

# ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PLANNER

Approved: July 2016

FLSA: Non-exempt

Unit: SEIU



<b>Definition</b>
Under general supervision (Assistant Planner) or direction (Associate Planner), performs professional duties in support of the City Planning Division. Processes a variety of planning-related applications. Collects and interprets relevant information. Completes technical assessments and prepares written project analyses. Provides professional advice and assistance to the public on planning, community development, zoning, and permits; and performs related work as required.
<b>Supervision received and exercised</b>
Receives general supervision (Assistant Planner) or direction (Associate Planner) from management or supervisory staff. Exercises no supervision of staff.
<b>Class characteristics</b>
<b>ASSISTANT PLANNER</b> This is the entry-level classification in the professional planning series. Initially, incumbents learn and perform a variety of techniques related to the interpretation, application and enforcement of the City's land use regulations, including Zoning Ordinances and the General Plan. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the Associate level, but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence.
<b>ASSOCIATE PLANNER</b> This is the journey-level of the planning series, able to perform the full scope of professional planning duties. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Assistant Planner level by the performance of the full range of duties as assigned, working independently, and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. This class is distinguished from the Senior Planner in that the latter is the advanced journey-level class in the series and is responsible for performing the more complex planning and project management activities.
Positions in the Assistant/Associate Planner class series are flexibly staffed and positions at the Associate level may be filled by advancement from the Assistant level; progression to the Associate level is subject to management approval and is dependent on the incumbent (i) performing the full range of duties assigned to the Associate level, and (ii) acquiring the knowledge, skill, and experience necessary to meet the minimum qualifications for the Associate level of the series.
<b>Examples of typical job functions (illustrative only)</b>
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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Receives, reviews and processes permit plans and associated documents for conditional use, architectural control, variance, rezoning, parcel and subdivision maps, land use, general plan amendments, and other requests related to City planning activities; reviews applications for consistency with the City's General Plan, codes, and ordinances.</li><li>• Reviews and processes administrative permits such as business licenses, sign permits, special event permits and noise ordinance exemptions.</li><li>• Interprets federal, state and City laws, codes, and ordinances associated with current and advanced planning activities.</li><li>• Researches rules and regulations to determine planning request compliance with mandated standards, codes and ordinances; conducts site inspections to collect pertinent information regarding site conditions; reviews and organizes field and office data for the development of staff reports, analysis of planning elements, and/or development or modification of current land use policies.</li><li>• Prepares and updates maps, charts, and graphs for visual presentations related to planning activities; makes presentations to internal and external stakeholders.</li><li>• Confers with and advises architects, builders, attorneys, contractors, engineers, and the general public regarding City development policies and standards; provides and clarifies information relative to land use, zoning, code interpretation, general plan compliance, signage, and other issues.</li></ul>

- Participates in coordinating City planning and development related activities with other City departments and with outside agencies.
- Researches and assists in preparing ordinances for review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Provides assistance to members of the public at the planning counter; performs a preliminary review of permit applications, documents and plan submittals to assure accuracy and compliance with pertinent laws and established criteria; identifies any document gaps and provides information to the customer on what is needed to complete the application.
- Attends meetings, conferences, workshops, and training sessions; attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of urban planning and other types of public services as they relate to the area of assignment.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

### Qualifications

#### Knowledge of ASSISTANT PLANNER

- Modern principles and practices of urban planning, zoning, and community economics and demographics.
- Planning terminology.
- Operations and activities related to the principles of comprehensive planning.
- Federal, state and local laws, codes, rules, regulations and standards affecting planning, zoning, and land development.
- City and department policies and procedures.
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, classifications and exemptions.
- Planning and development related processes including the plans review and permit functions.
- Site planning and architectural design principles.
- Practices of researching planning and land use issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- General concepts of architecture, landscaping, grading, drainage, and traffic and transportation engineering as they relate to the process of urban planning.
- Researching and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
- 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, educational 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.

#### ASSOCIATE PLANNER (In addition to the above)

- Methods, practices and procedures used in current and advanced planning operations.
- Planning terminology and technical report writing requirements.
- Authority and role of the Planning Commission in approving planning related projects.

#### Ability to

#### ASSISTANT PLANNER

- Learn and apply federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations, policies and procedures pertaining to the Planning Division's programs and services.
- Explain planning and zoning rules to the general public and internal staff.
- Collect, interpret and analyze field and office planning data accurately.
- Learn City and department policies and procedures.
- Interpret land use maps and legal descriptions of property.
- Draft land use maps.
- Read architectural and civil plan drawings and specifications.
- Conduct inspections to determine and evaluate site conditions.
- Analyze site design, terrain constraints, land use compatibility, utilities, and other urban services.
- Conduct routine research projects, synthesize data, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.
- Maintain accurate records of work performed.
- Perform mathematical and planning computations with precision.

- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs relevant to work performed.
- 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.

#### ASSOCIATE PLANNER (In addition to the above)

- Prepare environmental documents pursuant to CEQA.
- Process a variety of land development applications.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Coordinate assigned activities with other City departments and agencies as required.
- Prepare and present clear, concise, and logical written and oral reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Make sound, independent decisions within established policy and procedural guidelines.
- Organize and prioritize multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Effectively represent the division and the City in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, and regulatory organizations and individuals.
- Coordinate assigned activities with other City departments and agencies as required.

#### 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 four-year college or university with major coursework in urban planning, or a closely related field.
- Assistant Planner: One (1) year of full-time professional planning experience.
- Associate Planner: Three (3) years of increasingly responsible full-time professional planning experience.

#### Licenses and certifications

- Possession of a valid California driver's license and a satisfactory driving record.

#### 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 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 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 25 pounds.

#### Environmental elements

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