



SR. PLANNER

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, administers complex current and advance planning activities, including serving as project manager for complex development applications and special projects; provides technical direction to lower-level staff; performs professional office and field work involved in planning, zoning, and land use matters; interprets and enforces various planning rules, codes, regulations, and guidelines of the County; completes technical assessments and prepares written project analyses; provides professional advice and assistance to County staff, the Board of Supervisors, property owners, developers, contractors, and the public on planning, community development, zoning, and permits as assigned; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from an assigned manager. Exercises technical and functional direction over and provides training to lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the lead/advanced-level classification in the professional Planner class series. Incumbents work under general supervision and exercise a high level of discretion and independent judgment in performing the full range of routine to complex responsibilities spanning the entire spectrum of the planning function and exercising primary responsibility for the formulation, design, conduct, and completion of major or specialized County planning projects or services. Incumbents also provide lead direction to other professional planners assisting in the conduct and evaluation of planning activities and matters related to their assigned projects and planning areas.

This class is distinguished from the Planning Manager in that the latter is a management-level classification in the series responsible for the assignment, supervision, and evaluation of the work of assigned professional, technical, and administrative support staff, as well as programmatic and budgetary administration duties.

EXAMPLES OF JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Serves as project manager for multiple complex current and/or long-range planning projects, Environmental Impact Reports, General Plan Updates, and special planning studies, including in-depth application and plan review.
- Receives and processes land use applications for conditional use permits, rezones, parcel and subdivision maps, site development or site review permits, general plan amendments, and other requests related to County planning activities.
- Coordinates with applicants to obtain additional information and project changes, prepares legal notices, posts notices on sites, conducts background research, prepares staff reports, attends public hearings and makes presentations, monitors implementation measures and conditions of approval, checks submittals for building plan checks, and inspects development and capital improvement sites at the beginning and upon completion of the project.

- Compiles findings and prepares recommendations in written form for projects, including project analysis and conditions for permit approval or denial.
- Plans and directs the work of planning staff on assigned projects; reviews the work of assigned staff for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with policies, procedures, and standards; participates in staff training activities.
- Interprets and applies federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations to ensure that public and private projects are in compliance, including the California Environmental Quality Act, Subdivision Map Act, Public Resources Code, General Plan, County ordinances, specific plans, design specifications, and local guidelines and procedures.
- Interacts and communicates with a variety of individuals and groups at the public service counter, in the field, over the telephone, through email, at public hearings, and in discussion forums, including other County departments and public agencies, elected and appointed County officials, developers, consultants, architects, engineers, attorneys, appraisers, real estate agents, property owners, and the general public for the purpose of obtaining or providing information, coordinating activities, processing projects, negotiating plan changes, and formulating recommendations.
- Prepares grant applications and proposals for project funding; administers grants and prepares required reports.
- Reviews and conducts planning studies and projects related to current and advanced planning programs, operations, and the Local Agency Formation Commission.
- Conducts environmental review and analyses; reviews specialized planning support studies for incorporation into environmental review documents.
- Compiles and evaluates data related to the County's population, housing needs, income level, transit needs, etc., for use in projecting planning requirements.
- Develops recommendations, reports, maps, charts, graphics, and other information and documentation for presentation to the Planning Commission, advisory committees, and the Board of Supervisors.
- Prepares drafts of new or revised planning ordinances or regulations, and submits recommendations for review and approval.
- Reviews a variety of permits, applications, and petitions for compliance to planning regulations, codes, and ordinances.
- Participates in project meetings and conferences with commissions, committees, government agencies, and other groups; provides technical staff support to various County commissions.
- Makes presentations to the public, special districts, and agencies as requested.
- Receives and responds to inquiries, requests for assistance, and complaints regarding division and department projects, policies, and procedures.
- Prepares a variety of periodic and special reports regarding assigned activities.
- Assists in the development and administration of goals, objectives, policies, and procedures related to the division; drafts formalized policies and procedures with supervisory confirmation.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of employee supervision, including work planning, delegation, assignment review and evaluation, discipline, and the training of staff in work procedures.
- Principles and practices of leadership and decision making.
- Modern principles, practices, and technical and legal issues of urban and regional planning, zoning, urban economics, demographics, and environmental planning and program management.
- Geographic, socioeconomic, transportation, financial, political, environmental, and other elements related to public planning projects.
- Comprehensive plans and current planning processes and the development process.

- Philosophy, trends, principles, and techniques of planning programs.
- Principles and methods of urban and regional planning, zoning, and land development.
- Technical reporting requirements associated with planning programs.
- Biological and environmental issues associated with urban and regional planning and land use development.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and organizational policies and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Techniques for effectively representing the County and department in contacts with governmental agencies, governing bodies, community groups, various business, professional, educational and regulatory organizations, and with property owners, developers, contractors, and the public.
- Project management and contract administration principles and techniques.
- Principles of advanced mathematics and their application to planning work.
- Geographic Information Systems technology.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

Ability to:

- Select and supervise staff, provide training and development opportunities, ensure work is performed effectively, and evaluate performance in an objective and positive manner.
- Assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Interpret and explain complex planning and zoning projects and programs to the public.
- Assimilate both technical and theoretical concepts from many diverse disciplines and apply the knowledge in creative and intuitive ways to solve unique problems.
- Evaluate the suitability of projects to specific sites and surrounding areas.
- Interpret land use maps, legal descriptions, construction and grading plans, and other technical and office data accurately.
- Effectively organize and manage large or specialized planning projects.
- Provide effective staff leadership and work direction.
- Analyze complex problems, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations in support of goals.
- Effectively represent the department and the County in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups, and various businesses, professional, and regulatory organizations and individuals.
- Prepare and present clear, concise, and logical written and oral reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written material.
- Perform required mathematical computations with accuracy.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.

- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of the required experience, education, and training that would provide the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying.

Equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in planning or a closely related field;

AND

Two (2) years of experience at a level equivalent to the County's class of Associate Planner.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California or Nevada Driver's License by time of appointment 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 development sites, including traversing uneven terrain, climbing stairs, and other temporary or construction access points; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various County 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 with frequent field work, such as inspecting development sites. 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. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may work in the field and occasionally 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 members of the public or with staff under emotionally stressful conditions while interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.