



News from: **City of Oakland**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2013

City of Oakland Welcomes New Staff to Key Economic Development, Planning and Building Positions

Oakland, CA — Today, Oakland Mayor Jean Quan and City Administrator Deanna J. Santana welcomed Rachel O’Dwyer Flynn as Planning and Building Director and Kelley Kahn as Economic and Workforce Development Director. These two leadership positions are key to driving Oakland’s future economic growth.

“Making Oakland as business-friendly as possible and creating jobs are two major areas of focus for my administration,” Mayor Quan said. “There are many exciting possibilities and opportunities for our city right now, and it was important to find the right people to make Oakland’s promise a reality. I’m pleased that we found Ms. Flynn and Ms. Kahn to take leadership roles on our team, because they both have strong visions for getting us there.”

“I’m excited to have these two professionals join the City of Oakland in key positions that will propel investment and development in Oakland,” said Ms. Santana. “Ms. Flynn’s demonstrated ability to streamline processes for greater efficiency will greatly benefit efforts already underway within the Department of Planning and Building. Ms. Kahn brings more than 15 years of experience in implementing transformative development initiatives in the Bay Area.”

Rachel O’Dwyer Flynn—Planning & Building Director

A licensed architect and urban planner with more than 25 years of public and private sector experience, Ms. Flynn most recently worked in Abu Dhabi for Otak International. Prior to her overseas experience, she ran planning and building departments in two Virginia cities – Richmond and Lynchburg – as Director of Planning and Development. Ms. Flynn spent most of her early career with Cannon Design.

Ms. Flynn will manage a staff of more than 125 in the Department of Planning and Building, including permit and code enforcement inspectors, development review and zoning staff, engineering and architectural plan checkers and major projects and strategic planners. She will oversee the ongoing overhaul of the Building Services division based on recommendations made by Management Partners following their extensive evaluation which concluded in September 2012. Through her leadership, the City’s planning and permit functions will be serve as strong facilitators of sustainable economic development and growth within Oakland while embracing the core principles of quality of life, diversity and equity and engagement and collaboration.

(more)

Media Contact:

Karen Boyd
Citywide Communications
Director
(510) 238-6365
kboyd@oaklandnet.com

**News from:
Office of the City
Administrator**

**City of Oakland Welcomes
New Staff in Key Economic
Development, Planning
and Building Positions**

March 4, 2013

Page Two

Kelley Kahn—Economic & Workforce Development Director

An Oakland resident, Ms. Kahn most recently served as Project Director in the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development and Senior Project Manager at the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency where she played a leadership role in the transformation of Mission Bay from a vacant rail yard to a thriving center for biotechnology. Prior to her work in San Francisco, she was a key member in the development of the 10K Housing Initiative while serving as a planner with the City of Oakland and worked as a city planner in Berkeley and as a planning consultant in private practice.

Ms. Kahn will lead the Office of Economic and Workforce Development with more than 20 staff members, including a team of industry specialists working in business attraction, retention and expansion as well as staff members who monitor city-funded job training programs, support the Workforce Investment Board, administer the Enterprise Zone program, market Oakland as a business location and oversee the City's public art and cultural funding programs. In addition to spearheading the City's business attraction and retention efforts, she will be a key member on the City's team that is advancing major projects such as the Coliseum City plan and the redevelopment of the Oakland Army Base.

Biographies for both Ms. Flynn and Ms. Kahn can be found below.

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**Ms. Rachel O'Dwyer Flynn
Planning and Building Director**

Rachel Flynn is a licensed architect and urban planner who has practiced in the public and private sectors for over twenty-five years. She earned a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University and an M.S. in Engineering/Construction Management and a B.S. in Architecture from Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

Rachel served as Director of Planning & Development for two Virginia cities: Richmond (the Capital of the Commonwealth) and Lynchburg. In these historic cities she developed award-winning master plans and oversaw downtown and neighborhood redevelopment, zoning ordinance updates, the creation of form-based codes, historic preservation, permitting/inspections systems improvements, GIS mapping upgrades, an expanded urban forest and new design standards.

She spent most of her early career with the architecture and engineering firm, Cannon Design, working on a variety of projects in New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C., Tel Aviv and Toronto. While at Harvard, she worked for the Mayors' Institute on City Design. Last year, Rachel worked in Abu Dhabi consulting on planning and architecture projects for the Abu Dhabi Municipality, the Urban Planning Council and the National Oil Company.

Rachel is the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions including Central Virginia Visionary, Most Influential Leader, Historic Preservationist of the Year, Urban Conservationist of the Year and other awards for initiatives in digital technology, scenic enhancements, environmental stewardship and community revitalization.

Rachel has served on numerous boards, including the Virginia Historic Resources Board, Sweet Briar College, the Academy of Music and The American Civil War Center. She has also volunteered for numerous organizations such as Big Brothers-Big Sisters, Habitat for Humanity, Covenant House for Homeless Children and Mother Theresa's Ministries in Calcutta.

**Ms. Kelley Kahn
Economic and Workforce Development Director**

Kelley Kahn has more than 15 years experience implementing transformative development and placemaking initiatives in the San Francisco Bay Area. Most recently, she served as a Project Director in the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development, overseeing major economic development initiatives such as the expansion of the Moscone Convention Center and the redevelopment of Pier 70 into a new job center and revitalized urban waterfront. Previously, Kelley was a senior project manager at the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, directing implementation of the Mission Bay project, a 300-acre public/private partnership that has changed Mission Bay from a vacant rail yard into a thriving biotechnology cluster and model of sustainable, mixed-use development. Under her tenure, more than 1,000 affordable and market rate housing units, 10 acres of new parks and open space and nearly one million square feet of industrial and commercial space was constructed at Mission Bay including a new headquarters for Fibrogen and the expansion of the UCSF Medical Center.

Earlier in her career, Kelley worked as a city planner at the City of Oakland on efforts to revitalize the neighborhood around the Coliseum BART station and to implement the 10K Initiative to bring more residents to downtown Oakland. She also worked as a city planner for the City of Berkeley and as a planning consultant in private practice.

She has served on the City of Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the board of directors of Urban Ecology, an Oakland-based non-profit organization providing pro-bono community planning services to low-income neighborhoods.

Kelley holds a master's degree in city and regional planning from the University of California, Berkeley and received an undergraduate degree in English literature from UCLA.

She lives in Oakland with her partner Ben Grant and their son, Caleb.