



City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,
Oceanside, California 92054

Staff Report

File #: 25-1008

Agenda Date: 9/17/2025

Agenda #: 13.

DATE: September 17, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: Human Resources Department

TITLE: **UPDATE TO THE CITY OF OCEANSIDE SALARY SCHEDULE**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council approve and adopt the revised City of Oceanside Salary Schedule updating the pay range for City Planner effective the pay period following ratification and adoption of this recommendation.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The salary schedule presented for adoption reflects a change to the salary table increasing the pay range for City Planner in a concerted effort to address a significant recruiting deficiency for this key City position.

The City Planner position in the Development Services Department leads and manages the Planning Division, which is responsible for land use planning pursuant to federal, state, regional, and local ordinances. The role serves the community by providing balanced, professional recommendations to the public and City decision makers as they define, shape, and implement Oceanside's growth vision.

The City Planner position was recently vacated. As a matter of course when a long-tenured position is vacated, the Human Resources Department surveys agencies within San Diego County for salary competitiveness. Although the position's salary range falls within acceptable ranges, it constitutes 45% of the average salary range (below the 50% threshold), placing it into the lower quartile of salaries in the County of San Diego for City Planners.

A full-scale recruitment was recently conducted, with the position open for applications for approximately one month. Although three to four candidates met minimum qualifications out of the twenty-two who applied, the applicant showing was not as hoped. Feedback received from the Planning community is that the salary offered is not commensurate with the expectations of the position, given the complexities of land use planning in Oceanside as further described below.

The City Planner position for the City of Oceanside is particularly challenging in comparison to other cities due to the large volume of development activity, the scale and complexity of projects and the level of technical proficiency required to plan for a coastal community that contains many ecologically sensitive areas and several distinct neighborhoods, each with their unique set of considerations and

challenges. The City Planner position is responsible for making complex planning determinations and decisions for projects located in such challenging areas as the Downtown, Coastal Zone areas, and habitat preservation zones. Oceanside’s City Planner must have strong knowledge and expertise of the California Environmental Quality Act, California Coastal Act, and state housing legislation such as State Density Bonus Law and the Housing Accountability Act. In the coming years, the City Planner will lead the Planning Division in implementation of the General Plan Update and its multiple deliverables, including but not limited to the following:

- Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update
- Smart and Sustainable Corridors Specific Plan
- South Morro Hills Community Plan
- Updated Climate Action Plan
- Trails Master Plan
- Active Transportation Plan

As such, the City Planner position requires the highest level of knowledge in the field and the ability to work seamlessly among competing interests and navigate a complex political field while ensuring the integrity of the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Therefore, the salary schedule presented for adoption reflects a market-level compensation adjustment for the position of City Planner effective the first of the pay period following ratification and adoption of this recommendation, taking the position above market average, to approximately the 75% quartile of salaries for like positions within the County of San Diego. This adjustment is reflective of the complexity of duties the position entails and allows for market competitiveness during the recruiting process to ensure prime positioning for solicitation of top City Planner candidates.

The proposed pay scale is as follows:

City Planner Pay Scale Adopted September 17, 2025, Effective September 28, 2025							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
HOURLY	\$69.18	\$72.64	\$76.27	\$80.08	\$84.09	\$88.29	\$92.71
MONTHLY	\$11,991.20	\$12,590.76	\$13,220.29	\$13,881.31	\$14,575.37	\$15,304.14	\$16,069.35
ANNUALLY	\$143,894.36	\$151,089.07	\$158,643.53	\$166,575.70	\$174,904.49	\$183,649.71	\$192,832.20

Within the County of San Diego, the City Planner pay scale in the cities of Chula Vista and San Diego remains above the City of Oceanside’s City Planner pay scale.

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 570.5, outlines the required elements necessary to meet the definition for a publicly available pay schedule as follows:

- (1) Has been duly approved and adopted by the employer’s governing body in accordance with requirements of applicable public meeting laws;
- (2) Identifies the position title for every employee position;

- (3) Shows the pay rate for each identified position, which may be stated as a single amount or as multiple amounts within a range;
- (4) Indicates the time base, including, but not limited to, whether the time base is hourly, daily, bi-weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, or annually;
- (5) Is posted at the office of the employer or immediately accessible and available for public review from the employer during normal business hours or posted on the employer's internet website;
- (6) Indicates an effective date and date of any revisions;
- (7) Is retained by the employer and available for public inspection for not less than five years; and
- (8) Does not reference another document in lieu of disclosing the pay rate.

The most recent update to the City of Oceanside Salary Schedule was approved by the City Council during the meeting of September 3, 2025.

Updates to the salary schedules may require a separate approval from the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and/or Compensation Plan actions taken by the City Council. In addition to complying with the requirements of CCR 570.5, the salary schedules are utilized by CalPERS for the purposes of determining the amount of "compensation earnable" pursuant to Government Code Sections 20630, 20636, and 20636.1.

FISCAL IMPACT

The City Planner position is budgeted at G step in FY 2025-26 at \$254,935. With this change, the approximate fully loaded cost at G step is \$282,595, which results in an approximate annual increase of \$27,660 to the General Fund. The increase will be absorbed within the existing budget, as the position has remained unfilled and the resulting salary savings are sufficient to offset the additional cost.

COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

Does not apply.

CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS

Does not apply.

Prepared by: Chelsea Phebus, Director of Human Resources & Risk Management
Reviewed by: Robert O'Brien, Deputy City Manager
Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Staff Report
2. Salary Schedule