

T0: Personnel Board
FROM: Sarah Olson, Human Resources
SUBJECT: Planner 2, PCED-Planning
DATE: September 9, 2016

At the request of the Planning Division Director Heather Stouder, a study was conducted of a Planner 2 position (Compensation Group 18, Range 08), held by Kevin Firchow (position #629). This position works on high level projects beyond the scope of the current classification and leads projects and initiatives that require expertise and institutional knowledge of planned growth areas and complex development plans. After reviewing the duties and responsibilities associated with this position, as seen in the attached position description, I conclude that the position should be recreated as a Planner 3 position (Compensation Group 18, Range 10), and that the incumbent should be reallocated to the new position.

The class specification for Planner 3 indicates employees perform

...responsible advanced-level professional work in the development and implementation of assigned planning programs, functions and services. This level is characterized by ongoing responsibility for one or more planning activities and employees and work requires a high degree of independence, judgment and discretion, and typically involves program and policy development work.

Distinguishing duties and responsibilities include

Perform all work of a Planner 2; and administer ongoing and substantive planning program(s), e.g. preservation planning, neighborhood planning, current planning and/or other similar level special planning programs and projects.
Provide leadership to professional and technical staff. Assign, monitor, and evaluate work of Planner 1 and 2 positions, paraprofessional and technical staff, clerical staff and interns. Assist Principal Planners and Division Director as needed.
Plan, schedule and conduct work sessions and public meetings as necessary to accomplish program objectives.
Provide primary staff support to policy review bodies; and coordinate/facilitate administrative considerations to implement decisions.
Develop multi-faceted plans and strategies to achieve program objectives within policy parameters. Assist in developing policies and ordinances to carry out program objectives.
Conduct complex and discretionary analysis of various planning issues and initiatives.

This position reports directly to a Principal Planner. The Planning Division has 5 sections: Comprehensive Planning & Regional Cooperation; Neighborhood Cultural & Strategic Planning; Development Review & Plan Implementation; Transportation Policy & Planning; and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Madison Metropolitan Area.

Kevin Firchow started with the City in 2007 as a Planner 1. In 2011, Mr. Firchow promoted to a Planner 2. Mr. Firchow works under the umbrella of Development Review & Plan Implementation in the Planning Division. The Planning Division has undergone recent staff changes and with that change, there was a need for someone to take on a leadership role to mentor two new Planners. Mr. Firchow has taken on that mentorship role since spring, 2016, reviewing initial work products and actively participating in their acclimation to the Division and the City of Madison development review process. Leadership duties involve explaining how to work with the public and Alders, how to review proposals, how to interpret ordinances, and how to communicate to the Plan Commission.

Mr. Firchow has also taken on a leadership role in the Planning Division in regards to reviewing more technical and politically complex development proposals, working closely with development teams, neighborhood groups, other City agencies, and decision makers throughout the development review process as staff to the Plan Commission. In addition, Mr. Firchow had been working with former Principal Planner, Jay Wendt, with Accela. In August of 2015, Planning began to work toward a land use/development review paperless electronic process in Accela. Kevin worked with Jay on this effort, and will continue to implement the new electronic system. He acts as troubleshooter for any questions from staff on the program and manages and coordinates the electronic assignment of land use and development reviews to other Planners.

Mr. Firchow serves as a co-leader of the Owl Creek Neighborhood Resource Team (NRT), where recent investments in transit and park improvements are positively impacting the day-to-day experiences of residents. His role in the NRT is to set up regular meetings, facilitate, coordinate City resources with other resources such as with the schools and neighborhoods, and to communicate and perform regular and engaging outreach to neighborhood members.

The work Mr. Firchow performs is in line with what is expected of the Planner 3 classification. Because of this, I recommend the Planner 2 position, occupied by Mr. Firchow, be recreated as Planner 3 position and the incumbent be reallocated to the new position.

We have prepared the necessary Resolution to implement this recommendation

Editor's Note:

Compensation Group/Range	2016 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2016 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2016 Annual Maximum +12% longevity
18/08	\$58,762	\$69,731	\$78,099
18/10	\$63,787	\$76,660	\$85,859

cc: Heather Stouder—Planning Division Director
 Natalie Erdman—Director of Planning, Community & Economic Development
 Mike Lipski—HR Services Manager