



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

PLANNER III

DEFINITION

Under general direction, performs complex professional level planning work related to open space, natural resource, public access, land acquisition and/or capital improvement planning, including researching and compiling project information, conducting field surveys and observations to assess the status of District open spaces, analyzing land uses, and evaluating natural, agricultural and cultural resource issues; provides project management and administration on a variety of complex projects, including land use and management plans, feasibility and planning studies, site plans and environmental reviews; assists in the development and review of land use policies; coordinates planning efforts among other District staff and outside consultants, contractors and regulatory agencies; provides professional advice and assistance to other District staff, organizations, governmental and regulatory agencies, and the public on site planning, development, and environmental reviews; performs a variety of studies; prepares and presents staff reports; reviews and provides feedback on external agency and development projects; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from assigned Senior Planner and/or the Planning Manager. Exercises direct supervision over assigned staff, interns, volunteers, and/or consultants.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the fully experienced-level class in the Planner series. Incumbents are expected to perform the full range of professional and technical planning work in capital improvement, open space, land use, natural resource protection, public access, and environmental planning activities; project management and administration; and daily departmental operations. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Planner I/II level by conducting more complex projects, working independently, and exercising greater judgment and initiative, and providing direct supervision to lower-level staff. 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 highest-level class in the Planner series and is responsible for organizing, assigning, and reviewing the work of departmental and/or contract staff in the Planning Department, in addition to performing more complex planning, project management, and administrative departmental activities.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Manages, directs, and participates in highly complex and specialized planning projects and activities, which may include land use, land management, policy, natural resources, regional, site and long range, and capital improvement planning, design and implementation; designs and conducts studies to develop policies and plans; reviews and prepares environmental documents to meet the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

- Develops and standardizes procedures and methods to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of assigned services, projects, and activities; identifies opportunities for improvement and presents recommendations to District management staff.
- Coordinates the work related to capital improvement and long-range planning, land use and management studies, historical, cultural, agricultural and natural resources preservation, and other specialized studies as assigned.
- Prepares project budgets, monitors project expenditures and reviews and confirms task completion to approve/process project invoices and expenditures.
- Researches and compiles information for the preparation of use and management plans for District preserves, land additions to preserves and other planning activities; conducts or directs field or background research; meets with field staff, District personnel, members of the public, and neighbors to solicit input and identify problems and opportunities, and resolve issues.
- Evaluates the conclusions of initial studies, mitigated negative declarations, environmental impact reports, and uses the evaluation to formulate a recommendation on projects; monitors project compliance with environmental document mitigation measures and conditions of approval.
- Conducts and supervises planning studies in existing and new preserves; gathers data for implementing or evaluating current and advance planning projects; analyzes data and makes recommendations.
- Provides input to operations and other District staff regarding policy documents that affect District-wide programs and projects.
- Represents the Planning Department and the District to outside agencies, public and private groups, and the general public; conducts presentations regarding District planning issues and represents the District on major projects and regional trail planning initiatives.
- Outlines public engagement processes and conducts public engagement activities, including public workshops; facilitates community participation through a continual dialogue with residents and other stakeholders; captures and represents input in reports and recommendations. Develops consultant requests for proposal solicits for professional services; evaluates proposals and recommends award of contract.
- Negotiates, administers, and manages contracts for services; reviews documents, reports, and other work products prepared by consultants and provides feedback and corrections; reviews and oversees consultant invoices and progress payments.
- Participates in the preparation and development of grant applications; assists Grants Program staff in administering grants and monitoring grant expenditures/reimbursements; addresses project inquiries from granting agencies; and assists in preparing grant reimbursement invoices and audit reports.
- Provides assistance and coaching to direct report; supports supervisor and management on staff reports and presentations on a wide variety of highly complex planning matters; under direction, presents project information and recommendations to Executive Team and Board of Directors.
- Prepares and presents staff reports at public meetings to the Board of Directors and Board Committees.
- Prepares and/or coordinates the preparation of written materials and graphics required in planning work for assigned projects.
- 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 planning and related services; researches emerging products, trends and enhancements and their applicability to District needs.
- Monitors changes in regulations and technology that may affect operations; implements policy and procedural changes after approval.
- Receives, investigates, and responds to problems and complaints in a professional manner; identifies and reports findings and takes necessary corrective action.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

When assigned to the Real Property function:

- Coordinates the work related to land acquisition in addition to associated use and management studies and long-range planning.
- Develops land acquisition strategies and terms for complex acquisition projects; assists Real Property Manager and Staff in negotiating planning issues with property owners.
- Prepares or reviews and finalizes the environmental review (CEQA process) for land acquisition projects.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Project and program management principles and practices, including goal setting, work plan development, implementation, and evaluation.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, codes, and regulations related to the field of open space planning.
- Modern principles and practices, technical and legal issues of urban and regional planning, land use management and acquisition, cultural and historical planning, environmental planning and program management, biology, geology, earth sciences, ecology, wildlife, and vegetation management.
- Basic concepts of ecology, flora, fauna, geology, archeology, and cultural resources of California, specifically those found on District preserves.
- Project management and contract administration principles and techniques.
- Principles and practices of resource management and site planning.
- General concepts of architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering, including grading, drainage, traffic and transportation studies as they relate to urban and/or environmental planning and assigned projects.
- Basic principles and practices of budget development and management.
- Basic principles and practices of employee supervision, coaching and mentorship, including work planning, assignment, evaluation and the training of staff in work procedures, processes, and professional growth.
- Principles and practices of contract negotiation and administration.
- Practices of researching planning and land use issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Principles of mathematics and geometry and their application to planning work and basic cost estimation for project budgets.
- Methods and techniques of effective technical report preparation and presentation.
- Recent developments, current literature, and sources of information related to planning, zoning, and environmental review.
- Modern office methods, practices, procedures, and equipment, including computer hardware and software necessary for graphic presentation, mapping, and database management.
- Principles of advanced mathematics and their application to planning work.
- Methods and techniques of effective research, analysis, and technical report preparation and presentation.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for effectively representing the District in communication with governmental agencies, community groups, various business, professional, educational and regulatory organizations, and with property owners, developers, contractors, and the public.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and District staff.

Ability to:

- Administer complex, technical, and sensitive planning, development, and related programs in an independent and cooperative manner.
- Recommend and implement goals, objectives, and practices for providing effective and efficient services.
- Evaluate and develop improvements in operations and new service delivery procedures, policies, or methods.
- Interpret and explain planning projects and programs to the general public; identify and respond to issues and concerns of the public, other District staff, Board of Directors, and other boards and commissions.
- Assess, monitor, and report environmental impact of various District programs and services.
- Conduct complex research projects, evaluate alternatives, and make sound recommendations.
- Read, interpret, apply, and explain technical written material and complex Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws, regulations, ordinances, and District planning policies and procedures.
- Effectively represent the department and the District in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, and regulatory organizations and individuals.
- Coordinate assigned activities with other District departments and agencies as required.
- Direct the work of consultants.
- Prepare and present clear, concise, and logical written and oral reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.
- Read and understand technical drawings and specifications.
- Perform mathematical and planning computations with precision.
- Make sound, independent decisions within established policy and procedural guidelines.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set and communicate priorities, and meet critical deadlines.
- Operate present day office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs (Microsoft Office applications).
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- 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 graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in urban or environmental planning, environmental sciences, landscape architecture, architecture, natural resource management, or a related field, and three (3) years of increasingly responsible experience in planning project management preferably in parks, open space, or related field, including at least one (1) year of supervisory and administrative responsibility. A Master's Degree is desirable.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of a valid California Driver's License.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer, to inspect District project sites, including traversing uneven and steep terrain and wildland areas, climbing ladders, stairs, and other temporary or construction access points; to operate a motor vehicle including in remote areas on dirt roads, and to visit various District and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This position includes sedentary office work and field work requiring standing in and walking between work areas and project sites. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push and pull materials and objects weighing up to 25 pounds.

ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may work in the field and occasionally be exposed to loud noise levels, cold and blustery to hot and dry temperatures, inclement weather conditions, or road hazards. Employees may interact with upset individuals and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

EFFECTIVE: December 2011

REVISED: February 2022

FLSA: Exempt