

**THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON  
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**TITLE: Senior Planner  
Grade: 122  
Status: Exempt**

**Adopted: September 2008  
Reviewed: February 2013  
Revised: October 2013  
Amend: March 2017**

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

The essential function of the position is to provide planning and technical support for the Planning, Permitting and Enforcement Department and various boards and committees. The position is responsible for assisting with planning, policy analysis, regulation enforcement, technical research and support, site/plan review, customer service, and related records and reports. The position works under general supervision of the Director, independently developing work methods and sequences.

**PRIMARY DUTIES:**

**Planner**

Serve as primary staff support for the Planning Commission; oversee the creation and production of the agendas for each meeting of the Planning Commission and execute and communicate all decisions and/or votes of the Planning Commission; oversees staff in the acceptance and processing of applications for any planning-related approvals, including, but not limited to, special use permits, zoning clearances, zoning text amendments and/or map amendments and schedule any public hearings required to process said applications and develop staff reports relative to filed applications; coordinate the review and update of the Comprehensive Plan as stated by the Code of Virginia. Prepare staff report and supplemental information.

Per the County's Contract with the towns, provides planning services including reviews for compliance with respective town's code and review of special projects.

Provide support to the Director and Senior Zoning Administrator for specific project tasks specifically with Special Use Permits, Special Projects, Zoning Text Amendments, Zoning Map Amendments and other County code amendments that the Senior Planner is designated to administer.

Mentor Deputy Zoning and Environmental Compliance staff and oversee planning-related projects. Coordinate with Planning, Permitting and Enforcement staff for assistance with planning efforts.

Annually review and update all planning documents, codes and ordinances as necessary based on legislative updates. Coordinate with Planning, Permitting and Enforcement staff who are designated to administer the specific plan, code or ordinance that requires update.

**GIS Coordinator**

Serve as principal GIS Coordinator which duties include: compiles and integrates cartographic data from a wide variety of sources for inclusion in GIS database; manage data layers for Northampton County; create maps and conduct analysis at the request of the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Administration or any other department; maintain the official zoning map; serve as the primary coordinator with the County's outside vendor in maintaining the maps for public access on the County website; create and print maps for the public at their request.

**Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Administrator**

Serve as the Administrator for the Purchase of Development Rights program as enacted by the Board of Supervisors which duties include: Schedule and prepare agenda for quarterly PDR meetings (quarterly);

take minutes at meetings; assist in writing grants to solicit funding for projects; assist in coordinating easement review for various agencies involved; prepare annual report for PDR Committee; assist property owners with applications; and coordinate review and ranking of applications pursuant to Board policy or direction.

#### Enterprise Zone

Serve as primary coordinator with the Deputy County Administrator for GIS Support.

#### Other Duties as assigned

Conducts research and performs land use policy analysis.

Maintains departmental record system; develops and recommends new programs to support planning activities, and modifies existing programs for efficient operation; provides technical support to departmental staff and various boards and commissions.

Performs research to gather and compile information/data for preparation of departmental reports and papers.

Organizes and facilitates community workshops for special projects.

Attends and conducts staff and other professional meetings to exchange information.

Assists with special projects as directed.

Attends various regional committees as County representative when requested by the Director.

Assist the Building Official with the mapping component of the building regulations (911 regulations).

#### **DATA RESPONSIBILITY:**

Compiles, examines, or evaluates data or information and possibly recommends action based on results. This may require training or proficiency in specialized software programs.

#### **PEOPLE RESPONSIBILITY:**

Instructs or trains others through explanation, demonstration, and supervised practice, or by making recommendations on the basis of technical disciplines.

Provides assistance to public regarding local, state, and federal laws and/or ordinances.

#### **INVOLVEMENT WITH THINGS:**

Leads or handles machines, tools, equipment or work aids involving moderate latitude for judgment regarding attainment of a standard or in selecting appropriate items, such as computers and specialized software.

Responsible for organizing computer and software documentation and paperwork for its safekeeping.

#### **ASSETS RESPONSIBILITY:**

Requires responsibility and opportunity for achieving moderate economies and/or preventing moderate losses through the management or handling of supplies of high value or moderate amounts of money.

#### **MATHEMATICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Uses practical application of fractions, percentages, ratios and proportions, measurements, or logarithms; may use algebraic solutions of equations and equalities, deductive geometry, and/or descriptive statistics.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS:**

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Reads professional publications; composes complex reports and manuals; speaks formally to groups outside the organization.

**COMPLEXITY OF WORK:** *Complexity of work addresses the analysis, initiative, ingenuity, creativity, and concentration required by the position and the presence of any unusual pressures.*

Performs coordinating work involving guidelines and rules with constant problem solving; requires continuous, close attention for accurate results or frequent exposure to unusual pressure.

**IMPACT OF DECISIONS:**

Makes decisions with moderately serious impact - affects those in work unit and the public and may affect other work units.

Performance Indicators

Knowledge of the Job Has thorough knowledge of the administrative practices and procedures relative to planning. Has thorough knowledge of the codes, ordinances and regulations as applied to administration of codes and mandated programs assigned to the Planner. Has thorough knowledge of the occupational hazards and proper supervision, organization and public administration. Has considerable knowledge of the current literature trends and development in the field of planning. Is able to prepare analytical reports. Is able to effectively express ideas orally and in writing. Is able to establish and complete work assignments.

Quality of Work Maintains high standards of accuracy in exercising duties and responsibilities. Exercises immediate remedial action to correct any quality deficiencies that occur in areas of responsibility. Maintains high quality communication and interacts with all County departments, co-workers, contractors and the general public.

Quantity of Work: Maintains effective and efficient output of all duties and responsibilities as described under "Specific Duties and Responsibilities"

Dependability Assumes responsibility for doing assigned work and meeting deadlines. Completes assigned work on or before deadlines in accordance with directives, County policy, standards and prescribed procedures. Accepts accountability for meeting assigned responsibilities.

Attendance: Attends work regularly and adheres to County policies and procedures regarding absences and tardiness. Provides adequate notice to higher management with respect to vacation time and time off requests.

Initiative and Enthusiasm: Maintains an enthusiastic, self-reliant and self- starting approach to meet job responsibilities and accountabilities. Strives to anticipate work to be done and initiates proper and acceptable direction for completion of work with a minimum of supervision and instruction.

Judgment: Exercises analytical judgment in areas of responsibility. Identifies problems or situations as they occur and specifies decision objectives. Identifies or assists in identifying alternative solutions to problems or situations. Implements decisions in accordance with prescribed and effective policies and procedures and with a minimum of errors. Seeks expert or experienced advice and researches problems, situations and alternatives before exercising judgment.

Cooperation: Accepts supervisory instruction and direction and strives to meet the goals and objectives of same. Questions such instruction and direction when clarifications of results or consequences are justified, i.e. poor communications, variance with County policy or procedures, etc. Offers suggestions and recommendations to encourage and improve cooperation between all staff persons and departments within the County.

Relationships with Others: Shares knowledge with supervisors and staff for mutual and County benefit. Contributes to maintaining high morale among all County employees. Develops and maintains cooperative and courteous relationships with department employees, staffers and managers in other departments, representatives from organizations and the general public so as to maintain good will toward the County and project a good County image. Tactfully and effectively handles requests, suggestions and complaints from other departments and persons in order to maintain good will within the County. Interacts effectively with fellow employees, supervisor, professionals, contractors and the general public.

Coordination of Work: Plans and organizes daily work routine. Establishes priorities for the completion of work in accordance with sound time-management methodology, Avoids duplication of effort. Estimates expected time of completion of elements of work and establishes a personal schedule accordingly. Attends meetings, planning sessions, and discussions on time. Implements work activity in accordance with priorities and estimated schedules. Maintains a calendar for meetings, deadlines and events.

Safety and Housekeeping: Adheres to all safety and housekeeping standards established by the County and various regulatory agencies. Sees that the standards are not violated. Maintains a clean and orderly workplace.

Planning: Plans, directs and uses information effectively in order to enhance activities and production of various service departments. Knows and understands the expectations of the County regarding the activities of the department and works to see that these expectations are met. Designs and formulates ways, means and timing to achieve the goals and objectives of the departments and the County. Within the constraints of County policy, formulates the appropriate strategy and tactics for achieving departmental and County objectives. Organizes, arranges and allocates manpower, financial and other designated resources in an efficient and effective way so as to achieve the goals and objectives of the departments and County.

Organizing: Organizes work and that of subordinate staff well. Ensures that staff members know what results are expected of them and that they are regularly and appropriately informed of all County and departmental matters affecting them and/or of concern to them.

Staffing: Works with other County officials and management to select and recommend employment of personnel for the departments who are qualified both technically and philosophically to meet the needs of the departments and the County. Personally requests the development and training of zoning personnel in order to ensure that they are properly inducted, oriented and trained.

Leading: Provides a work environment which encourages clear and open communications. Has a clear and comprehensive understanding of the principles of effective leadership and how such principles are to be applied. Provides adequate feedback to staff so that they know whether their performance levels are satisfactory. Commends and rewards employees for outstanding performance yet does not hesitate to take disciplinary action when necessary. Exercises enthusiasm in influencing and guiding others toward the achievement of County goals and objectives.

Controlling: Provides a work environment which is orderly and controlled. Coordinates, audits and controls manpower and financial resources efficiently and effectively. Coordinates, audits and controls the utilization of materials and equipment efficiently and effectively. Has a clear and comprehensive understanding of County standards, methods and procedures.

Delegating: Assigns additional duties to staff as necessary and/or appropriate in order to meet departmental goals, enhance staff abilities, build confidence on the job and assist staff members in personal growth. Has confidence in staff to meet new or additional expectations.

Decision Making: Uses discretion and judgment in developing and implementing courses of action affecting the department. When a particular policy, procedure or strategy does not appear to be achieving the desired result, moves decisively and definitively to develop and implement alternatives.

Creativity: Regularly seeks new and improved methodologies, policies and procedures for enhancing the effectiveness of the departments and County. Employs imagination and creativity in the application of duties and responsibilities. Is not adverse to change.

Human Relations: Strives to develop and maintain good rapport with all staff members. Listens to and considers suggestions and complaints and responds appropriately. Maintains the respect and loyalty of staff.

Policy Implementation: Has a clear and comprehensive understanding of County policies regarding the department and County function. Adheres to those policies in the discharge of duties and responsibilities and ensures the same from subordinate staff.

Policy Formulation: Keeps abreast of changes in operating philosophies and policies of the County and continually reviews departmental policies in order to ensure that any changes in County philosophy or practice are appropriately incorporated. Also understands the relationship between operating policies and practices and departmental morale and performance. Works to see that established policies enhance same.

#### **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS**

##### **EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:**

Requires Bachelor's degree in planning, , engineering, or science with GIS classwork. A Master's Degree in planning or science is preferred.

##### **LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, AND REGISTRATIONS REQUIRED:**

Certified AICP or ability to obtain certification within two years.  
GIS Certification.

##### **EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS:**

Requires two years of related experience and a demonstrated ability to use GIS, handle multiple projects, public speaking and while maintain good public relations.

#### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES REQUIREMENTS**

##### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

Requires light work involving standing or walking some of the time, exerting up to 20 pounds of force on a regular basis, and moderate dexterity in operating machinery, tools, or office equipment.

##### **SAFETY OF OTHERS:**

Requires some responsibility for safety and health of others and/or for occasional enforcement of the standards of public safety or health.

##### **UNAVOIDABLE HAZARDS:**

The position may require exposure to extreme heat/cold, wet or humid conditions, insects associated with wooded and wetland environments, bright/dim lights, and dust or pollen.

##### **SENSORY (ADA) REQUIREMENTS:**

The position requires normal visual acuity and field of vision, hearing, speaking.

#### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COMPLIANCE**

The County of Northampton is an Equal Opportunity Employer. ADA requires the County to provide adequate accommodations to qualified persons with disabilities. Prospective and current employees are encouraged to discuss ADA accommodations with management.

