



June 2008

SENIOR PLANNER

DEFINITION

Under general direction, administers current and long range planning activities, including serving as project manager for complex development applications; reviews and assesses significant portions of the Comprehensive Plan and/or Community Development Code; provides information and assistance to property owners, developers, contractors, and the public; provides complex professional assistance to the Community Development Director, the City Council, the Planning Commission, and others in areas of expertise; oversees, reviews and performs a variety of studies and prepares and presents staff reports; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Planning Manager. Exercises functional and technical direction over and provides training to lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This class is the advanced journey-level class in the professional planning series with responsibilities spanning the entire spectrum of the planning function, with a primary emphasis on the City's Comprehensive Plan and/or Community Development Code and related issues. Successful performance of the work requires a broad professional background as well as skill in coordinating assigned work with that of other City departments and public agencies. Responsibilities may include assisting with performing specified departmental day-to-day administrative functions. This class is distinguished from Redevelopment Project Manager in that the latter provides highly complex planning support for the Urban Renewal Agency, including coordinating program activities, preparing and monitoring budgets, and overseeing staff and consultants.

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.

- Plans, schedules, prioritizes, and assigns planning projects and activities in consultation with a Planning Manager; communicates status of projects and activities to appropriate personnel, working cooperatively to schedule activities in accordance with established and special operational priorities.
- Provides technical and functional direction to assigned staff; reviews and controls quality of work; assists in the recruitment and selection of staff and in completing employee evaluations; recommends corrective action as required; trains employees in work methods.
- Assists in developing short- and long-range work plans, procedures, and schedules.

- Reviews routine to complex commercial, industrial, and residential development proposals, plans, and applications for issuance of development permit; reviews for compliance with appropriate regulations and policies.
- Serves as project manager in preparing, reviewing, and overseeing preparation of modifications to the City's Comprehensive Plan and/or Community Development Code; conducts a variety of special studies, evaluates alternatives, makes recommendations for actions, and prepares narratives and statistical reports.
- Evaluates codes and regulations for conformance to state and regional requirements; determines needed policy and procedural changes; submits recommendations to department management.
- Applies complex Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis to planning issues; trains staff in use of GIS; creates, maintains, and documents GIS data; prepares cartographic products and reports; documents protocols for analysis; represents the department at GIS planning meetings.
- Serves as project manager for special planning projects, including analyzing and summarizing data for the City Manager's office and elected City officials, presenting presentations on policy issues, and facilitating interdepartmental and outside agency coordination.
- Reviews and processes applications for land use and zone changes; evaluates alternatives and conformance with City policies and ordinances, the General Plan and Federal and State laws.
- Researches, collects, records, analyzes, interprets, and summarizes statistical and demographic information; prepares spreadsheets and establishes and maintains a comprehensive database.
- Prepares staff reports for the City Council, various committees, and advisory boards as directed; prepares research, maps, and conducts briefings.
- Confers with and advises architects, builders, contractors, engineers, attorneys, and the general public regarding City development policies and standards; provides and clarifies information relative to zoning, general plan compliance, signage, and other issues.
- Conducts studies and needs assessments for the development of programs to address significant development issues.
- Provides technical information and instruction regarding applicable procedures and methods; interprets and explains rules, regulations and procedures; answers questions and resolves concerns.
- Coordinates with and provides assistance to the larger City organization in data development, analysis, and planning activities.
- 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 developments in assigned work areas.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic principles of supervision and training.
- Advanced 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.
- 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.
- Project management and contract administration principles and techniques.
- 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 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 effectively representing the City in contacts with governmental agencies (such as Metro), community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- 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:

- Plan, schedule, assign, and oversee activities of assigned personnel; train staff in work procedures.
- Oversee and participate in planning activities and related projects.
- Identify and respond to issues and concerns of the public, City Council, and other boards and commissions.
- Interpret, apply, and explain applicable Federal, State and local policies, procedures, laws and regulations.
- Interpret and explain planning and zoning programs to the general public.
- Perform advanced analysis of site design, terrain constraints, circulation, land use compatibility, utilities, and other urban services.
- Conduct complex research projects, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.
- 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 five (5) years 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, 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.