



PRINCIPAL PLANNER

JOB DESCRIPTION

Department: Community Development Services	Division: Planning
Work Location: City Building	Percent Time: Full-time
Job Type: Civil Service	FLSA Status: Exempt
Reports To: Community Development Director	Union: Non-Union

JOB SUMMARY

The Principal Planner participates in advanced, highly-complex professional planning activities and directs the Planning Division. Responsible for personnel administration, coordinating work programs and priorities, and ensuring that decision-making within the Planning Division is internally consistent and in accordance with state and municipal statutes and the City's priorities, mission, and values.

In conjunction with the Director, responsible for comprehensive planning, historic preservation, neighborhood planning, subdivision/development review, annexation, research and long term planning studies. Provides staff support to the City Council, Urbana Plan Commission, Urbana Historic Preservation Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Design Review Board. Represents the City on a variety of intergovernmental committees and teams. Supervises and leads staff to accomplish the planning goals of the City. May also be assigned zoning administration duties.

Class Characteristics

This is the advanced, lead level in the professional planning series. Incumbents provide lead direction for assigned Planners and perform highly specialized and difficult planning functions. Incumbents are assigned to either advanced or current planning projects that require considerable professional knowledge and the use of independent judgment. This class is distinguished from Planner II position in that the latter has overall management responsibility for the City's Planning Division.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Actively supports and upholds the City's mission and values.
- Contributes to supporting organizational goals and priorities.
- Administers and enforces of the City of Urbana's Land Development Code as it applies to subdivisions and developments within the City and the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction, in consultation with the CD Director and the City Engineer. Serves on the Administrative Review Committee.

- Coordinates and/or oversees zoning issues and enforcement with the Building Safety Division staff and with other City departments. Facilitates joint planning projects between departments.
- Supports the development of the City's comprehensive plan, planning programs and policies.
- Directs the Planning Division, which includes implementation of the comprehensive plan, planning programs and policies; preparing staff recommendations regarding development, amendment, and implementation of City's Comprehensive Plan; and other long-range planning studies.
- Provides lead direction and work assignment to professional and technical staff; assists in the selection of assigned staff; instructs staff in work procedures, reviews work performed and provides periodic performance evaluations to assigned staff.
- Prepares and directs special planning studies as needed. Such studies may include use of maps, graphs, reports, field studies, statistics, tabulations, computations, graphs and charts for illustration and analysis.
- Serves as project manager for major planning activities and specific projects.
- Provides staff support to City Council on planning related matters and attends Council meetings as needed. Provides or assigns staff support for the Plan Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Design Review Board, and other boards, commissions or committees as needed. Attends or assigns staff to attend meetings.
- Coordinates planning efforts with other governmental jurisdictions, such as Champaign County, City of Champaign, Village of Savoy, Sanitary District, Park District, School District, etc.
- Coordinates the solicitation and gathering of input from various civic and neighborhood groups to aid staff in planning projects.
- Analyzes requests and recommends appropriate action for a wide variety of plan cases, including, but not limited to, zoning text amendments, zoning map amendments, land development and subdivision requests, subdivision regulation amendments, special use permits, conditional use permits, variances, annexation agreements, planned unit developments, and comprehensive plan amendments.
- Reviews the recommendations and packet materials prepared by division staff prior to their submittal to the Director for final review and distribution.
- Prepares and directs preparation of Plan Commission and City Council packet materials for meetings including memos, maps, and other information as needed.
- Reviews Plan Commission agenda and cases, including recommendations, providing alternate recommendations if applicable.
- Serves as Secretary of the Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Design Review Board.
- Makes presentations to government officials and citizens, especially the Urbana Plan Commission and Urbana City Council.
- Prepares Council legislation such as ordinances and resolutions.
- Fosters and develops a culture of positive customer service in working relationships with key staff, division and departmental employees, other governmental organizations, and with external services such as consultants, citizens, legal counsel, boards, and commissions, and City Council.

- Provides direct technical staff assistance and support to Director, as necessary.
- Works with the Director to research, recommend, and implement process improvements.
- Develops and revises applicable City codes, policies and procedures in consultation with the Director and other key staff or elected officials.
- Provides regular reports on the status of projects and ensures that City officials are informed on a timely basis.
- Works with the CD Director on developing a vision for neighborhood organizations and community engagement, including identifying and monitoring performance measures.
- Answers public inquiries regarding general planning, zoning, and subdivision regulations.
- Facilitates data management and related tasks with U.S. Census Bureau on as-needed basis.
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

Education & Experience

- Knowledge typically acquired through completion of a bachelor's degree in urban planning or a related field.
- Five (5) years of progressively responsible experience performing professional planning work.
- **Substitution:** A master's degree may substitute for one year of the required experience.

Note: The word "experience" referenced in the minimum qualifications means full-time paid experience; part-time experience including internships may be accumulated and pro-rated to meet the total experience requirements.

Knowledge of

- Principles and practices of urban planning and land use.
- Specialization such as housing, zoning, historic preservation, and economic development.
- Methods and techniques of effective technical report preparation and presentation.
- Pertinent federal, state and local laws, codes and regulations including recent changes.
- Recent developments, current literature and sources of information related to municipal planning.
- Local government procedures and practices.
- Citizen involvement techniques and processes.
- Software programs including Microsoft Office, Internet applications and GIS.

Skills

- Strong interpersonal skills to develop good working relationships at various levels and to resolve complaints.
- Must be innovative, detail-oriented, experienced in highly visible/controversial projects.
- Strong analytical skills to interpret research data for reports and apply mathematic techniques in practical situations.

- Reading comprehension to understand technical and legal materials.
- Outstanding communication skills.

Ability to

- Effectively prepare technical reports, present public recommendations orally and in writing,
- Respond to inquiries and complaints
- Represent the City in a variety of forums
- Work with confidential information.
- Work effectively with multiple stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and supervise.
- Manage multiple, high-priority assignments.
- Work on several projects or issues simultaneously and meet firm deadlines.
- Develop and maintain collaborative relationships with a variety of disciplines, elected officials and agency officials at all levels of government, non-profit organizations, developers, civic groups, and others involved in planning, community and economic development.
- Manage or facilitate complex, multi-year projects involving multiple stakeholders and a wide array of disciplines, sensitive political issues and challenges, and diverse communities.

Licenses, Certifications and Memberships Required

- Ability to obtain AICP certification within 18 months of hire and maintain certification.
- Must possess a valid driver's license or obtain one within fifteen (15) days of employment and have a safe driving record.

Preferred Attributes

- Master's degree in Urban Planning or a related field.
- Progressive leadership and supervisory experience.
- Experience working with boards and commissions.
- Local government planning experience.
- Familiarity with City of Urbana ordinances.
- AICP certification.

Job Dimensions

- Work at this level requires specific professional skills and/or skills in managing a wide variety of complex processes beyond those of Planner I or Planner II because the levels of independent judgment and process complexity require more breadth and/or depth of skills to perform the complex processes required by the job, and

higher levels of difficulty or responsibility are involved. Examples include advanced skill in administering programs, processes, or services with limited supervision; skill in utilizing an in-depth knowledge of applicable City, state, or federal regulations affecting programs or processes administered by the incumbent; and the ability to manage projects or programs or handle day-to-day administrative responsibilities independently.

- Interactions with others tend to be somewhat unstructured. The purpose may be to influence or motivate others, to obtain information or to control situations and resolve problems. Interactions may be with individuals or groups of co-workers, students or the general public, may be moderately unstructured, and may involve persons who hold differing goals and objectives. Individuals at this level often act as a liaison between groups with a focus on solving particular unstructured problems. Interactions at this level require considerable interpersonal skill and the ability to resolve conflict.

Level and complexity of supervision exercised

- Performs a full range of supervisory responsibilities, including performance reviews of subordinates. The incumbent is responsible for training, planning and directing the work of Planning Division employees, and generally contributes to hiring decisions of department staff. Supervisory responsibilities consume moderate amounts of work time and may include general work planning tasks.

Physical Demands and Working Conditions

- Work typically occurs in a standard office setting. Normal work schedule is from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Must also be available for meetings and special events occurring beyond standard business hours as required.
- Contacts: Daily contact occurs with City staff, businesses, and members of the public. Occasional contact will occur with City Council and various board and commission members.

The work environment characteristics described herein 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.

Class Specification History:

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For HR/Finance Use

Job Class Code	Pay Grade 343
EEO Category 1- Officials and Administrators	