

## **Interview Questions for Planners**

### **Questions to learn about your specific knowledge and experience in Planning**

Why have you chosen planning as a career?  
Detail your experience/ knowledge of comprehensive planning.  
Are you interested in public sector or private sector and why?  
What do you perceive to be the role of a city planner in private practice? In public service?  
How have your past experiences prepared you to design or plan the three dimensional aspects of communities?  
Describe your ideal planned environment - urban, suburban or rural - and describe the process by which it came to assume its present form and function.  
What services do you hope to provide and to whom? Who are your competitors? How will you differentiate yourself from them?  
How would you determine a recommendation for a zone change?  
As if talking to an average citizen, explain the purpose of platting.  
What experience do you have in plan preparation?

### **Questions to learn about your qualifications, strengths and experience**

Tell me about yourself.  
Explain the extent that you have worked in facilitating groups.  
Faced with multiple tasks and projects to complete or manage, explain how you would prioritize the work to be done.  
What do you consider your personal strengths? Weaknesses?  
What steps do you use in making decisions and judgements?  
What personal principle, when violated by others, makes you angry instantly?  
How do you handle that anger?  
What are your short and long range goals?  
Do you have interest in further education?  
Where do you see yourself as a leader?  
Do your personal values support the concepts of successful planning? If so, how?

Do you have any part-time/summer experience related to planning?  
What did you like most about your previous job?  
What did you like least about your previous job?  
Describe your worst job - what was it that you disliked so much?  
How would your previous employer describe your performance?  
Why are you interested in leaving your current employer to work for us?  
Why did you wait so long after graduation to seek a position in your field?  
What are you finding the job market to be like? (This question may be asked to give the employer an idea of your job search IQ. Many students are not prepared for a search and have limited knowledge. Employers could probably hire them cheaper than a savvy job searcher.)

### **Questions to learn about your academic preparation**

What specific steps did you take to prepare yourself for this important career?  
Very briefly, please summarize your work history and education.  
What courses have you found interesting in your curriculum?

### **Questions to learn about your working style, communication, flexibility**

How would you describe your personality?  
What does "effective communication" mean to you?  
Give me an example of how you handled a difficult person and what were the results?  
How do you handle a situation where an angry resident confronts you and is upset about a zoning change, board of adjustment decision, a regulation, or site plan or plat approval?  
How do you handle criticism?  
Give me an example of a class project that you worked on as a team. What was your role in the project?  
What experience have you had working as a member of a team to accomplish

projects or tasks?  
Tell us how you handle conflict?  
What does "effective communication" mean to you?  
What inspires or motivates you to do your best work?  
What project demonstrates your most innovative work?  
Give an example of when delaying an important decision worked to your advantage.  
Can you recall a time when important plans were changed? What did you do?  
What experience do you have in public speaking or making presentations to the public?  
Give examples of technical writing skills. (Be sure to take some writing examples with you to the interview.)  
How do you like being supervised?

### **Questions to determine your technical expertise**

Discuss your knowledge of various software, including spreadsheets and mapping.  
What experience have you had using GIS?

### **Questions to determine if you have researched the organization**

What do you know about the major issues/problems in our city?  
What do you think are the three biggest human service issues facing our community/country?  
What do you think two or three biggest human service issues are facing our community/country?  
How did you learn about our organization/firm?  
What do you know about the work of our organization/firm?  
What do you know about the city?  
What do you think is the bottom line for the success of an organization?

### **Questions to determine your fit with the organization**

Why do you want to work for our agency?  
(Many applicants tell why they want to live in our city, but not specifically why they want to work for our agency.)

What specific skills do you believe you can contribute to our agency?  
What qualities could you bring to this job and our organization?  
What kind of job do you see yourself holding five years from now?  
Is there a problem relocating?  
What salary are you expecting?

### **NOTE:**

These questions were submitted by planning professionals from both the public and private sector who have previously advertised positions with the College of Design.