

POSITION DESCRIPTION

TITLE: ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST / FORESTER EXAMINER

GRADE: Salary

DEPT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Job Analysis Conducted: February 26, 2019

NOTE: Statements included in this job description are intended to reflect in general the duties and responsibilities of this classification and are not to be interpreted as being all inclusive. The employee may be assigned other duties, which are not specifically included.

RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to: Community Development Director

Internal Contacts: Community Development Director, Code Enforcement Officer, Building Official, Planner I, Planner II, Coastal Resources Manager, Public Works Director, City Council, Planning Commission, City Engineer and Utilities Director

External Contacts: General Public, Landscape Architects, Architects, Engineers, Contractors, Consultants, Local Stakeholders, Environmental Advocacy Groups, Local, State and Federal Government Agencies

JOB SUMMARY

Under direction the person in this position will have a broad knowledge of environmental regulatory practices with a focus on permitting and regulatory review. This employee conducts plan review and site inspection for new development of single family, multi-family, commercial, and subdivision projects ensuring compliance with tree preservation and landscaping requirements of the zoning code, stormwater management regulations and other land development regulations as necessary. This employee performs onsite inspections for compliance with the approved site development plans for construction. This employee investigates complaints to determine illegal or hazardous conditions associated with tree removal, tree health, illegal fill, or improper erosion and sediment control measures. This employee investigates complaints to determine unpermitted site work activity. This position is also responsible for conducting preliminary informal wetland determinations on public and private property. This position may be required to perform presence/absence surveys for State and Federal listed Threatened and Endangered Species. This position will implement and/or manage environmental protection project/programs citywide. This employee is also responsible for management of high quality, multi-phase environmental projects on schedule and within budget in support of environmental programs and city projects. This employee will research and prepare reports and presentations for the Planning Commission and City Council as requested. This employee will conduct public presentations to groups and seminars on the tree & landscaping regulations, general tree & landscape installation and maintenance practices, wetland and water quality issues and other environmental topics as requested.

JOB DOMAINS

A. PLAN REVIEW

- (1) Conducts preliminary consultations with developers, subdividers and design professionals in reference to subdivision and site developments; explains purposes, regulations and objectives of tree & landscape regulations, the wetlands ordinance and other land development regulations; and suggests better designs for site plans in order to preserve tree canopy and the natural environment, promote green space and avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands and surface waters.
- (2) Reviews single family residential, duplex and minor commercial site plans to determine compliance with the stormwater management regulations. Meets with applicants to assist in the development of site grading plans and determines consistency with city stormwater management regulations.
- (3) Conducts onsite field investigations as part of site plan and permitting review to confirm number, size and health of existing protected trees and evaluate wetland limits and assess the quality of the onsite wetlands.
- (4) Reviews site construction drawings prior to presentation to Planning Commission, City Council and Board of Adjustment to ensure compliance with tree and landscaping regulations and other land development regulations as necessary.
- (5) Lists any conditions or necessary changes to the plans and provides copies to the owner or his representative. Suggests modifications to bring plans into compliance. Drafts information letters, completes various forms, reports and maintains records of reviews.
- (6) Answers questions concerning permitting procedures, tree & landscape regulations, stormwater management regulations, wetlands and surface waters, erosion & sediment control measures and other land development regulations. Interprets the zoning ordinance with regard to tree and landscaping regulations and investigates and assesses tree removal and tree health complaints.

B. INSPECTIONS

- (1) Performs field inspections of private development construction sites to monitor compliance with tree and landscape regulations, parking and vehicular use area dimensions, stormwater management regulations, erosion and sediment control best management practices and other land development regulations.
- (2) Conducts field investigations of reported illegal tree removals, unpermitted wetland impacts, water quality violations and performs tree health evaluations. Prepares reports detailing the nature of the violation and recommended remediation. Consults with State and Federal agencies in support of mitigative measures and compliance and enforcement actions.
- (3) Monitors jurisdiction for unapproved protected tree removal, unpermitted fill and site work, water quality violations and erosion & sediment control violations. Violations are followed with appropriate action to correct such violation.
- (4) Inspects sites to identify type, size and general condition of protected trees.

C. PLANNING AND DESIGN

- (1) Conducts watershed and wetland assessments and utilizes GIS and other remote sensing sources in support of the wetland program.
- (2) Develops and maintains tree canopy, heritage tree, wetland and green space inventory data.
- (3) Develops and implements plans, strategies, and programs to conserve, preserve and proliferate trees, urban forests, natural areas and wetlands within the city jurisdiction.
- (4) Creates designs, drawings and specifications for landscaping of city projects and rights-of-way as assigned. Makes recommendations and develops plans for the City Street Tree Beautification Program.
- (5) Prepares and reports on work activities.

D. RESEARCH

- (1) Researches newly developed and accepted tree protection, landscape design, and best management practices. Maintains awareness of changes in landscaping and irrigation trades technology and codes.
- (2) Researches and interprets the tree and landscape regulations of the zoning ordinance and related land development codes and drafts tree and landscape code amendments in response to administrative and community initiatives.
- (3) Conducts biological surveys including identification of rare plants/threatened and endangered (T&E) species, migratory bird nest surveys, and bald eagle and raptor nest surveys.
- (4) Prepares charts, graphs and maps for research studies.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

- (1) Provides information to the general public, community groups and the development community regarding tree preservation, tree pruning techniques, tree care and maintenance, the wetlands program and street beautification program. Answers citizens' questions and provides general assistance.
- (2) Coordinates division/section activities with other departments, public agencies and private entities.
- (3) Presents verbal and written reports to Planning Commission and City Council on site plan review, subdivision and rezoning petitions.

F. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- (1) Leads project teams on city funded projects and manages consultants and budgets.
- (2) Develops scopes for City Projects and formulates appropriate budgets which correspond to defined scope.

- (3) Applies technical knowledge and methods to develop creative, effective, and economical solutions to address project issues.
- (4) Shows leadership in striving to continuously improve technical performance with regards to staff and consultant project staff.
- (5) Applies for and administers grants, prepares proposals, develops marketing, public education and technical information materials.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- (1) Considerable knowledge of landscape design, soil geology, dendrology and plant physiology. Extensive knowledge of tree identification, proper tree care and maintenance practices, and the ability to perform a tree health and hazard evaluation. Extensive knowledge of wetland ecology and biology.
- (2) Knowledge of all types of site development construction, materials used, methods, stages of construction, standards and specifications and best management practices to determine that construction complies with approved site plans and land development regulations.
- (3) Knowledge of Alabama Department of Environmental Management, US Fish and Wildlife, and US Army Corps of Engineers regulations, permitting requirements and site construction methods in coastal areas.
- (4) Skill to read and interpret site construction drawings, quickly and accurately, and compare with land development regulations to ensure compliance with codes.
- (5) Ability to establish and maintain pleasant and professional working relationships with coworkers, property owners, public officials, the development community and the general public.
- (6) Appropriate verbal and written skills to provide clear and concise communication with coworkers, public officials, the development community and the general public. Public speaking skills to accurately and professionally deliver technical information in a manner easily understood by all levels of expertise.
- (7) Skill to maintain records of permits, plan reviews, public complaints and violations.
- (8) Skill to organize time and work wisely and efficiently deal with interruptions and changes to schedule with minimal amount of supervision.
- (9) Ability to enforce codes with firmness, tact and impartiality.
- (10) Ability to analyze complex problems, evaluate alternatives and make creative sound recommendations.
- (11) Skill in the operation of motor vehicle, landscape tools, personal computers (word processing, Power Point, spread sheets) and computerized field data collection devices.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

- (1) Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Science, Environmental Studies, Urban Forestry, Arboriculture, Landscape Architecture, Horticulture or related field with preferably two years experience in a government setting and two years of field experience in some aspect of ecological or biological field work or urban forestry.
- (2) Possession of or the ability to obtain an ISA designation as Certified Arborist, Professional Wetland Scientist or other Professional Certification relating to specific job duties.
- (3) Possession of a valid driver's license.
- (4) Continuing education to maintain state of the art knowledge and skill in landscape design, urban forestry, wetland ecology, regulatory practices and coastal processes.
- (5) Willing to work overtime, non-standard hours, weekends and holidays when necessary.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment involves moderate risks or discomforts that require special safety precautions, e.g. working around heavy equipment, and other construction equipment characteristics of site and building construction. Additionally, this employee may be required to work outdoors for extended periods of time and may be required to use protective clothing or gear such as hard hat, boots, coats, and protective boots.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work requires some physical exertion such as long periods of standing, walking over rough or uneven surfaces, bending, crouching, stooping, or similar activities. The work may require specific, but common, physical characteristics and abilities such as above average agility and dexterity.