

County of Humboldt Job Specification
ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PLANNER
Classification 0333
FLSA: Non-Exempt



DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs professional advanced and/or current planning work, including planning related to the County's cannabis ordinance; performs professional office and field work involved in planning, zoning, and land use matters; interprets and enforces various zoning regulations of the County; completes technical assessments and prepares written project analyses; provides professional advice and assistance to the public on planning, community development, zoning, and permits; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision or direction from a Senior Planner or Planning Manager. Exercises no direct supervision over staff. May provide technical and functional direction to lower level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Assistant Planner: This is the entry-level classification in the professional Planner series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents learn and perform a variety of professional office and field work related to the interpretation, application, and enforcement of County planning codes, ordinances, and regulations and the County's general plan. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied; close supervision and frequent review of work lessen as an incumbent demonstrates skill to perform the work independently. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the Associate Planner level, but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise.

Associate Planner: This is the journey-level classification in the professional Planner series. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Assistant Planner by the performance of the full range of duties as assigned, working independently, and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. This class is distinguished from the Senior Planner in that the latter is the advanced journey-level class in the series and is responsible for organizing, assigning, and reviewing the work of departmental staff involved in a major area of the Planning Division in addition to performing the more complex planning and project management activities.

Positions in the Assistant/Associate Planner class series are flexibly staffed and positions at the Associate level are typically filled by advancement from the Assistant level after gaining the knowledge, skill, and experience which meet the qualifications for, and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work of, the higher level classification.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignment of different positions.

Some duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities may be performed in a learning capacity for entry-level (Assistant Planner) positions.

- Receives and processes land use and development 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.
- Reviews applications for consistency with the County's General Plan, codes, and ordinances; provides information and assistance to developers, property owners and the general public regarding laws, policies, regulations related to the submission of plans, processing of applications and implementation requirements.
- Reviews aerial imagery of parcels using Geographic Information Systems to collect pertinent information regarding site conditions and determine compliance.
- Collects, researches, reviews, and organizes field and office data for the development of staff reports, analysis of planning elements, and/or development or modification of current land use policies.
- Conducts environmental review and analyses.
- Compiles findings and prepares recommendations in written form for projects, including project analysis and conditions for permit approval; prepares zoning clearance certificates, special permits, and conditional use permits during analysis.
- Prepares and updates maps, charts, and graphs for visual presentations related to planning activities.
- Prepares a variety of periodic and special reports regarding assigned activities; makes presentations to the public, special districts and agencies.
- Confers with and advises architects, builders, contractors, engineers, and the general public regarding County development policies and standards; provides and clarifies information relative to land use, zoning, code interpretation, general plan compliance, signage, and other issues; acts as Planner on Duty or Cannabis Planner on Duty on a rotational basis.
- Participates in coordinating County planning and development related activities with other County departments and with outside agencies.
- Refers to and applies numerous documents including the General Plan, zoning ordinance, California Environmental Quality Act, Subdivision Map Act, State Planning laws, municipal codes, and other related regulations.
- Researches and assists in preparing ordinances for review; assists with the review, development, or revision of the various elements of the General Plan, environmental impact reports, plans, ordinances and other policies and procedures.
- Attends meetings, conferences, workshops, and training sessions; attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of urban planning and other types of public services as they relate to the area of assignment.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge and ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Modern principles and practices of technical and legal issues of urban and regional planning, zoning, urban economics, demographics, and environmental planning and program management.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and ordinances relevant to planning, zoning, land development, and other programs of the department, including the cannabis land use ordinance.
- Comprehensive plans, and current planning processes and the development process.
- Methods, practices, and procedures used in current and advanced planning operations.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology.
- Environmental and biological issues impacting planning activities.
- General concepts of architecture, landscaping, grading, drainage, and traffic and transportation engineering as they relate to the process of urban planning.
- Geographic, socioeconomic, transportation, political, and other elements related to planning.
- Operational characteristics, services, and activities of a comprehensive environmental planning program.
- Planning terminology and technical report writing requirements related to planning.
- Project management and contract administration principles and techniques.
- Principles of providing functional direction and training.
- Researching and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
- 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, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Collect, interpret, and analyze field and office planning data accurately.
- Perform technical planning operations and studies.
- Read plans and specifications and make effective site visits.
- Effectively use basic GIS technology.
- Analyze site design, terrain constraints, land use compatibility, utilities, and other urban services.
- Assess, monitor, and report environmental impact on and of various County programs and services.
- Perform mathematical and planning computations with precision.
- Conduct routine research projects, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.

- Prepare and present clear, concise, and logical written and oral reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written material.
- Interpret and explain planning and zoning programs to the general public; identify and respond to issues and concerns of the public, Board of Supervisors, and other boards and commissions.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and procedural guidelines.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, 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.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

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

Equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in city, regional, urban, or transportation planning, or a related field.

and

Associate Planner: two (2) years of increasingly responsible professional planning experience at a level equivalent to the County's class of Assistant Planner.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Must possess a valid US driver's license upon date of application. Must obtain California driver's license following hire date per California DMV regulations.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

- Mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and visit various County sites; primarily a sedentary office classification although standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required; occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information; ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 20 pounds.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen.
- Hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone.
- Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

- Office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees also work in the field and occasionally are exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, and hazardous physical substances and fumes.
- Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Some departments may require pre-employment screening measures before an offer of employment can be made (i.e. background screening, physical examination, etc.).