

REPORT FROM

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Date: March 31, 2017

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Council District: All
Council File No. 13-0046

To: The Mayor
The Council

From: Richard H. Llewellyn, Jr., Interim City Administrative Officer

Reference: Council File No. 13-0046

Subject: **INTERIM POSITION AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT RECENTLY ADOPTED
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REFORM STRATEGIES**

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Authorize by resolution the following 28 positions within the Department of City Planning to support the expanded Community Planning Program, implement recently adopted changes to the environmental review process, and improve delivery of development services consistent with the adopted Development Reform Initiative, subject to position allocation by the Personnel Department:

<u>No.</u>	<u>Class Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>
1	7946-0	Principal City Planner
1	7947-0	Senior City Planner
7	7944-0	City Planner
10	7941-0	City Planning Associate
1	7998-0	Associate Zoning Administrator
1	9182-0	Chief Management Analyst
1	9171-2	Senior Management Analyst II
2	9184-2	Management Analyst II
1	1593-1	Departmental Chief Accountant !
1	1368-0	Senior Administrative Clerk
2	1358-0	Administrative Clerk

2. Authorize by resolution the following three positions within the Office of the City Attorney to support the expanded Community Planning Program, subject to position allocation by the Personnel Department and paygrade determination by the City Administrative Officer:

<u>No.</u>	<u>Class Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>
2	0552-A	Deputy City Attorney III
1	0577-0	Paralegal II

3. Authorize by resolution the following three positions within the Department of Transportation to support the expanded Community Planning Program, subject to position allocation by the Personnel Department and paygrade determination by the City Administrative Officer:

<u>No.</u>	<u>Class Code</u>	<u>Class Title</u>
1	7280-3	Transportation Engineering Associate III
2	2480-2	Transportation Planning Associate II

SUMMARY

On January 28, 2014, the Matrix Consulting Group delivered their analysis of the City's opportunities to improve development services. The Consultant's report included 329 separate recommendations for integrating and improving development review at the Departments of Building and Safety (DBS), City Planning (DCP), Public Works, Bureau of Engineering (BOE), Transportation (DOT), and Fire (LAFD). The recommendations contained in this report will support the expanded Community Planning Program, implement recently adopted changes to the environmental review process, and improve delivery of development services consistent with the adopted Development Reform Initiative.

The recommendations included in this report will allow the Personnel Department to begin the position allocation process in the current fiscal year. Once the positions are allocated, departments may initiate the hiring process. It is anticipated that these positions would be filled in July 2017. Attachment 1 summarizes the divisions within the DCP that will benefit from the recommended positions.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There is no anticipated General Fund or Special Fund impact in Fiscal Year 2016-17. The recommendations will allow the Personnel Department to begin the position allocation process in the current fiscal year. Once the positions are allocated, departments may initiate the hiring process. Fees and surcharges adopted in the current fiscal year will support these positions on an on-going basis. The recommendations included in this report are consistent with the City's Financial Policies as on-going expenditures will be fully supported by on-going revenues.

ADDITIONAL STAFFING BACKGROUND

City Attorney / Transportation:

Community Planning Program

The three positions within the Office of the City Attorney and the three positions within the DOT will support the strategic plan to update all 35 Community Plans within the City. These positions will provide support to the regional Community Planning teams within the DCP. The strategic plan is discussed in detail within the DCP's May 2016 report (CF-16-0422) to the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee. These positions will be fully funded by the recently adopted increase to the General Plan Maintenance surcharge.

Department of City Planning:

Case Management

As part of the Development Reform Initiative, the DBS lowered the threshold requirements for cases qualifying for Development Services Case Management (DSCM) review which resulted in a significant increase in the number of case management projects that require DCP review. One Senior City Planner and one City Planner are recommended for the DCP Case Management Unit to ensure that all cases that qualify and request DSCM services are reviewed in a timely manner. DSCM services navigate the public through DCP's entitlement processes, including: expanded preliminary zoning review for projects with lower thresholds; providing information about the submittal and pre-application requirements and services; and expanded project navigation services during the pre-entitlement, entitlement, and post-entitlement phases.

Pre-Application Review Program

Development Services counters provide zoning consultation services to applicants on development projects and serve as the point of entry and exit for all discretionary land use applications. The Deep Counters, which were implemented in 2016, offer additional services for projects that are more specialized in nature, such as Temporary Special Events, Wireless/Telecommunications, Map Processing Services, and Housing. Currently, it could take staff at the Public Counters up to two hours to review and intake an entitlement case filing, often requiring supplemental appointments due to errors in the application information, missed entitlement requests and missing required submittal documents. Follow-up appointments result in delays for the applicant and negatively impact the project timeline.

Two City Planners and four City Planning Associates are recommended to pilot a Pre-Application Review Program (PARP) which would ensure that these applications have been screened and are ready to submit on the actual scheduled date of submittal. The PARP would begin as a voluntary service piloted at the Metro Development Services Center (DSC) Public Counter. Based on an analysis of the efficiency of the pilot program, preliminary applicant review services could be extended to projects that meet certain thresholds as well as expansion of the PARP to the Valley and West Los Angeles offices.

Housing Services Deep Counter

Housing Unit staff provide expertise in housing development and coordinate with other City agencies including the Housing and Community Investment Department (HCID), DBS, Fire, and BOE to help resolve issues related to housing development throughout the project entitlement and permitting processes. Additionally, this unit provides the needed resources to oversee the tracking of housing units from the application phase, to entitlement phase, and ultimately permit phase. A tracking module in the Planning Case Tracking System (PCTS) was launched on November 1, 2015 to help track this data throughout the different phases.

This Unit provides regular housing reports to managers for review, and is an essential component in the Mayor's goal of achieving 100,000 housing units by 2021. Furthermore, as part of Executive Directive No. 13, DCP's Priority Housing Project (PHP) program was launched, which offers priority processing for projects that meet certain affordability thresholds and delivers focused entitlement processing services and dedicated staff from application submittal to the issuance of an entitlement determination, and ultimately permits. Service requests are often time sensitive and require extensive research and follow-up over an extended period of time. In order to maintain the current service levels for these services, as well as expand service for the management of research requests, an additional team of one City Planner and one City Planning Associate are recommended.

Environmental Review Project Management

The Department currently has 88 active Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) in process for private development projects; a significant increase from 25 and 50 EIRs in previous years. In order to maintain overall quality and impartiality in these critical public documents, the DCP is pursuing significant reforms to its procedures for intake and handling of EIR materials that are prepared by outside consultants. More specifically, the Department intends to designate individual environmental consultants after conducting a bidding process for each and every development application that requires an EIR. This expansion of the Department's administrative functions requires additional staff resources to ensure that it can maintain service of its many development applications. One Principal City Planner, one City Planner, one Senior Management Analyst II, and one Management Analyst II are critical for implementing adopted changes to EIR procedures and will provides the resources necessary to allow for enhanced quality control of these critical documents, without impacting its timeline to deliver complete EIRs used for consideration of private development applications.

Expedited Case Processing Section (EPS)

Additional staff resources are imperative to continue efficient processing of cases. Current case load in EPS is 15 to 30 cases per planner, including supervising staff. Additional staff would serve to lower the case load per planner and increase capacity to process additional cases. One City Planner and two City Planning Associates are recommended to meet demand and continue high quality case processing. These staffing resources would provide the ability for EPS to meet demand and reasonably handle increased caseloads. This would also further facilitate efforts to meet the City's goal in the creation of housing units to address the housing shortage currently affecting the City.

Beverage and Entertainment Streamlined Program (BESt)

The BESt Program is one of two programs managed by the Condition Compliance Unit (CCU). The goal of the BESt Program is to reduce the overall processing time of Conditional Use Permits related to beverage (alcohol) and entertainment and providing an engaging and predictable process. Along with its sister program, the Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Program (MViP), a single point of contact has been created at the CCU to guide applicants from the pre-application phase, to entitlement application and processing, and ultimately condition clearance and effectuation.

One City Planner, three City Planning Associates, and one Associate Zoning Administrator are recommended to ensure that the BESt Program can re-absorb and prioritize the streamlined functions of pre-application review, case filing, and condition clearance. Estimated efficiencies include streamlined reviews for pre-applications to be done in two weeks and quicker total entitlement review timeline to be 4 months from filed to issuance of decision letter.

West Los Angeles Public Counter

The West Los Angeles Public Counter will be staffed with planners and administrative support staff to mirror services currently offered at the Metro and Valley Public Counters including technical expertise in matters pertaining to the California Coastal Act and Mello Act coordination. The West Los Angeles Public Counter will serve as a one-stop location where the public can obtain information on zoning and planning processes, land use entitlements and application submittal requirements. Other services to be provided include entitlement application intake and building permit clearances. Once open, this West LA office will save customers time, and reduce traffic and service delays at the City's Development Services Centers (DSC). A Senior Administrative Clerk is essential in the start-up operations of the West Los Angeles Public Counter. In addition to the basic functions of handling phone calls, filing paperwork and assisting planners with other administrative duties, the Senior Administrative Clerk must be able to handle scheduling of appointments for case intake, condition clearances, and assist in collaborating with the other City and governmental agencies.

Administration and Commission Support

The DCP's staffing and work programs have grown significantly over the past three years. Support work such as contracting services, invoicing review and payment, fiscal management including revenue and expenditure tracking, and administrative services have also grown exponentially. As the DCP's caseload increases, there is also a greater need for support staff in the Commission Office. Currently, there are only two Senior Administrative Clerks and four Commission Executive Assistants providing support to nine Commissions. The Department is requesting one Administrative Clerk to assist with case intake and log cases into the Planning Case Tracking System as well as assist with uploading documents timely into the City Clerk's Novus System.

Increased funding and project activity, in combination with past plan delays due to legal issues and staffing shortages, has resulted in the need to cast a wider net on a more regular basis to obtain experienced and highly qualified consultants with well-crafted scopes of work. Therefore, the addition of a Chief Management Analyst, Management Analyst II, and Department Chief Accountant are necessary to prevent further plan delays and effectively manage monetary and personnel resources.

The requested administrative and commission positions will enable staff to better expedite required reports and documentation requested by City Planning Commissions, City Council, the Mayor's Office, and other divisions within the DCP. It will allow administrative staff to more effectively aid staff in following various procedures and requirements pertaining to fund management and contracting processes to obtain consultants for environmental, transportation, urban design, and historic preservation services that are integral to timely project and plan completion throughout the Department.

ATTACHMENT 1 - Summary of Positions within Department of City Planning

	Case Management	Pre- Application Review Program	Housing Services	Project Review	Expedited Case Processing	Beverage and Entertainment Streamlined Program	West Los Angeles Public Counter	Administration and Commission Support	Total
Principal City Planner				1					1
Senior City Planner	1								1
City Planner	1	2	1	1	1	1			7
City Planning Associate		4	1		2	3			10
Associate Zoning Administrator						1			1
Ch Management Analyst								1	1
Sr Management Analyst II				1					1
Management Analyst				1				1	2
Department Chief Accountant								1	1
Sr. Administrative Clerk							1		1
Administrative Clerk		1						1	2
Total	2	7	2	4	3	5	1	4	28