

**City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Job Description**

Position Title:	Senior Urban Forestry & Landscape Planner	Grade Level:	NU07
Department:	OSPCD-Transportation & Infrastructure	Date:	1/14/2018
Reports to:	Director of Transportation and Infrastructure	FLSA Status:	Exempt

Statement of Duties:

The Senior Urban Forestry & Landscape Planner performs field work, technical analysis, public education and interdepartmental coordination around arboriculture practices, plant health, risk management and policy planning to support stewardship of the 12,000 public trees and 160 acres of publicly-accessible open space in New England’s most densely-populated city. Employee will lead program design, program management and project delivery of activities associated with implementing the Open Space goals outlined in the City’s Five-Year and Annual plans under its federal Community Development Block Grant program and consistent with SomerVision, the City’s legally-adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Essential Functions:

The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various type of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. (Note: not all duties are performed by all incumbents in each division).

- Lead and perform arboriculture work in one or more functional areas such as tree condition assessment, risk management, pruning procedures, soil management, insect and disease control, tree removal and planting.
- Inspect trees and related plants for quality, condition, defects, pests and other risks and determine best protective and corrective action.
- Prioritize assignments and balance team schedules for field work and office duties.
- Envision and prepare updates to the City’s Tree Inventory and Urban Forest Management Plan
- Interface with the City’s Department of Public Works around preparation, implementation and evaluation of Standard Operating Procedures for tree maintenance, pruning, removal and related activities.
- Ensure quality control for tree work by private utility companies and contractors, including field work and policy development.
- Design, implement and evaluate training programs for City staff, update with best practices in current field literature.
- Research, prepare and implement planting specifications and oversee pilot projects to test effectiveness.
- Lead community planning efforts associated with urban forestry, green infrastructure, and landscape management.
- Lead Division efforts to prepare and deliver public education messages and materials on care and management of the City’s urban forest.
- Evaluate planting plans for sidewalk, street and parks reconstruction projects.
- Review private development proposals and collaborate around permitting processes with interagency staff.

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Supervision Required

Under administrative direction, working from municipal policies and objectives; individual establishes short-range plans and objectives, own performance standards and assumes direct accountability for department results; and may act as an independently elected official over a department. Employee consults with supervisor only where clarification, interpretation, or exception to municipal policy may be required. The employee is responsible for the development and implementation of departmental policies, goals, objectives and budgets. The employee is also expected to attempt to resolve conflicts which arise and coordinate with others as necessary.

Supervisory Responsibility

Employee, as a regular and continuing part of the job, *leads other workers* in accomplishing assigned work and also performs non-supervisory work that is usually of the same kind and levels as is done by the group led. The work leader is responsible to his/her supervisor for assuring that the work assignments of other workers are carried out by performing duties which typically consist of most of the following: distributes and balances workload among employees in accordance with established workflow and job specialization; assures timely completion of work; instructs employees in specific tasks or explains work methods to be employed and indicated applicable reference material and guidelines; checks work progress and reviews completed work to see that instructions have been carried out; answers questions and resolves problems that arise in the work; provides on-the-job training to new employees; reports to the supervisor on disciplinary problems, performance and training needs of employees; resolves simple, informal complaints of employees and refers others to the supervisor; may approve leave for a few hours or for emergencies.

Accountability

The nature of the professional or technical work means that errors in analysis, techniques or recommendations would probably be difficult to detect. Consequences of errors, missed deadlines or poor judgment could result in excessive costs, delay of service delivery, or legal repercussions to the municipality.

Judgment

Guidelines only provide limited guidance for performing the work. They may be in the form of administrative or organizational policies, general principals, legislation or directives that pertain to a specific department or functional area. Extensive judgment and ingenuity are required to develop new or adapt existing methods and approaches for accomplishing objectives or to deal with new or unusual requirements within the limits of the guidelines or policies. The employee is recognized as the functional area's authority in interpreting the guidelines, in determining how they should be applied, and in developing operating policies and practices.

Complexity

The work consists of employing many different concepts, theories, principles, techniques and practices relating to an administrative field. Assignments typically concern such matters as studying trends in the field for application to the work; assessing services and recommending improvements. Also, covers work performed by division or single department heads.

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Nature and Purpose of Personal Contacts

Relationships are constantly with co-workers, the public and with groups and/or individuals who have conflicting opinions or objectives, diverse points of view or differences where skillful negotiating and achieving compromise is required to secure support, concurrence and acceptance or compliance; OR one-on-one relationships with a person who may be under severe stress, where gaining a high degree of persuasion may be required to obtain the desired effect. The employee may represent to the public a functional area of the municipality on matters of procedures or policy where perceptiveness is required to analyze circumstances in order to act appropriately.

Confidentiality

Employee has access to confidential information obtained during the performance of the regular duties of the position.

Recommended Minimum Qualifications

Education and Experience: Bachelor's Degree in forestry, arboriculture, horticulture, landscape contracting, or a closely related field with seven (7) years' experience or Master's degree in any of above fields. (Master's degree preferred). Bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture or a closely related field, with arboriculture concentration, will be considered. Five (5) years' experience in tree and plant care operations; experience as foreperson or supervisor with a private tree company or landscape service is desirable. Master's degree in a relevant field may be considered. Any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.

Special Requirements: ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) certification is required, or candidates must receive ISA certification within 180 days of hire. Extensions to this requirement may be considered. Additional certifications including ISA Municipal Specialist, Massachusetts Certified Arborist, Registered Landscape Architect are desirable.

Knowledge, Abilities and Skill

Knowledge: Knowledge of principles and practices of arboriculture; ANSI A300 Standards, ANSI Z60.1; and other relevant standards. Direct supervisory experience desirable. Knowledge of community, action groups, politics, neighborhoods and business concerns; considerable knowledge of civil engineering, architecture, landscape architecture and graphic presentation as applied to planning. Considerable knowledge of economic, sociological and environmental aspects of planning; particular knowledge and experience with relation to design, construction and inspection problems commonly met in connection with municipal engineering activities.

Knowledge of personal computers and GIS applications; thorough knowledge of transportation planning as it related to urban or regional planning principles and practices; extensive knowledge of multi-modal transportation design principles.

Abilities: Ability to work effectively with the City's Superintendent of Lights & Lines and City tree crew, which consists of one foreman and two laborers. Ability to interface with City contract arborists and private utility tree contractors. Ability to read and understand plan drawings and supervise implementation of a planting plan on sidewalk, street and parks construction projects.

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Manage field data collection and analysis to ensure accurate and up-to-date tree inventory. Ability to formulate findings and recommendations to interdepartmental staff, and prepare technical reports. Ability to organize and direct the preparation of comprehensive research studies, analyze problems, prepare technical reports and formulate recommendations; ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing with architects, contractors, developers, owners, supervisors, employees, and the public; ability to travel to multiple City locations within the workday. Bilingual or multilingual ability preferred but not required.

Skills: Skilled public speaker; excellent customer service, planning and design skills. Design software skill (i.e. AutoCAD, ArcGIS, Sketch Up, Adobe Suite) is preferable; database software skill (Excel, TreeKeeper, etc) is essential. Strong written and oral communication skills necessary with peers, consultants, contractors, and representatives of other agencies; demonstrated skill at facilitating public presentations; organizational skills managing multiple tasks and deadlines.

Work Environment

The work environment involves everyday discomforts typical of offices, with occasional exposure to outside elements. Noise or physical surroundings may be distracting, but conditions are generally not unpleasant. Employee may be required to work beyond normal business hours in response to attend evening meetings or complete work assignments. When in the field or attending meetings, the environment can be at construction sites and outdoors.

Physical and Mental Requirements

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the position's essential functions.

Physical Skills

Few physical demands are required to perform the majority of work. Work effort principally involves sitting to perform work tasks, with intermittent periods of stooping, walking, and standing. Work requires some agility such as moving in or about construction sites or over rough terrain. When in the field, more physical skill may be required to accomplish the duties. May also be some occasional lifting of objects such as office equipment and computer paper (up to 30 lbs.)

Motor Skills

Duties are largely mental rather than physical, but the job may occasionally require minimal motor skills for activities such as moving objects, operating a telephone, personal computer and/or most other office equipment including word processing, filing and sorting of papers.

Visual Skills

Visual demands require constantly reading documents for general understanding and analytical purposes.