

# WASHINGTON COUNTY

## Job Description

### **JOB TITLE: Planning Technician**

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Exempt (Y/N): No

DATE REVISED: Dec 2015

DEPARTMENT: Planning Department

SUPERVISOR: Planning Director

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#### **SUMMARY:**

The primary role of the Planning Technician is to provide administrative assistance to the Planning Director and Planning Staff through office organization, project management, and public relations. The secondary role is to provide quality customer service by processing projects in a consistent, efficient, and organized fashion.

The Planning Technician position requires an intense amount of public contact, as well as contact with a variety of other departments, businesses, and agencies. Critical thinking skills are of utmost importance in this job- as well as excellent communication and interpersonal skills. This position processes a majority of the administrative projects submitted to this office including lot splits, lot line adjustments, and cell tower antennas. The incumbent must perform all tasks with minimal supervision from the Department Director and Senior Planner in order to meet department duties and directives. Organizational skills and good knowledge of computers is required. Accuracy in work is of utmost importance in this job to avoid the potential for legal action against the organization.

The Planning Technician educates the public about Washington County's ordinances, regulations, zoning, administrative procedures, floodplain management, and planning board review processes. This disbursement of information to the public is essential for preserving the public health, safety, and welfare.

The Planning Technician assists the Planning Director and Planning Staff with ongoing research and development of comprehensive plans and programs. This research helps to provide for the best application of land use within Washington County. The Planning Technician provides analysis and review of planning and policies for the development in Washington County.

The Planning Technician must demonstrate the ability to exercise sound judgment and take responsible actions as a County representative during contact with the public, elected and appointed officials, developers and other County employees.

The Planning Technician must understand the customer base and seek to meet the needs of the community.

The Planning Technician must identify, analyze and solve problems in support of group, department, and organization objectives; consider cause and effect among different factors or stakeholders of a problem.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** include the following. Other duties may be assigned.

#### **A. Communication and Education**

1. Works closely with the public on a regular basis to educate or provide customer service on planning issues and/or explain the intent and scope of a proposed development.
2. Must be able to learn, explain, and apply appropriate County codes, ordinances, and regulations.
3. Educate and assist the public, other County departments, and other professionals by providing information regarding County ordinances, regulations, zoning, and review processes either by phone, in person, or e-mail.
4. Inform engineers, surveyors, title companies, the public, and media of policy and code changes or revisions.
5. Prepare and update various documents, informational brochures, and website content for the public.
6. Conduct all liaison activities in a professional manner to ensure maximum cooperation between and among County and other agencies. Ensure that all activities are professionally and ethically performed in accordance and within the law to protect the individual rights of all citizens in Washington County.

7. Responsible for handling monies by receiving and receipting of Planning Department Fees for both administrative and Planning Board projects.

**B. Project Process**

1. Possesses the ability to read and comprehend codes, specifications, legal descriptions and boundary maps of real property, maps, and development plans and plats.
2. Responsible for review of projects submitted to the Planning Office to ensure completeness and accuracy to determine whether in compliance with Washington County's ordinances, regulations, and zoning. Advise applicants on corrections needed for the purpose of moving a project through the development process with a County Planner or the Planning Director in a timely manner.
3. Performs a large number of administrative land split reviews and approvals with little or no supervision.
4. Searches official records from other County Departments (locate property on the Assessor's parcel map and from property descriptions) and outside agencies to obtain such information as the use of the property, and property boundaries.
5. Conduct research by looking up history of previous splits, zoning, Planning Area, deeds, and etc. information for a given parcel number, address, or owner name.
6. Complete site visits to ensure projects submitted have adequate road frontage, adequate site distance for entering and exiting the site, have no structures within the building setbacks, and the layout of the land is suitable for the project.
7. Notify applicants, surveyors, and engineers if their projects are approaching the expiration date if construction plans have not been approved by the Washington County Road Department.

**C. Research**

1. Researches and compiles information on a variety of planning issues from multiple sources.
2. Responsible for research relating to any essential job duty as well as additional research as assigned by the Planning Director and Planning Staff. Research can consist of Internet, publication (periodicals, etc), local telephone polling, and many other types of research methods.
3. Searches official records from other County Departments (locate property on the Assessor's parcel map and from property descriptions) and outside agencies to obtain such information as the use of the property, and property boundaries.
4. Be able to provide concise written or oral summaries for the Planning Director and Planning Staff.

**D. Computing Tasks**

1. Maintain a computer record or "items submitted" detailed planning record of information for planning applications for ALL TYPES of development processed through the Planning Office; their status, dates received, and etc. for submittals.
2. Must have knowledge and/or experience with ARCVIEW GIS or obtain knowledge within 6 months of hire.
3. Compile the monthly Quorum Court report, quarterly report for Regional Planning, and end of the year report for Quorum Court. This report contains statistics on project type, number of lots or structures, and other statistics etc. that are processed through the Planning Office
4. Must be able to compile and print various documents, labels, and maps in order to send out both digital and paper informational packets to many different government agencies and private entities.
5. Must be able to update and maintain the Planning website on a frequent basis.

6. Daily management and logging of digital and printed documents within the Planning Department's Application/Database.
7. Archiving of older documents and projects for future reference.

#### **E. Organization and Analysis**

1. Ability to work on several projects or issues simultaneously. Must be detail-oriented and be able to multitask effectively. Must be able to organize work and establish priorities. Must be able to self-start.
2. Devotes a significant amount of time on routine administrative tasks including data entry, file management, copying, answering the telephone, project tracking, and etc.
3. Responsibility of maintenance and organization of the office, including updating handouts; availability of forms, computer paper, business cards, handouts, maps, etc.
4. Keeps track of office supplies and general office inventory.
5. Develop and maintain methods for filing, monitoring, and mapping developments. Prepare and update files and records pertaining to projects submitted to the Planning Office. Prepare maps, reports, statistical information, and other studies related to planning efforts.
6. Indexes and files filed plats / LSD plans and distributes them to the appropriate individuals (inter-office and other state and local reviewing agencies).
7. Must be able to use mathematics involving the practical application of fractions, percentages, ratios and proportions.

#### **F. Planning Board Duties**

1. Utilize organization skills to perform duties as the Secretary for the Washington County Planning Board.
2. Transcribe the official minutes for the County Planning Board / Zoning Board of Adjustments meetings and maintain official records for the Board.
3. Obtain submitted projects and confirm that all items meet the requirements of the checklist; i.e. fees, plats/LSD plans, completed application, and if they have notified the surrounding property owners.
4. Must be able to calculate fees due to the Planning office. Fees are charged for Concept Plats, Preliminary and Final Subdivision Plats, Minor Subdivision Plats, Minor Subdivision Replats, Administrative Lot Splits or lot line adjustments, Preliminary and Final Large Scale Development Plans, Variance Requests, Conditional Use Permits, and Contracted Engineering Review.
5. Assist the Planning Director in preparing agendas and background information for projects submitted for the Planning Board meetings and prepare for and document the proceedings of Planning Board Meetings.
6. Assembles project submittals and related materials for distribution to other County departments and reviewing agencies for further plat / LSD plan checking.
7. Assist in the preparation of mailing labels and aid in the production, assimilation and distribution of Planning Board meeting packets for County Staff, Planning Board / Zoning Board of Adjustments, Quorum Court, Utilities, outside agencies, groups and individuals, and etc.
8. Prepare and send the Planning Board/Zoning Board of Adjustments packet prior to the meeting. This packet must include staff reports and recommendations, copies of the plats/LSD plans for each project, and any additional information to validate the staff recommendation.
9. Call and remind Board members of monthly Planning Board / Zoning Board of Adjustments meeting to detect if a quorum will be available for the meeting.

10. Attends public meetings, assisting other planning staff as appropriate by providing technical support.
11. Hangs and arranges maps and displays at meetings and hearings.
12. Administer the provisions of the Bylaws for the Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustments meetings.
13. Notify applicants, surveyors, and engineers of their project's Tech. Review Time, Staff Report, and approval, table, or denial letter.
14. Notify the public, media, Planning Board, and Quorum Court Members of the dates and times of the Washington County Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustments meetings and technical reviews.
15. Assists in creating labels and letters for the neighbor notifications for each project prito to the Planning Board Meeting.

#### **G. FEMA Duties**

1. Knowledge of Floodplain (FEMA) regulations to review and address applications for floodplain location and compliance with FEMA regulations. May obtain this knowledge within six months of employment.
2. Educate the public on the National Flood Insurance Program.
3. Actively participate to further the goals of the National Flood Insurance Program, in order to mitigate the hazards of flooding.
4. Attend educational workshops to further education in regards to the National Flood Insurance Program as it relates to Washington County.
5. Perform 911 address floodplain checks in order to meet FEMA requirements regarding permitting structures within the floodplain.
6. Become a Certified FEMA Floodplain Manager and perform related duties.
7. Determine whether structures have sustained "substantial damage" during times of flooding

#### **H. General Office Duties**

1. Supervise, assign, and coordinate intern projects based on each of the interns' schedules and abilities. Assist in the coordination, assignment, and supervision of the work of planning interns, students, or other employees.
2. Attend and participate in staff meetings once a week to clean up the County Code, develop and recommend ordinance amendments, and to refresh Planning Staff on the County Code.
3. Assist the Public Works Coordinator by supervising the front desk when scheduled or asked. Judgment is exercised in referring visitors to the correct department.
4. Schedule appointments for self or appropriate Planning Office staff using the Microsoft Outlook calendar to meet with the public regarding any issues that they wish to meet with staff about (administrative lot splits or lot line adjustments).
5. Agree to a Walk-in schedule with other Planning staff members to ensure that members of the public are able to speak with someone in Planning about issues they may have.
6. Attend seminars and training courses to retain and put to use new ideas and skills learned.
7. Provide administrative support and perform all other required or assigned duties.

8. Build and maintain positive working relationships with co-workers, other County employees and the public using principles of good customer service.
9. Yearly inventory of office supplies and equipment.

**QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily and must be able to work with minimal supervision. The work performed requires judgment in the application of established guidelines to specific situations, with instruction or assistance from a supervisor on problems or unusual cases. Must be self-disciplined and motivated. Must be capable of exercising good judgment and to make decisions when necessary. The Planning Technician must be able to exercise tact in dealing with the public and fellow employees. Accuracy is a very important factor in this position. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

**EDUCATION and/or EXPERIENCE:**

Bachelor's Degree. at minimum. Preference for a bachelor's degree; One to two years related experience and/or training preferred; or equivalent combination of education and experience.

**LANGUAGE / COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

Must possess excellent interpersonal skills in order to establish and maintain good working relationships with co-workers, other County employees, contractors, developers, realtors, surveyors, engineers, title companies, general public, Planning Board members, Quorum Court members, and other officials. Must be able to learn, explain, and provide correct information about Current Planning Practices, Subdivisions, Variances, Zoning Regulations, Administrative Lot Splits, Large Scale Developments, Planning Office Statistics, Mapping Information, Floodplain Information, and Future Land Use Information within six months of hire. The incumbent must possess excellent interpersonal and communication skills when dealing with the public, and must be able to effectively communicate with others orally and in writing, often under complex conditions that require good judgment.

**REASONING ABILITY:**

Must have the ability to interpret and analyze technical and statistical information. Analytical ability skills are necessary in order to analyze planning data and make appropriate recommendations. Possess the ability to read and comprehend codes, specifications, legal descriptions and boundary maps of real property, maps, and development plans and plats. The work performed requires judgment in the application of established guidelines to specific situations, with instruction or assistance from a supervisor on problems or unusual cases.

**OTHER SKILLS and ABILITIES/ COMPUTER and SOFTWARE:**

The Planning Technician must have general knowledge of principles and practices of Urban and Regional Planning. Must have the ability to interpret and analyze technical and statistical information. Machine skills include computer, calculator, copier, and typewriter. Must have knowledge of Planning Board rules and regulations and County ordinances.

Must have good data management, troubleshooting, creative and collaborative thinking skills.

Regular and intensive use of computer, laptop and ipad to complete daily work. Some knowledge of advanced specialized programs (such as the ARC VIEW GIS mapping system) and software are required or must be obtained within 6 months.

Computer literacy including: Microsoft Office Suite and Access software, ESRI, ARCVIEW GIS IPAD, website software and Internet applications. Special abilities include strong writing skills and the ability to read maps.

Must have valid driver license and be in good standing to drive country vehicle.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit, talk, and hear, and use hands to finger, handle or feel objects. The employee frequently is required to stand, walk, and reach with hands and arms. The employee is occasionally required to stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl.

The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required by this job include close, distance, color, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT:**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those that an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee occasionally works in outside weather conditions.

The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.