

# SENIOR PLANNER

Approved: July 2016

FLSA: Exempt

Unit: SEIU



<b>Definition</b>
Under general direction, reviews and manages complex development projects through the entitlement process; performs professional duties in support of long range planning studies; interprets and enforces various zoning regulations of the City; completes complex and 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 direction from management staff. May provide functional and technical supervision to lower level planning staff.
<b>Class characteristics</b>
This is the advanced journey-level class in the Planner series responsible for performing complex planning and project management duties. Incumbents regularly work on tasks that are varied and complex, requiring considerable discretion and independent judgment. Positions in this classification rely on experience and judgment. The work involves problem-solving of unique issues or increasingly complex problems without precedent and/or structure. Assignments are given with general guidelines and incumbents are responsible for establishing objectives, timelines, and methods to deliver work products. Work is typically reviewed upon completion for soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements. This class is distinguished from the Associate Planner in that the latter is the journey level of the series, performing less complex tasks. This class is further distinguished from Principal Planner in that the latter is the highest-level class in the professional planning series and may provide supervisory review to staff in addition to handling the most complex and sensitive planning projects.
<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>• Performs a variety of complex professional planning duties in support of the City's planning programs including project management and staff liaison with the Planning Commission.</li><li>• Serves as project manager for private development projects, as well as the City's planning projects; oversees discretionary review process for a range of projects, from modest architectural updates to single-family residential applications, to multi-acre mixed-used development proposals and long-range planning studies; participates in the Development Review Team, an interdepartmental pre-application review group to provide feedback to prospective applicants; reviews applications for consistency with the City's General Plan, codes and ordinances, and coordinates review with relevant City Departments and applicable external agencies interprets federal, state and City laws, codes, and ordinances associated with current and advanced planning activities.</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><li>• As assigned, manages consultant services for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) technical and fiscal reviews; assists with monitoring contracts, compliance with contract requirements and project payments.</li><li>• Provides assistance in conducting outreach to the community on development projects which impact the City and its neighborhoods; prepares meeting flyers and information materials; assists in facilitating meetings and responding to community questions and concerns on project operations and impact.</li><li>• Coordinates the division's planner-level meetings which include division employees as well as stakeholders from other departments.</li><li>• Provides technical and functional supervision to lower level planning staff in the performance of their duties in such areas of rules and regulations interpretations, project priorities.</li><li>• Collects, researches, 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; compiles findings and prepares recommendations in written form for projects, including project analysis and conditions for permit approval; makes presentations at Planning Commission and City Council.</li><li>• Participates in coordinating City planning and development related activities with other City departments and with outside agencies.</li><li>• Provides assistance to members of the public at the planning counter; performs a preliminary review of permit applications, documents and plans submittals to ensure 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.</li></ul>

- 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

- Operations, services, and activities of a comprehensive planning program including current and long range planning.
- Modern principles and practices of technical and legal issues of urban and regional planning, zoning, urban economics, demographics, and environmental planning and program management.
- Geographic, socio-economic, transportation, political, and other elements related to planning including environmental issues.
- Comprehensive plans and current planning processes and the development process.
- Federal, state and City laws, codes, rules, regulations and standards affecting planning, zoning, land development and other planning programs.
- City and department planning process related policies and procedures.
- Principles and practices of project management.
- Principles and practices of contract administration.
- Methods and techniques of conducting public meetings and presentations.
- Authority and role of the Planning Commission in approving planning related projects.
- Provisions of the Brown Act as they relate to the conduct of public meetings.
- 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.
- Practices of researching planning and land use issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Planning terminology and technical report writing techniques.
- 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.

#### Ability to

- Perform complex current and long range planning duties.
- Manage assigned projects in an efficient and effective manner, and prepare deliverables and work products.
- Interpret and apply federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations, policies and procedures pertaining to division programs and services.
- Assess, monitor, and report environmental impact on and of various City programs and service; conduct and facilitate presentations before the Planning Commission, City Council and community groups.
- Interpret planning and zoning programs to the general public; identify and respond to issues and concerns of the public, Planning Commission and City Council.
- Analyze site design, terrain constraints, land use compatibility, utilities and other urban services; read and understand architectural and civil plans and drawings.
- Perform calculates and measurements to confirm project compliance with development standards.
- Interpret land use maps and legal descriptions of property.
- Conduct complex research projects, synthesize data, evaluate alternatives and make sound recommendations; 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 a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities and meet critical time deadlines.
- Effectively represent the department 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.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.

- Use English effectively to communicate in person, on 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 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, environmental studies or a closely related field.
- Five (5) years of increasingly responsible professional planning experience. A master's degree in a field as listed above may substitute for one (1) year of the required 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 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 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.

**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 work in the field and occasionally be exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions and road hazards. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.