in the cities of Pacifica, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Palmdale, and Palo Alto.

City Managers in this issue include Pacifica city manager **Sean Charpentier**. **Chris Escobedo** is the City Manager in Palm Desert, **Scott Stiles** is the City Manager in Palm Springs, **Salvador "Sal" Mendez** is the City Manager in Palmdale, and **Ed Shikada** is the current City Manager for the city of Palo Alto.

"...the right of the people peaceably to assemble..." does not mean looting, stealing, and burning stores and cars, and obstructing law enforcement officials from trying to keep the peace!

---Anonymous

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## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto



Pacifica is a coastal city in San Mateo County about a dozen miles southerly of San Francisco. They say that Pacifica combines a close proximity to the urban areas of San Francisco and Silicon

Valley and Half Moon Bay with the laid-back surf culture of a Pacific Ocean beach community. Explorer Gaspar de Portolá sighted San Francisco Bay by climbing the hills of Sweeney Ridge in Pacifica in November 1769. Before that time, the bay's entrance had been missed as it was often cover by thick fog. The area is packed with fascinating history. From ancient native sites to Prohibition-era speakeasies, a 20<sup>th</sup> century Scottish castle, along with the discovery of San Francisco Bay. During World War II, the Sharp Park Detention Station was established to process Japanese Americans, Japanese national and other "foreign enemies". Stanford professor Yamato Ichihashi spent six weeks at the facility and wrote extensively about his experience. Pacifica was incorporated in November 1957. Its 2020 populations if 38,640. **Sean Charpentier** is the City Manager and **Yulia Carter** is the Assistant City Manager. **Sarah Coffey** is the City Clerk, and the Community Development Director is **Samantha Updegrave**. **Michelle Marchetta Kenyon** is the Pacifica City Attorney.



Retired South Gate city manager **Chris Jeffers** and his wife Elaine, MLB Angels' fans even during another poor season unfolding.

At a June game, the Jeffers saw the home team win. Angels' Center Fielder **Mike Trout** is a 2026 All-Star.



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**Sean Charpentier** is the current city manager for the City of Pacifica. Sean replaced City Manager **Kevin Woodhouse** in May 2026. He previously served as the Assistant City Manager and Interim City Manager for East Palo Alto. Most recently he was the Executive Director of the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County. Sean began his public service career as a member of a Santa Clara County Supervisor's staff. Sean earned a BA in international development and social change from Clark University, and a Master's degree in city and regional planning from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Yula Carter**, Pacifica Assistant City Manager, is a former Finance Director and Deputy City Manager for Half Moon Bay (2015-2018), and Assistant City Manager for Sausalito (2018-2021).



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## City Managers Who Served in the city of Lakeport, California

**Kevin Ingram (July 2020–Present):** Appointed following a tenure as the city's first Assistant City Manager and Community Development Director.

**Margaret Silveira (April 2010 –July 2020):** Served for a decade before retiring. In honor of her service, Lakeport named its community center building for her.

**Kevin Burke (2009–2010/Interim):** Served as the Acting/Interim City Manager concurrently while also serving as Lakeport's Chief of Police.

**Jerry Gillham (2007–2009):** Appointed as Lakeport's second permanent city manager after transitioning from public management positions in Oregon.

**Randy Johnsen (2001–2006):** Served as Lakeport's first official city manager until he retired in 2006. Randy previously served as city manager in the cities of Orland, Jone, and Cotati. Since retirement, Randy has been interim city manager in the cities of Yreka, Dunsmuir and Gridley. He started as an Intern in Lakewood.

## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto

Former city of Pacifica city managers include:

**Kevin Woodhouse** (October 2017 – March 2026)  
Kevin served as one of the city's longest-tenured managers before his retirement in the spring of 2026.

**Lorie Tinfow** (October 2013 – March 2017) Lorie was appointed as the first female City Manager in Pacifica's history before moving on to become the City Manager for the city of Benicia;

**Stephen Rhodes** (2007 – July 2013)  
Served as city manager for six-years and came out of retirement in Oregon to guide Pacifica through the late-2000s.



**Joseph Tanner**, served as Pacifica city manager from 2003 to 2006 when he was initially hired as an Interim City Manager. Joe left to become the Vallejo city manager in 2006. Joe previously was city manager for Pleasant Hill, Emeryville and Galt.

**Karl Baldwin** (c. 1958)  
Karl is recognized historically as the first Pacifica permanent City Manager following the city's formal incorporation in late 1957.

**Jane Hicks** (c. 1957)  
Served as the initial **Acting City Manager** to help set up early municipal protocols as cityhood was established.



**John K. Simpson, Jacki "Cookie" Kimmitt Simpson Beebe, Jack Simpson and Kellee Kimmitt Hearther.**  
John lives in Billings, Montana, Kellee in Hawaii and Cookie & Jack in California.

## Executive Level Posse Roster:

**Wade McKinney**, Retired Indian Wells City Manager  
**Mike Sedell**, Retired Simi Valley City Manager  
**Larry F. Pennell**, Retired City Manager, Wasco  
**Kevin O'Rourke**, KOLGS; Retired City Manager  
**Glenn Southard**, Retired CM, Indio & Claremont  
**Joe Tanner**, Retired Vallejo City Manager  
**Guy Huffaker**, Retired Porterville City Manager  
**Vern Lawson**, Retired, City of Lancaster  
**Robert T. "Bob" Dickey**, Retired South Gate DPW  
**Doug Dunlap**, Retired City Manager, Pomona  
**Rita Geldert**, Retired City Manager, Vista,  
**Dale Geldert**, Retired CDF State Director  
**Lloyd de Llamas**, Retired City Man./**HdL** Co-founder  
**John Shirey**, Retired City Manager, Sacramento  
**John Russo**, Retired City Manager; SynchroniCITY  
**Lee McDougal**, Retired City Manager, Montclair  
**Mark Scott**, Interim City Manager  
**Doug La Belle**, Retired City Manager, Chino Hills  
**Don Penman**, Retired City Manager, Arcadia  
**Sam Olivito**, Retired CCCA Executive Director  
**Donald Duckworth**, Retired City Manager  
**Richard Rowe**, Retired City Manager

## Posse Roster:

**Gregory Korduner**, Retired City Manager, Huntington Park  
**Rod B. Butler**, Jurupa Valley, City Manager  
**Rita Geldert**, Retired City Manager, Vista  
**Dale Geldert**, Retired CDF Director, State of CA  
**Dr. Carlos A. Urrutia**, Retired City Manager, Rocklin  
**Ray Taylor**, Retired City Manager, Westlake Village  
**Denise Ovrom**, Former CM retired from **HdL Companies**  
**Robert "Bud" Ovrom**, Retired City Manager  
**Cynthia Kurtz**, Interim City Manager, Pasadena  
**Ron Molendyk**, Retired City Manager, Lake Elsinore  
**Kevin Duggan**, Retired City Manager, Mountain View  
**Gary Milliman**, Retired City Manager, Brookings, Oregon  
**Jim Lewis**, City Manager, City of Atascadero  
**Donald Jeffers**, Retired City Manager, Huntington Park  
**Wayne Wedin**, Retired City Manager, Brea  
**Karen Herrera**, Retired Deputy City Manager, Duarte  
**David Jenkins**, Retired City Manager, & CC So. Lake Tahoe  
**Laura Behjan**, Retired Simi Valley, City Manager

## Contributor Roster:

**Robert & Karen Flores**, Retired El Cajon, residents



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**Roxanne Diaz** is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the California City Management Foundation (CCMF)

Call **RWG** at No. 213-626-8484

# m.

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**Marc A. Mitchell**, Principal  
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Marc & his family are "Flag waving" American patriots honoring all those who have worn our country's uniform.

"I'll continue to fly the flag every day. All gave some; some gave all. Lest we forget." – **Marc Mitchell**



**Mitchell Public Affairs & Advocacy Marc A. Mitchell**, Principal

Honorably serving clients in both the public and private sector; achieving solutions at the regional and local level in the LA Basin. Marc's focus has been on infrastructure, transportation, energy, ports, and health care. Marc brings nearly three decades of government relations and political experience with public affairs and advocacy focus.

## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto



Palm Desert has been one of the most rapidly growing cities in the Coachella Valley area of Riverside County. The area was called Old MacDonald Ranch in the early days, and the name change to

Palm Village in the 1920s when groves of date palms were planted. The first large scale residential development began in 1943 in connection with the United States Army's Desert Training Center, built under the leadership of **General George S. Patton** during WW II. Following the war on the south side of Highway 111 the development of "El Paseo", and upscale shopping district copied for Rodeo Drive. In 1948, the Palm Desert Corporation began developing property, and in 1951 the area was named "Palm Desert." The first post office opened in July 1947. Palm Desert was incorporated in November 1973. The 2020 population is 51,163. **Chris Escobedo** is the City Manager in Palm Desert, and **Richard Cannone** is the Assistant City Manager. **Anthony Mejia** is the City Clerk. The Director of Economic Development is **Martin Avarez**, **Lauri Aylaian** is the Director of Community Development and the Director of Finance in **Paul Gibson**.

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**Joe A. Gonsalves** said: "Lobbyist are like parachutes, you don't need them often but when you do, they had better work."

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Founded in 1975 by former Assembly Member **Joe A. Gonsalves**, the firm represents 50-plus cities and is a key player in city legislation. The firm works closely with the League of California Cities.



**Anthony Gonsalves**, President of the firm, is a long time Member of the California City Management Foundation (CCMF) Board of Trustees.

**Jason & Paul Gonsalves** are recognized local. Government legislation experts.

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Retired city manager **Daniel Keen**, said after internships in El Segundo, Vernon and Monterey Park, "I was fortunate to land my first full time job in Paramount, working for **Richard Powers** and **Bill Holt**." Dan says, "...they were great role models for how to conduct yourself as a public administrator."



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## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto

**Chris Escobedo**, who started in Palm Desert as Assistant City Manager, is the City Manager in the city since September 2022 when he succeeded City Manager **Lawrence “Todd” T. Hileman**, who is the city manager for the city of South Pasadena. Chris served as the Assistant to the City Manager in Indio from February 2006 until March 2013, when he was hired as the Community Resources Director in La Quinta. He served there until he was hired in Palm Desert. Chris earned a BA from the University of California, Berkeley and an MPA from California State University, San Bernardino. In 2008-2009, Chris served on the Board of the Municipal Management Association of Southern California (MMASC).



Former Palm Desert Interim Assistant City Manager **Richard D. Cannone** has been the Assistant City Manager in Palm Desert since March 2025. Before 2022, Richard worked for the city of Denton, Texas. He came to Palm Desert as Deputy Director of Development Services in May 2022. He became Director of Development Services in November 2022. Richard earned a BA in community and regional planning from Iowa State University.

Highly thought of longtime Palm Desert City Manager **John Wohlmuth** was working as executive director for the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) in February 2009 when he was hired to replace longtime Palm Desert City Manager **Carlos Ortega**, who was a Vietnam Veteran, and began his city career in 1972 with the city of Coachella. Carlos worked for the city of Palm Desert for 31 years and was city manager from 2000 to 2008 when he retired. He replaced city manager **Bruce A. Altman**, who also retired as Palm Desert city manager. Bruce retired in 1995 due to contracting multiple sclerosis. He received a 30 Year ICMA Service Award. Bruce passed away on April 12, 2017, at the age of 79 of congestive heart failure. **Lauri Aylaian** served as the Palm Desert city manager from October 2016 until her retirement in November 2020. After retiring she was interim Parks and Recreation Director for Palm Springs for a time.



**Joseph Cisneros**, La Palma, President  
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**Stacie Marchetti**, President  
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 Annual Conference, September 27-30, 2026  
 3620 American River Drive, Suite 230,  
 Sacramento, CA 95864

## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto



Palm Springs is a nationally known Riverside County desert resort city on the Colorado Desert of the Coachella Valley. Palm Springs, where many celebrities maintain homes, has become a retirement

location and a winter "snowbird" gathering place for those who live in winter snow, many from Canada. When the United States joined World War II, Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley became important to the war effort. The airfields were important to logistics, and after Pearl Harbor Day, the El Mirador Hotel was obtained by the U.S. government and converted into Torrey General Hospital. Following the end of the war, the area began a transformation to a resort destination and an area with modern architecture for commercial development and housing for celebrities and the rich. Palm Springs incorporated in April 1938. The 2020 populations totaled 44,575. **Scott Stiles** is the Palm Springs city manager, and **Teresa Gallavan** and **Flinn Fagg** are the Assistant City Managers. **Brenda Pree** is the City Clerk. Andrew Mills is the Chief of Police and Jeffrey Ballinger is the City Attorney.

What began as a filming location in the silent film beginnings, developed into an exclusive area for film star private living. One of the first stars to recognize the allure of Palm Springs was **Rudolph Valentino**, and by the 1920s others joined him, like **Clara Bow**, **Rex Bell** and many other actors, directors and studio executives. **Charlie Farrell** and **Ralph Bellamy** opened the Palm Springs Racquet Club in 1934, and it became the center for Hollywood desert gatherings. **Norma Jean Mortenson** was photographed at the club and soon became the legendary actress, **Marilyn Monroe**. **Clark Gable**, **Carole Lombard**, **Humphrey Bogart** and **Marlene Dietrich** spent weekends at the club. The Rat Pack landed in Palm Springs. They include **Frank Sinatra**, **Dean Martin**, **Sammy Davis Jr.**, and **Peter Lawford**. **Sonny Bono**, of Sonny and Cher, served as the Mayor in Palm Springs in the 1980s. Sonny started the Palm Springs International Film Festival. **Bob Hope**, **Dinah Shore** and **Lionardo DiCaprio** and members of the Kardashians, **Liberace**, **Sophia Loren**, **Elizabeth Taylor**, **Brad Pitt**, and many more are/were among Palm Springs visitors and owners.

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**Debbie Smith**, Executive Director

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South Gate City Council Member

**Eddie Martinez**, ICFA Vice President/Treasurer

Huntington Park City Council Member

### Independent Cities Finance Authority

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## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto



Palm Springs has appeal far beyond the entertainment industry. For more than 40 years, Sunny lands, located in nearby Rancho Mirage, was a place for celebrities, Presidents, business leaders and even British royalty, to visited. Queen Elizabeth II is among to historic guests. **Walter and Leonore Annenberg** built Sunny lands, named for a former home they had in Pennsylvania. Walter made much of his worth by publishing TV Guide and the magazine, Seventeen. Sunnylands. Both Walter and Leonore served in Ambassador in the United States government. Sunnylands is a 25,000 square foot home on 200 acres. The estate became known as the "Camp David of the West." President **Richard Nixon** fled to Sunnylands immediately following his resignation. President **Barack Obama** hosted the ASEAN summit there in 2016. He held "shirtsleeve summits" with Chinese President **Xi Jinping** in 2013. The eight U.S. Presidents who were guests at Sunnylands include **Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush** and **Barack Obama**. **Ronald Reagan** visited the estate every New Year's holiday for 18 years.



Palm Springs City Manager **Scott Stiles** started his career in Ohio. He joined the Cincinnati city staff as a Human Resources Analyst in May 1988. Scott worked his way up in the Cincinnati organization. In July 1991, he became an Assistant Legal Administrator; July 2000, the Real Estate Manager; Assistant to the City Manager in July 2002; and Assistant City Manager in February 2005. Scott was tapped to serve as Interim City Manager in December 2013, and he went back to the Assistant City Manager post in September 2014. He came to California in August 2015 to be the Garden Grove city manager, and he was hired as city manager in Palm Springs in March 2023. Scott earned a BS in journalism and geography from South Dakota State University, and an MCP in community planning from the University of Cincinnati.

## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto

Former Palm Springs city managers include a former Pasadena and Oakland city staff member, **William E. Alworth**, who was appointed Palm Springs city manager in December 1945. He served as city manager until 1950 when **Russell W. Rink**, an Assistant to the City Manager in San Diego, was hired to be city manager. In September 1953, political friction led to Russell's resignation and the appointment of Assistant City Manager **Robert W. Peterson** to take his place. After the tenures of **Daniel Wagner** (1963-1968) and **Frank U. Alworth** (1968-1973), **Donald A. "Don" Blubaugh** became the Palm Springs city manager in August 1973 and served until November 1979, when he left to become the Hayward city manager. He later served in Walnut Creek (1988-2002) and other communities. Don was President of the City Managers' Department of the League of California Cities in 1990-1991. **Norman R. King** was Palm Springs city manager from 1979 until June 1990 after being the Claremont city manager (1975-1979), and before serving as Moreno Valley city manager (1991-1996). He was President of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) in 1995. After **Bob Parkins** Palm Springs city manager tenure (1990-2000), **David Ready** began his long service as city manager from February 2000 until his retirement in March 2021. David is now a member of the Palm Springs city council. **Justin Clifton** served for a short time (April 2021-July 2022) before the appointment of **Scott Stiles**. Assistant City Manager **Teresa Gallavan** filled the gaps as Interim City Manager.



Karen and her retired city manager husband **Gregory Korduner** at Dodger Stadium. Following the game the Los Angeles Dodgers were in first place in the National League West Division by 15 games.



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**Michael Colantuono** is Managing Shareholder, and currently is City Attorney for the City of Grass Valley. Michael is an elected member of the American Law Institute, and he is a leading expert in local government legal issues.

Two of the firm's attorneys were named California Lawyers of the Year (2020).

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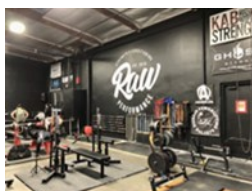
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## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto



Palmdale and its neighboring city of Lancaster are Los Angeles Counties two most northern cities in the Antelope Valley. Spanish Captain **Pedro Fages** explored the Antelope Valley in 1772. The

modern development of Palmdale began in the mid-1800s because of the gold rush, cattle ranching, the establishing of stagecoach service, and the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1876. Significant population growth moved up with the completion of the California aqueduct in 1913, which brought a large number of farmers. Palmdale was incorporated in August 1962. Its 2020 population has grown to 169,450. **Larry Chimbole**, who passed away in November 2015, was the "First Mayor of Palmdale." Larry was the first Antelope Valley resident to be elected to the California State Assembly. He served two terms (1974-1978). **Sal Mendez** is the City Manager, and the Assistant City Managers are **Sara Gallagher** and **Nardy Lopez**. **Janelle Samson** is the Deputy City Manager. **Michael McComas** is the Public Safety Director, **Megan Taggart** is the Director of Economic & Community Development, and **Yvette Barrios** is the Human Resources Director.



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**Salvador Mendez** went to work for the city of Lynwood in January 2015 as an Administrative Analyst. After a couple of public works position promotions, Sal became the Director of Public Works in August 2018. In March 2019, Sal joined the El Monte city staff. He became the Director of Public Works and Utilities in July 2020. In July 2022, he was chosen to serve as Assistant City Manager and Public Works and Utilities Director. Sal moved to Palmdale in January 2024 as Assistant City Manager and after serving as Interim he was appointed Palmdale City Manager in March 2026. Sal earned a BA in sociology from the University of California, Berkeley and an MPA from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

"Never apologize for being patriotic."  
---The Late Country Music Artist **Toby Keith**

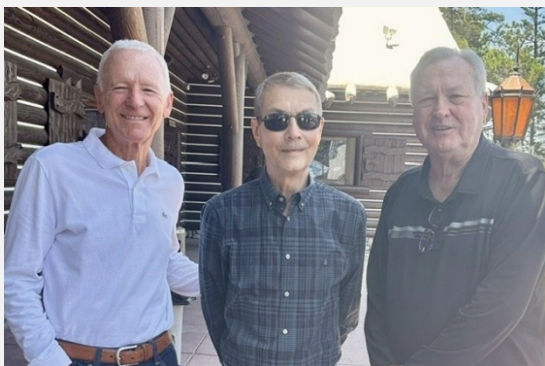
## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto

Former Palmdale city managers include some highly professionals. **Robert “Bob” Toone Jr.** served the city as city manager for 20 years, from December 1986 to December 2006. Prior to his Palmdale service he was the Assistant City Manager in La Mesa and worked for two Illinois cities. Bob earned a BA and MPA from Brigham Young University. **Stephen “Steve” Williams** joined the Palmdale city staff in 1987 as Public Works Director. Steve was appointed



city manager following Bob's retirement. **David “Dave” Childs** took the reins for about three years before he retired in June 2015. Dave was succeeded by Interim City Manager **Ken**

**Pulskamp**. Dave served as the President of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) in 2010-2011. Dave previously worked for Washoe County, Nevada and as South Lake Tahoe city manager. He also served as city manager for cities in Minnesota. Former Simi Valley city executive **James “Jim” Purtee** was the Palmdale city manager from October 2015 until his retirement in January 2020. Jim passed away on November 23, 2024. He was a regular attendee of the “Proof of Life” lunch program. **Dr. John J. “J.J.” Murphy** served as Palmdale city manager from December 2019 until February 2022. J.J. is a retired U.S. Air Force and Air Force Reserves Major and served in Africa and Haiti. **Ronda Perez** was Assistant City Manager and took the City Manager position as Acting or Interim from December 2021 to January 2023.



**Don Penman, Don Vestal and Glenn Southard** at a Southern California “Proof of Life” lunch.

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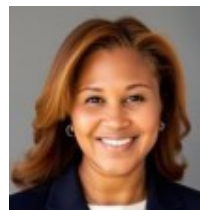
Palo Alto is a charter city in Santa Clara County. The city is named for El Palo Alto, an historic 110-foot-tall California Redwood on the banks of the San Francisquito Creek sighted by a Spanish explorer in 1769. In 1777,

**Father Junipero Serra** established the Mission Santa Clara de Asis that's lands included modern Palo Alto. Palo Alto was incorporated in 1894 by **Leland Stanford** and his wife **Jane Stanford**, when they founded Stanford University in memory of their only child, **Leland Stanford Jr.** The 2020 population of Palo Alto is 68,572. **Ed Shikada** is the city manager and **Mahealani Ah Yun** is the City Clerk. **Kiely Nose** is the Assistant City Manager, and the Deputy City Manager is **Chantal Cotton Gaines**. **Lauren Lai** is the Administrative Services Director/Chief Financial Officer, and **Kristen O'Kane** is the Community Services Director. The Chief of Police is **James Reifschneider** and the Fire Chief **Stephen Lindsey**.



**Ed Shikada** joined the Palo Alto city staff in April 2015 as an Assistant City Manager after serving as the San José city manager from December 2013. Ed began his career in Project Management in 1985 as a staff member for a private consulting firm.

From 1991-1995, Ed a Manager in the Congestion Management Program for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Ed became the Long Beach Director of Public Works in 1995 and joined the San José staff as Assistant City Manager in 2003. Ed was elevated to Palo Alto City Manager in December 2018, more than 11 years ago. Ed earned BS from the University of Hawaii, Manoa, and a Master's Degree from the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).



**Englander Knabe & Allen (EKA)** is one of the leading strategic communications and public affairs firms in Southern California. The Founding Partner is **Harvey Englander**, and Partners include **Matt Knabe**, **Marcus Allen**, **Eric**

**Rose**, **Jeff McConnell**, **Adam Englander**, **Alex Cherin** and Managing Partner **Kellie Hawkins**. **EKA** prides itself on providing a unique and strategic perspective on a wide variety of issues. **EKA** provides lobbying, government affairs, public relations, political campaigns, and crisis management services for a wide variety of clientele. **EKA** also provides professional litigation communication and expert witness services led by a team of strategists, lawyers, journalists, and media relations specialists.

Together, **EKA** has more than 100-years of combined experience and a multitude of relationships within the City & County of Los Angeles, and the 88 cities within Los Angeles County.

To contact **EKA**, please call 213) 741-1500 or email **Matt Knabe**, Partner.

## California City Executives in Cities of Pacifica to Palo Alto

Former Palo Alto city manager include **Jerome “Jerry” Keithley** (1950-1966). Jerry was appointed following the 1950 charter amendment approving the council-manager form of government. Jerry went on to serve in Oakland and Glendale. He was the Stockton city manager prior to joining Palo Alto. Jerry served as President of the City Managers' Department of the League of California Cities in 1968-1969, and as an ICMA Regional Vice President in 1973-1975. Following his retirement he relocated to Rancho Mirage.

**George Morgan** (1966-1972) had been **Jerry Keithley's** longtime assistant and protégé. After George resigned in 1972, **George Sipel** (1972-1979) succeeded him as city manager and successfully introduced a collaborative “team Management” philosophy to city hall. After George, **William “Bill” Zaner** served as Palo Alto city manager from 1979 to 1992. He previously worked in San Leandro and as city manager for Union City. After his 1992 retirement he served in Interim City Manager assignments in Half Moon Bay (1996), Belmont (1997) and Los Altos (1998). Bill frequently compared the role of a city manager to that of an orchestra conductor. He viewed his professional work as a blend of art and precision, working to put city departments and public interests in harmony with proper timing.

**June Fleming** was the first female Palo Alto city manager (1992-2000). June passed away at the age of 93 in December 2024. **Dr. Frank Benest** served as Palo Alto city manager from 2000 until his retirement in August 2008. Frank served as President of the City Managers' Department of the League of California Cities in 2001-2002. After his retirement, Frank is still an important professional management source for city managers. He is an ICMA leader as a Senior Advisor for Next Generation Initiatives and he is co-chair of the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program.

**James “Jim” R. Keene, Jr.** was the Palo Alto city manager from 2008 until his retirement in 2018. He previously worked as City Manager for Berkeley (1996-2000) and Tucson, Arizona (2000-2005). Jim was awarded the Mark E. Keane Award for Excellence in 2016.



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A banjo player of excellence was the late retired city manager **Lauren Wasserman**. He served Montclair, Rancho Cucamonga and Encinitas as city manager.



The world of communication is changing rapidly and so are the tools. **Englander Knabe & Allen** believes a constant, unrelenting focus on the needs of the firm's clients is not a service but a necessity. **The firm works with city governments to develop public-private partnership opportunities.**

At **Englander Knabe & Allen**, you only work with senior level staff because the firm only has senior level staff. Each of the firm's members bring substantial education, experience, and expertise in developing communications campaigns for Fortune 500 companies, financial institutions, entrepreneurial companies, trade associations, government agencies, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations. **Englander Knabe & Allen** does not employ account executives; rather, strategy and implementation are provided only by partners and vice presidents.

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## **Government Advocacy and Public Affairs**

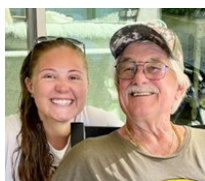
**Englander Knabe & Allen (EKA)** is a strategic communications firm specializing in government affairs, political campaigns, reputation and crisis communications, association management and litigation support. **EKA** produces results for its clients across a diverse range of practice areas. **EKA** team members have many years of public and private sector experience and deep person relationships in government throughout Southern California.

**Harvey Englander** is the Founding Partner, founding **EKA** in 2005. He has been at the center of California's public and business life for more than 40-years. **Englander Knabe & Allen (EKA)** specialize in developing and implementing Position -A- Strategies for its clients, public or private. **EKA** Partners include **Matt Knabe; Marcus Allen; Adam Englander; Eric Rose; Jeff McConnell; Kellie Hawkins; & Alex Cherin.**

**Kellie Hawkins** is the Managing Partner and leads the **EKA** Health Initiatives team. Her training and background offers clients expert counsel on both a practical and legislative level. She served in the administration of former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. Kellie earned a BA from Howard University and a Master's degree in public health from the University of Southern California (**USC**). She was an American Marshall Memorial Fellow in 2013, and she is a graduate of CORO's Health Leadership Program.

**Matt Knabe** is one of the founding partners. Matt specializes in public affairs, political consulting, government relations and issues, and communications strategy and community relations. Matt graduated from Pepperdine University in 1996, where he played for the Pepperdine University Men's Golf Team. It is hard to find someone with better personal interaction with local city managers, and elected officials than Matt.

**Marcus A. Allen** is a former Chief Deputy Controller in Los Angeles and Deputy Chief of Staff in charge of operations and finance in the Mayor's office. Prior to working for Los Angeles, among other posts, Marcus worked as the Chief Deputy at the Los Angeles County Probation Department, and as a Public Affairs Planner for the Southern California Gas Company. He earned a BA from **UCLA** and a MPPS from the University of Chicago.



### Some considerations and thoughts, just for edification and "remember whens":

California's state government has sued the United States EPA over efforts to subject California's Clean Air Act waivers to Congressional review. These

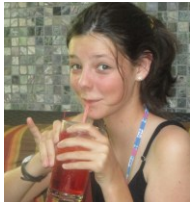
waivers allow California to set stricter vehicle-emission standards and pursue the planned transition away from new gasoline-powered vehicles. California argues that federal actions could increase pollution and undermine decades of California environmental policy. Shifting gears to music, based on worldwide streaming, sales, and cultural impact in 2026, **Taylor Swift** is probably the closest thing to the "top singer" globally right now, with **Bad Bunny** and **Drake** close behind. The biggest country music stars include **Morgan Wallen**, **Luke Combs**, **Lainey Wilson**, **Chris Stapleton** and **Ella Langley**. The legend of comedy and father of satire, **Mel Brooks** celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 28. Born in 1926, Mel is quoted as saying, "I think laughing keeps you healthy and happy." Being happy in the sunshine as summer approaches is a worthy objective. Public access to the warm sands of beach areas remains a major issue in coastal areas, especially where private development limits access. Water quality and pollution from stormwater runoff, sewage spills and plastic waste are issue areas in the minds of many beach goers. Other areas of concern for beach people as coastal erosion, and what climate change might be blamed for regarding sea-level changes that alter shorelines and wave patterns. Of course, the protection of marine ecosystems such as kelp forests, reefs and wetlands are important consideration. NASCAR driver **Ryan Blaney** has become the stock car racing circuit's **Jerry Colona** with his resented mustache growth. Ryan is a lookalike for the legendary *Bob Hope Show* funny man **Jerry Colona**. WNBA star player **Caitlin Clark** left a game with the Phoenix Mercury early with a back injury and then sat out the Indiana Fever's next game. Caitlin was a star at the University of Iowa and drafted into the WNBA as the very first pick in the Draft Class of 2024. She was named the 2024 WNBA Rookie of the Year and selected to the All-WNBA Team that year. The six-foot-tall Guard for the Indiana Fever has brought global interest to women's basketball; a movement widely known as the "Caitlin Clark effect." Park squirrels often lose their fear of humans and may aggressively approach backpacks or hands for food, occasionally biting out of confusion. The picture shows **Samantha Simpson** at the baseball field at Heartwell Park in Long Beach. **Alex Morgan** became the youngest member of the U.S. women's national soccer team in 2009. She was the first overall pick in the 2011 Women's Professional Soccer draft. She was born July 2, 1989, in San Dimas. Alex attended Diamond Bar High School, and she played soccer for the University of California, Berkeley.



**Picking Up the Pieces:** Since November 2021, **Todd Juhasz** has served as the City Manager of the City of Mount Shasta. He previously worked as the Dunsmuir city manager starting in August 2019 until he joined the Mount Shasta city staff. Todd is a United State Air Force veteran. He earned a BS in chemistry & microbiology from the University of Buffalo, an MLA

from the University of New York (SUNY), and an MPA from Syracuse University. Todd has been dealing with the issues surrounding the proposed establishment of a data center at the former Crystal Geyser bottling plant near Mount Shasta in unincorporated Siskiyou County. **Thomas G. "Tom" Mauk** (October 21, 1943-June 8, 2024), who passed away of Saturday, June 8, 2024, at the age of 80, served 19 years as the city manager for the city of Whittier (1980-1999). He previously served as the Norco city manager (1976-1980). He began his public service career in 1967 with the Los Angeles city staff and he was Assistant City Manager in Montclair from 1970 to 1976. After leaving Whittier in 1999, Tom worked as city manager for La Habra (1999-2002). He worked a couple years as a consultant (2002-2004), before he was hired as the County Executive Officer (CEO) for Orange County in October 2004. After Tom resigned from Orange County in 2012, he worked for a private engineering company as Director of Business Development. Tom received a rare 40 Year ICMA Service Award in 2009. Tom was the 1996-1997 President of the City Managers' Department of the League of California Cities. **Gillian Haen** is the new City Manager for the City of Chico. Her start date in Chico is July 27. Chief of Police **Billy Aldridge** was another candidate for the position. Vallejo city council member Helen-Marie Gordon, address the Chico city council on Zoom, as she worked with Gillian for seven years and confirmed the Gillian is a dedicated and experienced public servant. She has served as Assistant City Manager for Vallejo since April 2022. She was an Operations Manager for a private engineering firm in Healdsburg (2018-2019), after she had served as Director of Planning & Development for an Indians Tribe in Rohnert Park. Gillian was the City Planner for Santa Rosa (2005-2012) and an Associate Planner for San Joaquin County (2003-2005). She earned a BA from California State University, Sacramento. Auburn City Manager **Sean Rabé** resigned his position to accept an appointment to serve as the Assistant Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Placer County. His last day with the city was July 7. Sean began his city manager tenure in Auburn in April 2023. He previously served as the Town Manager for Loomis (2017-2023), Town Manager in Colma (2014-2017), and City Manager in Sutter Creek (2010-2014). Sean earned a BA from California State University, Sacramento and an MPP from California State University, Northridge.





**More Pieces Picked Up:** Effective January 2026, **John Craig** became the Morro Bay city manager. John previously worked as the Deputy County Manager for Los Alamos County in New Mexico, and Director of General Services for the city of Albuquerque.

John was Assistant County Administrative Officer for Mono County, California from December 2020 to October 2022. He earned a BS in psychology from Belmont University and an MPA from Columbia SIPA. He started his working career in May 1998 as a Senior Analyst for Moody's Investors Service. Morro Bay Mayor Carla Wixom welcomed John to his first California city manager's job. Former Tulare County Supervisor who currently serves as the city manager for the city of Lindsay, **Kuyler Crocker**, has been dealing with refuse disposal issues of late. Kuyler was appointed Lindsay city manager in September 2025, after working as Interim City Manager from March 2025 to September. It appears that Caglia Environmental and the city of Porterville have considered privatizing waste management services in Porterville. Kuyler was contacted for advice. Porterville City Manager **Richard Tree** confirms that should his city consider an RFP for services, the process will be a fair, competitive and transparent process. **Craig R. Nealis**, who grew up in Menlo Park, California where his father, Jack, was a medical doctor, served as the City Manager for the City of Rolling Hills from August 1990 until his tragic death on September 30, 2006. Craig joined the city staff in Bellflower in March 1984. He started in Bellflower as an Administrative Assistant, and he was promoted to Deputy City Administrator in the mid-1980s. He was 31 years old when he went to Rolling Hills. He was highly knowledgeable about firearms and was extremely good at target shooting. Craig and his wife Alice and their son and daughter lived in Yorba Linda. Craig earned a BA from the University of Nevada, Reno and an MPA from the University of Southern California (**USC**). At the time of his death, many in the community thought of Craig as "Mr. Rolling Hills," as then **Mayor B. Allen Lay** said. South San Francisco Public Works Director **Eunejune Kim** has a new Deputy Public Works Director as **Alex Henry** has been promoted. Alex succeeds **Dave Bockhaus**, who has retired. Alex began his career with the city as a Public Works Maintenance Worker before advancing to Craftworker, where he developed hands-on experience in the construction, maintenance, and repair of City facilities and infrastructure. Starting on May First, **Courtney Christy** is the new Assistant City Manager for Nevada City, California. Previously, Courtney served as the Deputy City Manager for the city of Stockton. She joins city manager **Carrie Wright**, who also has prior work experience with the city of Stockton. Courtney joined the Stockton city staff in 2017 as a Program Specialist. Please take a few minutes to look at the *Trackdown Management* Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/trackdownmanagement>



**SHORTS:** \***Dr. John Murphy** was approved to become the next Turlock city manager after he was terminated in 2022 as the Palmdale city manager. \*Morro Bay Mayor Carla Wixom is the owner of Carla's Country Kitchen and Gift Shop in Morro Bay, famous for its hearty breakfast and lunch comfort food and welcoming country-style atmosphere. \*Yes, there is a Gun Barrel City in Henderson County, Texas, on the eastern shore of Cedar Creek Lake, where **Steven Norwood** has been appointed Interim City Manager. \***James C. "Jim" Gilley** retired following a 20-year career as Lancaster city manager, and he relocated to Henderson, Nevada in the Las Vegas area. \***Julia Sylva**, who is a graduate of Loyola Law School and a successful attorney, was 21 years old when she was selected to be the Mayor of Hawaiian Gardens in 1977, making her, at the time, the youngest Mayor in the United States. \***Sharon L. Landers**, who served as the city of Carson's first female city manager from May 2019 to March 2022, is the General Manager of the Rossmore Community Services District (RCSD) in Orange County. \*Former Porterville Director of Transportation, **Richard Tree** is the city manager for the city of Porterville, starting as "Interim" in May 2025 and hired as city manager in October 2025. \***Ellen Schroer** is the Interim City Manager in Bainbridge Island, Washington, and has been serving there since the second retirement of City Manager **Blair King** in March, who previously retired as Coronado city manager. \***Lawrence "Todd" T. Hileman**, who served as the city manager for Palm Desert (2021-2025), his first city job in California, is the currently city manager for the city of South Pasadena.

### Letters, notes and observations by readers

With SB 79 receiving a mixed reception across Los Angeles, one thing is becoming increasingly clear: California's housing crisis can only be solved if cities, developers and the state work together.

Former Governor **Gray Davis**, Los Angeles County Supervisor **Kathryn Barger**, legal experts, planners and researchers all emphasize that building more housing requires collaboration, local flexibility and infrastructure investment—not just mandates.

We're happy to arrange interviews with Olson Homes President & CEO **Scott Laurie** to discuss what the new "Say Yes to Housing" approach could mean for California communities and housing policy.

---**Darren Gold**

Managing Director and Partner  
The Rose Group

[darren@therosegrp.com](mailto:darren@therosegrp.com)



**"Proof of Life"** participants at the June 25, 2026  
"Proof of Life" lunch in La Mirada.

**Mark Alexander** retired as the La Cañada Flintridge City Manager from 2003 after joining the city staff in October 1988. He also worked in San Dimas, Glendora and Simi Valley. Mark has been deeply involved with **USC**.

**Jim Barisic**, a former City of Artesia City Manager, who worked in Paramount and Cerritos. He served in Vietnam as an officer with the U.S. Army. He is the founder of **Brandywine Homes**.

**John Bramble**, a retired Merced City Manager. John started his career in Salem, Oregon in 1969. He served as City Administrator in Bell (1988- 1993), before Merced (2008- 2016). John is an avid golfer and occasionally hits the course with **Greg Korduner**.

**Jeff Collier**, retired as the Whittier city manager in November 2019. He worked as Acting City Manager in Fullerton in 2021-2022. He also worked in Chino Hills and West Covina.

**Bill Crowe** worked for Paramount (1975-1980), including time as Interim City Manager, before joining the staff of L.A. County Supervisor **Pete Schabarum** (1980-1990). He served as the Rosemead City Manager (2002-2006) before serving El Segundo Assistant City Manager until retirement.

**Lloyd de Llamas** is a co-founder of HdL Companies with the late **Robert Hinderliter**. He served as city manager in Woodlake (1968-1971), Lawndale (1971-1976) and Monterey Park (1976-1987).

**Caroline de Llamas**, a retired professional City Clerk. She has remained active in community and non-profit work, notably with the League of Women Voters (LWVC). She was City Clerk in Cerritos and La Cañada Flintridge.

**Jim DeStefano**, retired Diamond Bar City Manager. Jim was Community Development Director for Chino Hills when he was appointed Diamond Bar City Manager in July 2006. Jim retired in July 2017.

**Julio Fuentes** served as San Clara and Alhambra City Manager. Julio is building a career in real estate after more than 30-years in city government (Office: 424-297-1076).

**Greg Korduner**, retired Huntington Park City Manager. Greg is a Founder of the "Proof of Life" lunch program. He served as City Manager in El Monte and South El Monte. He worked for Norwalk and Artesia. He served as Interim City Manager in La Habra Heights and Los Alamitos.

**Larry J. Kosmont** started as an Intern in Santa Monica in 1975. He is the 1980 John H. Nail Memorial Award recipient while serving as the Assistant City Manager in Seal Beach. Larry was the Bell Gardens City Manager from 1980-1983 and went on to work in Burbank before founding the **Kosmont Companies** in 1986. Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the firm.

**Joaquin Ometeotl**, the son for former Lynwood city manager **Jose Ometeotl**, is a Summer Interim with **Wolf & Company**.

**Don Penman** is a retired Arcadia City Manager. He also was chief executive for Baldwin Park and San Fernando, and previously worked for Simi Valley. Since retirement, Don has completed several interim assignments, including as Interim City Manager in Ventura.

**Tom Robinson**, retired La Mirada City Manager (2008-2013). Tom previously worked in Commerce and Cerritos. Since retirement he served as Interim City Manager and Assistant City Manager in La Habra Heights. Tom is a Certified Management Consultant with his TR Management Services,

**Mike Sedell** is a retired Simi Valley City Manager. Mike is well known for working closely with State government in Sacramento on local government issues. He is a Board member for the Ventura County Employees' Retirement Association (VCERA), and the Museum of Ventura County

**Glenn Southard**, a San Clemente resident, is a well-respected veteran manager. He retired as City Manager for Indio and Claremont. Former ACM in San Juan Capistrano and worked in West Covina and Riverside. Glenn is one of the Founders of the California City Management Foundation (CCMF).

**Jeffrey L. Stewart** is a retired Bellflower city manager. Jeff also served as city manager in the cities of Los Alamitos and El Segundo. He worked in Rosemead and West Covina and currently is an executive for **Willdan**.

**Don Vestal**, a former City Manager in Westminster from 1997 to 2003. Don started his public services career in Planning. He worked with **HdL Companies** from 2007 to 2018.

**Don Wagner**, retired Assistant City Manager in Rosemead where he worked with the late City Manager and Willdan executive **Frank G. Tripepi**. Don served as City Administrator in Maywood since retirement.

**Wayne Wedin** served as the Brea City Manager 1968-1983. He started his career as a Pasadena Intern before joining the Santa Fe Springs city staff. He was Assistant City Manager when he left in August 1968 to be the Brea City Manager. Currently the President of Wedin Enterprises in Brea. He is a past-President of the League City Manager Department (1975-1976).

**Pat West**, a former Huntington Beach Lifeguard, is a retired city manager for the cities of Paramount and Long Beach. Since August 2025, Pat is a joint venture partner with **EKA**.

**Wes Wolf**, a former Hawaiian Garden City Manager. Worked in the finance, economic development and investment banker world prior to founding **Wolf & Company**.

**Jack A. Simpson**, worked for Paramount, Artesia, Cerritos, Hawaiian Gardens and Bellflower. Also, served as an Interim department head in La Puente. Worked with **Willdan**.

**Steve Harding** was the first Jurupa Valley city manager, and was city manager for the cities of Murrieta, Menifee and San Jacinto. Steve only missed the lunch because while on his way he got news that his granddaughter broke a collar bone, and he change course to go to the hospital.