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City of Turlock to Consider Appointment of New In-House City Attorney, Katie Lucchesi

Turlock, CA | March 20, 2026 — The Turlock City Council will consider the appointment of Katie O. Lucchesi to the position of City Attorney at its upcoming Tuesday meeting. Ms. Lucchesi would replace George Petrulakis, who has served in the role under a contract between the City of Turlock and his firm since February 2021.

Ms. Lucchesi comes to Turlock from City of Lodi and with extensive experience serving as a municipal advisor, presiding over legislative body meetings, as well as training officials and staff members on the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, notice requirements and conflicts of interest. Ms. Lucchesi has also drafted ordinances, resolutions, contracts, reviewed agendas, and assisted agencies with land use and CEQA procedures, administrative enforcement, and both criminal and civil litigation.

Additionally, through her prior private legal experience in corporate, land use and environmental law, Ms. Lucchesi is uniquely qualified to fill the City Attorney role by being able to bridge the gap between City staff and the applicants and residents that are trying to attain project approvals or services.

“I look forward to working with the City’s elected officials and staff and eventually building a City Attorney’s department that can grow and help achieve the Council’s goals.” said Lucchesi. “I appreciate Mr. Petrulakis’ service and look forward to building on that work. Turlock is a community that clearly cares about its future, and I’m excited to be part of that.”

In September 2025, current Turlock City Attorney George Petrulakis announced his intention to resign to focus on his private practice. Rather than pursue another contract arrangement for City Attorney services, the City initiated a recruitment process to restore an in-house City Attorney position. This approach is intended to provide consistent, day-to-day legal guidance to support City operations.

“Bringing this position back in-house is about strengthening how the City functions day to day,” said Interim City Manager Gary Hampton. “Having dedicated legal support as part of the organization will help provide consistency and accessibility as staff and Council continue their work. I’m thankful for Mr. Petrulakis’s service to the City Council, staff, and the community, and I look forward to the next chapter.”

“Ms. Lucchesi will be a great fit for the City of Turlock. The City has significant legal needs which an in-house attorney is ideal in meeting,” said Petrulakis. “I’m grateful for my time here and confident the City will continue moving in the right direction.”

During his tenure, Petrulakis supported the City through the COVID-19 pandemic, encampment-related issues, development matters, and the legal framework for numerous road rehabilitation projects, among other efforts.

Ms. Lucchesi's proposed start date is April 27, 2026, or earlier if her schedule permits. Council action is required to appoint the City Attorney and approve the associated employment agreement.

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