



COMMUNITY NEWS RELEASE:
Nov. 20, 2023

San Mateo Names New Finance Director Karen Huang Appointed as Top Steward of City's Finances

San Mateo, CA – The municipal budget is the backbone of the City of San Mateo's ability to provide high-quality services and a new director is eager to leverage her experience as the organization's top steward of public finances.

City Manager Alex Khojikian appointed Karen Huang as the new City of San Mateo Finance Director. She joins the City's executive team and will lead the department responsible for San Mateo's \$239 million annual operating budget and 5-year \$284 million Capital Improvement Program.

Huang has 18 years of finance experience, including 11 years working for local cities. She was hired as San Mateo's Deputy Director of Finance in January 2022 before being named Interim Finance Director in August 2023. During her time with San Mateo, she has helped manage the City's low-interest federal loans for the Clean Water Program, overseen the annual budget development, and maintained sound fiscal practices that have preserved San Mateo's AAA credit rating.



"I am honored to have this opportunity to lead the finance team and continue working for such a collaborative organization. The prospect of delivering high-quality financial services to all City departments and making a positive impact is what motivated me to take this new role. I look forward to working with everyone and applying my experience to serve the community," Huang said.

Huang earned a master's in business administration as well as a bachelor's degree in information management, and is a Certified Public Accountant. She previously served as Deputy Finance Director in the neighboring City of Burlingame for 4 years where she helped navigate the challenges of the pandemic-induced recession, completed implementation of an ERP replacement, and issued lease revenue bonds for major capital improvement projects.

"Karen's commitment to delivering top-quality financial services to our community is an asset to our organization. I know she will effectively lead and support our staff. I am pleased to officially welcome her into this important leadership position," Khojikian said.

The Finance Department maintains a strong and secure financial position for San Mateo by providing comprehensive financial and analytical services to the City Council, City staff and the public. While often operating behind the scenes, finance staff work collaboratively across all of the City's 10 departments to ensure the organization can continue to provide sustainable, high-quality services which the community relies upon every single day. The department's six functional areas include accounting, budgeting, purchasing and accounts payable, treasury and revenue management, debt service, and payroll.

In addition to having worked with Burlingame, Huang has served with the town of Los Altos Hills and the City of San Bruno. She also spent 7 years in the private sector as a senior auditor with an accounting firm. When not working, Karen Huang finds joy in traveling and tending to her vegetable garden in San Bruno where she lives with her husband and son.

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