

City of South San Francisco
Human Resources Department

Principal Planner
Class Description

Definition

Under general supervision, performs complex and sensitive professional planning work in the preparation and presentation of planning studies, plans, and reports; provides staff support to the City's Redevelopment Agency; develops and interprets planning policies and procedures; and performs other related duties as assigned.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This single-position class is distinguished from other City professional planning classes by the level, complexity, and Citywide implications of project assignments in addition to the provision of administrative and policy support to the planning division.

Typical and Important Duties

1. Processes current planning applications, particularly those within the Redevelopment Area and for commercial and industrial properties.
2. Provides staff support to the Redevelopment Agency; prepares a variety of complex reports, graphic materials, and presentations.
3. Coordinates planning activities and projects with actions of other City departments.
4. Oversees and coordinates changes to the City's General Plan; reviews, prepares comments, and reports on a variety of long-range and ongoing projects.
5. Makes presentations to the City Council, the Redevelopment Agency, Planning Commission, and various commissions and committees; represents the Division and the City in meetings with other agencies and professional groups.
6. Confers with and advises architects, homeowners, engineers, and others regarding planning matters, ordinances, policies, and procedures.
7. Provides policy and procedure interpretation to staff; assists in the development of new or revised policies and procedures.
8. Prepares requests for proposal; recommends selection of professional service contractors; administers and oversees the work of contractors.
9. Reviews plans and performs field inspections of major developments to ensure compliance with Council, Redevelopment Agency, and Planning Commission requirements.
10. Directs the work of professional and office support staff on a day-to-day or project basis; trains staff in work procedures.
11. Maintains accurate records and files; prepares a variety of reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
12. Acts for the City Planner on a relief or on an assigned basis.
13. Performs related duties and responsibilities as assigned.

Job-related Qualifications

Knowledge of:

- Theory, principles, and practices of City, urban, and transportation planning.
- Standard practices of both current and long-range planning, including development and modification of General Plan elements.
- Guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
- Applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- Statistical and research techniques related to the planning practices.
- Techniques for dealing with the architects, engineers, homeowners, City staff, professional service contractors, and representatives of other agencies in an effective manner.
- Report preparation and record keeping techniques.
- Principles of management, supervision, training, and employee development.

Ability to:

- Perform difficult and sensitive professional planning work.
- Collect, analyze, and interpret complex demographic, land use, statistical, financial, and related information pertaining to current and long-term planning projects.
- Understand, apply and explain laws, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Prepare, review, and interpret graphic displays, maps, and property descriptions.
- Communicate effectively in writing, orally, and with others to assimilate, understand, and convey information, in a manner consistent with job functions.
- Prepare clear, effective, and accurate staff reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Represent the City, the department, or the organizational unit effectively in contacts with representatives of other agencies, City departments, and the public.
- Make effective public presentations.
- Plan and direct the work of others; train others in work procedures.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.
- Use initiative and independent judgment within established policy and procedural guidelines.
- Take a proactive approach to customer service issues.
- Make process improvement changes to streamline procedures.
- Organize own work as well as the work of others, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments with a minimum of direction.
- Plan, distribute, direct, coordinate, review, and evaluate the work assigned staff and train staff in work procedures.
- Represent the City effectively in contacts with elected and foreign officials, representatives of other agencies, City departments, and the public, occasionally in situations where relations may be difficult or strained.
- Work in a safe manner, following City safety practices and procedures.

- Maintain confidentiality regarding sensitive information.

Skill in:

- Using a personal computer and associated applications.
- Word processing and database management at a speed and accuracy sufficient to perform assigned work.

Experience and Training

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

Experience:

Five years of progressively more responsible professional planning experience in a municipality, county, or other public agency setting. Possession of a Master's degree in an appropriate field may be substituted for one year of the required experience.

Training:

A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in city, urban or transportation planning, urban studies, or a related field.

Licenses and Certificates

All licenses and certificates must be maintained as a condition of employment.

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid, appropriate California driver's license and a satisfactory driving record.

Special Requirements

Essential duties require the following physical skills and work environment:

Physical Skills:

Able to use standard office equipment, including a computer; sit, stand, walk, kneel, crouch, stoop, squat, twist, and maintain sustained posture in a seated or standing position for prolonged periods of time; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; hearing and speech to communicate in person, over the telephone, and to make public presentations; lift and carry 35 pound boxes, files, and materials.

Work Environment:

Mobility to work in a typical office and/or field setting.

Ability to:

Travel to different sites and locations; drive safely to different sites and locations; maintain a safe driving record; work protracted and irregular hours and evening meetings or off-shift work for meeting attendance or participation in specific projects or programs; available for evening meetings.

Additional Information:

- Approved: July 2000
- Revised Date: June 2003
- Former Titles:
- Abolished:
- Bargaining Unit: Mid-management
- DOT: No
- Status: Classified/Exempt
- Job Code: M590