

PLANNING TECHNICIAN

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs a variety of routine activities in the field of current planning, including assisting in reviewing of development and land use applications, zoning, site plan, and environmental review; assists in completing technical assessments and preparing written project analyses; provides assistance to the public on planning, community development, zoning, permits, and environmental review; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision, direction and training from the Senior Planner. Exercises no supervision of staff. May exercise functional and technical direction over and provide training to lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the paraprofessional class in the Planner series. Under general supervision, incumbents learn City systems and infrastructure, regulatory codes, laws, and ordinances, and a variety of practices and procedures. Incumbents perform work in the field of current planning, including review of development and land use applications, zoning, site plan, and environmental review. Incumbents exercise little independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is supervised while in progress and fits in an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedure are explained in detail as they arise. This class is distinguished from Assistant Planner in that the latter is a professional level classification requiring completion of a four-year degree.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

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

- Assists in reviewing commercial, industrial, and residential development proposals, plans, and applications for issuance of zoning clearance; assists in reviewing for compliance with appropriate regulations and policies.
- Processes permit applications; calculates appropriate fees.
- Screens and evaluates applications for home occupation and conditional use permits, signs, lot merger, variance, subdivision, and parcel maps; confers with applicants and project sponsors on presented plans and designs; reviews lot line adjustments.
- Assists the public at the front counter; answers questions and provides information to the public; receives and reviews applications for completeness and compliance; investigates complaints and recommends corrective action as necessary to resolve complaints concerning the City's planning function.

- Assists in performing plan checking of permit requests; confers with and provides information to developers, engineers, architects, property owners, contractors, and others regarding City development policies and standards; provides and clarifies information relative to zoning, general plan compliance, signage, and other issues.
- Assists in compiling information for a variety of studies and reports; participates in researching, analyzing, and interpreting social, economic, population, and land use data and trends; assists in developing recommendations and preparing written reports on various planning matters and elements of the City's General Plan.
- Assists in inspecting properties and structures for compliance with appropriate City zoning codes and regulations; participates in identifying corrective actions to be taken by the owner and recommending improvements and rehabilitation programs; conducts follow-up inspections and re-checks as required.
- Checks planning records to identify maps that require updating; identifies changes recorded in Assessor's parcel books; computes acreage and frontages.
- Reviews business uses for compliance with zoning ordinances.
- Prepares, processes, and maintains variety of correspondence, maps, graphs, reports, legal documents, and other written materials.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic principles, practices, and procedures related to city and regional planning, development, and zoning administration.
- Basic site planning and architectural design principles.
- Geographic, socio-economic, transportation, political, and other elements related to city planning.
- Researching and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
- office methods, practices, procedures, and equipment, including computer hardware and software necessary for graphic presentation, geographic information systems mapping, and database management.
- Methods and techniques of effective technical report preparation and presentation.
- Mathematical and statistical principles including algebra, geometry, and trigonometry.
- Principles and procedures of record keeping.
- Safe driving principles and practices.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service to public and City staff, in person and over the telephone.

Ability to:

- Learn, interpret, and apply policies, procedures, laws, codes, and regulations pertaining to assigned programs and functions including California planning Law, the Subdivision Map Act, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and land use and zoning.
- Learn to read, interpret, and apply a variety of technical information from reports, maps, plans, specifications, drawings, layouts, blueprints, schematics, and legal descriptions.
- Learn and interpret planning and zoning programs to the general public.

- Learn current literature, information sources, and research techniques in the field of urban planning.
- Analyze and compile technical and statistical information and prepare reports.
- Use mapping software such as ArcGIS or equivalent.
- Prepare clear and concise technical reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Operate a motor vehicle safely.
- Prepare accurate display maps, plans, charts, and tables.
- Respond to complaints or inquiries from citizens, staff, and outside organizations.
- Maintain accurate and precise records.
- Make accurate mathematic and statistical computations.
- Understand and carry out oral and written instructions.
- Organize own work, set priorities, and meet multiple deadlines.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with those contacted in the course of the 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 an Associate's degree with coursework in urban planning, economics, public or business administration, or a related field and 3 years professional experience in a public setting; one (1) year in planning, zoning and related community development activities is desirable.

Licenses and Certifications:

- None.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to inspect various commercial, industrial, and residential development sites, including traversing uneven terrain, climbing ladders, stairs, and other temporary or construction access points; to attend meetings and to operate a motor vehicle; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen and to make inspections; color vision to identify materials, structures, wires, and pipes; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone or radio. 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, climb, 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 up to 25 pounds and heavier weights with the use of proper equipment.

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.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Must be willing to work a varied schedule of hours, which may include evenings, and/or weekends, as needed.