



MARCH 2016
FLSA: NON-EXEMPT

PLANNING SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, respond to public inquiries regarding the zoning ordinance, general plan, application procedures and compile zoning and planning related data, prepare written reports; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from an assigned manager or supervisor. Exercises no direct supervision of staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the experienced paraprofessional level of the planning classification series. Incumbents are assigned to the Planning Services Division of the Planning Department where they provide technical assistance and support to professional staff and handle specialized project and program assignments. The work requires extensive public contact, the frequent use of tact, discretion and judgment, good knowledge of departmental activities and the ability to conduct independent projects. This class is distinguished from the next higher class of Assistant Planner in that the Assistant is the first level in the professional planning series with responsibilities spanning the full spectrum of the City's planning function and the equivalent of an appropriate degree in a planning curriculum.

FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right 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.

- Provides customer service by responding to public and agency inquiries by phone and at the counter; provides information regarding zoning and land use issues, application procedures, City codes, policies and procedures.
- Review application submittals and materials to verify completeness under both State and local requirements.
- Review and process less complex development projects, including administrative use permits, sign permits, tree removal permits, home occupation permits, etc.
- Assist planners in conducting and preparing statistical and research projects, compiles zoning and planning related data as required; prepares a variety of correspondence.
- Maintains department records and files in the computerized permit tracking system.
- Prepares graphic and mapped data using computer-based mapping/GIS.
- Establishes positive working relationships with representatives of community organizations, state/local agencies and associations, City management staff, and the public.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Basic principles and practices of local government planning and zoning laws and related planning matters.
- Use of and architect and engineering scales.
- Statistics and simple data manipulation.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications.
- Technical report writing practices and procedures.
- Principles and procedures of record keeping.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff.

Ability to:

- Participate as a team member in assigned work.
- Use excellent customer service skills, including the ability to listen to and understand customer needs and courteously and completely respond to those needs.
- Learn and apply information and laws, rules, and regulations related to the duties and responsibilities routinely assigned other team members.
- Explain planning drawings, maps, specifications, legal descriptions and ordinances and do necessary computations.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Understand and follow oral and written instructions.
- Organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that 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 college or university with a bachelor's degree in City Planning, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Public Administration or related field, or one year of responsible zoning and administration or related experience in a municipal planning department combined with college level course work in such subjects as city planning, geography, architecture, engineering, public administration and other related subjects. Experience in a public agency setting is desirable.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License by time of appointment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer, 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 partially a sedentary office classification, although standing and walking between work areas 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 10 pounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels and controlled temperature conditions. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.