



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## City of Riverside Names Jorge Barrera Economic Development Manager

*Economic development professional with local roots returns to area to bring equitable, inclusive, and innovative economic development program to city*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside has named Jorge T. Barrera, J.D., as its new Economic Development Manager. He starts Feb. 6.

Barrera brings to the City of Riverside a wide range of skills and a varied background gained from the best practices of public agencies throughout Southern California, the Central Valley, and Greater San Francisco Bay Area. He hopes to build on the economic success already taking place in Riverside to ensure economic vitality and quality of life for future generations.

“Jorge Barrera has the skills and the background to advance our economic development program to the next level,” said Jennifer Lilley, Director of Community and Economic Development. “His experience around the state, paired with his knowledge of our local economy, make him uniquely qualified for this position.”

Barrera’s public sector career began more than 20 years ago as a development specialist for the Riverside County Economic Development Agency. He has spent the last twelve years in Northern California specializing in business retention, expansion, and attraction by supporting businesses of all sizes – from local businesses to international brands in the food and beverage industry like Anheuser-Busch and Jelly Belly.

Barrera currently leads the economic development division for the City of Modesto, helping to introduce equitable economic development and bio-industrial manufacturing as a new industry to target for future job growth. His strengthening of community and regional partnerships have led to a successful small business webinar series offering business resources to hundreds of small businesses.

Barrera demonstrated his proactive and innovative approach in securing the long-term fiscal viability of a city with the recent attraction and negotiation of a \$1 million lease with Tesla for surplus airport parking. This created a win-win solution by getting more value from a City asset and solving a workforce issue.

“I am excited to join the economic development team at the City of Riverside,” Barrera said. “I look forward to embracing the local business community and putting my skills to work to make a strong local economy even stronger.”

Barrera has an expansive career in economic development. At the City of Fairfield, he was responsible for the preparation and implementation of an economic development strategic plan focusing on revitalizing the downtown and attracting businesses to the numerous business and industrial parks located in the city. Barrera also served as a director for a commercial real estate firm providing real estate and development advisory services to cities throughout California and the City of Stockton, where he managed the real estate program and gave rise to several economic development projects, initiatives, and partnerships.

Barrera received his Bachelor of Art in Political Science and Certificate in Public Administration from California Baptist University. He earned a Juris Doctorate from the Laurence Drivon School of Law at Humphreys College in Stockton, serves as a Member at Large on the El Dorado County Community and Economic Development Advisory Committee, and is a member of the California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED).