

# **REPORT**

**To the Honorable Mayor and City Council  
From the City Manager**

September 24, 2007

## **SUBJECT**

Revisions to the classification of Urban Forestry Specialist

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve revisions to the classification of Urban Forestry Specialist

## **BACKGROUND**

Larry Barwacz, Public Works Services Director, requested revisions to the existing job specification of Urban Forestry Specialist to better emphasize the arboriculture and urban forestry responsibilities. Human Resources conducted a review of the classification and determined that other enhancements were necessary to meet the changing needs of the Urban Forestry Program, ensure consistency with the labor market trends, and to expand recruitment opportunities. While the proposed revisions do not substantively alter the definition, characteristics and typical duties for the class, revisions have been made to clarify and elaborate on these elements.

Specifically, the changes that were made to the Urban Forestry Specialist class include: adding language to illuminate the specialized arboriculture knowledge required; clarifying responsibility for providing technical direction to contractors, developers and permit applicants; adding a substitution pattern that allows for a Bachelor of Science degree to be substituted for one year of experience; and changing the professional license requirements to expand the usefulness of the class. Also, the years of experience has been changed from five years to three years, as this is more realistic for this level of position based on an internal review and an analysis of current market trends.

In past years, recruitment for this classification has proven to be challenging, given the difficulties in locating and retaining qualified candidates. It is expected that the recommended changes will enhance the city's recruitment efforts and result in an increase in the number of qualified applicants for the position.

Attached for your review is the revised job specification of Urban Forestry Specialist (see attachment 1.)

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The council could take no action. This will result in the continued use of the existing classification.


Council could also advise staff to conduct further research and come up with another recommendation.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact for adopting the recommendation to add the new classification of Urban Forestry Specialist.



Bob Bell  
Human Resources Director



Ed Everett  
City Manager

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Job description for the new classification of Urban Forestry Specialist
2. Resolution

**RELATED DOCUMENTS IN CITY CLERK'S OFFICE**

None

**CITY OF REDWOOD CITY  
URBAN FORESTRY SPECIALIST**

**DEFINITION**

Under general direction, administers and coordinates the City's Urban Forestry program in Public Works Services Department; supports Community Development Services Department in administering the City's urban forestry and tree programs and ensuring compliance with ordinances; acts as the city's liaison between contractors and the public; and performs other specialized arboriculture functions as assigned.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

This is the most advanced class in the Tree Maintenance series. The Urban Forestry Specialist classification is distinguished from the Tree Maintenance Leader by the specialized arboriculture knowledge and its responsibility for monitoring all phases of work performed by tree maintenance contractors. This position has the responsibility to communicate the City's tree policies, practices, and standards to the public.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

General direction is provided by a Public Works Services manager.

Responsibilities may include providing functional and technical direction to developers, permit applicants, and contractors related to tree maintenance, and tree protection, and general arboricultural practices.

**EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL AND IMPORTANT DUTIES**

1. Act as the City's liaison between contractors and the public; plan, coordinate and monitor the work of contractors and permittees, as assigned; ensure compliance with City tree maintenance standards and all applicable regulatory requirements.
2. Assist in developing and implementing the City's goals, objectives, and priorities and communicating them to the public, staff, and contractors in a timely and supportive manner; ensure adherence to industry maintenance standards, City ordinances and applicable regulatory requirements.
3. Recommend to Public Works Services and Community Development Services management necessary improvements of safety standards, work methods, quality standards, and updates to the Urban Forestry Master Plan and Management Plan.
4. Assist in preparing requisitions for necessary equipment, materials and supplies; assist in preparing supplies and equipment specifications.

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5. Maintain records necessary to monitor performance of the urban forest; utilize tree inventory data to produce reports showing the condition and status of the Urban Forest.
6. Respond to inquiries and investigate complaints related to tree maintenance operations; recommend corrective action as necessary to resolve complaints; keep abreast of current maintenance functions and recommend improvements to the City's policies and practices.
7. Assist division management to prepare budget estimates and requested reports.
8. Inspect project sites to evaluate work progress and quality; evaluate contractor work progress; resolve work problems; determine additional needs; formulate necessary actions to correct deficiencies.
9. Prepare, develop, and update notification letters and other public information materials.
10. Plan and coordinate projects and maintain a positive relationship with non-profits and community organizations.
11. Serve as primary liaison and technical expert with Community Tree Board, Community Development Services, and Parks Recreation and Community Services; formulate plans and programs; review permits and project submittals; review plans and specifications; and write conditions and requirements.
12. Inspect trees on public and private property to ensure that tree protection measures are followed during construction, and that Tree Preservation Ordinance or Street Tree Ordinance has not been violated.
13. Review permit applications and approve or deny applications based on ordinance criteria; follow-up with appropriate action.
14. Review plans project submittals for compliance with City policies and practices.
15. Attend plan review committee meetings to discuss projects and submittals to coordinate the tree policy compliance with other City departments.
16. Appraise tree value of trees on public and private property for determining replacement conditions and requirements.
17. Diagnose pest issues and plant conditions; coordinate pest control measures using available resources; make recommendations for treatment and coordinate IPM control solutions.

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**OTHER JOB RELATED DUTIES**

Perform related duties and responsibilities as assigned.

**JOB RELATED QUALIFICATIONS**

**Knowledge of:**

Techniques of supervision, communication and training.

Arboriculture and Urban Forestry practices.

Methods of tree pruning, tree removal, tree planting and tree preservation.

Pests and diseases of trees and methods for control.

Operation and repair of tree maintenance equipment.

Computer operation.

**Skills to:**

Evaluate tree conditions and recommend maintenance or mitigation actions

Experience and familiarity with Climbing trees with rope and saddle; operating an aerial lift; use and care of a variety of equipment (heavy & light), tools and apparatus; rig with ropes and accessory tools; performing skilled work on trees.

Investigate tree conditions and analyze circumstances

Write detailed reports

**Ability to:**

Direct and oversee the work of others (including contractors/other vendors).

Read and interpret blueprints, diagrams and schematics.

Prepare reports and requisitions.

Establish, maintain and foster a positive and harmonious working and customer service relationship with those contacted in the course of work.

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Provide excellent customer service to the public, other agencies, and other City employees.

**Experience and Training Guidelines:**

Any Combination of experience and training that would likely to provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

**Experience:**

Three years of increasingly responsible experience in the field of arboriculture, urban forestry management, or tree maintenance operations. .

**Education:**

Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth grade supplemented by specialized training in tree maintenance, arboriculture, and urban forestry. A Bachelor of Science degree from an accredited college with major course work in arboriculture, forestry, horticulture or a related field may be substituted for one year of work experience. (Associates degree or Bachelor's degree in arboriculture, urban forestry or environmental horticulture desirable)

**Licensees or Certificates:**

Possession of, a valid California Class C Driver License.

Possession of an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Arborist Certification (WCISA Tree Worker Certification desirable).

Possession of a C.P.R. and First Aid certificate.

Possession of an International Society of Arboriculture Municipal Specialist Certification and/or a California Urban Forest Council Certified Urban Forester is desirable.

**Special Requirements:**

Must be able to perform heavy manual labor, work outside in varying climatic conditions, work at heights in trees, lift heavy objects, and be in sufficiently good health to perform job duties.

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING JOB DESCRIPTION FOR URBAN FORESTRY SPECIALIST**

**WHEREAS**, the job specification for the position of Urban Forestry Specialist has been prepared by the Human Resources Department to better emphasize arboriculture and urban forestry responsibilities; and

**WHEREAS**, said job specification has been reviewed by the City Manager which is attached hereto as Exhibit A; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council has reviewed said specification and desires to evidence approval thereof; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed change in job specification does not result in any fiscal impact on the budget for the remainder of the 2007/08 fiscal year.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF REDWOOD CITY AS FOLLOWS:**

1. The job specification for the position of Urban Forestry Specialist as set forth in Exhibit "A" hereof and attached hereto is hereby approved. Any and all prior job specifications are hereby superseded.

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