



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## **City of Riverside Approves Contract for City Manager Al Zelinka**

*Former Assistant City Manager was named to post last week*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The Riverside City Council approved a contract with City Manager Al Zelinka at a special City Council meeting today (5/29), a week after naming him to the post. The contract will be finalized next week at a regular City Council meeting, as required by state law.

The contract was approved by a 6-1 vote with Councilmember Mike Soubirous voting against. He did not comment at the meeting, but had previously expressed concerns about the level of compensation.

Mayor Rusty Bailey congratulated Zelinka on the appointment by providing him with a plaque recognizing his first five years of employment with the city, during which Zelinka rose from Community Development Director to Assistant City Manager to the City's top job.

"Congratulations on your five years of service to the City of Riverside, and welcome to your new assignment as our City Manager," Bailey said. "I look forward to working with you and continuing the momentum in Riverside."

Zelinka said he is eager to meet the challenges and opportunities facing the City, including: approval of the upcoming City budget in about two weeks; naming a General Manager for Riverside Public Utilities, and a new Library Director; continuing progress on the Riverside Transmission Reliability Project, which will establish the city's second connection to the statewide power grid; and developing a strategy for managing the City's unfunded pension obligations.

"I am thankful for the confidence the Mayor and City Council have expressed in my ability to lead such a talented staff of more than 2,400 people dedicated to public service," Zelinka said. "There is a great deal of work ahead on issues that will shape the city's future, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be of service during such an exciting time in Riverside's history."

In appointing Zelinka, the Council also thanked Interim City Manager Lee C. McDougal, who has served in the position since mid-April.

Zelinka's contract runs through July 1, 2021, and is automatically extended for two years each March 31, starting in 2020. The contract includes a base salary of \$295,000, with a total compensation package of about \$360,000. Zelinka will be eligible for the same cost of living increases as the rest of the Executive Group of employees, starting in January. He also will be subject to any reduction in pay that the Executive Group receives in the event of an economic downturn or other event.

Zelinka is eligible for a salary increase following an annual review by the City Council, but no raises are guaranteed in the contract and no amounts or percentages are included. He is eligible for a year's severance pay if terminated without cause within two years, dropping to six months after that. If he is terminated for "good cause," the City is not required to provide a severance payment.

The contract allots Zelinka 48 hours of administrative leave each fiscal year, 16 of which are to be used in community service activities in Riverside. Administrative leave cannot be carried over to the next fiscal year. The City Council agreed that it cannot initiate termination proceedings within 90 days of a change in the make-up of the City Council.

The City and Zelinka agree in the contract that he is bound by the most current Code of Ethics from the International City Manager's Association. In planning, zoning, development and land use matters, he is bound by the American Institute of Certified Planners Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

"Al has done a tremendous job," Mayor Pro Tem Chris MacArthur said. "He is the type of person we need moving forward."

Zelinka has worked for the City for six years, the past three as Assistant City Manager. He most recently oversaw the Community and Economic Development Department; Parks, Recreation and Community Services; the Public Works Department; and the Office of Communications, which includes the City's public information and marketing functions. For nearly three years, he also oversaw the Innovation and Technology Department. He previously was Community Development Director.

Before coming to Riverside, he was Community Development Director, and Planning Manager, for the City of Fullerton for four years. He previously spent 11 years as Principal/Vice President of RBF Consulting's Urban Design Studio (now Michael Baker International) in Irvine. Previous experiences included stints as an urban planner at The Planning Center (now PlaceWorks) in Newport Beach; a planner at the City of Phoenix; and a VISTA program coordinator for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Zelinka's community involvement includes: Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Inland Empire — Riverside Area Board (Member & Alumni Big Brother); California Baptist University Dr. Robert K. Jabs School of Business Dean's Leadership Circle (Incoming Member); Olive Crest — Inland & Desert Communities Advisory Council (Member); and the UC Riverside School of Business Dean's Advisory Council (Member).