

:

Yale University President's Public Service Fellowship

Proposal for Fellowship Placement • Summer 2017

City Plan Department # 2 : Sustainability and Resilience, planning and public information for flood events and buildings in flood hazard areas.

- Organization: New Haven City Plan Department
- Full street address of organization: 165 Church Street, New Haven, CT
- Website: www.cityofnewhaven.com
- Name and title of the Direct Supervisor (*please note: the Direct Supervisor must be available to supervise Fellow on a daily basis*):

Susmitha Attota, Assistant Director of Comprehensive Planning

- Phone number and e-mail address of Direct Supervisor: 203-946-7814, sattota@newhavenct.gov
- Placement dates (*8-11 weeks between Tuesday, May 30 and Friday, August 11, 2017*):

May 30, 2017 to August 11, 2017 (start and end dates are flexible)

- Are placement dates flexible? If so, please describe: Yes, willing to accommodate intern's requests if he/she needs to start a week late or end a week early.
- Hours of the program (*placements should be equivalent to full-time*):

35 hours per week.

Placement Description

- Organization description (*Mission statement, population served. 150 words or less.*):

The New Haven City Plan Department is responsible for policies, plans and regulations concerning the physical development of the city and encourages a sustainable land use, economic, cultural and environmental agenda. The Department is responsible for maintaining the Comprehensive Plan of Development as well as other area-specific development plans, and writes reports for the City Plan Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals and provides administrative support, planning assistance, project management and design review to a number of city programs and projects. It assists residents, neighborhood organizations, businesses and developers in achieving the city's development objectives.

The City's Comprehensive Plan of Development (aka New Haven Vision 2025) was recently revised in 2015. Several interns contributed their time and effort in developing this Plan, including past Yale PPSF fellows. The Department is now in the process of implementing the recommendations of this Plan. Ensuring environmental sustainability by mitigating the impacts of climate change is one of the key recommendations of the Plan. The Department is seeking a Fellow interested in urban/environmental planning to assist the City's Comprehensive Planner in this effort by putting together a Commercial/Industrial Toolbox for businesses in floodplain areas of the city through research, coordinating and participating in stakeholder and public meetings, and preparing presentation materials and draft reports.

- Please write a 1-2 sentence summary of the work that the Fellow would be conducting (*50 words or less. This will be used as your agency's project description summary on the PPSF website, so please be succinct*): The Fellow would assist the City's Comprehensive Planner in developing a Commercial/Industrial Tool box to guide businesses in special flood hazard areas of the city regarding floodplain development thus enhancing the resilience of commercial infrastructure to flooding and sea-level rise. He/She would also assist in conducting public outreach within the city's coastal communities regarding tools and resources available to them in adapting to a changing climate.
- Please write a complete description of the specific project you propose and list the duties/outcomes expected of the Fellow. (*Suggested length: one to two pages.*)

As a coastal community, New Haven experiences frequent flooding due to heavy rainfall and increasingly severe hurricanes and winter storms. Weather related flooding is compounded by a high rate of sea level rise at 2.5 mm per year (the global mean

trend is 0.5 mm per year). Flooding events negatively impact and can cause closures in New Haven's commercial downtown area. For instance, the most recent and severe storms, Hurricane Irene and Sandy, both cost the city millions of dollars in damages and loss revenue, exposing weaknesses in flood preparedness of the city.

Annualized loss estimates from natural hazards have been prepared for the city based on local loss data or information presented in the 2014 CT NHMP by using HAZUS- MH- Federal Emergency Management (FEMA's) loss estimation software for risks due to severe weather events. A total of **\$0.37 million** of business interruption losses are expected due to flooding. Commercial interruption losses are estimated to be 76% of this total, residential interruption losses are 14% of this total, and municipal interruption losses being the remainder.

Several steps are currently being undertaken by the City to promote climate resiliency. In 2014, the City Plan staff assembled a Program for Public Information (PPI) committee with individuals from inside and outside of local government to develop strategies for conveying information on preparing, responding, and recovering from a disaster through a comprehensive outreach plan. This serves as a basis for creating the New Haven Commercial/Industrial Toolbox (CIT). This project will be consistent with the recently revised Hazard Mitigation Plan Update II, Mill River Planning Study, and FEMA's Community Rating System program, which New Haven is now part of.

The CIT will serve as a guide to businesses in flood plain areas in understanding their location and challenges it presents, providing calculations and retrofitting solutions, educating about best practices, providing information on financing tools, and equipping with monitoring tools and resources. Although this is specific to commercial/industrial areas in New Haven, this template could serve as a guide to other CT municipalities dealing with similar challenges.

- Specific skills/experience required for the project (*Please list*):

Required: Writing and analytical skills
MS Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)

Beneficial: Computer mapping (Arc Map)
Knowledge of Adobe Illustrator and/or Photoshop
Bilingual (English/Spanish)
Spread sheet and database management
General knowledge of urban and environmental Planning

- Additional requirements (e.g. a car or weekend working hours). If a car is required, please include information regarding parking arrangements and mileage reimbursement): May occasionally require attendance at evening meetings.
- Briefly describe the work that Yale PPSF Fellows have done with your agency in the past and present. If you have not worked with Yale Fellows, please describe any work that Yale students have done with your agency.

A number of Fellows have worked for the City Plan Department since the program's inception, notably on large development projects and on neighborhood planning as well as analysis and organization of planning and zoning records. Several Fellows have participated in redrafting Inland Wetland Regulations which were adopted and contributed to "Environmental Best Practices" for the City's website. A Fellow assisted in setting up the Canal Dock Corporation, a non-profit entity to manage a new community Boathouse proposed for Long Wharf – work with this non-profit will continue this summer. Another wrote local legislation necessary to accommodate federal and state mandates to comply with the National Flood Insurance Program and assembled components for a submission to our Board of Aldermen of amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance. The legislation has since been adopted and is in effect, thus keeping the City in compliance. Another completed an application for Great Public Spaces in America (New Haven Green), which was successful. Another helped in updating the City's Comprehensive Plan of Development, which was adopted by the Board of Alders in 2015, and is now effective. Few Fellows helped in putting together documentation for entering FEMA's Community Rating System program, through which property owners in special flood hazard areas will be eligible for a discounted flood insurance rate. New Haven is now officially part of this program and the community was recently rated by FEMA's insurance agent. A final score will be announced in January 2017, based on which property owners in floodplains could avail appropriate discounts to their flood insurance.
