

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: David W. Rowlands, City Manager

DATE: December 2, 2025

SUBJECT: Retirement Resolution Honoring Alexander “Alex” Posada, Director of the Recreation and Parks Department

The City Council will present a Retirement Resolution honoring and commending Alexander “Alex” Posada, Director of Recreation and Parks, for his 46.5 years of devoted service to the City of Santa Maria, recognizing his outstanding leadership, dedication, and contributions to the community, and congratulating him on his well-deserved retirement.

BACKGROUND:

Alex Posada is the longest-tenured employee in the City’s 120-year history. Also, he has served as Department Director for 32 years. His contributions and proven ability to lift others up for the betterment of the community is his legacy.

Alex demonstrated his loyalty and commitment to the people of Santa Maria, working with a cross section of community groups, civic organizations, schools, businesses, event promoters, managers, and residents. In addition to his director duties, Alex was active in the Special Olympics, American Red Cross, Santa Maria Kiwanis Club, Aktion Club for adults with disabilities, People for Leisure and Youth (PLAY), Santa Barbara Foundation trustee, and the National Recreation and Parks Association.

After growing up in the East Bay and attending San Jose State University and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, he worked for teen programs in San Jose and for the Hayward Area Recreation and Parks District. He was hired by the City full-time as a Recreation Activity Specialist in 1977, then left for two years and returned in May 1979. He was hired full-time as a Recreation Activity Specialist in May 1979 and managed the opening of the Minami Community Center. He was promoted to Recreation Supervisor in April 1981, and Director in 1993.

With his positive “can-do” attitude and strong work ethic, he worked tirelessly in what he calls his “dream job” to increase the park space in Santa Maria and has designed a multitude of recreational venues to serve the residents who live nearby. In his time with the Department, the number of City parks has grown from 9 in 1979 to 33 parks. Similarly, the number of recreation facilities has grown from two in 1979 (Atkinson Community Center, and Simas Park Building) to 10 including Grogan Community Center, Maramonte Community Center, Veterans’ Memorial Center, Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center, Edwards Community Center, Elwin Mussell Senior Center, Hagerman Softball

Complex, Minami Community Center, soon the Japanese Community Center and Smith-Enos House, to keep pace with Santa Maria's growth.

Professionally, Alex kept foremost in his work the value of public service, civility, and mutual respect, and an unwavering conviction that local government makes an important difference in people's lives.

He helped to organize in 1997 the non-profit People for Leisure and Youth (PLAY) with Trent Benedetti and others. To date, this group has raised more than \$5 million to aid in funding innovative recreation and parks services and programs offered in the Santa Maria Valley.

He and his team helped lead the successful 1998 All-America City designation granted by the National Civic League. They assisted in the development of the 2017 Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety, the "Safe and Strong" summer recreation program, the annual Dia de Los Muertos celebration, and much more.

He led the partnership between the Santa Maria Kiwanis Club and the City to design and open the first inclusive playground in Santa Barbara County, by adding to Preisker Park a playground designed for persons with disabilities.

Among his accomplishments: He worked closely with the City Utilities Department in the City's purchase of 1,778 acres near the top of the Solomon Grade, now home to Los Flores Ranch Park. The historic Smith-Enos House was gifted to the City by the developer around 2016 and soon will become part of a new park with the future Japanese Community Center. Machado Plaza near Chapel Street opened in 2022. He was instrumental in designing and championing the future Santa Maria Sports Complex that will open in fall/winter 2026.

Mr. Posada has worked for seven City Administrators/Managers and seven Mayors. He answered the call of duty and was appointed as Interim City Manager in late 2023, serving for a year until the City Council appointed a new permanent City Manager.

He has been a speaker at the California Park and Recreation Society Conference and has been locally recognized for his community service by the Chamber of Commerce, VTC Enterprises, Latino Today, and the American Red Cross. In 2009, he received the Robert P. Grogan Award, a public service honor named after the longtime Santa Maria City Administrator. In 2024, he was Grand Marshal in the 81st annual Elks Rodeo Parade. Recently, he received the prestigious Kiwanis Tablet of Honor.

Alex will be retiring on December 5th to pursue new adventures and travel with his wife, Julie. City staff would like to commend him for his outstanding dedication and commitment to the City of Santa Maria and wish him well in all his future endeavors.

Attachment(s)

A. Retirement Resolution