

Date: March 13, 2020  
To: **City Council**  
From: Mike Malone, Dawn Abrahamson, Michelle Straub, Shawny Williams, Terrance Davis, Rekha Nayar, Naveed Ashraf, Judy Shepard-Hall, Gillian Hayes, Daryl Arbuthnott,  
Subject: **Senior Leadership's Support For Greg As City Manager**

Dear City Council,

Once you have read our letter and spoken with our peers who share this sentiment, we hope you'll understand how critical Greg Nyhoff is to our long-term success as an organization and future strategic initiatives for the community. The City Manager is not aware we are reaching out to you, nor did he request that we do so.

Collectively, over the scores of City Managers we have worked for, Greg Nyhoff is an extremely positive standout. For all of us, Greg is the reason we are inspired to work for the City of Vallejo and bring our best here every day. We truly appreciate Greg's supportive leadership style and his ability to connect with employees at all levels and spark their engagement and hope. We know we can count on his decisiveness, vision, strong values and ethics to guide us through any challenges we face.

As members of the SLT, our interactions with Greg are professional and value-added and we leave our meetings with him having clarity on the next steps and encouragement for our path forward. He focuses on Council Goals as our compass, our true north. He expects immediate follow-up and appreciates our contributions when we deliver. He is patient and kind and also challenges us to defend our decisions, only expecting the best from us. We are a high-power "Type A" group and we endeavor to fix everything all at once, which can easily cause burn-out. Greg encourages opportunities to work with him to manage timelines and stress levels.

We are pleased to be sending you this letter of support for our City Manager and for the positive impact he has had on the City organization. We recognize that the role of a City Manager is inherently challenging - to work with diverse view points, priorities, styles, personalities, and political perspectives toward a unified community and a unified City organization. We appreciate the great progress Greg has already made in this role, as he works to meet Council goals, hire and support key positions in the City, address long-standing problems, pursue new and creative solutions, build on positive momentum and have the courage to start new initiatives. He does all this while supporting the departments to be successful in our delivery of services and our path of continuous improvement.

In 2017 while anticipating the change of leadership to an unknown city manager there was a lot of uncertainty, ambiguity and poor morale among senior managers trickling down to every staff member. Council's right decision to hire Greg re-established our hope for the City and this organization which has only grown since he arrived. The stability has opened up pathways for new development for the City, the Senior Leadership, and every employee. In the past, the general belief of the employees and community was that there was no hope for Vallejo. Greg brought unity to the SLT and a single leadership voice to the community. Currently, we are in a place where we proudly look forward to Vallejo's bright future. We attribute it to Greg's leadership, vision, and unselfish commitment to the success of this City.

Without Greg, the growth and positive culture change for the benefit of our Vallejo community would be uprooted. We know Greg to be a man of his word. He keeps confidences even if it offends those who value their power and control over what is best for the community. We know Greg to be a supportive person, sometimes so supportive that he gets spread thin and it is a challenge to keep up. Even on his busiest days, he is always working on top priorities with the community's best interest in mind.

City employees at all levels feel a strong bond with our City Manager. They trust that during times of uncertainty, they can count on him to manage us through the challenges. He is known here as a strong, fair, and open-minded leader who brings unity and positivity. Their engagement and hopes are key to the City's future. Without Greg, staff skepticism and despair will return, and momentum will be lost. We encourage you to reach out and hear these perspectives from other staff as well.

A City Manager's role along with department heads requires decisiveness and at times even a very direct approach. Sometimes a disgruntled employee may feel this decisiveness to be too forceful, and that would be misconstruing the situation. Greg's decisiveness is one of his strengths and is at the foundation of the City's positive forward momentum.


Most importantly, Greg has set our organization on a positive path into the future in which employees feel enthused and hopeful again. We ask your support to give us the chance to address personally whatever concerns you may have, so that your dedicated team of professionals – the SLT and our strong teams of managers and staff - may have the opportunity to continue our work to keep building toward a better Vallejo together.


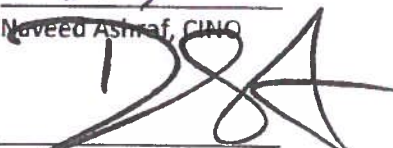
With the impacts of the Coronavirus expanding every day, the organization and the community need stability and consistency. A sudden leadership change - while we face government closures and initiate emergency operations - would be counterproductive and impede our response to this deadly virus. The staff has already begun working in-depth with Greg and the team to develop and refine COVID-19 response plans. The employees count on the City Council for consistency and fair impartial leadership, especially during critical situations as the COVID-19 brings. Any drastic leadership decisions now would undermine the stability of the organization at a time when stability is needed most.

We wanted to get this to you as soon as possible. As a result, all of us could not be present to sign in person. Feel free to reach out to any of us to confirm support and hear our concerns.

Respectfully and with pride to serve on Greg's Senior Leadership Team,

  
Mike Malone, Water Director

  
Rekha Nayar, Finance Director

  
Naveed Asraf, CINO  
  
Daryl Arbuthnott, Fire Chief

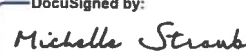
  
Shawny Williams, Police Chief

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Dawn Abrahamson, City Clerk  
Also in full support, but not present to sign the letter

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Terrance Davis, Public Works Director  
Also in full support, but not present to sign the letter

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Gillian Hayes, Planning & Development Services Director

  
Judy Shepard-Hall  
Housing & Community Development Manager

DocuSigned by:  
  
C62B984225BE451  
Michelle Straub, Executive Assistant