

# CITY OF SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO

## PRINCIPAL PLANNER

*Class specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in the class. Specifications are **not** intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.*

### **DEFINITION**

To manage major, private and public planning projects for the City; to negotiate requirements and solutions for major development projects; to provide planning recommendations to the City Council, various citizen's commissions, and executive staff; to manage consultant contracts; and to perform a variety of administrative and technical tasks relative to assigned areas of responsibility.

### **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

Positions at this level perform the most complex duties assigned to the series including managing the processing of complex planning and development projects, negotiating solutions to project issues, and serving as Zoning Administrator and/or Environmental Administrator. Positions at this level also serve as project lead for assigned planning and development projects.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general direction from the Community Development Director or Assistant Community Development Director.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION STATEMENTS**  *Essential responsibilities and duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:*

#### **Essential Functions:**

1. Manages controversial and complex private development and public land use projects; negotiates solutions for major development projects; conducts public presentations and provides planning recommendations to the City Council and advisory committees.
2. Serves as the City's Environmental Administrator and prepares environmental impact studies; ensures environmental studies comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements and local guidelines for implementing CEQA.
3. Prepares Requests for Proposals (RFP's) and drafts scopes of work for consulting contracts involving public and private development projects.
4. Manages and administers consulting contracts pertaining to the preparation of environmental studies; reviews consultant work for contract compliance; authorizes consultant payments.
5. Reviews and analyzes development projects plans; monitors for consistency with the City's General Plan and compliance with applicable land use codes; negotiates development requirements for private development projects.
6. Serves as Secretary to the Design Review Committee and provides support in the Committee's decision making process.

**CITY OF SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO**  
**Principal Planner (*Continued*)**

7. Prepares staff reports for the City Council, Planning Commission, and advisory commissions; oversees the preparation of special studies and technical reports for the City Council.
8. Conducts minor legal research regarding recent land use case law as required; drafts new City ordinances related to land use and manages the code amendment process.
9. Serves as the City's Zoning Administrator and renders final decisions on residential variances, development standards adjustment, and conditional use permit applications; conducts public hearings and negotiates application requirements.
10. Reviews and analyzes inter-jurisdictional projects; drafts City responses to projects and assists in developing strategic approaches; represents the City's interest on working committees for projects outside City limits.
11. Conducts departmental training sessions regarding new ordinances, environmental requirements, and other planning subjects.
12. Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and practices in the field of urban planning.
13. Participates in interview panels and assists in evaluating prospective employees and/or consultants.
14. May serve as Acting Director in absence of the Community Development Director or Assistant Community Development Director.
15. Performs related duties and responsibilities as required.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

**Knowledge of:**

- Principles and practices of urban and regional land use planning.
- Current trends, developments, and issues impacting the field of urban planning.
- Research techniques and information sources pertaining to urban planning.
- Site planning and architectural design techniques and methods.
- Principles and practices of historic preservation.
- Operations, services and activities relative to urban planning programs.
- Methods and techniques of contract negotiation and administration.
- Principles of business letter writing and report preparation.
- Laws underlying general plans, zoning and land divisions.
- Pertinent Federal, State and local laws, codes and regulations.

**Skill in:**

- Performing complex research, analysis and report writing.
- Managing controversial and complex private development and public land use projects.
- Reviewing project plans and monitoring for compliance with land use codes.
- Interpreting and explaining laws, regulations, and codes.
- Negotiating requirements and solutions for development projects.
- Conducting research and drafting new City ordinances.
- Analyzing and compiling technical and statistical information.
- Preparing and presenting reports and studies.
- Communicating clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.

**CITY OF SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO**  
**Principal Planner (Continued)**

- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING GUIDELINES**

*Any combination of experience and training that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:*

**Experience:**

Five years of public planning agency experience including with two years of experience as a Senior Planner working for a local government agency.

**Training:**

Equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in regional or urban planning, public administration or a related field.

**Licenses or Certifications:**

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, an appropriate, valid driver's license.
- Possession of, or ability to obtain, certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

**Environmental Conditions:**

Office environment.

**Physical Conditions:**

Essential functions may require maintaining physical condition necessary for sitting for prolonged periods of time.