



PRESS RELEASE

MAYOR ANNOUNCES ESCOBAR-ECK AS CITY'S NEW DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Mayor Jerry Sanders today announced that Marcela Escobar-Eck has been appointed director of the City's Development Services Department. In this role she will oversee all operations of a complex, regulatory department with a \$61.5 million budget and 576 employees. She will begin work on Oct. 4.

Escobar-Eck has served as the Planning Director for the City of Carlsbad for the past year, overseeing daily operations and the implementation of the General Plan, Growth Management Plan, Local Coastal Program, Habitat Management Plan and the California Environmental Quality Act. Prior to serving as Carlsbad Planning Director, Escobar-Eck served as a Chief Deputy Director for the City of San Diego's Development Services Department, overseeing a large division with a \$24.2 million budget.

"I am pleased and excited to announce that Marcela Escobar-Eck has accepted this challenge," said James T. Waring, Deputy Chief Operating Officer for Land Use and Economic Development. "Not only is Marcela a proven professional, her decision to return to the City of San Diego and assume the huge responsibilities inherent in the director's job is a vote of confidence in the future of San Diego and a reflection of her confidence in the staff."

Her other previous experience with the City of San Diego included serving as a Deputy Director in Development Services, overseeing Project Management, and serving as Redevelopment Project Director for the Naval Training Center in the Planning Department. She served as the lead negotiator on this \$500 million redevelopment project, and her experience on these issues will be essential as development continues at the site.

Escobar-Eck earned her bachelor of science degree in landscape architecture from the University of California at Davis. She began her career with the City of San Diego as a planner, and also held the positions of Council Liaison, private development manager and fiscal development manager. She is fluent in Spanish and a trained mediator, with extensive experience in conflict resolution.

"Marcela will continue the Development Services' goal of making balanced development decisions with input from the community, the development industry and other interest groups,"

said Mayor Sanders. “She is well-versed in our regional issues and is ready to continue with the service improvement efforts that the department has undertaken over the past few years. She knows the department. She is a leader familiar with how things are done, yet with real ideas of how they can be done better.”

The mission of Development Services is to enhance the quality of life for San Diegans by ensuring safe development, providing timely and effective management of the development process, and excelling in community and customer service. The department has implemented a concerted customer service initiative over the past several years, working to best serve all constituents and customers and simplify the regulatory process. Development Services staff review all development submissions for building code and life safety requirements, provide permit and development information, review development plans, issue permits, conduct inspections and resolve code compliance issues.

Escobar-Eck replaces Gary Halbert, who recently accepted a position with the City of Santee as Deputy City Manager and Director of Development Services.

“I am very excited to return to the City of San Diego and am committed to moving forward with improving the development process,” said Escobar-Eck. “My time spent in Carlsbad was invaluable for gaining a greater regional perspective and looking at new ways of solving problems.”

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