

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 5, 2006

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Postmus announces key economic development hires

Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus today announced the hiring of two professionals with solid Inland Empire experience to fill two key positions on San Bernardino County's Economic Development team.

Brian McGowan, currently the Economic Development manager for the City of Ontario, today became the county's Economic Development Administrator.

Kathleen Thomas, currently the Strategic Planning manager for the Riverside County Economic Development Agency, on Monday became administrator of the County of San Bernardino's Redevelopment Agency.

"When I became Chairman of the Board of Supervisors I made a commitment to make economic development a top priority for the county," Chairman Postmus said. "The appointments of Brian McGowan and Kathleen Thomas constitute a key component of our effort to bring greater prosperity to our growing county."

Mr. McGowan will report directly to County Administrative Officer Mark Uffer in overseeing the county's Economic Development Operation, which includes the Redevelopment Agency, Workforce Development Department, and Community Development and Housing Department.

He will administer and coordinate the activities of these three departments while providing administrative and long-range planning direction for the county's Economic Development effort.

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Mr. McGowan has been with the City of Ontario for five years. Prior to that he served as the Economic Development Coordinator for the City of Palm Springs, where he created the Palm Springs Foreign Trade Zone and led three trade missions to China. Most recently, he was asked to provide assistance to the California Commission for Jobs and Economic Growth on matters related to international trade and Gov. Schwarzenegger's trade mission initiatives.

Mr. McGowan earned a bachelor's degree in political science from UC Riverside and a master's degree in politics, economics, and business from the Claremont Graduate University. He recently earned the Michael and Mary Johnston Fellowship in American Politics and is a Ph.D. candidate in American politics and public policy at Claremont. He is married with four children and resides in Canyon Lake.

As director of the San Bernardino County Redevelopment Agency, Ms. Thomas will oversee efforts to foster economic opportunities and affordable living conditions within established redevelopment project areas in the unincorporated county areas through the effective and efficient utilization of California redevelopment law, appropriate use of tax increment revenues, and cooperative programs with other county agencies and communities.

The San Bernardino County Redevelopment Agency currently administers redevelopment efforts in the Speedway Development Area near Fontana, as well as in the Victor Valley, the Cedar Glen disaster zone, Mission Boulevard between Montclair and Chino, Bloomington, and Muscoy.

Ms. Thomas has been with the Riverside County Economic Development Agency since 1998. During that time she supervised and managed multiple redevelopment projects, reviewed all development proposals in redevelopment project areas, prepared legislative proposals for the county, and researched alternative funding sources for the agency. Prior to that, she served as a redevelopment project planner for the City of Ontario Redevelopment Agency.

A resident of Upland, Ms. Thomas earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Redlands and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Cal Poly Pomona.

She received an Outstanding Public Service Award from the County of Riverside in 2004, and is a recipient of the California Planners Foundation Award.

"We are very fortunate to have these two highly qualified professionals joining our economic development team," Chairman Postmus said.