



NEWS RELEASE

City of Chico

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CITY OF CHICO ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF NEW CITY MANAGER

CHICO, CA — After making an official announcement in November 2025, Chico City Manager Mark Sorensen will soon begin retirement, bringing his distinguished career to a close. “It has been an incredible honor to serve the Chico community,” said Sorensen. “Throughout my time with the City of Chico, I have witnessed firsthand the professionalism, integrity, and dedication that City employees bring to work each day in service to this outstanding community.”

The City extends its sincere appreciation to Mark Sorensen for his leadership, dedication, and lasting contributions to the Chico community. The Chico City Council will formally recognize Sorensen’s years of service at the July 7, 2026, City Council meeting.

“Mark’s leadership has been defined by professionalism, integrity, and a deep commitment to the people of Chico,” said Mayor Kasey Reynolds. “Throughout his tenure, Mark has provided steady leadership, working closely with the Chico City Council and City staff to strengthen City operations, maintain fiscal responsibility, and advance projects that support Chico’s long-term success. Mark will be missed, but we wish him the very best in retirement.”

Over the past seven months, an extensive recruitment process has taken place to find Chico’s next City Manager. The Chico City Council is happy to announce the appointment of Gillian Haen, who will leave her current position as Assistant City Manager for the City of Vallejo to accept the Chico City Manager position. “I’m honored for the opportunity to serve the Chico community,” said Haen. “My focus will be on maintaining the City’s successes, prioritizing strong fiscal stewardship, providing responsive public service, and building trust through collaboration as we work together to meet the City’s challenges and future opportunities. I look forward to working together to ensure Chico remains a successful, vibrant, and close-knit community for generations to come.”

Haen will begin her service as Chico City Manager on August 10, 2026. In the meantime, Assistant City Manager Erik Gustafson will serve as Interim City Manager.

“As Mayor, I am honored to welcome Gillian Haen as Chico’s next City Manager. Throughout this process, it became clear that Gillian is a thoughtful, experienced leader who shares our commitment to public service and to building a strong, thriving community,” said Mayor Kasey Reynolds. “I look forward to working alongside her and the City Council as we continue making meaningful progress for Chico. I am confident her leadership, integrity, and collaborative approach will serve our residents well, and I am excited to see what we will accomplish together.”

Located in Butte County, California, Chico is the cultural and economic center of the northern Sacramento Valley and the largest city north of Sacramento. Known as a college town, the home of California State University, Chico and for Bidwell Park, one of the largest urban parks in the United States. For more information, visit www.chicoca.gov.

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