

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: David Chanski, City Administrator
RE: Planning & Zoning Administrator Position
DATE: September 5, 2023



Background

As discussed at the August 1 and August 15 workshops, a full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator position is included in the Preliminary 2024 Budget. This position would replace the current part-time contract planner position.

The benefits of this change include:

- A full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will provide faster response times to inquiries and faster permit turnaround times than a part-time employee.
- A full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will be able to be more proactive in regularly reviewing the Zoning Code, implementing the Comprehensive Plan, and conducting code enforcement.
- A full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will relieve pressure from the Deputy Clerk/Office Manager as this position will be responsible for all Planning Commission related tasks including public notice preparation and publication, meeting packet preparation and publication, development of zoning resolutions, and intake and issuances of building permits. It will also relieve pressure from the City Administrator and Assistant City Administrator (as well as the Deputy Clerk) as there will be significantly less time these positions spend attempting to answer planning & zoning questions because the planner isn't in the office. Additionally, the position will be responsible for Short Term Rental enforcement, which is currently done by the City Administrator and Assistant City Administrator.

With the intent to update the entire City Code (zoning and administration) as well as develop a streets plan, full Capital Improvement Plan, implement new budget software, and the potential of a new city hall construction and Phase II of the Buschmann Road project, a full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will play a key role.

Implementation & Organizational Assessment

On August 15, the City Council also discussed conducting an organizational assessment to analyze the City's current and future staffing needs. An RFP for such an assessment has been issued, but proposals will not be presented to the City Council until October 2nd. Additionally, the assessment itself will likely not be completed until the end of the year should the Council move forward with one of the proposals.

During the discussion on the organizational assessment, the City Council was unclear as to whether the Planning & Zoning Administrator position was being added apart from the organizational assessment or dependent on the organizational assessment. Staff remains confident that a full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator is warranted.

As I shared at the August meetings as well as mentioned above, having a full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator will impact staff's ability to accomplish all the intended projects for 2024. If the City Council does intend to add this position, I do not desire to start the City Code update process until someone is in-place as that person will be intimately involved in the process. Additionally, I anticipate it will take a number of months to get someone in place based on the current employment market, especially for planners. It also would be ideal to have the selected Planning & Zoning Administrator in place prior to the beginning of the construction season so that the person has time to settle in and get familiar with the community, the staff, the Code, and our processes.

Finally, if the intent is to replace the current contract planner with a full-time Planning & Zoning Administrator in 2024, the current contractor should be given notice as soon as possible when that is anticipated to happen.

Staff Request

Given the above, staff is requesting authorization to post the Planning & Zoning Administrator position immediately with an intended start date of January 1, 2024. If the City Council were to decide to not hire the position in the next few months before a candidate has been identified, the position posting could just be removed.

Attached to this memo is a draft job description for the Planning & Zoning Administrator.

Council Action

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the attached Planning & Zoning Administrator job description and authorize staff to begin the hiring process.