CITY OF BELLINGHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: **Planning Code Compliance Officer** **UNION:231**
SG:3
DEPARTMENT: **Planning and Community Development** **CS:N**
FLSA:N
EEO4CODE:PR

JOB SUMMARY:

This position is responsible for performing work involving document research and analysis along with field investigation including identifying building, zoning and land use violations based upon proactive observation and complaints leading to the resolution of alleged or apparent violations of the Bellingham Municipal Code. Responsible for the investigation and documentation of apparent or alleged code violations, working with citizens and City personnel on resolution of compliance issues, development and preparation of case files for prosecution by the City Attorney, and the development and maintenance of appropriate records.

The position requires specific knowledge of the application of land use and building codes and familiarity with their purpose and intent. Responsibilities include assisting and coordinating compliance activities primarily with other City departments and City, County, Federal and/or State agencies. This is non-uniformed civilian enforcement work under a limited law enforcement commission including the ability to issue citations. Focus of code compliance work includes environmental and land use regulations, codes and permits, handicapped access regulations, billboard/sign codes, fire, building, dangerous building and housing codes, and other similar City codes and/or regulations as required.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to the Development Services Manager or his/her designee. Works under general supervision and the guidance of City and Departmental policies, procedures, protocols and technical standards. Guidance and strategic planning is provided by the Building Official and the City's Planning and Community Development Department. Work may be reviewed via oral and written reports as well as inspection or review of the following: field work, contact with the public, case files, case presentation and contact with other departments and/or agencies.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

Investigations:

1. Conducts site visits, investigations, and review of records including recorded documents, historic records, insurance maps and title information to evaluate circumstances in order to identify violations of codes, permits, and regulations.

2. Researches a variety of public and other records in order to verify business/property ownership, land use and occupancy history or other relevant information associated with compliance.

3. Meets with developers, business owners, and residents to review land use, zoning and building code violations, explains intent of the codes and gains compliance. Writes letters directing compliance on specified issues.

4. Determines whether there is probable cause to issue a citation; issues citations where appropriate.

Complaint Resolution:

5. Applies knowledge of building, zoning and land use codes, ordinances and regulations as required to resolve complaints or violations.

6. Notifies individuals of actual or potential code compliance violations and of corrective action required.

7. Provides information and education to citizens and interested third parties regarding code requirements, options and remedies.

8. Assists and/or coordinates code compliance work with operational departments and other agencies to resolve code issues and/or plan code compliance approaches.

9. Makes strategy recommendations for procedures to resolve violations and makes judgments regarding deviations from established procedures.

Report and Case Preparation and Disposition:

10. Prepares and summarizes reports, records, evidence or other materials necessary for prosecution or other legal action under the direction of the City Attorney.

11. Testifies as required at hearings or court.

Record Keeping:

12. In accordance with chain of custody requirements, establishes and maintains an orderly system of identifying, retrieving, preparing, securing, transferring, tracking, and storing a variety of reports, records evidence and investigation/case files from origination through disposition.

Planning:

13. Coordinates efforts with other departments as needed to ensure appropriate action and uniformity of interpretation, application and enforcement of regulations and codes.

14. Participates in regular inter-departmental discussions with the City's Code Enforcement Committee to review or assist in reviewing, developing and/or modifying code compliance strategies, policies and procedures.

15. Proposes amendments to the specific city codes or regulations which relate to the position and enhance the City's enforcement capabilities.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Performs other related work of a similar nature or level.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities):

Knowledge of:
- Strong knowledge of the compliance requirements of a wide variety of municipal codes, regulations and ordinances including environmental and land use regulations, codes and permits, handicapped access regulations, billboard/sign codes, fire, building, dangerous building and housing codes, and other similar City codes, and/or regulations.
- Effective investigative techniques including the rules of evidence and evidence preservation techniques.
- Working knowledge of governmental functions and processes, including the legal system.

Skills in:
- Oral communications skills to convey technical code information to lay persons and explain agency procedures and consequences of code violations.
- Writing skills for the production of reports and correspondence.
- Strong computer skills, including word processing and database applications.
- Photo documentation.

Ability to:
- Exercise discretion and protect privileged or confidential information.
- Work independently, to plan and organize work in an efficient manner.
- Display tact, diplomacy and the ability to gain cooperation from the public in the correction of code compliance deficits.
- Maintain composure when challenged and under stressful conditions.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff and agency personnel.
- Establish and maintain a legal and effective records systems for the code enforcement function.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Physical ability to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
  - Frequently operate a computer and read a computer screen or typewritten page;
  - Frequently communicate verbally;
  - Work outside in all weather conditions;
  - Move between work sites, which may include private property and construction sites with uneven terrain and slippery surfaces to investigate compliance issues;
  - Occasionally transport objects up to twenty pounds;
  - Correctible visual acuity and manual dexterity sufficient to operate a motor vehicle.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in both field and office settings. Field work can include construction sites, private property, and public property and can occur in adverse weather conditions.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in planning, zoning administration, building/architectural design or a closely related field and a minimum of two years experience in code compliance, building inspection or similar enforcement.
- Four years experience in code compliance or similar enforcement, housing/building inspection, zoning, land use, planning or related experience may substitute for two years education.
- In place of the above requirements a combination of education and experience sufficient to provide the applicant with the knowledge, skills and ability to successfully perform the essential functions of the job will be considered.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

- Valid Washington State driver's license at time of hire with good driving record. Candidate considered for hire must submit an abstract of his/her driving record for the past three years.
- Employment contingent upon passing a criminal convictions check, child and adult abuse records check and local background check.

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11/2017

REVIEWED BY: _____
Rick Sepler, Planning Director

REVISED BY: