

**Walla Walla County
Position Description**

JOB TITLE: Planning Technician
DEPARTMENT: Community Development
REPORTS TO: Senior Planner and/or Community Development Director
PAY GRADE: 5, Full-time (40 hours/week); Benefits Apply, Courthouse Union

JOB SUMMARY: Under the direction of the Community Development Director, performs a wide variety of complex customer service tasks involving the intake, processing, and issuance of development permits. Provides administrative support for planning division, Planning Commission, Technical Review Committee, and Hearing Examiner. Assists with special planning projects. Coordinates permit reviews with other local, County, City, State, and Federal agencies, handles customer inquiries and complaints, and provides permit information to customers. Organizes and maintains related records and reports and tracks the status of permit applications submitted. Duties may include explaining procedures and requirements, addressing problems and concerns, maintaining related receipts and computerized tracking records; working on complex special projects as assigned; and providing technical direction to other staff.

This position is highly visible involving constant contact with the general public and other agencies. The Planning Technician must be deadline-driven, detail-oriented, and perform a variety of complex technical duties with minimal supervision. The incumbent must deal with sensitive and confidential issues or matters that may be the subject of conflict and/or disagreement, thus requiring considerable judgement and tact. Our champion employees are driven by a desire to contribute on a team, possess a willingness to be challenged by complex new projects and responsibilities, are committed to public service, and take pride in helping others. Assigned duties require the exercise of good judgment or choice among possible actions, sometimes without clear precedents and often with concern for the consequences of the action.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES: None.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Organizes and assists management and planning staff with coordinating Planning Division functions, activities, and communications within department and with customers.
- Assists with the reception of the Department of Community Development by providing information about the permitting process and requirements to the public at the counter, on the telephone, and by email relating to land use and other regulations.
- Processes and reviews land use applications at intake and issuance; determines appropriate application type; accepts applications and revisions; performs completeness checks and necessary documentation and data entry.
- Receives, processes, and assists with responses to complaints from members of the public regarding building, planning, environmental, and nuisance code issues.
- Serves as the Department's Public Records Officer: accepting, researching, and responding to public records requests for the Department.
- Researches, analyzes, and prepares information for dissemination to the public.

- Prepares and enters technical data into computerized permit tracking system and coordinates operation and maintenance of integrated permit management system.
- Works as liaison between permit applicants and plan reviewers to ensure information is transferred accurately and timely; explains procedures and requirements to applicants, coordinates review process with other staff and departments.
- Utilizes ArcGIS to prepare site maps and other documents and prepare public notification lists.
- Provides back-up support for Administrative Assistant and Permit Coordinator.
- Supports the overall operation of the Department through reliable, predictable, and timely processing of work.

EXAMPLE OF DUTIES:

- Provides assistance to project proponents in the permitting process: assists customers with submitting applications; reviews applications for completeness; reviews application for compliance with applicable codes and policies; processes fee payments and refunds; and prepares and issues permits and administrative decisions/reports.
- Tracks and responds to questions related to status of land use and other development permit applications.
- Participates in and assists with ongoing evaluation of the permit process and other department operations to aid in improving customer service, productivity, and efficiency.
- Provides administrative support: answers multi-line telephones; manages files; receives/sorts incoming mail and other messages; and composes and edits memorandums, correspondence, and reports.
- Drafts and distributes public notices and manages customer inquiries and public comments.
- Schedules and arranges planning meetings; assists management in coordinating the schedules of department personnel; arranges for facilities, public notices and variety of other details.
- Interprets policies, directives, and codes; provides information, receives and processes requests and complaints and routes individuals to proper department or individuals as appropriate; provides procedural and county code information to customers.
- Works as liaison between permit applicants and plan reviewers to ensure information is transferred accurately and timely; explains procedures and requirements to applicants, coordinates review process with other staff and departments.
- Prepares agendas, meeting packets, and minutes/notes for Technical Review Committee, Hearing Examiner and Planning Commission meetings/hearings, as well as internal department meetings. Assists planners with coordinating these meetings and managing public testimony.
- Creates and edits educational materials for customers including informational handouts.
- Assists with organization, maintenance, and design of the Department's website. Adds and edits content regularly and makes sure that information is up to date. Must regularly coach customers on navigating the website over the phone.
- Performs reviews of Type 1 and Type 2 development permit reviews under the supervision of the Director and planners.
- Assists Planners and Code Compliance Officer with the investigation of land use, critical areas, and related violations.

- Assists planning staff and Director with preparation of planning staff reports and other written documents.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

EQUIPMENT TO BE USED: Standard office equipment including PC, mobile devices including tablets and/or cell phones, scanning and photocopy machines, postage machine, multi-line phone systems will be utilized.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT / PHYSICAL ABILITIES: The Department's operating hours are Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. and the office is typically open to customers Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m. Must work majority of work week within operating hours. Work is normally performed in an office setting but may require occasional night meetings and field work. Required to sit and/or stand for extended periods of time. Requires sufficient hearing and speech ability to communicate verbally. Requires manual dexterity and visual acuity to operate a computer, telephone, and peripherals. Ability to lift up to twenty (20) pounds, bend, and reach.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

- Must possess excellent customer service skills and be able to provide clear and accurate information to a wide variety of people to accurately exchange or convey information and to receive work.
- Must have effective interpersonal communication skills and the ability to provide positive and timely customer service, and resolve conflicts, using tact, patience, empathy, and courtesy.
- Must have mastery of modern office practices, procedures, and equipment such as personal computers, printers, scanners, and related software such as permit management/tracking, telephone, email, electronic calendars and scheduling, word processing and spreadsheet programs.
- Must possess exceptional oral and written communication skills using correct English usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary.
- Must have professional telephone and email etiquette and techniques and the ability to research and prepare a variety of written documents.
- Ability to interact positively and effectively with diverse individuals to accomplish common goals.
- Ability to establish and maintain a positive and professional relationship with customers, co-workers, and supervisors in a variety of situations.
- Ability to follow verbal and written instructions from supervisor and other staff members and maintain work hours and work assignments to support the team as a whole.
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision, under stressful conditions, with frequent interruptions, and organize and plan multiple tasks and responsibilities concurrently and meet deadlines as required.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: Bachelor's degree, or equivalent, planning or related field. One (1) year experience working as a permit technician or like capacity in a local government setting required. Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite to include Outlook, Word and Excel, and pdf programs including Adobe Professional and BlueBeam. Experience with GIS, website management, and permit tracking software preferred. Prefer bilingual (English Spanish).

OR: In place of the above requirements, the incumbent may possess any combination of relevant education and experience which would demonstrate the individual's knowledge, skills, and ability to perform the essential duties and responsibilities listed above.

LICENSES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS: Must successfully pass a background check and a driving record check. Possession of or ability to obtain certification from the International Code Council (ICC) as a Permit Technician within 18 months of employment.

THIS POSITION DESCRIPTION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT FOR EMPLOYMENT.