



Assistant/Associate Planner

Class Specification

Revised 3/24

Class ID: 220

Unit: MGMT

Probation: 12 Months

FLSA: Exempt

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of professional planning activities including technical reviews of development and land use applications, and zoning matters; provides professional advice and information to others on planning, community development, zoning and environmental review; prepares staff reports for plan review and site development; assists with preparing and reviewing City Ordinances and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision and direction from a Senior Planner, Principal Planner, or Deputy Community Development Director or designee. Exercises no direct supervision over staff. May provide technical and functional direction to lower-level staff.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Assistant Planner - This is the first level class of the professional planning series. Initially, under supervision, incumbents with basic planning experience perform professional and technical planning work in current, advance, and/or environmental planning activities. Incumbents are expected to become familiar with and competent in a range of routine planning functions. As incumbents gain experience, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties at the Associate level but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgment related to work procedures and methods.

Associate Planner - This is the journey-level class in the professional planning series and incumbents may be assigned the full range of planning functions. Incumbents have project management responsibilities in addition to performing the full range of professional planning duties. Positions at the level are distinguished from the Assistant level by performing the full range of duties as assigned, working independently, exercising judgment and initiative, and receiving only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situation arise.

Positions in the Planner class series are flexibly staffed and positions at the Associate Planner level are normally filled by advancement from the Assistant Planner level after gaining the knowledge, skill, and experience which meet the qualifications for and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work of the higher-level class.

EXAMPLES OF JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Perform technical review, monitor, and process land use and development applications, including various permits, plan checks and listings fees.

Review development projects, permit applications and building plans 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.

Prepare or assist in preparing and reviewing environmental impact reports; prepare written initial studies, negative declarations, and staff reports related to development projects or City projects.

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

Assist in conducting and preparing statistical and research projects, and compile zoning and planning related data as required; prepare a variety of correspondence; prepare routine written project analysis including researching, analyzing findings and making recommendations.

Serve as project manager on entitlement projects, including analyzing and evaluating site and architectural plans, performing technical review and making recommendations, ensuring plans and applications receive appropriate signatures, coordinating in-house review with contractors, administering contracts and approving payment on projects.

Manage consultant contracts, determine scope of work and budgets, track budgets and approve contract payments.

Provide technical advice to other departments, contractors, developers, and the public including explaining City ordinances, regulations, resolutions and planning and zoning policies; may be assigned to direct and review the work and provide training in work procedures to support staff.

Confer with and provide information to property owners, contractors, developers, engineers, architects and public regarding conformance to standards, plans specifications and codes; explain codes, requirements and procedures.

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

Assist in preparing general plan updates; 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 and present staff reports for the City Council, Planning Commission, and various other committees and advisory boards as directed on routine development matters; prepare research, reports, maps, and conduct briefings and meetings.

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

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:

- Principles, practices and procedures related to current City and regional planning, 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 related to the process of urban planning.
- Practices of researching planning and land use issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and organizational policies and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Research and report methods, techniques, and procedures.
- Recent developments, current literature, and sources of information related to planning, zoning, and environmental review.
- 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 and techniques.
- Techniques for effectively representing the City with governmental agencies, community groups, businesses, professional and regulatory bodies and with property owners, developers, contractor 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:

- Understand, interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- 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.
- Conduct routine research projects including zoning and planning studies, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Prepare and present clear, concise, and logical written and oral reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Read and understand building plans, site plans, technical drawings and specifications.
- Communicate and coordinate activities effectively with co-workers, supervisors, other City departments, the general public, representatives of organizations and other sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and current business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- 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:

Assistant Planner: Possession of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in city, urban or environmental planning, architecture, or related field to

area of assignment, and one (1) year of full-time professional planning experience or related experience.

Associate Planner: Possession of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in city, urban or environmental planning, architecture, or related field to area of assignment, and three (3) years of professional experience in planning, zoning, and related community development activities.

Possession of a Master's degree in planning may substitute for one year of professional experience.

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, and to operate a motor vehicle to visit various City and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person 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 frequently sit for prolonged periods of time, bend, stoop, kneel, and reach to perform assigned duties, as well as push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Standing in and walking between work areas is frequently required. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds with the use of proper equipment.

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.