

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Planner III

GRADE: 28

DATE: 2/16/2021

SERIES: Planning

CODE: 2244

EEO: Professional

FLSA: Exempt

Class Definition:

Under direction, leads advanced professional planning work requiring considerable complexity, responsibility, and technical expertise to plan land use, development, public facilities, transportation, and parklands. Plans and oversees multi-faceted land use plans, studies or complex development review cases, projects and studies that involves leading a work team and other department staff, county agencies, community groups, customers, and private sector consultants to complete assigned projects. Performs related administrative work by performing analytical duties and responsibilities that include diverse subjects, emerging issues, complex or contentious matters, high stakes, extensive coordination or similar types of complications or implications in various major work areas of a planning program or budget (e.g., master plans, sector plans, park and trail plans, and feasibility studies); ensures appropriate information is incorporated into different correspondences, documents, and reports. Attends meetings including public hearings and community meetings. Presents and defends planning reports, plans and recommendations to a variety of individuals and groups including County Council, Commission, Planning Board, District Council, Zoning Hearing Examiner, community, business developers; assists with work products, marketing and outreach. Leads site inspections and ensures field observations are incorporated into recommendations. Reviews and analyzes development applications, special exceptions, proposals, record plats, referrals, legislative proposals and amendments. Incumbents of this class are regularly assigned project leadership and coordination responsibilities as well as independent work assignments and contribute their expertise as part of other project or work teams. Provides technical guidance and expertise to other staff working on project team. On a regularly recurring basis, the work has a direct impact, primarily department-wide, on planning programs including high profile or high stakes matters. Work may be highly confidential or highly sensitive. Applies comprehensive knowledge of, and skill in, depending on area of assignment, including, but not limited to, the principles and concepts of planning in one or more of the following area(s): architecture, transportation, landscape architecture, economics, zoning, land use, land development, historic preservation, archaeology, history, engineering, environmental science, urban design, record plats, trails, parks and recreation, demographics, public facilities, as well as, knowledge of research techniques and statistical analysis, GIS applications and uses, land use laws, community and economic development, planning regulations and processes and project management and administration. Independently performs various types of research and analyses and solves difficult, complex and challenging problems. Interacts with people inside and outside the organization, including the public, to exchange information, coordinate, instruct, guide, advise, obtain agreement, gain compliance or achieve other desired actions. Performs other duties, as assigned.

Work is assigned in terms of functions, priorities, requirements of specific assignments, known or suspected problems. The incumbent independently leads, plans and carries out the work in conformance with established policies and procedures and resolves commonly encountered problems by selecting and applying, or implementing and adjusting, the applicable guidelines. The incumbent is to keep the supervisor informed and seeks assistance for complex or sensitive matters. Work is expected to meet objectives effectively –the incumbent is held responsible for results; work is evaluated in terms of effectiveness in meeting objectives, quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and other factors such as use of skill and ingenuity in overcoming technical and non-technical problems.

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Examples of Important Duties:

1. Core Functions ($\pm 70\%$) – assigned functions vary by position

- Leader/Coordinator. Serves as project team leader and coordinator for designated projects, strategic plans, special studies, or processes that are significant to department's mission and work program (e.g., master plans, sector plans, regulatory applications, park and trail plans, and feasibility studies); provides technical contributions to plans as subject matter expert. Plans, directs, and coordinates work of other planning staff assigned to projects, and studies; develops goals, schedules, and deadlines for work efforts and ensures that objectives are met for completion. Manages consultant contracts and budgets for selected projects. Solves problems and works toward achieving creative and equitable resolutions; reviews and checks work of other team members. Provides recommendations and input to development of unit work program and budget; provides performance feedback to management on projects. Performs reporting and analysis for a designated work unit. Serves as an internal consultant for subject areas of expertise, including for studies that involve coordination with department staff, county agencies, community groups, customers and private sector consultants; communicates department mission, goals and objectives. Provides input to unit goals and objectives.
- Plans and Projects. Reviews and analyzes plans, rezoning requests, development applications, special exceptions, proposals, record plats, referrals, studies, legislative proposals and amendments; proposes scope; may lead or produce master, functional, park or trail plans. Prepares analysis and recommendations related to land use, design, environment and sustainability, parks, trails, transportation and public infrastructure necessary to support additional density; performs feasibility studies and environmental, or economic analyses. Applies criteria for evaluations and provides required findings for regulatory cases, mandatory referrals and conditional uses. May prepare legal opinions for regulatory projects and forwards for legal review. Prepares master plan analysis and recommendations related to land use, design, transportation and public infrastructure, or any other subject areas. Leads site inspections and ensures field observations are incorporated into recommendations; applies knowledge of planning standards, codes, and resolves identified planning problems. Works with interested parties, including applicants, consultants, reviewing agency staff, local governments and community members to develop solutions; guides internal projects through local, state and federal agency reviews and reviews external public and private projects. Develops program requirements and concept plans. Reviews and prepares necessary Sectional Map Amendments.
- Research and Planning Studies. Leads planning and feasibility studies that involve research using planning data (e.g., demographic, health, economic, housing and real estate trends, traffic, parks, trails, plants and tree canopy, stream and flood issues, wildlife, air quality, sewage treatment, storm water runoff, water quality). Leads field studies; coordinates and develops analysis that presents context, methodology, findings and recommendations for the department, policy makers and public. Assembles and maintains databases; analyzes data typically through use of complex computer-based

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models to prepare complex statistical analyses, forecast trends, determine site selection criteria and measure community and fiscal impacts. Evaluates impacts generated from feasibility studies or needs analysis; and provides review of data collected in formulating planning recommendations.

- Transportation Analysis. Ensures assigned team members review regulatory applications and new master plans for road, transit, bicycle and pedestrian adequacy, employ technology to predict peak hour trips, mode sharing, average delay, other key aspects of the transportation network. Ensures recommendations are determined to improve anticipated capacity issues; writes transportation mitigation agreements and comments regarding countywide transportation projects. Reviews transportation elements of the county's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), and recommends projects that would improve master plan implementations.
- Environmental Analysis. Reviews and analyzes proposed plans for conformance with regulations, appropriate environmental guidelines and master plan recommendations; works with other agencies on issues such as storm water management, seeks to minimize impervious surfaces, particularly in special protection areas. Ensures projects promote sustainability in all forms, from reducing an area's carbon footprint to encouraging energy efficiency and best management practices. Assesses recommendations regarding improvements needed to improve anticipated capacity issues. Prepares draft transportation mitigation agreements and draft comments to other agencies regarding countywide transportation projects. Reviews transportation elements of the county's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), and advocates for projects that would improve master plan implementation.
- Urban Design. Assigned to or leads team members, as part of the master, sector plan, park or trail planning process; confirms research is conducted to analyze planning studies, projects, parks or programs and design alternatives provided. Ensures urban design recommendations are drafted in the master and sector plans as well as urban design guidelines are produced in keeping with the recommendations of the master, sector or park plans.
- Park and Trail Planning. Assigned to or leads team members in park or trail planning studies (e.g. Trail plans, park master plans, park feasibility studies), projects, or programs. Leads the review and analysis of proposed plans; ensures park and trail planning recommendations are drafted in master and sector plans and confirms that recommendations are supported by park plans and studies.
- Demographic, Housing and Economic Analysis. Analyzes data related to demographic and economic conditions countywide and in master plan study areas, including but not limited to, population, employment, business establishments, and real estate markets. Advises team members on strategies to enhance community development (including affordable housing) and economic development. Ensures recommendations are economically feasible and advance community and economic development goals.

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- Forecasting. Develops and analyzes data to create projections and estimations of growth for population, housing, and employment, and implications on land uses. Develops estimates of new student generation to assess impacts of new development on public facilities.
 - Planning Reports and Presentations. Writes and develops planning reports, correspondence, plans, and other materials; explains technical planning issues and concepts to support research conclusions and recommendations. Ensures the development and design of presentations, charts, graphs, maps, data, and other exhibits as appropriate. Drafts specific plan chapters and oversees work of assigned resource team members on contributions to writing plan elements. Schedules projects on Planning Board agenda; presents and defends plans and recommendations to Planning Board, County Council, District Council, and Zoning Hearing Examiner. Makes presentations to a variety of individuals and groups (e.g., Planning Board, County Council, community, business developers) for purpose of communicating planning issues, studies, laws, procedures, and recommendations; assists with work products, marketing and outreach.
 - Regulatory Review. Reviews and analyzes proposed amendments to county and state regulations. Prepares county legislation and ensures compliance with legislative processes governing Planning Board, County Council and District Council actions to include developing and maintaining legislative and detailed milestone schedules, alerting project manager to upcoming deadlines and requirements. Attends public hearings and community meetings to provide expertise in response to questions.
2. Other (±30%)
- Responds to general inquiries from citizens, elected officials, developers, engineers, architects, and attorneys concerning development, actions of the Planning Board, planning regulations, forest conservation regulations, park or trail plans. Provides planning expertise for agency staff and municipalities. Develops a variety of correspondence, agreements, letters and electronic communication which may include special research reports, plans, planning regulations, grant applications and requests for proposals. Reviews transmittal letters to the Office of the Zoning Hearing Examiners or to the District Council that provides the Planning Board's recommended actions and reasoning behind recommendations.
 - Serves as a member of an assigned team to provide expertise in presentations and special analyses and serves on evaluation committees, task forces, special inter-agency and interdepartmental teams established by department, county or other government entities, for purposes of contributing technical expertise, problem solving approaches and resource support to achieve goals and objectives of work efforts. Serves as lead on issues within responsibility of department for team, determines how department could contribute to efforts. Recommends and facilitates use of allocated funds to address neighborhood needs; may represent department as designated by supervisor or department head. Ensures the maintenance of webpages and preparation of social media material.

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- Manages Request for Proposal process for consultant services and develops and manages consultant work and contracts; troubleshoots problems and works toward achieving creative and equitable resolutions. Recommends and implements changes in project scope which may include hiring of consultants to work on project components supported by teams of staff appropriate to subject matter. Prepares applications for special designations and grant funding.
- Communicates and interacts effectively with business contacts. Establishes, maintains and enhances working relationships, including teamwork, with internal and external contacts. Actively listens to understand key information, including perspectives, concerns, wants and needs of stakeholders, in relation to administrative management matters; seeks to obtain agreement, gain compliance or achieve other desired results.
- Uses a computer and modern office suite software (e.g., MS Office), enterprise software and specialized software for planning, scheduling, communicating, word processing, manipulating data, preparing presentations, reporting time and attendance, requisitioning, researching, and performing other functions.

Important Worker Characteristics:

- A. Comprehensive knowledge of, and skill in (1) depending on the area of assignment, the principles and concepts of planning in one or more of the following area(s): architecture, transportation, landscape architecture, economics, zoning, land use, land development, historic preservation, archaeology, history, engineering, environmental science, urban design, record plats, trails, parks and recreation, demographics, public facilities; (2) research techniques and statistical analysis; (3) current planning literature, and best practices in public sector planning; (4) GIS applications and uses; (5) land use laws; (6) local, state and federal codes, regulations and industry standards*; (7) county geography*; (8) community and economic development; (9) planning regulations and processes; (10) parks systems; (11) project management and administration; and (12) 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. Considerable skill in problem solving to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve a problem. This includes skill in identifying subtle aspects of problems and making recommendations and decisions. Examples include applying principles and concepts of planning field of study to solve problems involving many variables; researching and analyzing a wide variety of planning data and information to develop recommendations and conclusions that can withstand legal scrutiny; planning, assigning and reviewing work of others; managing consulting contracts; and establishing and managing a small, simple project budget and short term projects.

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- D. 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, in some situations, agree, comply or take other desired actions. This includes skill in actively listening to ascertain key information, including perspective, concerns, wants and needs of others, and in coordinating to obtain desired results including agreement or compliance. Examples include writing technical and analytical reports and correspondence; reading, understanding and applying technical reports, correspondence, engineering drawings, and codes to planning problems encountered; presenting and defending plans and recommendations to boards, councils, planning staff, examiners, community and business groups, and other stakeholders.
- E. Interpersonal skills to interact effectively with contacts in a businesslike, customer service-oriented manner; this includes skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships and working as a member or a leader of a team. Example includes skill in community engagement techniques.
- F. Skill in using a computer, modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise software and specialized software.

Minimum Qualifications:

- 1. Bachelor's Degree in Planning, Geography, Architecture, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Urban Design, Engineering, Environmental Science, Public Policy, Economics or any related field.
- 2. Four (4) years of progressively responsible professional level planning experience related to specific area of assignment such as transportation planning, environmental planning or urban planning.
- 3. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted, which together total eight (8) years.
- 4. Valid driver's license (depending on area of assignment) 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:

Primarily works in an office setting with occasional outside exposure. Work involves frequent positioning of self to obtain maps, drawings, plans, remaining in a stationary position, moving about inside the office, communicating with the public, officials and employees. Work may require some physical requirements. Driving to attend various meetings and conduct site inspections. May be subject to various job demands such as high volume of work and tight deadlines.