



American Planning Association  
**California Chapter**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

DATE: January 25, 2020  
TO: APA California Chapter Board  
FROM: Hanson Hom, AICP, Vice President Conferences  
SUBJECT: Board Appointment of Conference Program Coordinator

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

Appoint Tess Harris at the APA California Conference Program Coordinator, effectively immediately.

## **DISCUSSION**

In 2016, the Board approved the creation of a Conference Program Coordinator to assist the VP of Conferences in advising and coordinating with the Conference Host Committee and conference contractors in assembling the annual conference program. As described in the APA California Bylaws (Section 5.25), the duties of the position are as follows:

- a. Become familiar with the upcoming year's conference location and overall program schedule for educational sessions;
- b. Solicit ideas and develop the Pre-Conference training sessions based on 'hot topics' and past offerings, and taking advantage of experts who may be based near the conference site;
- c. Work with the Conference Host Committee's (CHC) Programs Committee to develop a Call for Presentations;
- d. Discuss the session submittal process and timing with the Chapter contractors and the CHC Programs Committee;
- e. Advise the CHC Programs Committee of the Chapter's interest in ensuring a sufficient number of sessions are included in the program, balance among the selected sessions' topics, and that all mandatory sessions are submitted and accepted by the Programs Committee;
- f. Serve as the Board representative to work with the Programs Committee to select sessions, distribute among Session Blocks to assure a program balanced over all conference days, assure mandatory sessions are appropriately placed, and assign all sessions to rooms; and

g. Review the Conference Program as it is being developed and prior to publication.

For the past three conferences (2017, 2018 and 2019), this position has been capably filled by Kacey Lizon. She has done an exceptional job, but unfortunately cannot continue in this role due to other competing obligations.

This is a essential position for assisting the planning of our annual conferences. I would like to nominate that the Board appoint Tess Harris to fill this vacant position. Tess has been active on the Central Coast Section Board and, for the past two years, has served as one of the Cochairs for the 2019 Conference in Santa Barbara. In this capacity, she has not only learned the intricacies of planning our annual conference, but has been very hands on in attending to the innumerate details associated with all aspects of the conference. She has demonstrated excellent organizational and inter-personal skills and has been instrumental in the success of the 2019 conference. I feel very fortunate that Tess is willing to assume the Conference Program Coordinator position and heartily recommend her appointment. Tess Harris works as a Supervising Planner at the County of Santa Barbara and her resume is attached.

Attachment: Tess Harris Resume

## Relevant Work Experience:

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### County of Santa Barbara, Planning and Development Department

#### Supervising Planner, Development Review Division

Nov. 2019 – Present

- ✓ Supervise team of 3-4 planners ranging in experience levels
- ✓ Review environmental documents, staff reports, and attend hearings
- ✓ Manage Montecito Debris Flow Rebuilding Team, consisting of approximately 10 planners assigned as case managers to assist property owners in the rebuilding process; provide Montecito Planning Commission with monthly rebuilding briefing reports.

#### Planner III, Development Review Division

Feb. 2018 – Nov. 2019

#### Planner II, Development Review Division

Feb. 2017 – Feb. 2018

- ✓ Manage complex caseload, ensuring project consistency with the County's Comprehensive Plan, zoning ordinances, and compliance with CEQA.
  - Notable projects include: U.S. Highway 101 Carpinteria to Santa Barbara Local Coastal Program Amendment, Montecito Debris Nets Emergency Permit and Conditional Use Permit, Like-for-Like Rebuild Amendments to the LUDC, MLUDC, and Article II, Dangermond Preserve Coastal Development Permit, Tajiguas Landfill General Plan Amendment, Skytt Tentative Parcel Map, and Lerner Winery Appeal.
- ✓ Prepare environmental documents and staff reports, and present projects to the Zoning Administrator, County and Montecito Planning Commissions, and the Board of Supervisors.
- ✓ Staff the Historic Landmark Advisory Commission (HLAC)
- ✓ Completed the Leadership Academy program and worked on orientation process restructuring.
- ✓ Oversaw the red-tag case manager teams and managed internal communications for the recovery efforts in Montecito.
- ✓ Awarded CSAC Innovation Award for Montecito mapping effort.
- ✓ Act as mentor to other staff and provide trainings for new staff (e.g. Photomapper and GIS)

### County of Ventura, Resource Management Agency, Planning Division

#### Planner III, Residential Permits Section

July 2016 – Feb. 2017

#### Planner II, Residential Permits Section

Sept. 2015 – July 2016

#### Planner I, Residential Permits Section

July 2014 – Sept. 2015

- ✓ Managed complex cases including Tract Maps, Conditional Use Permits and Development Plans.
  - Notable projects include: Simi Valley Shooting Range, Epona Estate Temporary Events, Tract 4410 Subdivision, Lake Sherwood.
- ✓ Prepared environmental documents and staff reports, and presented to Municipal Councils, Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC), Planning Director, Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.
- ✓ Assisted in training of incoming Planner II staff.

#### Williamson Act Program Manager

Aug. 2014 – Feb. 2017

- ✓ Managed the Ventura County Williamson Act Program, which included preparing contracts, presenting the program annually to the Board of Supervisors, updating the Guidelines, and enforcing the program.

### Oracle Utilities (previously, Opower), San Francisco, CA

#### Proposal Manager

July 2013 – June 2014

- ✓ Managed proposals for utilities interested in energy efficiency and demand response.

**U.S. Fulbright Commission, Nicosia, Cyprus**

**U.S. Fulbright Scholar to Cyprus**

**July 2012 – June 2013**

- ✓ Researched irrigation policies and water conservation opportunities in the Cypriot agricultural sector. Partnered with the Department of Agriculture, Water Development Department, University of Nicosia, and Near East University. Gathered irrigation data in the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities.

**U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Oceans, Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES), Washington, DC**

**Management Analyst**

**Feb. 2012 – July 2012**

- ✓ Drafted U.S. guidance on the Rio+20 Text for the U.S. negotiation team, with an emphasis on land use issues.
- ✓ Supervised intern team and managed presentations for the U.S. Center at the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development.

**City of Pacific Grove, Community Development Department**

**Environmental Programs Assistant**

**Jan. 2011 – Feb. 2012**

- ✓ Prepared CEQA and NEPA documents and presented projects at City Council hearings.
- ✓ Coordinated long-range planning projects, including the Urban Forest Management Plan and Urban Greening Grant. Held public outreach meetings and created GIS maps for long-range planning projects.
- ✓ Applied for and awarded \$250,000 for the City to create watershed models, storm water treatment measures, and a public tree inventory. Secured \$50,000 in grants for the City's coastal recreational trails.

**Awards/Achievements**

**CSAC Innovation Award, County of Santa Barbara**

**Fall 2018**

- ✓ Montecito Debris Flow mapping effort

**Employee Excellence Award, Ventura County Planning Division**

**Jan. 2017**

- ✓ Major Project, Simi Valley Shooting Range

**Employee Excellence Award: Ventura County Planning Division**

**Dec. 2014**

- ✓ Excellence in Day to Day Performance

**Certificate of Appreciation, U.S. Department of State**

**Fall 2012**

- ✓ Awarded for work at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

**Member of the U.S. Delegation to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development**

**June 2012**

- ✓ Nomination by Secretary of State Clinton

**Certificate of Appreciation, U.S. Department of State**

**Spring 2012**

- ✓ Awarded for assistance during the U.S. China Ten Year Framework for Energy and Environment Cooperation

**Leadership**

**Initiated the Brown Bag Lunch Series, County of Santa Barbara**

**Feb. 2018 – Present**

**Volunteer, Blue Beam Software Implementation Team, County of Santa Barbara**

**2017 – Present**

**Santa Barbara County Subsection Director, American Planning Association (APA)**

**Dec. 2015 – Present**

**2019 California APA Conference Co-Chair, Santa Barbara APA**

**2017 – Sept. 2019**

**2019 California APA Conference, Session Panelist**

**Sept. 2019**

**Local Assistance Center Volunteer, Montecito Recovery, County of Santa Barbara**

**Jan. – Feb. 2018**

# TESS HARRIS

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- ✓ Panelist for Undergraduate Environmental Studies Planning Course, UCSB Spring 2016 and 2017
- ✓ Guest Lecturer for Public Policy Graduate Course, Cal Lutheran University Fall 2016
- ✓ Central Coast Membership Inclusion Officer, Santa Barbara APA Nov. 2014 – Dec. 2015
- ✓ Presented Lecture: *Opportunities for Sustaining On-Farm Water Supplies* Dec. 2012
  - “Building Bridges: Energy, Water and Climate Change” Conference at the Cyprus Institute in Nicosia
- ✓ Guest Lecturer on Rio+20 for Law and Politics Graduate Course, Middlebury Institute Spring 2012

## Education:

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### Middlebury Institute of International Studies

Master of Arts in International Environmental Policy 2010 – 2012

- ✓ Merit Scholar
- ✓ Specialization: Energy and Climate Change

### University of California, Santa Barbara

Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and Bachelor of Arts in English (Dual Major) 2006 – 2010