

A Neighbor Who Sees the Work, Stephen

From Victoria Cortez <vcortez1004@gmail.com>

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To citymanager@ci.lathrop.ca.us <citymanager@ci.lathrop.ca.us>

Dear Stephen,

My name is Torie Cortez. My back wall borders your parking lot, so when I say I'm a Lathrop neighbor, I mean it in the most literal sense.

I was in the chamber last night, Stephen. I watched you work. And I want you to know — I see how much this city is asking of you.

Lathrop is one of the fastest growing cities in California. That is a testament to the work people like you are doing every single day. But Stephen, I also hear what that growth sounds like from the other side of the fence — from the families who don't know what's being built, decided, or changed in their own neighborhood until it's already done. Not because the City isn't communicating. But because the message isn't reaching them where they are.

I am a mother of seven. I homeschool my children. I am in this community constantly — talking to families, navigating benefits, sitting in living rooms with people who care deeply about Lathrop and simply don't know how to plug in. Spanish-speaking families. Punjabi-speaking families. Everyday residents who will never read an agenda but would absolutely show up if they felt invited.

I happen to have a background in writing and communications. But that's not why I'm writing to you. I'm writing because I am a neighbor who pays attention, and I think you could use one.

If there is any capacity — formal or informal, paid or volunteer — where I can help you close that gap, I am ready. No agenda. Just a mom who wants this city to work for everyone living in it.

I would love to buy you a coffee and talk, Stephen. At your convenience, entirely.

With respect and good faith,

Torie Cortez
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