



Principal Planner

Class Specification

Established:
Class ID:
Unit: MGMT
Probation: 12 Months
FLSA: Exempt

DEFINITION

Under general direction, administers specified Community Development activities including current planning, zoning, and subdivision ordinance, long-range planning and the General Plan; supervises the daily operations of the Planning Division and staff; assists with complex, advanced and technical professional planning activities including managing complex development and land use applications and other planning projects; provides professional and technical assistance to the Director and Deputy Director, the Planning Commission, the City Council, developers, contractors and general public; performs a variety of studies and prepares and presents staff reports; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from the Deputy Community Development Director. Exercises direct supervision of assigned administrative, technical, professional, and contract staff.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This class is a supervisory-level class in the Planner classification series. Incumbents are responsible for supervising programs, projects, and staff within the Planning Division, and are also expected to independently perform the full range of complex planning duties. Responsibilities include performing diverse, specialized, and complex work involving initiative, independence, and decision-making within established guidelines. Successful performance of the work requires an extensive background in planning, as well as skill in coordinating work with other City departments and external agencies. This class is distinguished from the Deputy Community Development Director in that the latter has oversight and responsibility for all current and long-range planning programs, projects, functions, and activities.

EXAMPLES OF JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Plan, organize, assign, supervise, and review the work of staff assigned to the Planning Division including current and long-range planning, environmental compliance, and interagency coordination; train staff in work procedures; evaluate employee performance, counsel employees, and effectively recommend initial disciplinary action; assist in selection and promotion.

Monitors daily activities of the Planning Division; recommend improvements and modifications and prepare various reports on activities, programs, and projects; recommend and assist in the implementation of goals and objectives; implement policies and procedures.

Provide technical analysis of the application of planning and zoning laws, municipal code, general plan, and other technical documents.

Participate in the development, monitoring, implementation, and update of the City's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, specific plans, and other land use studies; advise staff on interpretations of the Zoning Ordinance, General Plan, Municipal Code, State Planning Law, California Environmental Quality Act, and other regulatory standards.

Oversee and participate in the review and analysis of development proposals, and processing of

proposed development projects to ensure applications are complete and compliant with City policies and regulations and local, state, and federal requirements; coordinate the technical processing of development proposals.

Supervise and participate in the preparation of documents to ensure compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and federal environmental requirements.

Coordinate Division programs, projects, and activities with other City departments, local jurisdictions and agencies, and regional, state, and federal agencies during the development review process of projects.

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.

Assist in budget preparation and administration, analyze financial data, prepare detailed cost estimates with appropriate justifications, as required.

Serve as staff liaison for review boards, ad-hoc committees, and elected officials, including providing technical advice and interpret planning policies and regulations; manage internal staff groups or committees; prepare, review, and present staff reports, management and information updates, and report on projects to the City Council, boards, committees, and commissions, and at public meetings.

Conduct a variety of organizational studies, investigations, and operational studies; recommend modifications to programs, policies, and procedures, as appropriate.

Prepare or direct the preparation of grant and permit applications, pursue federal and state grant funds, and permits, and ensure project compliance with grant or permit regulations.

Attend and participate in professional group meetings; stay current of new trends and innovations in planning; research and monitor changes in regulations and technology that may affect operations; implement policy and procedural changes after approval.

Confer with and provide 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; receive, investigate, and respond to concerns and issues in a professional manner; identify and report findings and take necessary corrective action.

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

Assist the Deputy Community Development Director with special projects, as needed.

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. Current principles, practices and procedures of environmental regulations including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Computer applications related to the work.
- Supervisory techniques.
- Principles and practices of researching planning issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Project management contract administration principles and techniques.
- Techniques for effectively representing the City in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, regulatory, and legislative organization

Skill or Ability to:

- Complete and administer complex current and long-range 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.
- Understand, interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Supervise, direct, and review the work of support staff on a project or day-to-day basis and train staff in work procedures.
- Effectively represent the department and the City in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups and various business, professional and regulatory organizations, and in meetings with individuals.
- Conduct zoning studies and interpret City zoning laws, regulations, and codes.
- 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.
- Prepare and monitor budgets; manage contractors and contract service budgets.
- 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.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern 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:

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

License and Certificate:

- Possession of a California driver license and a satisfactory driving record.
- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification is desirable.

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, evening, and weekend meetings, at various sites within and outside the City.