

TO: Personnel Board
FROM: Sarah Olson, Human Resources
DATE: May 19, 2017
SUBJECT: Program Assistant I – Planning

At the request of the Planning Division Director, Heather Stouder, I have studied the 1.0 FTE position of Program Assistant I (CG 20, Range 11-position #634), currently occupied by R. Ethington. This position functions as an office manager and provides administrative support for the Planning Division and Planning Division Director. Increasingly, this position provides a high level of assistance in the preparation and monitoring of the Planning Division budget and will co-lead the administrative support team to ensure optimization of workloads in DPCED relevant to Planning Division needs. Based on my review of the current position description and of the classification specifications for Program Assistant 1 and Program Assistant 2, as well as discussions with Ms. Stouder and the incumbent, I conclude that the current position of Program Assistant I should be recreated as a Program Assistant 2 in CG20, Range 12, and the incumbent be reallocated to the new position for the reasons outlined in this memo.

The classification of Program Assistant 1 is defined as:

...responsible programmatic support work in a City department, division or other independent program unit. Employees in this class support a particular program or programs by performing or coordinating specialized program functions, interpreting and applying programmatic policies and procedures, and performing administrative tasks in support of the program. The work requires exercising considerable judgment and discretion in the interpretation and application of policies. Employees in this class work under the general supervision of the department, division, or program head and may provide direction to limited numbers of permanent and/or non-permanent staff. [emphasis added]

The classification of Program Assistant 2 is defined as:

...highly responsible, advanced-level programmatic support work in a department, division or other independent program unit. Employees in this class support a particular program or programs by performing or coordinating specialized program functions, interpreting and applying programmatic policies and procedures, and performing administrative tasks in support of the program. Employees may supervise a small (2-4) assigned clerical staff and/or assist with supervision of non-clerical staff. Otherwise, employees are responsible for performing a variety of complex program related functions. **Employees in this class work under the general supervision of the department, division, or program head.** Work is distinguished from a Program Assistant 1 in that a Program Assistant 2 may have direct supervisory responsibility. Otherwise, a **Program Assistant 2 may develop operating systems and procedures for the program, as well as have a greater depth of knowledge, independent decision making, and coordination of program activities at a higher level than a Program Assistant 1.** [emphasis added]

Ms. Ruth Ethington joined the Planning Division in 2000 and was reclassified to a Program Assistant I in 2008. In the last few years, Ms. Ethington has had changes to her position description as it relates to budgeting and the administrative support provided to the Planning

Division Director. The Planning Division Director relies on this position in the preparation and monitoring of the annual budget using MUNIS software. In past years, Ms. Ethington was mainly involved in the preparation and monitoring of the annual *operating* budget but she is now expected to prepare and monitor the annual *capital* budget as well. In addition, this position supports the annual \$100,000 Arts Grant Program and related programs involving approximately 50 projects per year. This work involves working closely with the Arts Administrator. The position's role in the annual operating and capital budget and the clerical support provided for the Arts Grant Program requires a greater depth of knowledge of Planning operations, which is at the level of a Program Assistant 2.

Ms. Ethington provides support for key Planning commissions and committees. Responsibilities include the management and monitoring of activities for these commissions, including preparation of packets of information, formal notices for public hearings, posting of all documents to Legistar, scheduling of meetings and the posting and monitoring of Common Council resolutions related to plans, expenditures and a wide variety of work initiated by the Planning Division. The class specification for a Program Assistant 2 describes the management and monitoring of activities for a major board or commission or several related groups. Ms. Ethington oversees five key commissions and committees.

Currently, there is a vacancy for a Program Assistant 2 in the Office of the Director of Planning, Community & Economic Development. That position is similar to Ms. Ethington's in that the position will serve as assistant to the Department Director, provide support for 5 different key Committees and Commissions, provide office management including the preparation and monitoring of the capital and operating budgets and provide leadership to the administrative staff. That position in conjunction with Ms. Ethington will lead the day-to-day workloads of five administrative support staff in the DPCED Office of the Director who also support the Planning Division in various capacities. Assign, prioritize and control work flow of other clerical staff is consistent with the expectations of a Program Assistant 2.

This advanced-level programmatic support work clearly falls into the advanced level of responsibilities expected of a Program Assistant 2.

For all the reasons discussed in this memo, this level of work is expected at the Program Assistant 2 level and consistent with the examples of duties and responsibilities found in that class specification. As such, I recommend the position be recreated as a Program Assistant 2.

The necessary resolution to implement this recommendation has been drafted.

Editor's Note:

Compensation Group/Range	2017 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2017 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2017 Annual Maximum (+12% longevity)
20/11	\$45,543	\$50,978	\$57,096
20/12	\$46,665	\$52,331	\$58,611

cc: Heather Stouder –Planning Division Director
Natalie Erdman – Director of Planning, Community & Economic Development
Mike Lipski – HR Services Manager