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PRESS RELEASE

Fire Chief Mark Gillaspie Announces Retirement Effective December 31st

Downey, CA, November 24, 2020:

Mark Gillaspie, Downey's Fire Chief since 2014, has announced his retirement after more than 30 years of dedicated service to the City of Downey, its residents, and firefighters.

Chief Gillaspie began his fire service career as a volunteer Auxiliary Firefighter with the Downey Fire Department in 1988. He then became a part-time Fire Dispatcher, before being hired as a full-time Downey Firefighter in 1989.

In 2011, he was promoted to Assistant Fire Chief, overseeing department operations, the multi-agency Communications Center, and as Fire Marshal, managed the department's fire prevention bureau. As the City's Emergency Manager, he also oversaw the City's emergency preparedness efforts. He was promoted to Fire Chief in August 2014.

"On behalf of the citizens of Downey, I would like to sincerely thank Fire Chief Gillaspie for his dedicated service to our City," said Mayor Blanca Pacheco. "He has proven to be an outstanding leader for our Fire Department and has earned the respect of not only his colleagues, but the entire Downey community."

As Fire Chief for the past 6 ½ years, Chief Gillaspie's leadership has instituted long-term improvements such as increased engine company staffing levels, doubled paramedic and EMT ambulance transport capabilities, replaced the entire 9-1-1 fire communications center, bolstered the department's training abilities, and created a fallen firefighter memorial.

Mayor Pro Tem Claudia M. Frometa commented, "Chief Gillaspie's leadership, professionalism and teamwork is a true testament to his commitment and dedication to our City, and for that, we commend him and wish him the very best on his retirement."

During his time with the City he has managed virtually every program within the Downey Fire Department. He has served as Incident Commander on countless local emergency incidents and has led numerous strike team deployments throughout the state of California.

"Through his hard work and dedication, Chief Gillaspie has done remarkable things for his department and has many accomplishments of which to be proud of," said City Manager Gilbert Livas. "We wish him and his family great happiness as they enter their next chapter in life."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE