CITY OF BELLINGHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: **Communications and Outreach Manager** **UNION:231**
SG:7
DEPARTMENT: **Public Works** **CS:N**
FLSA:N
EEO4CODE:PR

JOB SUMMARY:

Develops, implements and manages effective communications, education and outreach strategies to both inform and involve the Bellingham community and City staff in the work of the Public Works Department, with a focus on transparency and access to timely, accurate and understandable information about City actions and services. Leads all communications, marketing, education and outreach activities for the department including print and digital communications, programming, special events, community engagement, public opinion research and media relations. Develops and facilitates strategic approaches to ongoing and emerging issues. Participates in strategic planning and development. Maintains a regular working relationship with the City's Communications Director; contributes to Citywide communications priorities as assigned.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to the Assistant Public Works Director, Natural Resources. Works independently under general supervision and the guidance of City and Departmental policies, procedures and industry best practices. Serves as a member of the Public Works Natural Resources Division Management Team and, when assigned, serves as a member of the Public Works Executive team and City of Bellingham communications team. Manages, trains, directs and supervises other staff, consultants, interns, extra labor and temporary employees as assigned.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

1. Plans, develops, oversees and implements strategic communications plans and environmental education and outreach programs for Public Works. Manages the execution of communication strategies across various media according to best practices. Under general direction, develops and implements the Public Works' Strategic Communications Plan to enhance the department's proactive, transparent communication to both inform and engage staff and the public.

2. Develops, implements and monitors annual work plans for the Public Works Department's communications, education and outreach programs. Supports the Assistant Public Works Directors in the development and monitoring of budgets for program areas. Prepares budget proposals and provides budget estimates to management.

3. Oversees and reviews the work of lower level staff, consultants, interns, extra labor and temporary employees as assigned. Assists in selection and training, assigns and monitors work, conducts performance appraisals, administers coaching, couseling and corrective action; carries out personnel actions as appropriate.

4. Regularly contributes to Citywide communications needs and projects as part of the City communications team and other interdepartmental teams. Contributes to emergency communications or joint information center activities as assigned.

5. Leads and oversees content creation and optimization for the Public Works' sections of the City website, social media sites and other electronic communications managed by the Public Works Department.

6. Oversees effective education and outreach programs to achieve the goals of the Public Works Department and to comply with all applicable regulations, policies and reporting requirements, including water conservation, stormwater, Lake Whatcom and Title VI. Applies best practices, such as social marketing, and works with other City departments, staff and outside organizations.

7. Develops, implements and administers effective communications policies and procedures within the Department to promote transparency and ensure consistent, accurate, understandable and timely communication to department staff and the public consistent with City policies, procedures and industry best practices.

8. Conducts research and analysis of assigned Public Works communications, education and outreach programs by gathering data and preparing reports to analyze impacts of efforts. Evaluates existing measures, maintains program databases, files and records. Manages and coordinates departmental stakeholder and public opinion research efforts.

9. Prepares and administers contracts for program and consultant services including: requests for proposals, scopes of work and cost estimates, monitoring progress, preparing reports and providing recommendations on findings.

10. Collaborates, coordinates and networks with other City staff, City departments, professional organizations, jurisdictions, agencies and educational institutions on topics that expand the City's ability to reach target audiences in an effective and coordinated way.

11. Responds to questions and concerns from Public Works staff and other city personnel, as well as local agencies, organizations, utilities and the public. Meets with community members and groups and professional associations as required. Develops response protocol in coordination with the Public Works Executive Team and the City's Communications Director.

12. Ensures consistent use of City standards in all print and electronic materials produced by Public Works such as logo use, image quality, and accessibility requirements. Observes established best practices and City and Department policies and guidelines to ensure effective copywriting, proofing and editing in coordination with various staff, City administration and consultants.

13. Administers grants including: researching grant funding sources, writing proposals and applications, determining appropriate budget allocation, strategy and priorities for the communications and outreach programs.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

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

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities):

Knowledge of:

- Thorough knowledge of Microsoft Office suite software and common software used in communications such as portable document format software, website content management software, graphic design software and photo management software and related technology.
- Principles, best practices and current and emerging trends in communications, marketing and community relations.
- Digital communications strategies and best practices, including skills in and proficiency with technology, including website, social media and other common communications related technology platforms.
- General knowledge of government decision-making processes.
- General principles, practices and methods of public works and natural resources management and topics including water resources management, stormwater management, watershed ecology and stewardship, habitat restoration, water conservation, climate change and capital construction.
- Diverse marketing and communications tools and resources.
- Applicable local, state and federal laws and standards.
- Program design and evaluation.
- Basic methodology used in statistical analysis.
- Knowledge of and ability to apply a variety of regulations, statutes, and instructions.

Skill in:
- Strong leadership skills including planning and organizing, problem-solving, supervising and staff training.
- Excellent written communication and editing skills to develop, write and proofread grant applications, reports and written communications, and to prepare informational materials for various media including print, television and web publication.
- Technology and digital communications platforms.

Ability to:
- Plan and organize meetings, and present recommendations and reports.
- Make accurate mathematical calculations using scientific calculator and computer.
- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Prepare technical materials and reports.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with individuals and groups, other employees, contractors, developers and the public.
- Multitask, meet deadlines and shift priorities as needed.
- Manage communications to successful outcomes.
- Be organized, attentive to details and ensure accuracy of information and communications.
- Work and remain dependable in a fast-paced environment while juggling multiple priorities; think quickly, assess a situation and make sound decisions.
- Read and interpret statutes.
- Maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical ability to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
    - Frequently operate a computer and read a computer screen or typewritten page;
    - Ability to communicate with city employees and the public;
    - Correctible visual acuity and manual dexterity sufficient to operate a motor vehicle;
    - Move between work sites;
    - Lift and carry materials weighing up to 25 pounds on an infrequent basis;
    - Manual dexterity sufficient to operate small hand tools.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in an office setting with extensive work at a computer work station with periods of prolonged sitting or standing. Work involves frequent interaction with co-workers and the public. Work is

occasionally performed out-of-doors which may include exposure to the elements, noise, fumes, construction environment and traffic hazards. Employees are required to use appropriate safety equipment and follow standard safety practices. May require evening and weekend work to meet time-sensitive deadlines.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- BA/BS degree in communications, marketing, environmental education, or related field required.
- Supervisory experience required. Supervisory experience within a government agency preferred.
- Four years of professional communications experience required. Experience in environmental education related to Public Works Water conservation and Natural Resources management preferred.
- Coursework or experience with program design and evaluation preferred.
- An equivalent 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 REQUIREMENTS:

- Employment contingent upon passing a criminal convictions and local background check.
- Valid Washington State driver's license and good driving record. A three-year driving abstract must be submitted at the time of hire, with periodic submission of driving abstract per City policy.
- Certificate of completion from the following FEMA/Emergency Management Institute Independent Study Course within six months of hire: IS-29.a Public Information Officer Awareness.

PREPARED BY: B. Bandarra
A. Accetturo
C. Gatza
12/11

REVIEWED BY:_____
Eric Johnston,
Director of Public Works

REVISED BY:
A. Faria
7/16
R. LaCroix
E. Weinberg
1/22

REVIEWED BY:_____
Renee LaCroix,
Assistant Public Works Director,
Natural Resources