

FLSA Status: Exempt
At-Will

PRINCIPAL PLANNER

DEFINITION

Under general direction, leads, oversees and performs the more complex and difficult professional-level tasks related to municipal planning, zoning, housing, economic development and environmental analysis; organizes, executes and completes routine to major planning projects; researches and analyzes a variety of planning data; prepares various studies and recommendations; prepares and reviews environmental documents; reviews development and subdivision proposals, building plans, permits, and parcel maps; works with developers, architects, attorneys, and the public regarding City standards and policies; serves as staff to various Commissions and/or committees; and does related work as required.

This classification is an advanced journey level classification. The incumbent will independently assume responsibility for more complex projects and specialized assignments.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED AND RECEIVED

General direction is received from the Community Development Director. The Principal Planner exercises project direction over consultants and supervises lower level planning staff.

ESSENTIAL AND IMPORTANT DUTIES

The duties and responsibilities listed below are illustrative only and are not meant to be a full and exhaustive listing of all of the duties and responsibilities of the classification.

Provides direct supervision of subordinate professional staff; lead direction to consultants, subordinate professional, technical, and administrative staff; trains other staff in their areas of work including planning methods, procedures and techniques; verifies the work of employees, as assigned, for accuracy, proper work methods, techniques, and compliance with applicable standards and specifications; staffs and provides technical assistance to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Reviews planning projects for consistency with applicable rules and regulations, including ordinances, general plan, environmental compliance and other related areas; assists with special projects; analyzes data with respect to relevant laws, ordinances, regulations, and policies; determines methods to reconcile project conflicts with local and state law.

Reads and interprets maps, architectural and engineering plans and specifications; provides analysis and recommends actions on various aspects of planning; develops statistical analysis and engages in research in preparation of various phases of planning projects; establishes and maintains appropriate files, and prepares correspondence as required.

Writes reports and develops a variety of presentations related to community needs, development projects, and goals and services; writes resolutions, ordinances and California Environmental Quality Act documents; meets with and advises property owners and developers on a variety of planning matters; provides information on planning, zoning and subdivision matters and interprets laws and policies for other employees, policy makers and the public;

attends and participates in a variety of group meetings; stays abreast of trends and innovations in the field of planning.

Reviews and makes recommendations regarding development plans, architectural reviews, use permits and sign reviews for conformance with design standards; performs field inspections to determine conformance to design standards and regulations.

Assists in the preparation of agendas, public hearing notices, and scheduling of planning applications; attends meetings of the City Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator, Residential Design Review Committee and other committees as required; assembles pertinent data to be used in studies required for meetings and hearings; prepares technical reports, presents and explains detailed information.

Serves as a City Liaison at regional and local meetings; conducts research and prepares reports as required to meet deadlines; keeps the department, policy makers and public informed of requirements and trends.

Works extensively on the computer and with the City's software to manage current planning case-loads, produce written documents, prepare maps and graphics, analyze data, create graphics, maintain financial reporting, document property information and conduct research.

Performs duties consistent with the City's commitment to exceptional customer service.

JOB-RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of: Principles, practices and purpose of municipal planning; site and project design review; nomenclature, symbols, methods, practices, techniques and instruments used in planning, drafting and mapping; statistics and statistical analysis as applied to land use, transportation, zoning and master plan studies; principles and techniques of developing and maintaining a master plan; site planning and architectural design; laws and other regulations relating to municipal planning; knowledge of or capacity to learn Geographic Information System software, database software, and graphics software.

Ability to: Lead, organize and review the work of subordinate staff; perform difficult planning assignments independently; operate personal computers and utilize planning applications; analyze and compile statistical, economic and technical data; read, understand and apply state laws, local ordinances and guidelines to permit applications; prepare well written reports and oral presentations; establish and maintain effective working relationships with other employees, developers and the public; read and interpret architectural and construction plans; communicate clearly, concisely and tactfully with a variety of audiences; learn, retain and apply knowledge of laws and ordinances.

Skills in: Reading and interpreting architectural and engineering plans and specification; collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data pertaining to planning and zoning situations; applying urban, environmental, housing, zoning, and transportation planning principles and methods to local problems; establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with others; communicating effectively, orally and in writing; understanding and interpreting maps, plans, building elevations, specifications, and legal descriptions; creating word processing documents, sending e-mails, and researching topics on the Internet.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Any combination of experience, education and training that would provide the best qualified candidates. A typical way of gaining the knowledge, skills and abilities would be:

Experience: Five years of progressively responsible, experience in urban planning including some supervisory experience.

Education: Graduation from a four-year college or university with major course work in city or regional planning, urban planning, public policy or a closely related field. A Master's degree is desirable and may be substituted for one year of experience.

Training: Any recent training such as, academic courses and certification programs which are relevant to this job classification.

License: Possession of a valid California Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record, as determined by the City.

Certification from American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is preferred.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Speak clearly and understandably; operate standard computer programs. Ability to travel to various locations within and outside the City of San Carlos to meet program needs and fulfill job responsibilities. When driving on City business, maintenance of a California driver's license and satisfactory driver's record is required.

Other Requirements: Must have the willingness and ability to: work the hours necessary to accomplish the assigned duties, including evening and week-end hours; attend evening meetings; travel out of town and attend workshops, conferences, seminars during work and non-work hours.