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City of Riverside Names Larry Gonzalez Interim Police Chief

Current Deputy Chief/Administration will lead department after Chief Sergio Diaz retires on Sept. 15

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – City Manager Al Zelinka announced today (8/30) that the Riverside Police Department’s Deputy Chief/Administration Larry Gonzalez will serve as Interim Police Chief after Chief Sergio Diaz retires on Sept. 15.

“Chief Diaz has demonstrated tremendous leadership of the Riverside Police Department during the past nine years,” Zelinka said. “Larry Gonzalez is the right person to continue that strong leadership while we take the time on the selection process for this very important position.”

Diaz has been Police Chief since July 2010, after spending 33 years with the Los Angeles Police Department. As Chief, Diaz focused on reducing crime, enhancing the Department’s relationship with the communities it serves, developing personnel to ever-higher standards of service and achieving greater efficiencies in the delivery of police services. Gonzalez, a 26-year RPD veteran, has held his current position, one of two Deputy Chiefs directly under Chief Diaz, since June 2017.

“A city’s Police Chief can have a tremendous effect on not just safety and security, but its overall quality of life,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “I’m glad to see that Riverside is taking the time to allow for community input and a thorough vetting of all candidates.”

The City intends to do an open recruitment process, with input from community members and assistance from a firm specializing in police chief recruitments, before naming its next chief, Zelinka said. That input regarding what community members want from a new chief will inform the selection process. A tentative schedule calls for selecting a new RPD Chief by January. Gonzalez, as Interim Chief, is eligible to compete for the job.

“We have been very fortunate in Riverside to benefit from the leadership of Chief Diaz during the past nine years,” Mayor Pro Tem Andy Melendrez said. “I look forward to this process determining the next great leader of the Riverside Police Department.”