

Classification Specification
SENIOR PLANNER

Date Prepared: January 2002

FLSA Status: Exempt

Date Revised: October 2016
Mar 2006

SERIES CONCEPT

The Senior Planner is the advanced project manager, technical expert, and fully skilled non-supervisory level of the planner series, which includes Senior Planner, Associate Planner, Assistant Planner, and Planning Technician.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Responsibilities include serving as a working project manager for high-level and complex projects, and/or as a working high-level technical specialist in a particular aspect of planning; prepares and administers work programs involving regional or local plans, land use regulations, or planning programs.

Positions in this classification exercise considerable independent judgement to manage day-to-day activities.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Provides immediate supervision and training for assigned staff and interns.
- Serves as a working project manager for complex and sensitive projects and programs.
- Develops, coordinates, and implements work programs for projects and programs within planning areas such as land use, transportation, economic development, or environment.
- Conducts complex studies related to land use, transportation, community and economic development, or environment and/or oversees, establishes methodologies and conducts data collection, analysis, and complex studies related to land use, transportation, economic and/or community development, or environmental impacts.
- Develops scopes of work for grants, projects, and work programs, including budget estimates and staffing levels.
- Identifies funding, training, and technical assistance opportunities and prepares grant applications for federal, state, local, and other funds to further Council goals and objectives.
- Scopes and reviews the technical work of consultants, contracting agencies, and other organizations as appropriate.
- Monitors and analyzes project and programmatic budgets.
- Participates in agency audit as needed.
- Ensures that planning programs and projects adhere to all relevant rules and regulations.
- Monitors emerging State and Federal legislation as it relates to specific projects or programs.
- Communicates and interacts with policy makers, executives and administrators of other organizations at the request of Division Director or the Executive Director.
- Participates in intergovernmental committees to analyze, evaluate, and resolve public policy issues.

- Advises appointed and elected officials on public policy issues, planning procedures, comprehensive and special plans, as well as regulatory ordinances.
- Provides technical and administrative staff support for appointed committees, workgroups, and stakeholder groups on planning issues or special studies.
- Identifies, develops, and conducts public involvement and education processes.
- Responds to public inquiries with data and information on planning processes and public policy.
- Prepares and presents oral and visual reports to Council, committees, community groups, and private organizations.
- Identifies technology and information services needs of a project or program.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS

Performs other related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

Positions in the Senior Planner classification are distinguished from those of Associate and Assistant Planners by the greater degree of responsibility for technical, administrative, and public policy elements of the work program and/or the comprehensive expertise and achievement in a functional area of planning required. Senior Planners are given broad latitude to use independent judgment in developing recommendations and making decisions in their program area and dealing with the public and appointed and elected officials.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is generally performed indoors in an office environment. Must maintain a level of physical and mental fitness necessary to perform the essential functions of the position.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE – MINIMUM:

- Five years of experience that provides the applicant with comprehensive knowledge of planning principles, practices, and techniques as they relate to all functional areas such as land use, environmental impacts, or other related areas.
- Two years of project management and experience with budget responsibilities, must be included in the five years of experience.

EDUCATION – MINIMUM:

Bachelor's degree in urban or regional planning or a related field such as geography, economics, political science, or environmental studies.

PREFERRED:

Master's degree in planning or related field.

OR SUBSTITUTING

Any demonstrated combination of experience and education, which provides the applicant with the required knowledge and abilities.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Supervisory principles and practices.
- Budgeting principles and practices.
- Project management principles and practices.
- Computer applications such as financial and accounting systems, spreadsheets, databases and word processing systems and their application in agency operations.
- Planning principles, practices, and techniques as they relate to more than one functional area, such as land use, economic development, transportation, environmental impacts, or other related areas.
- Local government and political decision-making processes.
- Comprehensive and regional planning processes.
- Research methods and practices.
- More than one specialized area of planning, such as community and economic development, food systems, transportation, sustainability, natural hazards, forecasting of regional development.
- Microsoft Office software for document, spreadsheet, and presentation preparation.

Ability to:

- Lead and motivate others.
- Manage complex projects.
- Problem solve and provide holistic solutions.
- Resolve conflict in an open and inclusive manner.
- Develop and write plans based on an analysis of data and ongoing stakeholder, community, and agency input.
- Organize and oversee work programs, including monitoring budgets, work schedules, grant requirements, and progress reviews. Manage numerous projects simultaneously.
- Communicate effectively (in writing and orally) with individuals and groups regarding complex or controversial public policy issues or regulations.
- Establish and maintain effective working relations with agency members, planning staff, agency staff, and the community.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

May be required to work evenings and weekends.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATES

A current Washington State Driver's License may be required.