

City Council
Date: 6/5/07
REGULAR
Item: 11
Motion

ITEM: Authorize proceeding with the search process for filling the position of planning director

SUBMITTED BY: Susan Hoyt, City Administrator

REVIEWED BY: Tom Bouthilet, Finance Director

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED: The city council is being asked to authorize advertising for a planning director to fill the vacant position of planning director. If the city council authorizes seeking out a candidate to fill the vacant position, the city council need to approve the individual recommended for the position. The position is part of the adopted 2007 budget. The planning director is designed to phase out the consulting staff planner, Ben Gozola. Mr. Gozola began in January, 2007 to take on some of the duties of the former planning director, who resigned in December, 2006. The planning director will manage the planning and building area within the city. He or she will supervise the planner and the building official personnel. The proposed position requires at seven years of increasingly responsible experience, supervisory experience is desirable. The proposed salary range from \$60,000 to \$75,000 a year depending upon qualifications. This is budgeted in the 2007 budget and the cost will be offset by the reduction in the staff duties currently filled by the consulting planner. If approved, it is anticipated that a planning director can begin by September 2007.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The city hired a consulting planner, Mr. Ben Gozola, to provide senior staff planning services by being in the office two days a week and available on an as needed basis at \$90 per hour, after the departure of the city's planning director in December, 2006. This staffing approach was recommended as a temporary arrangement until a new city administrator was hired and the needs of the organization could be evaluated and a future staffing course determined. This has now been accomplished. City Administrator Hoyt began on April 9, 2007. As part of her project director duties prior to her appointment as city administrator, she acted as the liaison to the planning department.

The city administrator has been observing and working with the planning department for several months and has determined that it is organizationally and fiscally prudent to fill the vacant position now. The consulting arrangement has served its purpose well and can do so for the next few months. However, a full time planning director will be instrumental in helping to develop and implement systems for managing land use applications and implementing building projects. With the pending departure of the long time building official, Jim McNamara, in August, 2007, it is a good time for a new planning director to be hired and to help shape the future of the department which handles planning, zoning, building and code enforcement activities. In addition, there a variety of land use related topics and issues and to prepare for the implementation of development activities both in the Village and south of Tenth Street in the coming years as well as significant building associated with this. This will also make sure that the city staff is prompt, responsive and accurate in providing property owners, citizens and the public information on land use planning and building activities.

If approved, the position will be advertised at a range of \$60,000 to \$75,000 per year. The average salary for persons serving this function of planning director, building and code enforcement for cities of similar size is \$79,900. The range for three similar sized cities is \$62,000 to \$91,000. Therefore, the \$75,000 maximum falls slightly below the average.

The hiring of a planning director will replace the routine staff planner duties performed by the consulting planner, Ben Gozola of Schoell Madson, which are being performed at \$90 per hour and are available part time. (This is \$93,600 per year for 20 hours a week). (Typically, a city anticipates 30% additional costs in benefits for a regular employee, which makes the full time planner potential financial commitment an additional \$18,000 to \$ 22,500 in benefits).

RECOMMENDATION:

Given the importance of creating systems and follow through in the land use planning and building areas as well as being responsive to citizens, residents, business owners and property owners, it is time to look ahead and fill the vacant position of planning director that has been temporarily filled by a consulting senior planner. Filling the position is organizationally and fiscally prudent.

The option to filling this position is to continue with the consulting planner as the city's senior planner. However, this does not provide the leadership, the continuity and the availability of having a planning director on staff.

SUGGESTED MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:

Move to authorize the search process for the vacant position of planning director.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:

Introduction/Report	Susan Hoyt, City Administrator
Questions to staff	Mayor and Council members
Questions from the public, if any (3 minutes each)	Mayor facilitates
Consider motion	Mayor facilitates
Discussion	Mayor and Council members
Action on motion	City Council

ATTACHMENT:

1 DRAFT Job Description for Planning Director