

# CITY OF SANTA CRUZ SENIOR PLANNER

**Reports To** Receives direction from a Principal Planner.

**Supervises** May exercise functional and technical supervision over assigned staff.

**Bargaining Unit** Mid-Management

### **BASIC FUNCTION**

Under direction, manages, oversees, reviews and performs complex professional land use and urban planning work, such as current planning, future planning, implementation of the City's General Plan, development review, management of Citywide pre-application review, and major, complex planning projects; provides direction and training to assigned staff; and, performs other related duties as assigned.

### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The **Senior Planner** is the lead worker and advanced journey level classification in the professional planning series. Incumbents are expected to independently perform the full scope of assigned duties. Incumbents work independently in the research and analysis of planning issues, in the preparation of planning reports, studies and recommendations, and in the supervision and coordination of assigned planning functions and processes. This classification is distinguished from the next higher classification of Principal Planner in that the latter is responsible for overall management of a major function within the department.

# **TYPICAL DUTIES** (May include, but are not limited to, those duties listed below.)

- Develops and implements goals, objectives, policies and priorities for assigned functional areas; plans, coordinates, directs and processes complex projects and conducts research studies; analyzes information and data and makes recommendations for action; negotiates, prepares and administers consultant services contracts; prepares reports and recommendations regarding land use, zoning, urban design, population trends, transportation, community needs, housing and environmental issues; recommends the use of land for residential, commercial, industrial and community uses.
- Provides lead direction to professional, technical and office support staff in assigned functional
  areas; instructs staff in work procedures; participates in the review and evaluation of work
  performed.
- Coordinates and participates in the review and processing of various plans and applications for subdivision, housing and commercial developments; reviews and processes variances and other development permits and applications; collects and evaluates information related to the application process and determines conformity with laws, regulations, policies and procedures; recommends approval or alternative approaches; conducts project site inspections.
- May be assigned to investigate and respond to complaints of zoning code violations.
- Supervises, coordinates and participates in the update and implementation of the General Plan; drafts and coordinates adoption of ordinance amendments.
- Manages complex and controversial planning projects; manages public participation and project budget.

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- Acts as Deputy Zoning Administrator.
- Supervises special functions of the assigned division such as code enforcement, historic preservation, and code amendments.
- Facilitates interdepartmental coordination of complex planning projects; confers with personnel from other departments and agencies in coordinating work activities; meets with representatives of community organizations and other groups to encourage cooperative action or to resolve problems.
- Interprets, applies and explains federal, state and local laws, codes and regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act (C.E.Q.A.) and the National Environmental Protection Act (N.E.P.A.).
- Provides information and assistance to developers, property owners and the public regarding laws, regulations, standards, policies and procedures related to the submission of plans, processing of applications and implementation requirements; investigates and answers the more complex questions from the public regarding planning, zoning and environmental issues.
- Writes and edits reports and agendas for the City Planning Commission; serves as staff to the Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission; coordinates, prepares and provides meeting support services to the Commission and other groups, including reviewing draft materials and preparing comments; drafts hearing notices, organizes meetings and work sessions ensuring timely notification of appropriate parties; makes presentations and prepares material for the City Council, commissions, boards and community groups.
- May coordinate and administer grant applications or contracts.
- May manage the work of consultants performing planning projects or studies.
- Serves as technical advisor to City staff and officials, public agencies and members of the public.

### WORKING CONDITIONS

Position requires prolonged sitting, standing, walking on slippery, level and uneven surfaces, kneeling, squatting and stooping in the performance of daily activities. The position also requires repetitive hand movement and fine coordination in preparing reports using a computer keyboard. Additionally, the position requires both near and far vision in reading written reports and work related documents. Acute hearing is required when providing phone and personal service. Additionally, the incumbent in this position works outdoors in all weather conditions, including wet, hot and cold. The need to lift, drag and push files, paper and documents weighing up to 25 pounds is also required.

Some of these requirements may be accommodated for otherwise qualified individuals requiring and requesting such accommodations.

#### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

#### **Knowledge:**

- Principles, practices and techniques of municipal planning.
- Land use, physical design, demographic, environmental, economic and social concepts as applied to municipal planning.
- Applicable agencies, laws, codes, and regulations related to area of assignment.

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- Statistical methods and research techniques applicable to the preparation of municipal planning studies.
- Methods and techniques for record keeping and report preparation and writing.
- Methods and techniques for making effective public presentations of complex information.
- Principles and practices of program development, administration and evaluation.
- Methods and techniques of scheduling work assignments.
- Office practices, methods and equipment, including a computer and applicable software.
- Grant writing and administration.
- Contract negotiation and administration.
- Methods and techniques of supervision and training.

### **Abilities:**

- Coordinate and perform complex professional planning work in assigned program area.
- Plan, organize, and direct the work of assigned staff; assist with the training and evaluation of staff; organize, prioritize and follow-up on work assignments.
- Perform thorough research and analysis of complex planning-related issues and develop appropriate recommendations for action.
- Interpret, explain and apply applicable, policies, procedures, standards, laws, codes, and regulations pertaining to the municipal planning process, including the California Environmental Quality Act (C.E.Q.A.) and the National Environmental Protection Act (N.E.P.A.).
- Review complex project plans and concepts to determine compliance with the general plan and plan principles.
- Interpret technical manuals, maps, site and building plans and specifications, graphs, sketches, drawings and modeling and statistical data.
- Coordinate and/or participate in community planning and information sessions.
- Research, collect and analyze a variety of information relative to planning activities and projects; conduct project inspections.
- Make adjustments to standard operating procedures to improve effectiveness and comply with regulatory changes as appropriate.
- Participate in the establishment of division and/or department goals, objectives and methods for evaluating achievement and performance levels.
- Assist with budget development and monitoring.
- Negotiate and oversee contracts and manage the work of consultants.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Make effective public presentations of complex technical information.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with developers, contractors, consultants, advisory bodies, City staff, other governmental agencies, and the public.
- Willingness to attend evening meetings as required.

# **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

Any combination of education and experience that provides the above knowledge, skills and abilities combined with any required licenses is qualifying. A typical way of obtaining the required qualifications is to possess the equivalent of the following:

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- Four years of increasingly responsible experience in urban or regional planning and
- A Bachelor's degree in urban or regional planning, or a related field. A Master's degree in urban or regional planning or a related field may be substituted for one year of the required experience.

## LICENSES/CERTIFICATES

• Possession and continued maintenance of a valid California Class C driver's license and a safe driving record, or the ability to provide alternate transportation which is approved by the appointing authority.

### **DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS**

• A Master's degree in urban or regional planning.

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# **Career Ladder**

- Principal Planner
- Senior Planner
- Associate Planner II
- Associate Planner I