



June 2008

## **ASSISTANT PLANNER**

### **DEFINITION**

Under direct supervision, performs basic professional field and office planning work in the areas of current and long range planning; reviews land use applications and site plans; completes technical assessments and prepares written project analyses; provides professional advice and assistance to the public with regard to planning, community development, zoning, permits, and environmental review; may provide project management and administration; provides staff assistance to management staff, other departments, and the public in areas of expertise; performs a variety of studies and prepares and presents staff reports; and performs related work as required.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives direct supervision from the Planning Manager and/or technical and functional direction from higher-level planning staff. Exercises no direct supervision of staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This is the entry-level class in the professional planning series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents with basic urban planning experience perform professional and technical planning work in current, long-range, and/or environmental planning activities, and daily departmental operations, in addition to providing project management and administration. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence. This class is distinguished from the Associate Planner in that the latter performs more complex work that requires advanced knowledge, skills, and experience.

### **EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)**

*Management reserves the rights to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations where appropriate so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.*

- Reviews routine to complex commercial, industrial, and residential development proposals, plans, and applications for issuance of development permit and for compliance with appropriate regulations and policies.
- Reviews permit applications and building plans for completeness and compliance with current City codes and regulations; provides interpretations of State and local environmental guidelines; identifies corrective actions to be taken by owners; recommends improvement and rehabilitation programs; conducts follow-up and recheck and approves or denies submittals.
- May serve as project manager for routine application projects, including analyzing and evaluating site and architectural plans, performing technical review, making recommendations, ensuring plans and applications receive appropriate signatures, and coordinating in-house review with contractors.

- Compiles information for a variety of studies and reports; researches, analyzes, and interprets social, economic, population, and land use data and trends; prepares written reports on various planning matters.
- Participates in the implementation and administration of the City's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.
- Prepares staff reports and presentations for the City Council, various committees, and advisory boards as directed.
- Confers with and advises architects, builders, attorneys, contractors, engineers, and the general public regarding City development policies and standards; provides and clarifies information relative to zoning, Comprehensive Plan compliance, and other issues.
- Participates in conducting studies and needs assessments for the development of programs to address significant development and policy issues.
- Prepares ordinances for review.
- Participates in coordinating City planning and development related activities with other City departments and with outside agencies.
- Receives and records zoning and code compliance complaints, establishes appropriate files, performs inspections to document violations, coordinates actions as needed with those of other agencies, and implements appropriate procedures to correct or resolve each violation.
- Coordinates with and provides assistance to the larger City organization in data development, analysis, and planning activities.
- Answers questions and provides information to the public.
- Engages in constructive dialogue with the public and coordinates citizen involvement activities regarding City proposals and programs.
- Keeps immediate supervisor and designated others accurately informed concerning work progress, including present and potential work problems and suggestions for new or improved ways of addressing such problems.
- Attends meetings, conferences, workshops, and training sessions and reviews publications to become and remain current on principles, practices, and new ideas/developments in assigned work areas.
- Develops and prepares public information materials such as notices, brochures, flyers, newsletters, and other materials; updates website with informational materials.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Basic principles, practices, and procedures related to urban and regional planning, development, and zoning administration.
- Geographic, socio-economic, transportation, political, and other elements related to urban planning.
- Comprehensive plans and current planning processes and the development process.
- Basic site planning, architectural design principles, and the practice of sustainable principles and/or urban design.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, codes, and regulations, as well as community development program rules and requirements.
- Researching and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
- Recent developments, current literature, and sources of information related to planning and zoning.
- Modern office methods, practices, procedures, and equipment, including computer hardware and software necessary for graphic presentation, mapping, and database management, such as Microsoft Office, Microsoft Project, City permitting software, and basic GIS concepts and applications.
- Practices of assisting in researching planning issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.

- Modern developments, current literature, and sources of information regarding planning.
- Principles of advanced mathematics and their application to planning work.
- Methods and techniques of effective technical report preparation and presentation.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for dealing effectively with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff, in person and over the telephone.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service to public and City staff, in person and over the telephone.

**Ability to:**

- Learn to interpret planning and zoning programs to the general public.
- Learn to read plans and specifications and make effective site visits.
- Identify and respond to issues and concerns of the public, City Council, and other boards and commissions.
- Learn to interpret, apply, and explain applicable Federal, State and local policies, procedures, laws and regulations.
- Perform basic analysis of site design, terrain constraints, circulation, land use compatibility, utilities, and other urban services.
- Conduct routine research projects, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.
- Read, interpret, apply, and explain technical written material and complex laws, codes, regulations, ordinances, and City planning policies and procedures.
- Read and understand technical drawings and specifications.
- Perform mathematical and planning computations with precision.
- Respond to inquiries, complaints, and requests for service in a fair, tactful, and timely manner.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, and other written materials.
- Make effective public presentations.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer and related word processing, database, and spreadsheet software and applications.
- Make sound, independent decisions within established policy and procedural guidelines.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities and meet critical time deadlines.
- Comprehend and use English effectively including producing all forms of communication in a clear, concise, and understandable manner to intended audiences.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent sound judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and harmonious working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**Education and Experience:**

*Any combination of training and experience, which would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:*

Equivalent to graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in urban planning, community development, business or public administration, or a related field, and one (1) year of responsible public agency planning experience.

**Licenses and Certifications:**

- Possession of a valid driver's license with a satisfactory driving record.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to inspect City development sites, including traversing uneven terrain; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various City and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen, and make inspections; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator, and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to 25 pounds.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

Employees work partially in an office environment with moderate noise levels and controlled temperature conditions, and partially in the field and are occasionally exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, vibration, confining workspace, chemicals, mechanical and/or electrical hazards, and hazardous physical substances and fumes. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives, and contractors in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures. May be required to work outside of normal work hours such as evenings, early mornings, and/or weekends.