

City of West Richland Job Description

Job Title: Senior Planner
Department: Community & Economic Development
Reports To: Community Development Director
FLSA Status: Exempt
Prepared By: Selena Smathers
Approved By: Brent Gerry, Mayor
Approved Date: October 8, 2020

Summary

The Senior Planner works independently in all areas of work related to planning and development, generally assisting the Community Development Director in carrying out duties of the department's short and long-range planning functions. Duties include public assistance, report preparation and presentation, research related to planning studies and activities performs complex work in all areas of planning activities, including but not limited to application of the Growth Management Act, Comprehensive Plan and other land-use planning statues on behalf of the City. Incumbent has experience in the customary elements of land use planning in Washington State, and has the demonstrated ability to apply the tools and techniques of the planning trade.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Reviews development proposals, city activities and proposals by other agencies with respect to feasibility, effects on City growth, environmental impacts and aesthetic acceptance and makes recommendations to the Director, Mayor, Planning Commission and City Council.
- Prepares staff reports and recommendations for a variety of land use permits, including variances, rezones, conditional uses, planned development, shoreline permits and subdivisions. Makes presentations to the public, Planning Commission, Shoreline Hearings Board and the City Council regarding each application.
- Researches, drafts and manages amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan and related implementing ordinances, including the preparation of various studies and reports.
- Provides excellent customer service, participates constructively and effectively in the department management team, represents the director in his/her absence at selected applicable meetings and provides leadership with regard to implementing the department mission.
- Writes and reviews Environmental Impact Statements, checklists and technical reports and makes recommendations to the Director on environmental issues and mitigation.

- Provides information to the public, including architects, engineers, planners, builders, contractors, real estate representatives, and home owners, regarding land use, zoning, planning activities and community development projects.
- Represents the department at various meetings of local, regional and county organizations and groups.
- Responsible for knowing and disseminating information from the West Richland Municipal Code (WRMC) and associated/related documents.
- Support the planning resource needs for public assistance at the permit counter.
- Leads or supports the coordination of Technical Review Committee meetings with applicants and developers.
- Have in-depth knowledge of a permit center concept – know the interdepartmental relationships, overlaps and procedures.
- Attends and presents at evening meetings and/or regional agency meetings.
- Routine updating of land use-related maps, codes and programs.
- Represent the Department and the City before various groups and in various settings.
- Ability to attend evening and night meetings as needed
- Other duties as assigned.

Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of:

- Planning principles including zoning, environmental review and analysis, design, planning theory, land use law, socio-economic aspects, and land development as applied to a small growing city; Washington State Planning laws and procedures, including Growth Management Act, State Environmental Policy Act, Shoreline Management Act, Subdivision law, and other state and federal laws related to the operation of the department;
- Modern trends in the field of land use planning;
- Modern office practices, procedures and equipment; Record keeping techniques
- Correct English usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary;
- Interpersonal skills using tact, patience and courtesy;
- Preparation and presentation of statistical and narrative reports.

Ability To:

- Review architectural plans, site and landscape plans, building elevations, and related materials to determine compliance with applicable land use, design, zoning, and environmental regulations;
- Work constructively in a team environment with customers and other staff to seek solutions and gain code compliance in an efficient and professional manner;
- Present complex and technical information in a clear and concise manner to various audiences both in written and oral communication;
- Provide excellent customer service by using a friendly, professional and accurate and customer orientated approach to a wide variety of customers, including:

government officials, general public and staff. This would include in-person, written and oral communications;

- Contribute to achieving to the Department Mission
- Plan and organize work to run smoothly and efficiently and meet deadlines.
- Prioritize and schedule work to accomplish required tasks and complete projects on time. Operate word processing hardware and software used by the City.
- Interpret, apply and explain laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures.

Supervisory Responsibilities

Works under the direction of the Community Development Director. The Senior Planner may be asked to supervise interns, other planners and/or consultants on special programs or projects.

Education and Experience

Bachelor's degree from an accredited college/university in planning or closely related field and four (4) years of progressively responsible planning experience; or any combination of education and experience that provides the skills, knowledge and abilities to perform this position.

Master's degree is preferred

GIS experience preferred

AICP certification preferred

Certificates and Licenses

Must possess a valid Washington State driver's license with insurable driving record

Core

Use Technical/Functional Expertise: Displays an appropriate depth of knowledge and skills as required for the position and commensurate with the time in class. Uses technology as appropriate for the position. Seeks additional knowledge and information to continually enhance knowledge in areas of specialty.

Be Accountable for Performance: Actively shows responsibility, reliability, and trustworthiness. Ensures work and information are complete and accurate. Admits mistakes and looks for ways to improve. Models self as dependable and reliable. Follows up with others to ensure agreements and commitments have been fulfilled. Values the importance of team and organizational success. Independently takes action to influence events, to improve own or organizational performance and to promote the goals of the organization.

Provide Excellent Customer Service: Anticipates, assesses, and responds effectively to the needs of diverse customers, both internal and external, providing consistently excellent service that is timely, accurate, courteous, and respectful.

Communicate Effectively: Uses verbal and written skills effectively to ensure that information is successfully shared throughout the organization. Relates well to a range of people. Shows sensitivity to the needs of others. Demonstrates ability to build rapport and facilitates mutual understanding.

Work Safely: Knowledge and application of relevant safety requirements that apply to the specific work being done. Recognizes and mitigates safety hazards on the job. Observes rules and regulations to comply with personal and workplace safety standards. Works to create a hazard-free, accident-free environment.

Customer Service: Employee must be able to work in situations with hostile customers while maintaining tact and professionalism and adhering to prescribed departmental policies and procedures. Must also work effectively with elected officials, staff and vendors.

Interpersonal Skills: Confidentiality is required due to the sensitive nature of some documents or messages. A high level of integrity is required to maintain objectivity in dealing with customers and City employees.

Oral Communication: Effective communication skills are essential due to the variety of public interfaces required for this position. Must be able to represent personal view or position, but be flexible and able to carry out actions which may contrast with personal preference.

Written Communication: Writes clearly and informatively; edits work for spelling and grammar; presents numerical data effectively; able to read and interpret written information.

Teamwork: Balances team and individual responsibilities; exhibits objectivity and openness to others' views; contributes to building a positive team spirit.

Organizational Support: Follows policies and procedures; supports organization's goals and values. The position requires frequent interaction with the general public and City staff, and elected officials.

Judgment: Exhibits sound and accurate judgment; includes appropriate people in decision-making process; makes timely decisions.

Motivation: Sets and achieves challenging goals; demonstrates persistence and overcomes obstacles; measures self against standard of excellence; takes calculated risks to accomplish goals.

Initiative: Volunteers readily; undertakes self-development activities; seeks increased responsibilities; takes independent actions and calculated risks; looks for and takes advantage of opportunities; asks for and offers help when needed.

Planning/Organizing: Must be able to understand, relate and contribute to strategies to improve communications and service. Prioritizes and plans work activities; uses time efficiently.

Professionalism: Must be able to interact with others using tact, patience and courtesy. The individual in this position must maintain a customer service orientation, be courteous and diplomatic in the exchange of information, and present a positive image of the City to its customers.

Quality: Demonstrates accuracy and thoroughness.

Adaptability: Adapts to changes in the work environment.

Attendance/Punctuality: Is consistently at work and on time; ensures work responsibilities are covered when absent.

Language Skills

Ability to read and interpret documents such as codes, rules, regulations, policies and procedures. Ability to write routine reports and correspondence. Ability to speak effectively before groups of customers or employees of organization.

Mathematical Skills

Ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure, using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals. Ability to compute rate, ratio, and percent and to draw and interpret bar graphs. Ability to calculate proportions, area, circumference and volume. Ability to apply basic concepts of algebra and geometry.

Reasoning Ability

Ability to apply common sense understanding to carry out detailed but uninvolved written or oral instructions. Ability to deal with problems involving a few concrete variables in standardized situations.

Physical Demands

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit and talk or hear. The employee is frequently required to stand and walk. The employee is occasionally required to use hands to finger, handle, or feel and reach with hands and arms. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 15 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, peripheral vision and ability to adjust focus.

Work Environment

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.