



CLASS SPECIFICATION FOR:

## Senior Principal Planner

### General Statement of Duties:

Manages staff and professional planning activities in a major Planning Division such as Comprehensive Planning, Development Review and Design or Zoning Administration; does related work as required.

### Distinguishing Features of Class:

An incumbent in this job classification manages assigned staff and division activities; performs a wide variety of administrative, managerial, and staff supervision; develops, proposes, implements and interprets policies and regulations; serves in various capacities as a technical subject matter expert representing the County with diverse stakeholders and audiences; and supervises and directs the preparation of highly detailed studies and comprehensive plans. The incumbent demonstrates thorough relevant knowledge of the principles and practices of planning, urban and landscape design, code administration, civil engineering, law and the economic concepts underlying planning work. Assigned duties and responsibilities vary based on assigned Planning Division. Under the general direction of the Assistant Director or Director of Planning, the incumbent exercises sound independent judgment utilizing subject matter expertise to manage assigned staff's workloads and project assignments and the assigned division activities which includes managing related finances such as budgets or financial guarantees. The employee exercises supervision over inspection, technical and/or professional planning personnel in the Planning Department.

### Examples of Assigned Duties *(illustrative of the types and scope of duties and responsibilities assigned to positions in this class):*

- Manages staff and professional planning activities in a major Planning Division such as Comprehensive Planning, Development Review and Design or Zoning Administration;
- Interviews, selects, trains, develops, supervises and evaluates professional, paraprofessional and other support staff;
- Maintains personal contact with responsible governmental officers, civic organizations and the general public concerning data collection, goal formulation, and explanation and interpretation of the plan;
- Makes public presentations and interprets planning programs to the public;
- Works at policy level with County and other government officials;
- Recommends, implements and accurately interprets policies, procedures, and programs, which may include drafting County ordinances, State legislation or other amendments;
- Prepares and presents data and reports to the County Manager, Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission;
- Participates in the coordination of planning activities with citizens, attorneys, engineers, agency heads, and other officials of local, regional, state and federal governments;
- Attends meetings and hearings, including Boards and Commissions meetings, serving as a technical and/or management advisor or participant and takes the lead in providing guidance in land use decisions and applications;
- May serve in various capacities on various local and/or regional technical committees and boards as the representative for the County;
- Meets with citizen groups regarding problems to elicit information needed in planning studies;
- Reviews special and controversial plans, conducts investigations, makes recommendations and approves to plans;
- Appears in court as an expert witness to give testimony in zoning and planning cases;
- Supervises and directs the development of technical data and reports concerning master planning, capital improvement programming, urban renewal, planning legislation, development policies and other planning activities;
- Supervises and directs the preparation of highly detailed studies and comprehensive plans and develops long-range and community development planning policies;
- Supervises the implementation of programs and projects and monitors, assesses and reports on progress;
- May be responsible for managing all financial guarantees, including estimating, accepting, maintaining, reducing, releasing, and drawing on all financial guarantees for development approvals;
- May oversee and coordinate staff among divisions in reviewing and approving Certificates of Occupancy and Transfer of Approvals in relation to compliance with Plans of Development, Subdivisions, and Conditional Rezonings and uses judgment in routing to the Planning Commission as needed;
- May manage the Zoning Administration division, working zoning complaints, certifying certificates of occupancy and checking for compliance with conditional permits and variances;
- May supervise the review of building permits, POD'S, subdivisions and other applications processed by the Planning Department;
- May review, evaluate and make recommendations on requests for vacation of rights-of-way, easements, and for the sale of surplus County-owned property and chancery suits;



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- May lead monthly zoning applications meetings, coordinating with interdepartmental staff;
- Prepares outlines for planning studies, inventories, development of planning concepts and implementation of plans;
- Serves as Acting Director of Planning in absence of the Director and Assistant Director;
- Maintains a current thorough working knowledge of legislation and new developments in the field of planning and design for urban development;
- Performs other duties as assigned.

**Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

Extensive knowledge of principles and practices of planning, urban and landscape design, code administration, civil engineering, law and the economic concepts underlying planning work; extensive knowledge of laws and regulations related to planning; ability to plan, develop and organize comprehensive planning projects and programs; strong coordination and collaborations skills; ability to successfully complete assigned administrative tasks in accordance with applicable requirements and deadlines; ability to accurately and consistently interpret and apply complex planning and land use laws, regulations and policies; sound judgement with excellent critical thinking and problem solving skills with the ability to cost effectively and appropriately solve a variety of issues within a wide variety of complex regulatory guidelines and requirements; strong oral and written communication skill with exceptional ability to express ideas clearly and concisely, orally and in writing to diverse public audiences, stakeholders, government and regulatory officials; ability to research, collect and maintain data, consider and weigh a variety of factors in making decisions or recommendations; ability to synthesize multiple types of complex data and produce easily understood presentations, reports and other materials; ability to lead, manage and partner effectively; excellent interpersonal skills with the demonstrated ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with department staff and other planning professionals, all levels of County employees, public officials and the public; good supervisory skills including good training skills and the ability to effectively manage workloads, programs and assigned projects and to foster and maintain high morale and engagement with staff; ability to systematically compile data and provide detailed program and related financial reports; strong computer skills with ability to use computer and typical business software, proprietary software and applications for data management and reporting; physical condition that permits the activities necessary in and inherent to the supervision of staff and management of assigned division's activities, including the ability to perform various assigned duties at locations Countywide; personal accountability including teamwork and establishing and maintaining positive relationships with partners and stakeholders in the planning processes, the public and colleagues; excellent customer service skills; tact; and courtesy. Must be able to positively and appropriately represent the County with public, stakeholders and regulators at the local, state and federal levels. Requires ability to work a flexible schedule as needed.

**Minimum Education and Experience:**

- Education: Master's degree in urban planning or other relevant field;
- Experience: Six (6) years of increasingly responsible and complex professional planning experience with minimum of three (3) year of supervisory experience, preferably at a middle manager or above level;
- OR: Any equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities.

**Additional Requirements:**

NOTE: Effective 4/1/2009 County Ordinance 1128 requires a criminal history record check and fingerprinting of all employees in authorized and hourly safety sensitive positions.

NOTE: All employees are required to successfully complete National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) 700 (Introduction) training. Successful completion of additional NIMS ICS training courses may be required based on the job classification, level of responsibility, and department. Please refer to Fire's Intranet site for a list of NIMS ICS requirements by job classification.

- Valid driver's license.
- May require additional certifications such as the AICP Certification based on area of assignment.