



Senior Planner

Class Specification

Revised 9/23

Class ID: 221

Unit: MGMT

Probation: 12 Months

FLSA: Exempt

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, administers specified planning activities including current planning, zoning and subdivision ordinance, advanced planning and the General Plan; complex professional planning activities, such as serving as project manager for complex development and land use applications; provides professional information and assistance to the Director, the Planning Commission, the City Council, developers, contractors and general public; performs a variety of studies and prepares and presents staff reports; serves on review committees; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Deputy Community Development Director. Exercises direct supervision over Assistant and Associate Planners.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This class is the advanced journey-level in the professional planning classification series with responsibilities spanning the full spectrum of planning functions encountered by a developing City. Performance of the work requires an extensive professional background as well as skills in coordinating overall planning functions and for developing, implementing, and interpreting public policy. It is distinguished from the next lower level of Associate Planner in that the Senior Planner handles more complex applications and has supervisory responsibilities over assigned staff.

EXAMPLES OF JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Review permit applications, building plans, and technical reports for residential, commercial, and industrial developments for completeness and compliance with current City codes and regulations; provide interpretations of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Subdivision Map Act, and local environmental guidelines; identify corrective actions to be taken by owners; recommend improvement and rehabilitation programs; conduct follow-up and re-check and approve or deny submittals; review and sign off on plans submitted for Building Plan Check and permits.

Refer to and apply numerous documents including the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, California Environmental Quality Act, Subdivision Map Act, State Planning laws, Municipal Code, design review guidelines, County tax assessor's maps and records, building and architecture plans, etc.

Serve as project manager for complex planning projects, including analyzing and evaluating site and architectural plans, performing technical review for project plans and applications, and making recommendations, managing consultant contracts, and determining scope of work and budgets, tracking budgets and approving contract payments.

Prepare and present staff reports for the City Council, Planning Commission, and various other committees and advisory boards as directed on complex development matters; prepare research, reports, maps, and conduct briefings and meetings.

Update and create long-range planning documents such as the City's General Plan and other assigned plans; prepare modifications to specific General Plan elements; review and draft City ordinances;

prepare zoning code and general plan amendment studies; research, analyze, compile, and interpret social, economic, population and land use data and trends; prepare written reports on various planning matters, special reports and elements of the General Plan.

Prepare written project analysis including identifying appropriate land use policy, design issues and environmental requirements; make recommendations for action; prepare and review environmental impact reports, written initial studies, negative declarations, and reports related to development projects or City projects.

Supervise and train assigned department staff; provide timely, accurate and thorough performance reviews for assigned employees.

Serve as staff liaison for review boards, ad-hoc committees, and elected officials, including providing technical advice and giving presentations; manage internal staff groups or committees such as the Development Review Committee.

Assist in developing and implementing department strategic plans and initiatives, focusing on services and transparency to meet community needs, and evaluating the outcomes in terms of effectiveness and cost efficiency.

Assist in establishing and implementing planning, zoning, development, and environmental program goals, objectives, policies, and priorities.

Confer with and provides information to property owners, contractors, developers, engineers, architects, and the public regarding conformance to standards plans specifications and codes; explain codes, requirements and procedures and evaluate alternatives; provide technical advice to other departments, contractors, developers, and the public including explaining City ordinances, regulations, resolutions and planning and zoning policies.

Conduct project site inspections, including compliance with laws, regulations, and ordinances, make recommendations on changes.

Maintain department records and files in the computerized permit tracking system; prepare graphic and mapped data using computer-based mapping/GIS.

Establish positive working relationships with representatives of community organizations, state/local agencies and associations, City management, staff, and the public.

Perform related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Current principles, practices and procedures related to City and regional planning and zoning administration, environmental review, and the development process including applicable laws and regulations.
- Site planning and architectural design principles.
- General concepts of architecture, landscaping, grading, drainage, and traffic and transportation engineering as they relate to the process of urban planning.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and organizational policies and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Computer applications related to the work, including basic GIS concepts and applications.

- Current equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
- Project management and contract administration principles techniques.
- Practices of researching planning issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Basic principles and practices of effective supervision.
- Techniques for effectively representing the City with governmental agencies, community groups, business, professional and regulatory bodies and with property owners, developers, contractors, and the general public.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff.

Skill or Ability to:

- Complete complex current and advanced planning and zoning conformance activities in an independent and effective manner.
- Conduct complex planning research projects, evaluate alternatives, make sound recommendations, and prepare effective technical staff reports.
- Assess, monitor, and report environmental impact on and of various City programs and services.
- Analyze site design, terrain constraints, land use compatibility, utilities, and other urban services.
- Manage projects and conduct site inspections.
- Understand, interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Direct and review the work of support staff on a project or day-to-day basis and train staff in work procedures.
- Conduct zoning studies and interpret City zoning laws, regulations, and codes.
- Effectively use computer systems, specialized computer software such as GIS and other industry standard software programs, and current business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Read and understand building plans, site plans, and technical drawings and specifications.
- Prepare and present clear, concise, and logical written and oral reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials; communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Communicate and coordinate activities effectively with officials, co-workers, subordinates, other City departments, the general public, representatives of organizations and others sufficient to exchange or convey information and receive work direction.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Respectfully and effectively collaborate with a variety of people of varying backgrounds and roles. Demonstrate tact, professionalism, and diplomacy.

Education and Experience:

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

Possession of a Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in city, urban or environmental planning, architecture, or related degree, and five (5) years of planning related experience including two (2) years project management or supervisory experience. Master’s degree in urban planning and AICP certification is desirable.

License and Certificate:

Possession of a valid driver license and a satisfactory driving record throughout employment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer, to inspect City sites, including traversing uneven terrain, climbing ladders, stairs, and other access points, to operate a motor vehicle, and to visit various City and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas and to conduct inspections may be required. 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 or more with appropriate equipment or staff assistance.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures. Employees must be available to attend day and evening meetings, at various sites within and outside the City.