



## Senior Planner

### Definition

Under general direction, assists in planning and coordinating complex activities related to current and long-range planning; serves as project manager for complex zoning and planning administration, environmental review, special projects, and policy development; completes technical assessments and prepares written project analyses; performs community outreach and education; provides technical and functional direction to planning staff; and performs related work as required.

### Class Characteristics

This is the advanced-level class in the professional planning series with responsibilities spanning the entire spectrum of the planning function, with a primary emphasis on complex current and long-range planning issues. Successful performance of the work requires a broad professional background as well as skill in coordinating assigned work with that of other City departments and public agencies.

Responsibilities include assisting with overseeing specified divisional programs and managing complex and special projects. This class is distinguished from the Planning Manager in that the latter has management responsibility for planning functions and for developing, implementing, and interpreting public policy.

### Supervision Received and Exercised

Receives general direction from the Planning Manager or Assistant Director of Community Development. Exercises technical and functional direction over and provides training to lower-level professional and technical staff.

### Typical Job Functions

*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.*

Serves as project manager for multiple complex current and/or long-range planning and development projects and special planning studies, such as General Plan, Specific and Conceptual Plans, municipal code, and development projects.

Interprets and ensures compliance with City codes, General Plan, Specific Plan, and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Provides technical and functional direction and training to lower-level planning staff; reviews and controls the quality of staff reports and other work products prepared by planning staff; assigns work and provides guidance and direction to staff regarding work plans and methods.

Develops and standardizes procedures and methods to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of assigned services, projects, and activities; identifies opportunities for improvement and makes recommendations to the Planning Manager and Assistant Director.

Evaluates the conclusions of initial studies, mitigated negative declarations, and environmental impact reports and uses the evaluation to assess the impact to the City and to formulate a recommendation on projects; monitors project compliance with environmental document mitigation measures and conditions of approval.

Reviews plans and descriptions of proposed projects and land uses for completeness and compliance with City standards; provides interpretations and advises applicants on corrective actions.

Assists the public at the front counter, on the phone, and via email, answering questions and providing information regarding zoning, land use, code interpretation, development standards, project status, and the City's processes.

Organizes and facilitates community outreach and public education events to provide information on planning, community development, zoning, permits, and environmental review related issues and to collect information on community priorities in order to develop and prioritize goals and policies for development and land use planning.

Researches, analyzes, and interprets data and trends; researches and reviews previous entitlements and City records; assists in developing long-range planning policies and documents.

Prepares and presents a variety of staff reports to the City Council, Planning Commission, and other committees and advisory boards as directed.

Coordinates project and development related activities with other City departments and with outside agencies; completes surveys and questionnaires from regional and other agencies.

Assists in conducting a variety of organizational studies, investigations, and operational studies related to the Planning Division; recommends modifications to programs, policies, and procedures, as appropriate.

Attends and participates in meetings, conferences, workshops, and training sessions; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of planning and other types of public services as they relate to the area of assignment.

Assists the Planning Manager, Assistant Director of Community Development Director, and Assistant City Manager – Community Development/Strategic Planning with special projects, as needed.

Performs other duties as assigned.

## **Qualifications**

### **Knowledge of:**

Principles, practices, theories, and trends of urban, land use, and regional planning, zoning, and environmental review.

Geographic, socio-economic, transportation, political, and other elements related to city planning.

Basic principles of supervision and training.

Principles and practices of project management and contract administration.

Recent developments, current literature, and sources of information related to planning, zoning, and environmental review.

Applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, standards, and procedures relevant to zoning and land use planning.

Practices of researching planning and zoning issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.

Principles of advanced mathematics and their application to planning work.

Statistical and research methods and techniques of effective technical report preparation and presentation.

Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work.

English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.

Techniques for effectively representing the City in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, various business, professional, and regulatory organizations, and with property owners, developers, contractors, and the public.

Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff.

### **Ability to:**

Manage complex current and long-range planning projects such as General Plan, ordinance, and policy amendments and mixed use, multi-jurisdictional, and larger projects.

Evaluate and develop improvements in operations, procedures, policies, or methods.

Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods, procedures, and techniques.

Plan, review, and oversee activities of staff; train others in work procedures.

Interpret planning and zoning programs to the general public; identify and respond to issues and concerns of the public, City Council, Planning Commission, and other stakeholders.

Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, standards, and procedures relevant to zoning and planning.

Assess, monitor, and report environmental impact on and of various City programs and services.

Independently conduct complex research projects, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.

Read and interpret architectural and engineering plans and specifications.

Oversee the preparation of and prepare clear and effective reports, correspondence, and other written material.

Make accurate arithmetic and statistical computations.

Effectively represent the department and the City in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, and regulatory organizations and individuals.

Make sound, independent decisions within established policy and procedural guidelines.

Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; 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 and legal guidelines in politically sensitive situations.

Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

### **Education and Experience**

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

Equivalent to graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in urban planning, environmental studies, engineering, or a related field and four (4) years of increasingly responsible professional experience in planning, zoning, and related community development activities.

### **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 inspect City development sites, including traversing uneven terrain, climbing ladders, stairs, and other temporary or construction 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 may be required.

Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter 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 up to 10 pounds.

### **Environmental Elements**

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may occasionally work in the field and be exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, vibration, mechanical and/or electrical hazards, and hazardous physical substances and fumes. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.