



CITY OF RAPID CITY

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA 57701-2724

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Rapid City Planning Commission

FROM: Marcia Elkins, Planning Director

DATE: August 26, 2002

RE: Position Description of Planner III

At the last Planning Commission there was some discussion regarding the position of Planner III. From listening to the tape, it appears that there was some misinformation provided at the last meeting regarding the Planner III position. Hopefully, the following information will clarify the facts relative to this issue.

- 1) The title "Assistant Planning Director" was replaced with the title Planner III in approximately 1993 when the Personnel Department conducted a City-wide review of all position descriptions.
- 2) The title "Assistant Planning Director" was eliminated from the City's classification system because there were three positions with similar grade in the Department – Planner III (Urban Division), Planner III (Rural Division) and Transportation Planning Coordinator. The term created confusion and implied to some that one of these three positions "out-ranked" the others, when in reality all three were classified at a similar level.
- 3) Scott Anderson was hired as a Planner III in 1995; Laura Johnston was hired as a Planner III in 1996; and Blaise Emerson was promoted to the Planner III position in 1998 and subsequently rehired to the Planner III position in 2000. (Copies of the Payroll Change Notices are available if you wish to review the documentation.)
- 4) Since at least 1988 (prior to my tenure with the City) the Assistant Planning Director/Planner III position has had no supervisory responsibility. (See attached Position Description dated 12/88.) I am not aware of any position descriptions that existed prior to that date.
- 5) There are currently three positions within the Department with the same grade (Grade 21): Planner III, GIS Coordinator and Transportation Planning Coordinator. Each have specific duties assigned to them.

Whenever I am out of town, I inform the Mayor's Office and the entire Planning staff as to which of these three individuals has been left in charge and is authorized to sign any necessary documents. The duty is rotated depending on the schedules of those three individuals. Specific meetings that I normally attend and duties that I normally perform are assigned to a variety of individuals, depending on the work and vacation schedules of those individuals. I always leave a phone number where I can be reached in my absence as directed by a previous administration. I am unaware of any problems arising from this arrangement. To my knowledge, this arrangement has been satisfactory with this administration and the three previous administrations I have served.

If the Planning Commission feels it is appropriate to create a position entitled "Assistant Planning Director," then a position request documenting the need for the new position and the additional duties is submitted through the Human Resources Department and approved by the Mayor and City Council. If the position is approved, the Human Resources Department evaluates the position for inclusion on the salary schedule. Subsequently, the position is posted in house to allow all qualified internal candidates to apply, interviews are held and the most qualified individual selected.

Unlike the Public Works Department with over 250 full time employees, I cannot justify the creation of an Assistant Planning Director position to add an administrative layer to a department with 18 full time equivalent employees. This does not appear to be a cost effective use of City resources. The current arrangement of designating one of three employees with the same grade to be responsible in my absence has worked quite well for the twelve years that I have been associated with the City of Rapid City. This arrangement provides a learning opportunity to three employees without placing an undue burden on any one employee. At this point in time, I cannot justify creating a position of Assistant Planning Director.

Position Classification Description

Rapid City Personnel Department

PLANNING

ASSISTANT PLANNING DIRECTOR

Reports to: Planning Director

Supervises: None

General description of duties:

- Reviews and make recommendations on zoning ordinances, special requests, variances and subdivision requests;
- Develops, communicates and interprets the zoning and subdivision ordinances for citizens and public officials;
- Reviews site design of commercial and industrial building permit applications and subdivision layouts;
- Schedules and conducts prehearing meetings to evaluate recommendations of staff and to assist developers with modifications to their submittals;
- Supervises the preparation of staff reports, including graphical and verbal, for planning commission meetings and presents staff recommendations to commission and Common Council public hearings;
- Presents Planning Department policies and regulations concerning issues such as, annexation, area profiles, and others to various neighborhood meetings;
- May conduct staff meetings and may act as Director in the Director's absence;

Minimum Qualification Requirements:

-Graduation from college with a Master's Degree in Planning or related field, and two years of responsible experience in City planning.

-Requires considerable knowledge of municipal planning processes including all phases of planning implementation. Unusual ability to communicate with others. Certification with the American Institute of Certified Planners desirable.