

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Land Acquisition Specialist II

GRADE: 30

DATE: 5/28/2024

SERIES: General Administrative

CODE: 2143

EEO: Professional

FLSA: Exempt

Class Definition:

Under general direction, leads negotiations involving the acquisition of land for parks and other significant public use. Work involves administration, coordination and negotiation in preparation of acquisition of parkland and other land acquired through the Departmental Land Acquisition Programs. Determines acquisition priorities by analyzing complex data (i.e., type of funding, allocation of resources, master and sector plans, Capital Improvement Plans, appraisals, zoning requirements, community input and recommendations, and tax implications) and provides land purchase options. Leads complex negotiations, approves the negotiation strategies for the acquisition of real estate. Provides information and assistance on real estate matters; maintains and manages real estate records on all land owned and managed by the Department and maintains records necessary for developing property value estimates to formulate recommendations for condemnations, or purchase of parkland and other properties. Coordinates with the Secretary-Treasurer and General Counsel, or their designees, in the preparation of information and materials required for financial and legal transactions relevant to the land acquisition program. Presents acquisition contracts to the Planning Board, Commission, County Council or County Executive's Office with recommendations for action. Interacts with the development community on subdivision plans, site plan reviews, rezoning applications and other development activity. May lead and advise lower-level Land Acquisition Specialists. Work product or service affects the planning, development and operations of functions, programs, and activities for the Commission. Some work is highly sensitive or highly confidential. Work involves land acquisition, land exchange, and land disposal activities which are often unusual or non-standard and information must be developed through specialized methods of analysis (i.e., financial, legal, or mathematical) or unclear interrelationships among data or situations which must be ascertained before acting; and consists of a broad range of land acquisition related activities within the Division and information must be developed through intensive analysis and actions requiring the consideration of both short and long-term effects. Applies comprehensive knowledge of, and skill in, Land Acquisition Programs; land acquisition techniques; land use principles such as zoning and permit processes; appraisal procedures; negotiation techniques; condemnation and related court procedures; land taxation rules and regulations; real estate; and Federal, State, and county laws and governmental regulations pertaining to land acquisition by a public agency and business administration. Independently performs various types of research and analyses, including intensive analyses, and solves conventional, non-standard and challenging problems, which include interactions of technical and non-technical variables, to ensure thoroughness and sufficiency. Interacts with people inside and outside the organization, including the public, to exchange information, coordinate, instruct, guide, advise, obtain agreement or compliance, present, defend, convince or persuade and achieve other desired actions.

Work is assigned in terms of functional responsibilities, goals, priorities, and resources. Plans and independently leads all work within this framework and is held accountable for provision of strategic and effective services including soundness of management advice and achievement of goals and objectives. Incumbent is expected to keep the supervisor informed and to seek assistance only for highly complex or very sensitive matters. Work is expected to meet objectives highly effectively – the incumbent is held responsible for results; work is evaluated in terms of quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and such other related factors as use of skill and ingenuity in overcoming technical and non-technical problems.

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Examples of Important Duties (Estimated Percentages):

1. Core Functions (±85%)

- Performs advanced land acquisition negotiations for acquisition of parks and other significant public uses.
- Determines acquisition priorities by analyzing complex data (i.e., type of funding, allocation of resources, Capital Improvement Plans, appraisals, zoning requirements, community input and recommendations, and tax implications); provides Department Head with land purchase options. Determines acquisition priorities for projects to be funded through the various land acquisition programs such as local and state funding sources. Ensures all funding program criteria is met prior to implementation.
- Leads complex negotiations, approves the negotiation strategies for the acquisition of real estate for future parklands; negotiates with landowners based on appraisals and initiates contact with property owners to advise of pending acquisitions. Obtains independent appraisals on each property to be acquired; reviews appraisals for accuracy, determines amount to be offered and arrives at mutually acceptable purchase price with property owners.
- Drafts and provides review of legal documents necessary to secure negotiated acquisitions or improvements to the recreation system, such as Land Purchase Contracts, Option Agreements, Easements, Recreational Facility Agreements, and Leases using established forms and recommending modifications required by individual situations. Presents acquisition contracts to the Planning Board, County Council or County Executive's Office with recommendations for action. Obtains final approval of legal documents from either the Commission's Legal Office or the County Attorney's Office prior to documents being fully executed. Tracts the processing of all contracts for acquisition through the Commission's Administrative Offices or forwards contracts to the County Government for processing through the County Attorney's Office.
- Maintains and manages real estate records on all land owned and managed by the Department. Maintains records necessary for developing property value estimates to formulate recommendations for condemnations, exchanges, or purchase of parkland and other properties.
- Provides information and assistance on real estate matters to all Divisions involved in interagency coordination with Federal, State and County governments, and involved with community interactions on new and on-going projects. Responds to queries regarding parkland ownership from customers that are both within and outside the Department. Coordinates on park planning matters and parkland dedications received through the development review process. Interacts with development community on subdivision plans, site plan reviews, rezoning applications and other development activities.

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- Coordinates with the Secretary-Treasurer and General Counsel, or their designees, in the preparation of information and materials required for financial transactions and legal transactions relevant to the land acquisition program.

2. Other ($\pm 15\%$)

- Leads and coordinates activities of appropriate section personnel.
- Represents the Commission at public meetings related to land acquisition programs.
- Assists the General Counsel's office preparing for trials dealing with land matters and provides testimony in court or through depositions as required.
- Presents information to the Planning Board on all proposed land acquisition contracts and agreements in the County as well as presentations to the County Council.

Important Worker Characteristics:

- A. Comprehensive knowledge of, and skill in (1) Land Acquisition Programs such as local and state funding sources and the Legacy Open Space (LOS); (2) land acquisition techniques; (3) land use principles such as zoning and permit processes; (4) appraisal procedures; (5) negotiation techniques; (6) condemnation and related court procedures; (7) land taxation rules and regulations; (8) real estate; (9) Federal, State, and county laws and governmental regulations pertaining to land acquisition by a public agency and business administration; (10) business administration; and (11) Commission organization, policies and procedures.*

**Typically acquired or fully developed primarily after employment in this job class.*

- B. Knowledge of, and skill in assigning or reviewing tasks, setting the pace, and otherwise assisting the supervisor by performing group leader work or ability to rapidly acquire knowledge and skill set.
- C. Skill and ability to (1) negotiate complex land acquisition contracts; (2) interpret complex instruments of real estate conveyance (i.e., deeds, property descriptions, title abstracts); (3) plan and organize work efficiently; (4) critically evaluate a variety of acquisition, land taxation, and real estate subject matters areas; (5) read complex maps; and (6) prepare and deliver effective presentations for leadership and elected and appointed officials.
- D. Considerable skill in problem solving in order to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve a problem. This includes skill in recognizing subtle aspects of problems and making recommendations and decisions. Examples include solving complex problems involving many variables related to real estate transactions which may be politically controversial; reading and interpreting complex land taxation and real estate rules and regulations to resolve issues pertaining to land acquisitions.

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- E. Skill in communication to understand verbal and written information (including facts, assertions and arguments), draw inferences, form hypotheses and develop logical arguments, and to express such information so that others will understand, and at times, agree, comply or take other desired action(s). This includes skill in actively listening to ascertain key information, perspectives, concerns, wants and needs of others, and in communicating effectively to obtain agreement, compliance or other desired results. Examples include presenting information to outside groups and Commission leadership; persuading and negotiating in order to obtain desired results; reading and understanding deeds and other instruments of real estate conveyance, property descriptions, and title abstracts; establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with landowners, real estate professionals, public officials, business entities, and government agencies; and reading, writing and editing technical reports and correspondence.
- F. Interpersonal skills to interact effectively with contacts in a businesslike, customer service-oriented manner; this includes establishing and maintaining effective working relationships and working as a member or a leader of a team.
- G. Skill in using a computer; modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise software and specialized software.

Minimum Qualifications (MQs):

1. Bachelor's Degree in Planning, Park Administration, Business Administration, Public Administration, Engineering, Real Estate or any related field.
2. Four (4) years of progressively responsible experience in real estate management, land appraisal and negotiation of land and property acquisitions.
3. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted, which together total eight (8) years.
4. Valid driver's license in accordance with both State and Commission rules and regulations. Driver's license must be unencumbered by restrictions, revocations, suspensions, or points that could limit the employee's ability to drive Commission vehicles or perform driving duties required by the position of assignment.

Working Conditions:

Works in office and conducts on-site field inspections. May be exposed to inclement weather such as rain and winds, hot, cold or humid outdoor conditions and a variety of potential hazards from driving and working outdoors. May be subject to various job demands such as high volume of work and tight deadlines.