

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 1, 2021

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Renee Rakestraw Appointed as Assistant Director of Cultural and Community Services

OXNARD, Calif. – The City of Oxnard Cultural and Community Services Director Terrel Harrison announces the appointment of Renee Rakestraw as Assistant Director to the department.

Rakestraw has served the Oxnard community for over 19 years in various capacities and emerged as a leader within the department. She began her career as a Recreation Leader and later became a Recreation Coordinator before being named Recreation Supervisor in 2017. Most recently, she was appointed as the Cultural and Community Services Manager in 2019.

“Renee’s intricate knowledge and awareness of Oxnard’s diverse community, paired with her experience, has garnered much confidence in her ability to meet the needs of the community and bring new opportunities to Oxnard families,” said Harrison. “We are excited for the future of the Cultural and Community Services Department with Renee serving as the Assistant Director.”

Rakestraw currently serves as the liaison to the Senior Services Commission, and is supporting them in the efforts towards building a new senior center.

“Oxnard’s seniors have benefited greatly under the leadership of Renee Rakestraw,” said Alice Sweetland, Chair of the Oxnard Senior Services Commission. “We’ve worked together helping Oxnard’s older adults enjoy creative activities, social functions as well as health and nutrition programs. I’m very happy for Renee as she assumes her new role for the City of Oxnard.”

Rakestraw’s other department responsibilities have included serving as co-chair for the Special Olympics Host Town program, assisting in the development of both the Division and Department Leadership teams, providing oversight of the Recreation Division’s budget, and strengthening relationships within the community. As Assistant Director, Rakestraw will oversee all divisions of the department, including Recreation & Community Services and the Oxnard Public Library.

Said Rakestraw, “I’ve experienced many years of planning, budget oversight, development, mentorship, training and instructing through the variety of roles I’ve previously served in. I’m excited for this new opportunity to continue positively impacting the great City of Oxnard and the community we serve.”

Ms. Rakestraw holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology and a Master’s Degree in Education. She is also a member of the California Parks and Recreation Society, National Recreation and Parks Association, and the American Society on Aging.

