

Classification Specification
ASSOCIATE PLANNER

Date Prepared: January 2002

FLSA Status: Exempt

Date Revised: October 2016
Apr 2014, Mar 2006

SERIES CONCEPT

The Associate Planner is the fully skilled working level of the planner series, which includes Senior Planner, Associate Planner, Assistant Planner, and Planning Technician.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Responsibilities include serving as a working project manager and/or as a working technical specialist in a particular aspect of planning; coordinating the preparation or administration of regional or local plans, land use regulations, or planning programs.

Positions in this classification work under minimal supervision.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Provides guidance to assigned staff and interns.
- Serves as a working project manager for agency and member projects and programs.
- Coordinates and implements work programs for projects and programs within planning areas such as land use, transportation, economic development, or environment.
- Conducts complex studies related to land use, transportation, community and economic development, or environment and/or conducts data collection, analysis, and complex studies relating to land use, transportation, economic and/or community development, or environmental impacts.
- Participates in development of scopes of work for grants, projects, and work programs, including budget estimates and staffing levels.
- Assists in preparation of grant, training, and technical assistance applications for federal, state, local and other funds to further Council goals and objectives.
- Participates in scoping, and reviews the technical work of consultants, contracting agencies, and other organizations as appropriate.
- Monitors and analyzes project and programmatic budgets.
- May provide information for agency audit as needed.
- Complies with all relevant rules and regulations.
- May monitor emerging State and Federal legislation as it relates to specific projects or programs.
- Communicates and interacts with staff at other organizations.
- Serves as planning representative and/or coordinator on committees and boards.
- Advises appointed and elected officials on public policy issues, planning procedures, comprehensive and special plans, as well as regulatory ordinances.

- Provides technical and administrative staff support for appointed committees, workgroups, and stakeholder groups on planning issues or special studies.
- Conducts public involvement and education processes.
- Responds to public inquiries with data and information on planning processes and policies.
- Prepares and presents oral and visual reports to Council, committees, community groups, and private organizations.
- May assist in identifying technology and information services needs of a project or program.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS

Performs other related duties as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

Positions in the Associate Planner classification are distinguished from those in the Assistant Planner classification by the greater depth of technical knowledge required and by the increased responsibility for coordinating the work of other planning staff and staff from other agencies. Associate Planners are given broad responsibility for managing projects; developing recommendations on planning issues, policies, and their applications; and dealing with the public, appointed and elected officials.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Work is generally performed indoors in an office environment. Must maintain a level of physical and mental fitness necessary to perform the essential functions of the position.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE – MINIMUM:

Three years of experience within a planning process related to urban or regional plans, comprehensive plans, or community development.

EDUCATION – MINIMUM:

Bachelor's degree in planning or a related field such as geography, economics, political science, or environmental studies.

PREFERRED:

Master's degree in planning or related field.

OR SUBSTITUTING

Any demonstrated combination of experience and education, which provides the applicant with the required knowledge and abilities.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Budgeting principles and practices.
- Project management principles and practices.
- Computer applications such as spreadsheets, databases and word processing systems and their application in agency operations.
- Planning principles, practices, regulations, and techniques as they relate one or more functional areas such as land use, economic development, environmental impact, transportation, or a related area.
- Local government and political decision-making processes.
- Comprehensive and regional planning processes.
- Research methods and practices.
- Specialized area of planning, such as community and economic development, food systems, transportation, sustainability, natural hazards, forecasting of regional development.
- Microsoft Office software for document, spreadsheet, and presentation preparation.

Ability to:

- Lead and motivate others.
- Manage projects.
- Problem solve and provide holistic solutions.
- Resolve conflict in an open and inclusive manner.
- Develop and write plans based on an analysis of data and ongoing stakeholder, community, and agency input.
- Organize and oversee work programs, including monitoring the budget, work schedules, grant requirements, and progress reviews.
- Communicate effectively (in writing and orally) with individuals and groups regarding complex or controversial planning policies or regulations.
- Establish and maintain effective working relations with agency members, planning staff, agency staff, and the community.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

May be required to work evenings and weekends.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATES

A current Washington State Driver's License may be required.