

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Planner IV

GRADE: 30

DATE: 2/16/2021

SERIES: Planning

CODE: 2245

EEO: Professional

FLSA: Exempt

Class Definition:

Under direction, provides the highest level of complex planning consultative work that involves expert proficiency, on a department-wide basis, within one or more broad planning disciplines such as land use, development, public facilities, transportation, parklands, historical preservation or cultural resource management. Determines methodologies, approaches, or alternatives used to achieve program objectives. Incumbents are known for their expertise and grasp of subject matter and ability to work autonomously; oversees multifaceted projects and studies and may lead a project team. Attends meetings including public hearings and community meetings. Provides expert guidance and coordination between department staff, county agencies, community groups, customers and private sector consultants to facilitate Departmental objectives. Serves as the departmental expert on broad areas within planning and makes presentations to County Council, Commission, Planning Board, District Council, Zoning Hearing Examiner, and other decision-makers and stakeholders. Performs related management work by analyzing, researching, or negotiating diverse subjects, emerging issues, complex or contentious matters, high stakes issues that require extensive coordination or similar types of complications or implications in various major work areas of a planning program. Provides expert oversight and review of site inspections and ensures field observations conducted are incorporated into recommendations that are prepared and presented to the Planning Board, District Council, Zoning Hearing Examiner or others. Serves as, and is recognized as, an expert internal consultant on planning management matters by applying expertise in functional domains to identify and solve complex and politically sensitive issues and challenges. Provides technical guidance and expertise to other staff working on project teams. On a regularly recurring basis, the work has important impact, primarily department-wide, on planning management programs or systems. Some work is highly confidential and highly sensitive. Applies expert knowledge of, and skill in, depending on the area of assignment, the principles and concepts of planning in one or more of the following areas, including, but not limited to, transportation, architecture, landscape architecture, economics, zoning, land use, land development, archaeology, history, historic preservation, engineering, environmental science, urban design, parks and recreation, trails, demographics, public facilities, as well as knowledge of research techniques and statistical analysis, community and economic development, real estate market analysis, planning regulations and processes, architectural and structural analysis, and program management and administration. Independently performs intensive research and analyses and makes probing assessments of multiple, interactive variables, including uncertainties, to determine effects on key projects and the overall work programs. 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. 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 best practices, policies and procedures and resolves commonly encountered problems by selecting and applying, or implementing and adjusting, the applicable guidelines. The incumbent keeps the supervisor informed and seeks 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 effectiveness in meeting objectives, quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and such other 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. Consultative (±50%)

- Serves as an expert internal consultant for multifaceted projects, development applications and studies that involves leadership of a project team and coordination with department staff, county agencies, community groups, customers and private sector consultants; communicates departmental and division mission, goals and objectives. Provides input to unit goals and objectives; may plan, coordinate and review the work of staff and consultants.
- Acts as the Department's subject matter expert on subjects that may include, but not limited to, economics and demographics, regulatory review, environment and sustainability, housing, urban design, transportation, land use planning or zoning ordinance issues, trails or park planning, and historic preservation. Provides high quality guidance to other planners who are working on land-use plans, functional plans, park plans, legislation or regulatory applications. Serves as an internal consultant to senior managers and the Planning Board on critical economic or demographic, engineering, planning or zoning issues or policies with significant importance for the county.
- Plans, directs and coordinates work of other planning staff assigned to projects, studies; mentors less experienced staff and shares knowledge of issues related to area of expertise. Develops goals, schedules and deadlines for work efforts and ensures that objectives are achieved. Ensures completeness, soundness, sufficiency of reviews and analysis of plans (e.g., park, development, preliminary subdivision), applications, special exceptions, proposals, referrals, amendments and negotiates as needed. Solves problems and negotiates work toward achieving creative and equitable resolutions; reviews and checks work of other team members. Provides recommendations and input to development of division work program and budget; gives performance feedback to supervisors of planning staff assigned to projects. Develops and administers contracts for consultants as needed.

2. Core Management Functions (±35%) – assigned functions vary by position

- Master Plan/Implementations; Research/Planning Studies; Plan/Program Development. Serves as an expert internal consultant with project team, implementation advisory groups, outside organizations and internal staff. Identifies relevant issues and potential solutions, undertakes effective community outreach to all stakeholders, and supports master plan or implementation analyses, controversial planning and feasibility studies; provides technical expertise on difficult and complex planning work within specialized area or discipline, provides recommendations and negotiates, as needed. Leads review of economically strategic complex development applications. Responds to requests for information, develops and presents planning issues, informs the project team, supervisor, and division chief of plan progress and related issues; maintains project schedule and incorporates Planning Board changes into draft plans. Consults with Council staff to address questions and concerns regarding proposed plan; incorporates Council changes into the document. Consults with Council staff to prepare the resolution required once Council has approved a

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plan; ensures that the Planning Board and Commission adopt the Planning Board Draft after approval by the Council. Prepares or supports all necessary materials for the adoption of the Sectional Map Amendment.

- Planning Reports and Presentations. Applies appropriate criteria for evaluation and provides the required findings for studies, plans, regulatory cases, mandatory referrals, annexations, conditional uses, special exceptions, re-zonings and required agreements for legal compliance. Prepares complete, accurate, well-reasoned, and legally defensible reports. Participates constructively in peer reviews, when requested.
- Plans and Projects. Serves as an expert in the review and analysis of plans, applications, special exceptions, proposals, record plats, mandatory referrals, and amendments to facilities and feasibility studies. Provides expertise to planning analysis and recommendations related to land use, design, environment and sustainability, parks, trails, transportation and public infrastructure necessary to support additional density; reviews and supports feasibility studies and environmental, or economic analyses. Ensures site inspections and field observations are incorporated into recommendations; applies knowledge of planning standards, codes, and plans to resolve planning problems identified. Negotiates 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 serves as liaison to review external public and private projects. Reviews and supports program requirements, concept plans and necessary Sectional Map Amendment once a new plan has been approved.
- Research and Planning Studies. Conducts difficult, sometimes controversial 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). Ensures field studies are performed and the development of analysis that presents context, methodology, findings and recommendations for the department, policy makers and public. Provides expertise in analyses of data through use of complex computer-based 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 expert review of data collected in formulating planning recommendations.
- Transportation Analysis. Provides consultation of review regulatory applications and new master plans for road, transit and pedestrian and bicycle adequacy, employs technology to predict peak hour trips, mode sharing, average delay, and other key aspects of the transportation network. Presents and defends recommendations to improve anticipated capacity issues; provides expertise in the review of transportation mitigation agreements and comments regarding countywide transportation projects. Reviews transportation elements of the county's Capital Improvements Program (CIP), and advocates for projects that would improve master plan implementations.

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- Environmental Analysis. Provides consultation for the review and analysis of proposed plans for conformance with regulations, appropriate environmental guidelines and master plan recommendations; consults with other agencies on issues such as storm water management, seeks to minimize impervious surfaces, particularly in special protection areas. Utilizes expertise in the promotion of sustainability in all forms, from reducing an area's carbon footprint to encouraging energy efficiency and best management practices.
- Urban Design. As part of the master, sector plan, park and trail planning process, provides consultation of planning studies, projects, parks, or programs and design alternatives. Utilizes urban design expertise in the master and sector plans as well as production of urban design guidelines.
- Park and Trail Planning. Provides consultation in park or trail planning studies (e.g. trail plans, park master plans, park feasibility studies), projects, or programs. Utilizes expertise in the review and analysis of proposed plans; presents and defends park and trail planning recommendations in master and sector plans and ensures that recommendations are supported by park plans and studies.
- Demographic, Housing and Economic Analysis. Provides expert guidance of analysis of 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. Provides consultation on strategies to enhance community development (including affordable housing) and economic development that are economically feasible and advance community and economic development goals.
- Forecasting. Provides expert guidance of the development and analysis of data to create projections and estimations of growth for population, housing, and employment, and implications on land uses. Provides consultation for the development of new student generation estimates to assess impacts of new development on public facilities.
- Community Response. Responds to sensitive and complex inquiries or requests for information from citizens, developers, engineers, architects and attorneys about proposed developments, Planning Board actions, laws and regulations. Serves as regular source of expertise within recognized planning disciplines in deliberations before the Planning Board, County Executive or County Council. Ensures that all resolutions are forwarded to Legal for review.
- Department Representation. Serves as technical expert in Department's planning related issues with community leaders, public officials, staff from other divisions and representatives from County, State and Federal agencies. Serves as subject matter expert to advise other agencies and divisions on area or program of expertise; provides guidance to other planners working on land-use plans, functional plans, park and trail plans and legislation or regulatory applications. Serves as an internal consultant on economic (including real estate) or demographic, planning or zoning issues or policies. Serves on county and state committees that exist for the purpose of promoting, reviewing or

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coordinating various aspects of the planning function, programs or whose activities may impact upon the planning function. Develops formal and informal partnerships, presents materials and serves as spokesperson to other recognized government, academic and private sector organizations within field of expertise in order to educate and promote programs.

Other (±15%)

- Manages work program budget. Plans, develops, administers and monitors budgetary expenses.
- Maintains knowledge of best practices in subject matter and technical expertise regarding land use planning, urban design, county zoning, land use regulations and planning methods. Stays informed of Commission programs, projects, and facilities.
- Communicates and interacts effectively with business contacts. Establishes and maintains or enhances working relationships, including teamwork, with internal and external contacts. Promotes internal and external collaboration and facilitates inclusion. Interacts with citizens, commission groups, business groups, government agencies, elected or appointed officials, private developers, special interest groups and other stakeholders to identify wants, needs and perspectives. Provides advice and answers questions about Planning Board policies, processes and decisions including matters of the highest complexity, visibility or sensitivity. Actively listens to obtain full understanding, and attempts to reconcile or accommodate divergent, strongly held objectives, interests and viewpoints. Confirms that webpages are maintained and social media material is prepared.
- Represents the Department as requested in discussions or meetings with the public, agency representatives and elected officials. Resolves complex and politically sensitive issues and problems. Effectively represents the Department on assignments regarding legislation at the county, state and federal levels. Informs Department staff of emerging facts and issues learned in representational assignments, effectively identifies the most important information, and suggests Departmental responses. Consults with Planning Board, County Council; and other high-level public officials to resolve difficult planning related public policy issues.
- Maintains confidentiality of data, including legally protected personal information, proprietary and pre-decisional information not subject to public information disclosure, sensitive programmatic data, and other sensitive information.
- Uses a computer and modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise software and specialized software for planning, scheduling, communicating, word processing, budgeting, manipulating data, preparing presentations, reporting time and attendance, requisitioning, researching (the Internet), and performing other functions.

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Important Worker Characteristics:

- A. Expert 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): transportation, architecture, landscape architecture, economics, zoning, land use, land development, archaeology, history, historic preservation, engineering, environmental science, urban design, parks and recreation, trails, 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) county geography*; (6) land use laws; (7) Local, State and Federal codes, regulations and industry standards*; (8) community and economic development; (9) real estate market analysis; (10) planning regulations and processes; (11) architectural and structural analysis; (12) parks systems*; (13) program management and administration; and (14) Commission organization, policies and procedures*.

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

- B. 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 developing solutions. Examples include achieving planning goals; researching and analyzing data and information to develop recommendations and conclusions for plans, policies, regulations, reports, papers, correspondence; and exercising sound and independent judgment within general policy guidelines.
- C. 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 action. 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 negotiating effectively among varying viewpoints; developing and presenting effective presentations on planning issues; consulting with diverse teams to collaboratively address planning and policy projects; demonstrating strong interpersonal and public relation skills to work effectively with various officials, staff, citizens and customers; and targeting communications to specific audiences.
- D. 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.
- E. Skill in using a computer, modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise software and specialized software.

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Minimum Qualifications (MQs):

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. Six (6) years of progressively responsible professional level planning experience that includes project consultation and coordination.
3. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted, which together total ten (10) 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 requirement to attend public meetings and hearings. 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. Driving to attend various meetings and conduct site inspections. May be subject to various job demands such as high volume of work, tight deadlines and extended hours.