ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Classification Specification

Principal Planner
Job Code: 3040
FLSA: Exempt

Purpose of Classification:

The purpose of this classification is to perform complex professional planning, zoning, code enforcement and other development activities and to supervise day-to-day activities and staff in one or more of the following functional areas, as assigned: long-range planning, historic preservation, or zoning administration.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

This classification is the fourth level in the Planner job family and is distinguished from lower levels by increasing degrees of scope, independence, responsibility, decision-making, as well as supervising staff and activities of assigned functional area.

Essential Functions:

The following duties are normal for this position. The omission of specific statements of the duties does not exclude them from the classification if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment for this classification. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Supervises, directs, and evaluates assigned staff: plans, directs and reviews work of individuals and the team; processes employee concerns and problems and counsels as appropriate; recommends discipline, disciplinary actions, or discharge; completes employee performance appraisals and salary increases; participates in interviews and makes hiring recommendations; acts as a liaison between employees and management; and trains staff in operations, policies, and procedures.

Organizes, prioritizes, and assigns work: prioritizes and schedules work activities in order to meet objectives; develops and oversees employee work schedules to ensure adequate coverage and control; ensures that

subordinates have the proper resources needed to complete the assigned work; monitors status of work in progress and inspects completed work; consults with assigned staff to assist with complex/problem situations and provide technical expertise; provides progress and activity reports to management; and updates and maintains department standard operating procedure manuals.

Recommends and assists in the implementation of department goals and objectives for assigned functional area: establishes schedules and methods for the performance of professional planning, historic preservation, urban design, and zoning administration and code enforcement activities; implements policies and procedures; manages the implementation of the comprehensive plan, historic preservation plan, other long-range planning efforts, and zoning administration and code enforcement activities; and coordinates the establishing of priorities, reporting progress and updates.

Supervises day-to-day activities of assigned functional area: evaluates operations and activities; recommends improvements and modifications; prepares and/or reviews various reports on operations and activities; receives, responds to, and resolves complex and escalated planning or zoning issues; participates in the development and management of budget for area of assignment; prepares proposal requests; evaluates and procures supplies, equipment and materials; and monitors expenditures to ensure compliance with approved budget.

Coordinates boards, commissions and committees related to area of assignment: coordinates and participates in a variety of meetings; prepares and presents reports before City Council, boards, commissions, and committees; reviews and edits agendas; ensures preparation and submission of legal notices; provides technical expertise and guidance regarding functional area of assignment, procedural rules, and local, state, and federal codes, regulations, and laws; responds to questions as needed; verifies completion and uploading of staff reports and other materials according to established schedule; prepares materials for board orientations; and assists in planning and coordinating retreats.

Develops and implements communication strategy for area of assignment: responds to requests for information; prepares, oversees, presents and/or disseminates reports, correspondence, outreach communication materials, online resources and information in support of assigned functional area; coordinates and participates in public engagement and educational activities; attends and makes presentations at public hearings, neighborhood association meetings, etc.; reviews and edits press releases; and develops, implements, and maintains web based communication tools.

Serves as City's Zoning Administrator, as assigned: ensures all zoning activities are in compliance with applicable design and legal guidelines, codes, standards, laws, rules, and regulations; researches, drafts, interprets, explains, and enforces design guidelines, development standards and guidelines, and development and zoning codes and related amendments; reviews, analyzes, and approves or denies site plans and building elevations; identifies and applies applicable legal decisions, legal research, and case law; creates, prepares, and presents reports, maps, graphics, legal notices, educational materials, etc.; maintains permit records; coordinates, attends, and conducts pre-application conferences for construction, variances, and appeals; performs site inspections as needed; and coordinates policy, code, and other development related issues.

Performs zoning code enforcement activities, as assigned: investigates and responds to complaints from the public; conducts research and reviews public records; perform site inspections; determines compliance or non-compliance; prepares Notices of Violation and Citations; communicates with complainants, property and business owners and others; identifies compliance strategies and options; responds to subpoenas and attends court hearings as needed; reviews and edits legal settlement agreements; and coordinates enforcement activities with legal staff as needed.

Manages complex planning projects and programs, as assigned: coordinates assigned projects and programs with City departments, boards and commissions, and other stakeholders; monitors and maintains timelines, work plans, project budgets and resource allocation; provides performance measurements and status updates; prepares, organizes, edits, writes, and/or publishes technical reports, plans, guidelines, books and other documents;

identifies, applies for, and manages granted funds; prepares requests for qualifications for contracted professional services and interviews and evaluates professional candidates; prepares contracts and project budgets; monitors project schedules and consultants for compliance with contract specifications.

Performs other duties in support of department operations: provides professional advice and technical expertise to the Planning Director regarding area of assignment; researches and recommends best practices for assigned functional area; may serve as Planning Director in the absence of the same; and attends meetings on behalf of the Planning Director, as needed.

Maintains a current, comprehensive knowledge and awareness of applicable laws, regulations, principles, trends, and practices relating to urban planning and design and zoning administration and code enforcement; monitors pending legislation in local, state, and federal governments for impact on operations; reads professional literature; maintains professional affiliations; and facilitates and attends meetings, workshops, conferences, and training sessions as required.

Communicates with City officials, boards, commissions, committees, supervisor, subordinates, other City employees, third party service contractors, the public, outside agencies and organizations, property and business owners, developers, design professionals, and other individuals as needed to coordinate work activities, review status of work, exchange information, or resolve problems.

Processes a variety of documentation associated with department/division operations, within designated timeframes and per established procedures: receives, reviews, prepares, completes, processes, forwards or retains as appropriate various forms, reports, correspondence, site plans, staff reports, invoices, time sheets, architectural drawings and guidelines, meeting agenda and minutes, performance appraisals, project plans and reports, statistical analysis, budget and financial records and documentation, legal documents, notices and ordinances, maps, graphics, presentations, and other documentation; compiles data for further processing or for use in preparation of department reports; and maintains computerized and/or hardcopy records.

Operates a personal computer to enter, retrieve, review or modify data, utilizing word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, Internet, e-mail, or other software; and operates general office or other equipment as necessary to complete essential functions.

Additional Functions:

Performs other related duties as required.

Minimum Qualifications:

Master's Degree in City & Regional Planning, Urban Planning, Landscape Architecture, Environmental Planning, or related field; supplemented by seven years of progressively responsible experience in urban and regional planning, historic preservation, zoning code administration and enforcement, or related field; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job.

Specific License or Certification Required: Must possess and maintain a valid North Carolina driver's license. Must possess and maintain certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Specific Knowledge, Skills, or Abilities: Must be able to demonstrate proficiency in performance of the essential functions and learn, comprehend, and apply all City or departmental policies, practices, and procedures necessary to function effectively in the position.

Performance Aptitudes:

Data Utilization: Requires the ability to coordinate, manage, and/or correlate data. Includes exercising judgment in determining time, place and/or sequence of operations, referencing data analyses to determine necessity for revision of organizational components, and in the formulation of operational strategy.

Human Interaction: Requires the ability to work with others to coordinate the more complex programs and more complex problems associated with the responsibilities of the job. Often represents the department and/or organization when dealing with others.

Equipment, Machinery, Tools, and Materials Utilization: Requires the ability to operate, maneuver and/or control the actions of equipment, machinery, tools, and/or materials used in performing essential functions.

Verbal Aptitude: Requires the ability to utilize a wide variety of reference, descriptive, advisory and/or design data and information.

Mathematical Aptitude: Requires the ability to perform addition, subtraction, multiplication and division; ability to calculate decimals and percentages; may include ability to perform mathematical operations with fractions; may include ability to compute discount, interest, and ratios; may include ability to calculate surface areas, volumes, weights, and measures.

Functional Reasoning: Requires the ability to apply principles of influence systems, such as motivation, incentive, and leadership, and to exercise independent judgment to apply facts and principles for developing approaches and techniques to resolve problems.

Situational Reasoning: Requires the ability to exercise judgment, decisiveness and creativity in situations involving the evaluation of information against sensory, judgmental, or subjective criteria, as opposed to that which is clearly measurable or verifiable.

ADA Compliance:

Physical Ability: Tasks require the ability to exert light physical effort in sedentary to light work, but which may involve some lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of objects and materials of light weight (5-10 pounds). Tasks may involve extended periods of time at a keyboard or workstation.

Sensory Requirements: Some tasks require the ability to perceive and discriminate colors or shades of colors, sounds, and visual cues or signals. Some tasks require the ability to communicate orally.

Environmental Factors: Essential functions are regularly performed without exposure to adverse environmental conditions.

The City of Asheville is an Equal Opportunity Employer. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with the employer.