



ERIC GARCETTI  
MAYOR

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** The Honorable Members of the City Council  
c/o City Clerk

**From:** Eric Garcetti, Mayor *EG*

**Subject:** **EXEMPTION REQUEST – DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING, (1)  
PRINCIPAL CITY PLANNER**

**Date:** November 15, 2022

The Department of City Planning (DCP) requested the exemption of one (1) position of Principal City Planner, Class Code 7946, in accordance with Charter Section 1001(b), from civil service as management, professional, scientific, or expert services exemptions. On October 17, 2022, the Mayor's Office asked the Personnel Department to review the DCP's request.

Charter Section 1001(b) allows up to 150 persons to be exempt, of which 133 are approved. Approval of this request will increase the count. As of the date of this letter, this request will be in the 136<sup>th</sup> position of the 150 exemptions. There are an additional 50 exempt positions added by the City Council pursuant to Charter Section 1001(b)(4), of which 8 are filled. Approval of this request will increase the count.

The Principal City Planner position will serve as the lead over the Department's Performance Management Unit (PMU) and will also lead one of the Department's comprehensive long-range planning initiatives and policy division. The position is responsible for ensuring, through extensive coordination with the Executive Team, equitable access to training opportunities for Department staff, and providing management and policy makers with meaningful data and metrics to make informed decisions. The position will also be responsible for managing, directing, and overseeing the Valley Community Planning Program and the Transit Neighborhood Planning Initiatives. The need to provide Department staff a comprehensive training program will

be critical as the Department navigates through the many demands from updating the City's General Plan, implementing the Comprehensive Community Plan Program, Implementing the new Zoning Code, guiding staff through new state laws such as AB 52 compliance, tribal cultural sensitivity awareness, and reviews of major development projects and associated processes.

The duties and responsibilities of the position include, but will not be limited to:

- Participate as a member of the Department of City Planning (DCP) Management team;
- Serve as technical resource to the DCP Executive Office on matters relating to policy planning and training development;
- Attend and participate in Area Planning Commission, PLUM, and Council hearings as needed;
- Direct and manage the Department's Performance Management Unit, collaborating in the development of workload metrics and staffing compositions;
- Collaborate with Executive Office to identify operational needs, streamlining processes, and establishing department efficiencies.
- Regular engagement on several levels to facilitate clear and consistent direction on land use policy issues/conflicts, and advance Department goals for quality work products;
- Engage and play a leadership role in policy discussions;
- Regular communication with internal DCP staff, management team and Executive team, other City agencies including City Attorney's Office, other City Departments, Commissioners, Council Offices and other elected officials, and external agencies including Metro;
- Oversees the development and implementation of ongoing training programs for department staff including, new employee trainings, customer service, how to handle conflicts, tribal sensitivity awareness, writing defensible findings, conducting a public hearing, and guidance on compliance with state mandates in the department's land use policy and case processing practices, etc.;
- Supervise, train, and evaluate Senior City Planners, City Planners and Administration staff (when available); set division policies, goals, and performance evaluations; and Prepare annual staff performance reviews and manage personnel issues as needed; evaluate status of policy work and timeline ensure goals are met;
- Actively monitor and inform PlanStat reporting to Executive Office and Management Team; and
- Attend controversial hearings before City/Area Planning Commission or PLUM with the assigned staff to provide support during the course of the meeting.

The Principal City Planner position requires two years of full-time paid experience with the City of Los Angeles as a Senior City Planner or in a class which is at that level and provides experience in urban planning or zoning; or two years of full-time paid second-level supervisory experience responsible for directing professional personnel in an

organization engaged in urban or regional planning, redevelopment, land use administration, or a closely related field.

While the Principal City Planner position is a civil service classification for which examinations have been given in the past, the Department of City Planning (DCP) had previously been granted an exemption for a Principal City Planner position under Charter Section 1001(b).

The exemption of this position will allow the DCP the flexibility to recruit and select the best qualified candidate who possesses the necessary experience and expertise for the position. The duties as described are appropriate to the class of Principal City Planner.

Based on my review of DCP's request, as well as the review of the Personnel Department, I hereby approve the request for the exemption of a Pr. City Planner and transmit my action to the City Council, pursuant to City Charter Section 1001(b)(1). If the exempt position is not filled within six months, the Mayor's approval for the department to fill the position may expire.

EG:alg

cc: Andre Herndon, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor  
Heleen Ramirez, Legislative Coordinator, Office of the Mayor  
Vincent P. Bertoni, AICP, Director of Planning  
Dana Brown, General Manager, Personnel Department