

City Manager Newsletter By TRACKDOWN MANAGEMENT

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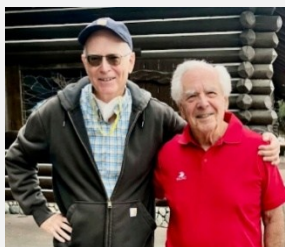


October 2026

Click the logos throughout the newsletter to open links...

Volume No. 20 | Issue No. 17

Louis "Lou" Shepard (December 3, 1932 – September 23, 2026)



Here is Lou in his red shirt at a "Proof of Life" lunch with **Bill Crowe**. Both Lou and Bill have the City of Commerce on their Resumés.

Highly regarded, longtime city manager and local

government administrator, **Lou Shepard** passed away at the age of 93 in late September 2026. Lou joined ICMA in 1958 and in 2015 he received a 30-year ICMA Service Award. He interned in San Leandro in 1957 and worked in Fremont (1958-1964) before he became city manager for Delano (1964-1967) and San Pablo (1967-1977). In 1977-1981, Lou was the Pasadena Redevelopment Agency Executive Director. In 1985-1987, he was Signal Hill city manager, before taking the Commerce City Administrator position in 1987-1994. R.I.P. Lou! You are truly missed.

Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway

Attached is you will find October 2026 issue of the City Manager Newsletter by Trackdown. This issue presents information regarding the executive leadership in the cities of Pomona, Port Hueneme, Porterville, Portola, Portola Valley and Poway.

City Managers in this issue include Pomona City Manager **Anita D. Scott**. City Managers **James Vega** of Port Hueneme, **Richard Tree** of Porterville, **Ryan Bonk** of Portola, **Darcy Smith** of Portola Valley, and **Chris Hazeline** of Poway.

In 2007, Jack A. and Susan Simpson's Trackdown Management began producing the City Manager Newsletter by Trackdown. The newsletter aims to call out people who serve or have served local governments. Though we don't get everyone, we try for good representative coverage.

Jack & Susan Simpson, 10 Claret, Rancho Mirage, California 92270

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www.trackdownmanagement.net | Jack@trackdownmanagement.net

Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



Pomona became part of Mexico in the 1830's, and the first settlers arrived prior to 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which eventually resulted in California becoming a State in

the United States of America. A group of real estate developers held a contest in 1875 to come up with a name for the town. The winning entry was submitted by citrus worker **Solomon Gates**, "Pomona." The name Pomona is the name of the Roman goddess of fruit. In the 1920s, Pomona was known as the "Queen of the Citrus Belt." Pomona incorporated in January 1888. The 2020 population is 151,713 and the estimated 2025 population is 147,807. The Pomona city manager is **Anita D. Scott** and Assistant to the City Manager and PIO is **Mark Gluba**. **Karla Shipman** is the City Clerk and **Diana Robles** is the Deputy City Clerk. **Sonia Carvalho** is the Pomona City Attorney. **Andrew Mowbray** is the Finance Director and City Treasurer. The Pomona Chief of Police is **Michael Ellis**.



Fall is upon us and Halloween celebrations lurks.



City Manager **Anita D. Scott**, worked for Los Angeles County Regional Planning and as the Legislative Deputy to Supervisor **Gloria Molina** (2004-2019). She came to Pomona in 2018 and worked as Assistant City Manager, Director of Development Services and Planning Managers. Anita was appointed City Manager in February 2024. She earned a master's in urban planning (MPL), and a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D.) from the University of Southern California (**USC**).

m.

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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
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John Russo, Retired City Manager; SynchroniCITY
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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
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Posse Roster:

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

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Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



James Makshanoff served as the Pomona city manager for four years from January 2020 before separating with the city in December 2023. James is currently working as an independent local government consultant. Prior to joining Pomona he served as San Clemente city manager from September 2014 to January 2020. Jim began his career with the cities of Covina and Downey. He was the Downey Deputy City Manager from June 2003 to October 2005 when he took the Azusa Public Works Director job in October 2005. He worked as the Azusa city manager from January 2012 to September 2014. Jim earned a BA and MPA from California State University, Long Beach. He was an elite member of the U.S. Men's National Water Polo Team prior to his local government service. He was an All-American goalie on the U.S. National team when it won the FINA World Cup Championship in 1991.



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This is a 2008 picture of **Rhonda Tripepi** and her late husband, former Rosemead city manager and **Willdan** executive **Frank G. Tripepi**. He was born in Dearborn, Michigan in 1947 and grew up in Norwalk. He served in Vietnam with the U.S. Army.



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Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



Doug Dunlap, served as the Pomona city manager from September 2000 until he retired in October 2007. Doug began his career as an Administrative Intern in July 1967 with the city of Pasadena. He joined the Cypress city staff under City Manager **Darrell Essex**, who became city manager in 1962. Doug served as Assistant City Manager from July 1973 to August 1976, when he accepted the city manager position in Chowchilla. He served there until 1979 when he moved to Villa Park (1979-1981), El Monte city manager (1981-1982), and Hawaiian Gardens (May 1983-January 1987). After working as the Community Development Director in Stanton (1987-1988), he joined Urban Futures Inc. as an Executive Vice President (1988-1989). He worked as the Pomona Redevelopment Agency Executive Director (1989-1992) and operated a private financial capital firm from 1993 until 2020. Doug was the Bradbury city manager from 1996 to 2000 before he to the Pomona city manager position. Doug earned a BA from California State University, Los Angeles. In 2004 he received a 30 Years ICMA Service Award.

Other Pomona city managers include **Linda Manning Lowry**, who **Doug Dunlap** brought to the city as Assistant City Manager after she was the Diamond Bar city manager. Linda replaced Assistant City Manager **Robert "Bob" Gutierrez**, who left the city in 2005 to become the Moreno Valley city manager. Following Doug's retirement in 2007, Linda served as Interim City Manager until she was selected for the city manager job in 2008. Linda retired from Pomona at the end of 2019. **Mark Gluba** served as the Interim City Manager following Linda's retirement and **Jim Makshanoff** taking the job.

Severo Esquivel was the Pomona city manager from 1994 until 2000.

The late **Frank G. Tripepi**, a retired Rosemead city manager, had life-altering injuries during his service in Vietnam with the United States Army. For his heroic service, Frank was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the Good Service Medal.

Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



Port Hueneme is a Ventura County "beach city." The name is native American for "resting place." In the 1800s the postal service named the small community, Wynema, after the local Wynema Lighter Co. The

name was officially changed in Port Hueneme in 1939. Hueneme was the second-largest grain-shipping port on the Pacific Coast between 1871 and 1895. The basic street grid for the town was laid out in 1888 using the Hueneme Wharf, built in 1871, as the focal point. The wooden fishing pier, after modifications over the years, reaches 1,250 feet into the Pacific Ocean. Port Hueneme was incorporated in March 1948. Its 2020 population is 21,954. The city manager is **James Vega** and **Charles Peretz** in the Deputy City Manager. **Georgianna Alvarez** in the City Clerk and **Paul Early** is the City Attorney. **Fred Camarillo** is the Public Works Director and **Tricia Maier** is the Community Development Director.



Port Hueneme City Manager **James Vega** worked as an Associate Attorney with a civil litigation firm from August 2012 to December 2014, when he took a Management Analyst position with the city of Oxnard. In March 2017,

James was hired to be the Assistant City Manager for the City of Ojai. He served as Interim City Manager from May until June in 2019, and he was appointed Ojai city manager in June 2019. James left Ojai to become the Port Hueneme city manager in July 2023. He earned a BA from California State University, Channel Islands and a JD from The Santa Barbara and Ventura Colleges of Law, Ventura. He is a member of the California State Bar.



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Anthony Gonsalves is President of the firm.

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Tricia Maier is the Community Development Director for the city of Port Hueneme since March 2026. She previously worked as a Planner in Pleasanton (1999-2002), and she spent more than 23 years with Ventura County and left there after a long-term role as a Planning Manager (2009-2026).

Former Port Hueneme city managers start with **Walter "Bill" Moranda** in the 1950s, and **John R. "Dick" Velthoen**, who served a 25-year tenure (1975-2000) and as Interim in 2012-2013. Other city managers include **Richard "Bob" Hunt** (2000-2006); **David J. Norman** (2006-2012); **Cynthia Haas** (2013-2016); **Rod Butler** (2016-2019); and **Tony Stewart** (2019-2023). David served as **Camarillo** city manager from 2016 until his retirement in 2020. Rod is currently the Jurupa Valley city manager.





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Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



Porterville, as early as 1826, was an area settlers skirted with swamps stretching out into the San Joaquin Valley floor with lush greenery of tall rushes called "tulare" by the indigenous people. The discovery of gold in 1848 brought crowds of migrant travelers to California. Porterville provided a stopping place for travelers and a staging area for prospectors. Between 1749 and 1852 prairie schooner traffic rolled through Porterville on the Stockton-Los Angeles Road along the banks of the Tule River. By 1860 local stores served the residents of the area, including those who raised cattle, horses, and hogs. The town of Porterville was founded in 1864, taking the middle name of its founder **Royal Porter Putnam**. The city was incorporated in May 1902. Its 2020 population is 62,623. The City Manager is **Richard Tree**, and the Deputy City Manager is **Donnie Moore**. The Porterville Chief of Police is **Jake Castellow**, and the Fire Chief is **Bryan Cogburn**. **Maria Bemis** is the Finance Director, **Baldomero Rodriguez** is the Public Works Director, the Planning and Engineering Director is **Clayton Dignam** and **Yuliana Andrade** is the Administrative Services Director.



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Porterville City Manager **Richard “Rich” Tree** is the son of former Porterville Mayor and Council Member **Steve Tree**. Steve served on the city council in the 1980s. Rich graduated from Porterville High School. He earned a BA from California State University, Bakersfield, and an MS in transportation management from San José State University. Rich began his public services career working nearly two decades managing operations for SM Transit, a family-owned transit business that contracted with public agencies to provide transportation services. In 2016, Rich was hired as the Porterville city Transit Manager, and he worked in that position until 2020 when he committed his time to helping establish the Tulare County Regional Transit Authority (TCRTA), and he was appointed the Executive Director of Tulare County Regional Transit Authority (TCRTA) in 2022. He resigned the TCRTA position in 2023 and became the Director of Transportation for the Porterville Unified School District (PUSD). He returned to Porterville as Transportation Director in March 2024, he became Porterville Interim City Manager in May 2025, and he was hired as City Manager in September 2025.



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Former 1992-1993, ICMA President **Roy Pederson** was the Porterville city manager from 1964 until 1969, when he left to become the Montebello City Administrator. Distinguished city managers have found their way to Porterville through the years. **Charles “Guy” Huffaker** was one of the longest tenured city managers in the state as Porterville city manager for 25-years from 1977 to January 2002. After working in National City in 1965, Bakersfield from 1966 to 1969, and Montebello, as assistant to **Roy Pederson**, Guy was appointed city manager for the city of Colton in 1972. He worked there until his Porterville tenure commenced. He started there at 38 and retired at the age of 62. He was President of the South San Joaquin City Managers Association and the Tulare County City Managers Group. He served on the Board of Trustees for the California City Management Foundation (CCMF). Other Porterville city managers include **John Longley** (2002-2009), **John Lollis** (2009-2024), and Interim City Managers **Patrice Hildreth** in 2024 and **Jason Ridenour** (2024-2025).





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Portola is found on the eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountains in Plumas County. Portola is located on the Middle Fork of the Feather River. It is named for the Spanish explorer

Gaspar de Portolá. The city is a crew change site for the Union Pacific Railroad's, formerly the Western Pacific Railroad, Feather River Route over the Sierra Nevada mountains. The Western Pacific Railroad Museum, located in Portola, is one of the largest railroad museums in the West; famous for its "Run-A-Locomotive" program. Portola was incorporated in May 1946. Its population count for 2020 was 2,100. Since 1997, the city has had at least 9-city managers, including the current City Manager **Ryan Bonk**. **Todd Roberts** is the Director of Public Works and **Kristen Schiavone** is the Administrative Services Manager. **Susan Scarlett** is the city's Finance Officer and **Linda Cooley** is the City Clerk and City Treasurer.



Portola City Manager **Ryan Bonk** grew up in Tinley Park, Illinois. While employed by the Chicago Transit Authority, Ryan earned an MBA from Governors State University. He moved to Monterey, California to work for an automation company. Ryan was selected to serve as the Portola city manager with a three-year employment agreement on November 18, 2024.

Jim Murphy served as the Portola city manager for nearly 14-years before he retired (1997-June 2011). Jim previously served as the Chief of Police for Chewelah, Washington (1985-1990). He also worked as the Normandy Park, Washington city manager (1990-1995) and Assistant City Manager and Public Safety Director for Federal Way, Washington. Jim currently service on the Portola City Council with a term that expires in November 2028. He earned a BS from Eastern Washington University and an MPA from City University, Seattle.

Local historians insist that Portola was always a fundamentally disciplined, hard-working logging and railroad community established long after the gold rush.

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Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



Portola Valley, named for Spanish explorer **Gaspar de Portolá**, who led the first Europeans exploration along the San Francisco Peninsula in 1769. Lumber and cattle grazing became the prevalent in the area in the early

1800s. The area's conversion from ranches to residences began after World War II, when housing pressures expanded out from Santa Clara County to reach San Mateo County. The city incorporated in July 1964. Its 2020 population is 4,456. **Darcy Smith** is the Town Manager and **Veronica Dao** is the Town Clerk. The Administrative Services Manager is **Cindy Rodas**. The Interim Town Engineer is **Armando Lee**, and **Sarah Cawse** is the Planning and Building Director.



Darcy Smith is the Portola Valley Town Manager. After working part-time as a Planning Research Assistant with Stanford University in 1997-1998, Darcy joined a private land planning firm in October 1998.

She worked on General Plans for South San Francisco and Rohnert Park. In November 1999, Darcy joined the Campbell Planning Department and in June 2003, she joined the San Mateo Planning Department. In June 2013, Darcy was named Principal Planner and Zoning Administrator for San Mateo. She was hired to serve as the San Bruno Community and Economic Development Director in November 2018. Darcy took the city of Millbrae Community Development Director position in October 2020, and in August 2022 she returned to the city of San Bruno to be Assistant City Manager. She worked in San Bruno until April 2025, when she left to accept the town manager job in Portola Valley where she began her tenure in July 2025. Darcy earned a BS in earth systems with a land systems specialty from Stanford University, and a Master of Urban Planning from San Jose State University. Darcy is American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Certified. She is an avid hiker and cyclist and knows the Portola Valley trails and roads quite well. She took over from Interim Town Manager, **Mark Linder**.



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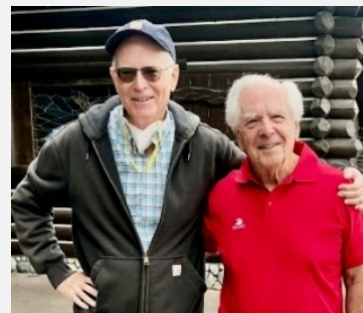
Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



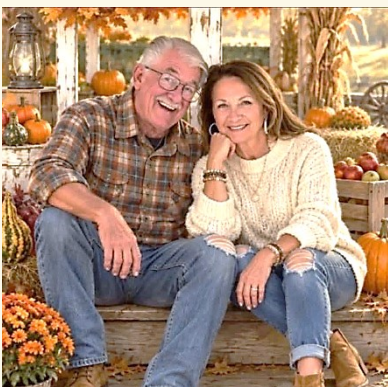
Poway is likely derived from an indigenous population word "Paguay" meaning "arrowhead" or "watering hole." As early as 1828 the local San Diego mission grazed cattle in the area, and Poway served as a stock range for nearly a century. In 1887 about 800 people lived and farmed in Poway. The lack of water in the area retarded its growth. In 1954 the Poway Municipal water District was established and utilize Colorado River Aqueduct water. Following the completion of a local sewer system in 1957, developers began build housing tracts. Poway incorporated in December 1980, and its 2020 population was 48,841. However, according to a recent State government population estimate, the population has grown to 50,542. **Chris Hazeltine** is the city manager and **Tracy Steven** is the assistant city manager. **Carrie Gallagher** is the Poway city clerk. **Audrey Denham** is the Director of Community Services, and **Julie Procopio** is the Director of Development Services. **Craig Schmollinger** is the Director of Finance, **Brian Mitchell** is the Fire Chief, **Eric Heidemann** is the Director of Public Works, and **Jodene Dunphy** is the Director of Human Resources & Risk Management.

Never to be Forgotten

Those who attended the "Proof of Life" Program who we have lost along the way. The picture shows **Bill Crowe** with the late **Lou Shepard**. "Proof of Life" program participants who passed:



Darrell Essex
Bob Williams
William "Bill" Holt
Lauren Wasserman
Ray Harris
Frank G. Tripepi
Howard Chambers
Mary Strenn
Keene Wilson
Joe Goeden
Ronald R. "Ron" Bates
Jim Purtee
Lou Shepard



City Manager Newsletter by Trackdown Management

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Executives in the California Cities of Pomona to Poway



Chris Hazeltine was appointed to serve as the city of Poway city manager in 2019. Began his public service career in parks and recreation in the 1990s including with the city of Oceanside. Chris served as the Parks and Recreation Director of Encinitas from 2004 until April 2011, when he took a similar position with the city of Carlsbad. Chris worked for Carlsbad until May 2019, when he was hired to be the sixth Poway city manager replacing the retiring City Manager **Tina White**. Chris earned a BA in recreation administration from San Diego State University, and a master's degree in organizational leadership from Point Loma Nazarene University.

James "Jim" L. Bowersox, who previously worked for the city of Cerritos, was Poway's first city manager and served in that position for nearly 25-years. He was hired in March 1981 and retired in December 2005. Following his retirement, the city council named the city hall building for him: the **James L. Bowersox City Office Building**. Jim was named "Kiwanian of the Year" by the Poway Kiwanis Club in 2010-2011. He turned 80-years old last February.

High respected in city manager circles, **Rod Gould** served as Poway city manager from January 2006 to 2010 when he left to assume the Santa Monica city manager position. Rod was succeeded by **Penny Ann Riley** who started her tenure with the city in 1988 as a college intern. Penny retired in January 2014, and Dan Singer was city manager from April 2014 until July 2016. Tina White, who served as Assistant City Manager for six years prior to being promoted to city manager in September 2016.



Audrey Denham is the Director of Community Services. She grew up in San Diego. She worked as Recreation Superintendent in National City. She was hired as the Poway Community Services Director in 2011.



Chairman **Jim L. Barisic**, former Artesia City Manager who also served the cities of Cerritos and



Paramount, is a Viet Nam veteran, founded **Brandywine** in 1994.

Jim, two of his sons, **Brett Whitehead** and **David Barisic**, and **Alex Hernandez**, the President of the Homebuilding Division, and **Mario Urzua**, the Chief Financial Officer are the **Brandywine Homes** executive team. Please check the firm's website for current sales!

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Debbie Smith, Executive Director

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Gil Hurtado, ICFA President
South Gate
City Council Member

Independent Cities Finance Authority
Post Office Box No. 6740
Lancaster, California 93539-6740
Telephone No. 877-906-0941

m.

Mitchell Public Affairs & Advocacy

Marc A. Mitchell, Principal
www.mitchellpaa.com

"Democracy is our worst form of government.
except for all the others that have been tried
from time to time." ---**Winston Churchill**



Mitchell Public Affairs & Advocacy
Marc A. Mitchell, Principal

<https://www.mitchellpaa.com/connect>

Marc A. Mitchell is a veteran government relations consultant, political strategist, and the founder of **Mitchell Public Affairs & Advocacy**. Based in the **Los Angeles Metropolitan Area**, he has spent more than two decades navigating complex regional policies and issue, and engaging public agencies throughout Southern California

Core Focus & Expertise

The firm coordinates with elected officials, their staffs, and communities at the **federal, state, county, and city levels**, in addition to engaging public agencies throughout Southern California. Marc Mitchell's specialized areas of advocacy focus on:

- **Infrastructure**
- **Transportation**
- **Energy**
- **Ports**

Based in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, the firm's strategic regional work primarily targets public policy challenges across the **four LA Basin counties**.



Outside of his consulting firm, Marc lives in Southern California. He is a proud husband to his wife, Maryanne, and a father to his daughter, Eva.

Marc graduated from the **University of Northern Iowa (UNI)** in 1995. During his time at UNI, he made the unconventional decision for the era to study abroad in Denmark during the spring semester of 1994. He credited this immersive experience—which famously included joining a local Danish team to play American football as a quarterback—as a foundational milestone that helped shape his long career in consulting and public affairs.

"It ended up being one of the best decisions I ever made," Marc said, speaking of his decision to study in Denmark, "Not even a handful of students underwent this experience every semester, and its mind-blowing how many people do it now. It's a good thing."

Marc is proud to be honorably serving clients in both the public and private sectors; 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.

Letters, notes and observations by readers

Hi Jack— I am Lou's wife Nancy. I think we've met but it's been a long time. I know that Lou was following your newsletter closely and always enjoyed the Proof of Life lunches when he was able to attend.

Sadly, Lou's pulmonary fibrosis caught up with him and with a vengeance. He was with hospice for only two weeks but during that period he was suffering and ready to let go. He was 2 months shy of 94. He passed yesterday here at home. It was quick and he didn't suffer any length of time. He was the man of my dreams. We had 40+ years together and he was a kind and loving husband, father, and friend.

We've had the opportunity to travel the world since his retirement 32 years ago and throughout it all we never stopped enjoying one another's company. It was always a treat spending time together and we seldom tired of one another. It's going to be strange without him as we were so close. Of course, he'll always be with me but now via a different path.

He didn't want a funeral or memorial service. He did ask me, though, to please contact you when the time came. So, the time has come, and I think he was hoping there still may be a few fellow friends who will take a little time to remember him as he truly was, a good man.

I hope you keep well. I know Lou is grateful for your continuance of tracking down news in the world of local government. The best to you

---**Nancy Shepard**, the wife of retired **Lou Shepard**

Lou Shepard, as a birthday present, bought me a one-inch square of Jack Daniel's property, and I received updates from Jack Daniel's on the property for decades. I thoroughly enjoyed Lou's friendship.

---**Gary Sloan**, retired city manager

Sad news. He was an icon without fanfare.

---**Steve Harding**, former city manager

Thanks for sharing the news about **Lou Shepard**. Lou was a lot of fun. He was on CCMF Board and did all our printing needs.

---**Glenn Southard**, retired city manager

I am certainly taking the time to remember, and appreciate, **Lou Shepard**!! He was absolutely a role model for a whole generation of City Managers.

---**Bud Ovrom**, retired city manager



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Michael G. Colantuono is Managing Shareholder, and currently is City Attorney for the City of Grass Valley, also General Counsel for the North Yuba Water District, Calaveras LAFCO, and the Yuba LAFCO. Michael is a leading expert on California municipal finance and appellate law. He earned a BA from Harvard College and a JD from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.

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Thanks for forwarding the information on **Lou Shepard**'s passing. Lou was one of the early true professionals in our City Management world and set the example for many of us to follow in making our communities better places. His passing is very sad, yet in passing he has left one final lesson for us all: what we accomplish in our jobs will be remembered in our professional and civic arenas long after we retire and pass on.

---**Mike Sedell**, retired city manager

Thank you. I am so sad to hear the news of **Lou Shepard**'s passing. Lou was a great guy with a keen sense of humor. He was so helpful when I was getting started and generous with his time and perspective. R.I.P. **Lou Shepard**.

---**Larry J. Kosmont**, founder of the **Kosmont Companies**

Letters, notes and observations by readers

Thanks for letting us know the sad news about **Lou Shepard**, but also passing along this wonderful letter from his wife, Nancy.

You're right, Jack. Lou was one of the "good guys" in our profession. He was friendly and supportive, never one to get angry, and always willing to share advice and knowledge with others. He was one of those people who made you proud you were working in local government.

---**John Shirey**, retired city manager

Gene Wahlers was appointed Lompoc City Administrator in 1968. He served in that role for 25 years until his retirement in 1993. He passed away sometime this year at age 95. I saw his inscription on an "IN MEMORIUM" plaque at the local Elks Club Hall. Didn't know him well, but since Lompoc was my old home town, I talked with him a few times, usually at conferences.

---**Doug Dunlap**, retired city manager



This is **Gonzalo Vazquez** and his wife Vickie during a recent trip to Iceland.

Working as a city manager or a local government department head can be stressful and demanding. In order to balance the extreme stress and long evening hours of municipal meetings and professional gatherings, and the necessity to live and work under a public microscope, public managers must pursue leisure activities that usually serve as a critical mental release. Relaxing and re-energizing the mind and body is important.



Picking Up the Pieces: Santa Monica City Manager **Oliver Chi** has been dealing with a planned conversion of the longtime Main Street Victorian restaurant and nightclub into a family-centered membership club in the historic city-owned building. The Victorian will close after its annual Halloween Party and reopen as *The Santa Monican*, a membership club with dining, recreation, wellness, and children's programming.

Ernest N. "Ernie" Reyna is the new City Manager of Hemet. He succeeds former City Manager **Mark Prestwich**, who retired in May 2026. He will officially take over from Interim City Manager **Noah Rau** on November 2, 2026. He has served as Assistant City Manager for the city of Perris, and previously was the Finance Director and City Treasurer for Eastvale. He was Chief Financial Officer for more than 7-years for the Western Riverside Council of Governments, and he worked 13-years for the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. Ernie earned a BS from the University of California, Riverside and an MPA from California Baptist University. He is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

Daniel Padilla is the new Arvin city manager. His first day on his new job is set for November 16. He is replacing City Manager **Jeff Jones**. Since 2019, Daniel has worked as the Director of Engineering and City Engineer for Ceres, City Engineer and Acting Public Works Director for Gilroy, and Public Works Director and City Engineer in Baldwin Park.

San Fernando City Manager **Kanika Kith** has been selected to serve as the next Rosemead city manager, replacing the retired City Manager **Ben Kim**. Kanika came to San Fernando to replace City Manager **Nick Kimball**, who went to work with South Pasadena as Assistant City Manager. It is reported that Kanika has not yet resigned her San Fernando position.

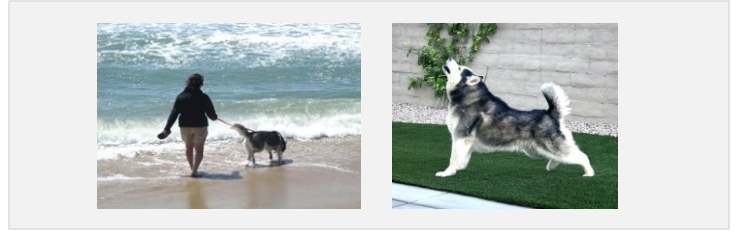


"Holy Effective City Management," Bat Girl, Halloween is upon us. **Trackdown Management** wishes everyone a safe and fun Halloween.



More Pieces Picked Up: In June 2026, Turlock, on a 5-0 vote hired **Dr. John J. "J.J." Murphy** as the city's new city manager with a five-year contract paying an annual base salary of \$269,100. Turlock residents have pushed back questioning the hiring based on "J.J.'s" termination as Palmdale's city

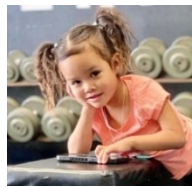
manager in 2022. Following his departure, the legal fallout cost Palmdale nearly \$7.5 million in settlements. J.J. is a U.S. Air Force veteran. On September 28, 2026, the City of Indio, California officially appointed **Maria Aliotti** as the city's new Assistant City Manager starting on October 5, 2026. She will be working with Indio City Manager **Jonathan Nicks**. She most recently served as the Assistant City Manager for the city of Pittsburg, where she also filled roles as Interim City Manager, Finance Director, Director of Community Services, and Redevelopment Manager. Previous to working in Pittsburg, Maria worked for the city of Antioch. She earned a BA from Saint Mary's College of California. Hercules hired **Mike Futrell** to serve as city manager. Mike is a former Riverside city manager, who accepted and then withdrew as the new city manager for the city of Pasadena. He said that he would return to Riverside but resigned from there in July following a city controversy involving his wife, **Susan Freeman**. Mike took the Riverside city manager position in January 2023 after serving as the South San Francisco city manager for nearly nine years. Pico Rivera, where **Steve Carmona** is the city manager, has received a statewide award from the Institute for Local Government as the 2026 Beacon Leadership and Innovation Award winner. The city is being recognized in the innovation in energy category. Fresno, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, and Costa Mesa also received Leadership and Innovation Awards. Pico Rivera is honored for the city's PRIME program, *Pico Rivera Innovation Municipal Energy*. It is a community choice program established to give the city greater control over energy decisions, while pursuing cleaner electricity, provide competitive rates and programs tailored to local customers. San Clemente City Manager **Andy Hall** reports that his city's beaches face a sand deficit of about 3 million cubic yards and getting that much sand to the San Clemente beach will require 300,000 trucking trips. The expected super El Niño will be responsible for flooding and landslides after years of erosion. El Niño is a temporary warming of parts of the equatorial Pacific Ocean that warps normal weather patterns worldwide. The city is challenged to find a way to pay for restoring the critical sand buffer along the coastline. Anaheim Mayor's Chief of Staff **Berenice Ballinas** has issued several claims against Anaheim Mayor **Ashleigh E. Aitken** regarding alleged drinking, harassment, including talk with sexual content, and political corruption. She claims that the Mayor called her "a dirty Mexican" in front of former Anaheim city manager **Jim Vanderpool**.



The Mayor has denied the claims, and that she made racist or homophobic remarks. Ashleigh is the first female Mayor in the city of Anaheim's 167-years history. Assistant City Manager **Greg Garcia** is currently serving as Interim City Manager for Anaheim.

"Freedom, human rights, tolerance, peace and prosperity are like the eternal flame that must be guarded, nurtured and never, ever taken for granted."

— Konstantin Kisin



SHORTS: **Catherine Hill**, **Jennifer Quan**, and **Deanna Sessums** were recognized alongside **David Mullinax** of the League of California Cities' Regional Public Affairs staff as 2026 recipients of the prestigious National League of Cities

John G. Stutz Award.

Former Tulare County Supervisor, **Kuyler Crocker**, the fourth Lindsay city manager in less than three years, resigned in July 2026, and Public Works Director **Dario Dominguez** was appointed Acting Lindsay city manager.

Former Dallas, Texas Assistant City Manager, **Carl Simpson**, in order to be near his Granite Bay home, left the Jackson city manager job he held since February 2024, to take the Town Manager position in Loomis in May 2026.

Jonathan Blackstone, who has served as the Interim Police Chief since January 2026, is the new Chief of Police for the Imperial Valley community of Brawley.

Anne Ambrose, who worked for the city of Palmdale for more than 24 years, currently resides in the city of Cathedral City where she served as Interim City Manager, succeeding retired city manager **Charles McClendon**. With the hiring of City Manager **Andrew "Andy" Firestine**, she has transitioned back to her role as Assistant City Manager.

Andrea Dransfield is the city of Goleta's new Environmental Services Manager, focusing on waste management and oversight of the Creek and Watershed Management Plan.

John Paul Maier is the Interim City Manager for California City, since **Sean Grayson** stepped down from the job on August 32, 2026, for personal reasons. ***