



UrbanPlan

Volunteer Information & Application

“Until you’ve done UrbanPlan, you can’t grasp the power of the program. We senior-level development professionals must step up as volunteers. The time commitment is minor; the impact is powerful—immediately and long term.”

— Connie Moore, President & CEO, BRE Properties, San Francisco, CA

Benefits of Being an UrbanPlan Volunteer:

- Make an impact on the next generation of citizens
- Professional development and knowledge sharing
- Networking with like-minded professionals
- Rewarding engagement with students



High School Students with UrbanPlan Volunteer Facilitator

The mission of UrbanPlan is to generate more positive and informed dialogue about land use at the local level through the education of students – our future voters, neighbors, public officials, and land use professionals.

UrbanPlan is a project-based learning curriculum development for high school classes focused on disciplines in business, city planning, real estate, architecture or law. During the project, students develop a financial proforma and physical model of their plan for an urban infill, mixed-use redevelopment project, and present their proposal to a mock City Council that awards the development contract to the winning team. UrbanPlan is supported by volunteers who are professionals in all disciplines of land use and development, selected for their depth of experience and knowledge.

“Our goal is to create a more sophisticated level of discourse among local stakeholders involved in land use decisions. The education of tomorrow’s voters, neighbors, community leaders, public officials and land use professionals is mission critical to ULI.”

— Ron Nahas, IOPC Gold, ULI Foundation Governor,
Principal Rafanelli & Nahas,
Orinda, CA



In the Classroom

In the 15 class hours of the curriculum, students form development teams and respond to an RFP to redevelop a 5½ block site in a fictional city. Each team member assumes one of five roles:

- Financial Analyst
- Marketing Director
- City Liaison
- Neighborhood Liaison
- Site Planner

Through the process, students discover the dynamic fundamental challenges of development: how market forces (supply and demand, availability of capital, risk/reward expectations, etc.) clash and collaborate with non-market forces (regulation, politics, advocacy groups, etc.) to create the built environment.

Through these roles, students develop a deeper understanding of the various stakeholders in the development process and the challenge of reconciling their often-competing agendas to create a well designed, market responsive, financeable, and buildable project.

Volunteering with UrbanPlan

Volunteers accepted into the program are invited to a 1-day training session for hands-on experience with the program and tools. Trained volunteers serve in the classroom as Facilitators and as members of a mock City Council for final student presentations.

The training and volunteer time commitment includes:

- 6-8 hours preparation to the training session
- 1-day training session
- Minimum of 1 hour of classroom time annually. Typical commitment is 3 hours per semester

ULI volunteer Facilitators challenge the students to think more critically about the UrbanPlan issues and the specific responsibilities of their “roles”.



Volunteer Roles

Facilitator

The role with the greatest impact, most responsibility, and least time commitment is the role of Facilitator. Facilitators challenge the students to think more critically about the UrbanPlan issues and the specific responsibilities of their respective roles.

Facilitators draw deeply on professional experience and are rewarded by creating excitement and inspiration in students for the urban development process.

Effective Facilitators have:

- Development project experience
- Patience to question rather than coach
- Time and willingness to learn the details of the UrbanPlan project case

Facilitators meet twice with students during the semester. Classes are 45 to 90 minutes, depending upon the school.

City Council Member

Students present their final proposals to a five-person mock City Council comprised of volunteers. By challenging the students’ work as if in an actual City Council meeting, the volunteers assess whether the proposals are responsive to the RFP, grounded in the facts of the UrbanPlan case, and consistent with reality. The City Council then awards the contract to the winning team.

This is a fun volunteer opportunity, particularly for those who have sat on the other side of the table.

Effective City Council Members have:

- Development project experience
- Previously presented to City Councils, Planning Commissions, etc.
- The time and willingness to learn the details of the UrbanPlan project case

The length of City Council sessions vary with the number of student teams presenting plans. Typically, there are four to six teams per class. City Council sessions range from approximately 2½ to 4 hours.

Thank you for your interest in UrbanPlan—we hope you will consider joining us!

Questions on UrbanPlan?

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“UrbanPlan is in a class by itself—advancing ULI’s mission and brand while enriching students, the broader community and ULI members alike.”

— Rick Dishnica, Multi-Family Council Blue, President of the Dishnica Company, Point Richmond, CA