

**COMPETENCY MODEL FOR
SENIOR CITY PLANNER
CLASS CODE 7947**

The following competencies have been identified as those that best separate superior from satisfactory job performance in the class of **SENIOR CITY PLANNER**. (Numbers refer to the order of competencies in the Competency Bank.)

- 3. Judgment and Decision Making
- 11. Initiative
- 20. Job Knowledge
- 28. Supervisory Knowledge
- 31. Results Orientation
- 33. Interpersonal Skills
- 36. Emotional Maturity
- 45. Oral Communication

On the following pages are descriptions of each competency, including a definition, the level of the competency required for the class (*italicized and underlined*), examples of behavioral indicators, and satisfactory and superior performance levels.

3. JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING – Accurately assesses situations, seeks new information if necessary, and applies all available information to reach sound conclusions/formulate effective response.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Training and guidelines needed to respond to immediate situations within very specific function are provided (or supervisor available to assist).
- Level 2: General information and guidance to assist in responding to a variety of situations across a range of circumstances are provided.
- Level 3: Little guidance available for responding to a wide range of complex situations with far-reaching and/or enduring consequences.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Effectively responds to atypical situations.
- Asks questions or otherwise obtains additional relevant information to make a decision.
- Formulates a decision and necessary actions based on available facts.
- Correctly infers appropriate response based on information provided and existing policies, personal experience, and/or consultation with others.
- Discusses conclusions/possible responses with others before taking action as necessary.
- Considers impact of decisions on all affected parties.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Correctly assesses routine and unusual situations and reaches appropriate conclusions for actions needed. Obtains additional information and/or consults with others as necessary.

Superior

Evaluates new situations accurately to establish an appropriate response or plan of action. Recognizes the impact on all affected parties, as well as the possible ramifications and/or repercussions of setting a precedent.

11. INITIATIVE – Generates activity that facilitates accomplishment of work.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Offer to help co-workers and/or recognize things to do that facilitate work group accomplishment.
- Level 2: Identify new tasks/projects to be undertaken and assist others with accomplishment of their work.
- Level 3: Determine additional work necessary to improve the function and productivity of the organization or its services to citizens or other customers.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Makes suggestions for improvement in work quality or quantity.
- Finds work to do when own work is slow rather than allow diminished personal productivity.
- Expands scope of work/responsibility in appropriate directions.
- Anticipates upcoming events in order to prepare for them.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Generates goal directed activity rather than waiting to be told what to do. Anticipates what is likely to occur in order to be able to prepare; recognizes that preparation for (and clean-up after) a job is part of doing the job.

Superior

Actively pursues additional tasks/responsibilities that will facilitate effectiveness. Makes extensive preparations for upcoming events or expected changes.

20. JOB KNOWLEDGE – Knows information required to perform a specific job. Includes both widely available courses of study (for example, chemistry, human resources management, graphic arts) and City-specific information (parking regulation and ticketing practices; purchasing procedures; provisions of the City Charter).

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Knowledge acquired after hire in a brief orientation, short training program, or through on-the-job training.
- Level 2: Knowledge acquired through an apprenticeship or extensive training program, or long duration of job performance.
- Level 3: Knowledge acquired through a prolonged external course of study and/or extensive training and experience within the City.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Performs work correctly/avoids technical (job content related) errors.
- Answers technical questions about work accurately.
- Asks few technical questions about the performance of routine work activities.
- Offers advice (“coaching”) to new employees regarding their work.
- Develops training programs for other employees.
- Sought out as a source of information by others.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Sufficient job knowledge to perform work correctly independently. Answers technical questions about work correctly.

Superior

Expertise in technical job information sufficient to serve as a resource to others. May develop training manuals/programs and/or give internal and/or external presentations related to work.

Job Knowledge Areas

1. Knowledge of the environmental review process under Los Angeles City and State CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) Guidelines, and levels of environmental clearance pursuant to State law in order to legally comply with CEQA and effectively mitigate potential environmental impacts such as air quality and noise.
2. Knowledge of planning theories regarding urban form, land use, transportation, infrastructure, housing, urban design, and historic preservation in order to guide future City development, benefit the population, and produce opportunities for employment and housing.
3. Knowledge of urban planning challenges such as air quality, reduced mobility, shortage of housing, decaying infrastructure, solid waste and waste water management, and seismic safety in order to develop potential solutions.
4. Knowledge of the organization, content, and requirements of the Planning and Zoning Code section of the Los Angeles Municipal Code in order to interpret the codes for members of the public, subordinates, and decision makers and to evaluate and make findings regarding development proposals.
5. Knowledge of the organization, content, and requirements of the subdivision section of the Los Angeles Municipal Code and the State Subdivision Map Act in order to supervise the acceptance and processing of subdivision applications.
6. Knowledge of federal and state laws, legislative issues, and court cases affecting local planning and zoning such as the California Coastal Act of 1976, Subdivision Map Act, AB283, Friends of Mammoth, and Nollan v. Coastal Commission in order to supervise the preparation of legally adequate documents and plans.
7. Knowledge of zoning principles and implementation tools such as interim control ordinances and specific plans, and procedures for effectuating zone changes and code amendments such as verifying that the proposed project complies with all on-site and off-site conditions of approval in order to assure that detailed land use regulations are developed and implemented legally, fairly, and in a manner consistent with the General Plan.
8. Knowledge of the procedures and processes involved in reviewing, adopting, or approving/disapproving proposed general plan elements, community plans, Code amendments, zone changes, environmental documents, conditional uses, subdivisions, and zone variances including sequence of hearings and appropriate preparation of reports or maps at a level sufficient to supervise staff in carrying out these procedures.
9. Knowledge of the provisions of the City Charter and Municipal Code such as requirements for findings for discretionary actions in order to assure Department actions are carried out in accordance with Charter requirements.

10. Knowledge of established planning policies and methods such as sequence of reviews and actions by members of the public, Planning Commission, and City Council in order to assure that plans, ordinances, and other documents are properly and legally considered and acted upon.
11. Knowledge of the organization, functions and responsibilities of the various divisions, sections, and units within the Planning Department such as project planning, historic resources, and policy planning in order to integrate section activities into the larger organizational purpose, and supervise divisions, sections, and units.
12. Knowledge of the functions, scope, and authority of other departments and agencies including the Department of Public Works, the Department of Building and Safety, the Department of Transportation, the Regional Planning Commission, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), Metropolitan Transportation Authority, (Metro), Caltrans, and the Coastal Commission as they relate to and may affect local planning matters sufficient to cooperate effectively on matters of mutual concern, ensure necessary coordination, and assure that projects are in compliance with state and regional policies.
13. Knowledge of State General Plan law including the requirements for General Plan Elements and the content and structure of the City of Los Angeles' General Plan including land use, conservation, noise, circulation, open space, safety, housing, health and wellness, and mobility in order to guide City Planning policies and project review.

28. SUPERVISORY KNOWLEDGE – Knows how to assume direct responsibility for all aspects of the performance of a work group, which requires knowledge in the areas of:

- Planning and goal setting
- Creating a safe and positive work environment
- Establishing standards and training employees
- Motivating employees and teambuilding
- Performance Management (assigning, monitoring, facilitating, reviewing and evaluating work, and providing feedback)
- Supporting and developing employees through delegation and participation
- Taking disciplinary action including progressive discipline
- Provisions of employees' MOU's and handling grievances
- Legal requirements including EEO, ADA, FLSA, FMLA, and Workers' Compensation provisions
- Civil Service Commission Rules and Policies related to the management of employees
- Administrative Code provisions related to the management of employees
- Budget processes sufficient to request and justify expenditures in a correct and timely manner

Level of Competency Required by Job:

Level 1: Supervisor – organizes and plans work; reviews and evaluates work.

Level 2: Manager – Supervises supervisors.

Level 3: Executive – Supervises managers.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Assigns work and monitors progress.
- Trains employees to do work.
- Evaluates work and gives feedback.
- Maintains responsibility for work of entire workgroup.
- Represents the workgroup to management and other entities.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Knows how to properly supervise a workgroup in terms of task orientation, interpersonal concerns, and personnel administration.

Superior

In-depth knowledge of supervision in terms of task orientation, interpersonal concerns, and personnel administration sufficient to serve as a resource to others and/or represent department position in a public forum.

31. RESULTS ORIENTATION – Maintains a focus on objectives to be achieved and acts accordingly to ensure their accomplishment.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Remain focused on the task at hand and its purpose. May alter activities if the same result will be achieved. Does not become distracted by extraneous information, events, or details.
- Level 2: Remain focused on the objectives to be achieved and take all reasonable actions necessary to achieve them. If initial activities to achieve objectives are unsuccessful, tries other approaches.
- Level 3: Remain focused on outcome and not process, when possible, in the monitoring and evaluation of staff work. Encourage staff to maintain focus on the objectives of their work and not to be overly affected by nuisances or frustration.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Clearly understands the purpose/objectives of work assignments.
- Recognizes that there are typically many ways to achieve the same objective.
- Makes multiple attempts to achieve objectives when necessary.
- Does not become distracted by unimportant or irrelevant issues.
- Ignores distracters in order to maintain pursuit of the desired outcome.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Maintains a focus on desired outcomes and makes every reasonable attempt to achieve them. Always recognizes the purpose or objective of work activities.

Superior

Maintains a clear focus on desired results, and is persistent in attempts to achieve them. Insistent that all work activities lead to goal accomplishment; expresses dissatisfaction with activities that have no apparent impact.

33. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS – Interacts effectively and courteously with others.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Interact with members of the workgroup, supervision, and/or the public in a cordial, service-oriented manner.
- Level 2: Interact across department lines and with appointed City officials, and/or members of the public, at times under adversarial circumstances, in a cordial, respectful manner.
- Level 3: Interact with appointed and elected City officials, department heads, representatives of external organizations, and/or the media in a cordial, effective manner.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Works well with others toward mutual objectives.
- Does not arouse hostility in others.
- “Disagrees without being disagreeable.”
- Elicits acceptance/cooperation from others.
- Affords all individuals respect, regardless of their role or status.
- Effectively addresses concerns of politicians or others who may have their “own agenda.”

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Behaves in a courteous, respectful, cooperative manner toward co-workers, other City employees, and members of the public.

Superior

Facilitates positive interpersonal relations within/among workgroups and toward members of the public. Adept at finding similarities and grounds for cooperation/mutual benefit.

36. EMOTIONAL MATURITY – Maintains a calm and task-oriented approach to work even under circumstances of conflict or hostility.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Remain focused on the task at hand when interacting with unpleasant or uncooperative people, circumstances are frustrating, the workload is high, or other conditions of the work environment are less than optimal.
- Level 2: Seek effective resolution to complaints/criticisms; recognize that most are not personal, but a reflection of frustration or disagreement on the part of others.
- Level 3: Maintain neutrality and effective performance even in the face of unjustified challenge or direct criticism in a public forum.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Maintains a calm and focused demeanor.
- Continues to listen to others with whom conflict or disagreement has occurred.
- Does not display excessive emotionality: yell, shout, scream, cry, or use profanity.
- Does not “act out:” slam doors, throw things, threaten, or assault others.
- Does not engage in inappropriate acts such as telling off-color jokes, name-calling, horseplay, or bullying.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Demonstrates emotional stability and mature behavior appropriate to the workplace even in circumstances of discord or duress.

Superior

Maintains businesslike demeanor and continues to attempt to address the issue at hand even when faced with personal attacks, unjustified accusations, or other inappropriate behavior from others.

45. ORAL COMMUNICATION – Communicates orally in a clear, concise, and effective manner.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Exchange specific, job-related information orally with others in the immediate work environment or via telephone and/or radio.
- Level 2: Obtain/provide/present general and/or job-specific information orally to a variety of others in various situations.
- Level 3: Obtain/provide/present a diverse array of information orally at varying levels of complexity to a wide range of others across many different situations and circumstances.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Audience clearly understands the intended message.
- Rarely must repeat information in response to questions.
- Refrains from use of unnecessary words, phrases, or jargon.
- Provides a level of detail appropriate to the situation (avoids too much or too little detail).
- Speaks at a level appropriate to the audience in terms of terminology, sentence structure, and simplicity/complexity of ideas expressed.
- Uses words with precision (vocabulary) to convey exact information.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Speaks clearly and audibly, providing the appropriate information and level of detail. Typically conveys the message on the first attempt. Answers questions accurately and directly.

Superior

Speech is direct and to the point. Speaks convincingly and with authority when appropriate. Maintains sensitivity to the audience while providing thorough information with the appropriate level of detail through the use of precise language.