

Artesia Councilmember Ali Taj Elected League of California Cities President



Sacramento — In a first for the tiny Southeastern L.A. County city of Artesia, the League of California Cities Board of Directors elected Artesia Council Member Ali Sajjad Taj to serve as its 2022-23 president. Council Member Taj was installed on Sept. 9 as part of the Cal Cities Annual Conference and Expo.

“I have benefitted both personally and professionally from my involvement in Cal Cities throughout my nine years in public service, and I’m excited to give back as president,” said Taj. “I look forward to working alongside such skilled, thoughtful, and insightful local leaders as we advocate for policies that enhance our communities and the lives of our residents.”

Taj has served on the Artesia City Council since 2013 and, in another milestone, [was the first Pakistani-American to be appointed Mayor of Artesia](#); he has served twice as mayor. In addition, Taj currently serves as Chair of the Eco-Rapid Transit Authority, a joint powers authority created to pursue the development of a the West Santa Ana Branch light rail line that will run from Artesia to Downtown Los Angeles. Members cities include Artesia, Bell, Bell Gardens, Cerritos, Cudahy, Downey, Glendale, Huntington Park, Maywood, Paramount, South Gate, and Burbank-Glendale-Pasadena Airport Authority.

Taj represents Artesia on numerous regional boards and committees, including as a board member and vice president for the California Contract Cities Association.

Throughout his tenure on the city council, Taj has focused his efforts on solving the day-to-day quality of life issues for Artesia residents by supporting projects that improve the city’s lighting, street quality, and traffic safety while being an advocate for bringing new businesses that generate revenue for city services and provide new amenities for residents.

“Ali has been an insightful and valued member of Cal Cities for many years,” said League of California Cities Executive Director and CEO Carolyn Coleman. “Ali brings expertise, commitment to public service, and dedication to the belief that effective, locally-led policymaking builds stronger communities.”

Taj worked in the financial services industry for two decades and held several key leadership positions, including district manager, regional manager, managing principal, and vice president of multinational firms like American Express, Ameriprise Financial, Weddell & Reed, and T.D. Ameritrade.

During its meeting this week, the Cal Cities Board of Directors also elected Fowler Council Member Daniel Parra to serve as first vice president and Palm Springs Mayor Lisa Middleton to serve as second vice president. Walnut Creek Mayor Pro Tem Cindy Silva, who served as the 2021-22 president, became immediate past president.