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County of Santa Clara Appoints Director of Department of Planning & Development

Hall Esser Guided Department through Williamson Act Changes

SAN JOSE, CALIF.—Today, County of Santa Clara County Executive Pete Kutras announced the appointment of Jody Hall Esser to the position of Director of Department of Planning and Development. Hall Esser has served as interim director since May and previously in 2004-05.

"Jody is a good match for the County and we are lucky to have her," said Kutras. "We have had an opportunity to work with her during the past few years and she has delivered on her reputation as a highly qualified public administrator. She also has built upon her proven track record of positive and progressive leadership."

Hall Esser is a seasoned executive with an impressive career in public service. She has 25 years of service with the City of Culver City in Southern California where she was the Chief Administrative Officer, Community Development Director, and Housing Director and Senior Center Director. Among other accomplishments, she brought fiscal stability to the City and Redevelopment Agency, designed a citizen-driven master planning effort that transformed the city's downtown including a new city hall, fire station, transit facility, and expanded police department. She negotiated agreements expanding the business and economic base of the community; advanced emergency preparedness programs for staff and the community; and oversaw implementation of the City's public art, performing arts and historic preservation programs, renovation of six public parks and numerous other public works projects which enhance the lives of residents.

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In recent years, Hall Esser has led a successful consulting business where she has provided her executive leadership skills in assisting local governments and non-profit organizations in leadership, organizational development, and public policy issues, including financial planning and public funding strategies. Since 2003, she has coordinated the efforts of the Westside Cities Council of Governments working with elected and appointed officials from Los Angeles County and five municipalities. She is known for her skills in collaboration and helping to build consensus.

Hall Esser assisted the County in its efforts to revise the Williamson Act program in 2005, as required by the state and lead a community outreach effort to build understanding of the program, and required changes, and options for affected landowners. She also worked on the County's first Historic Preservation Ordinance. The department is currently developing "Green Building" policies and updating a number of policies and practices.

"It s has been such pleasure working with the team in Santa Clara County," said Hall Esser. "I am looking forward to continuing the work we have begun and providing leadership as we work with the community to tackle the planning and development issues ahead of us."

Hall Esser holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Southern California. She also completed coursework towards a Master of Science degree at California State University Northridge, has co-authored several books and professional articles, holds several professional certificates and has served on the Boards of nonprofit organizations.

Hall Esser will officially begin her employment with the County of Santa Clara in mid-November. Her annual salary will be \$173,078. She and her husband currently reside in Los Angeles, but will be relocating to Santa Clara County.

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