City of Bellingham
Classification Specification

CLASS TITLE	**Park Specialist – Urban Forestry**
DEPARTMENT	**Parks And Recreation**
UNION:	**1937**
SG:	**112**
CS:	**Entry/Promotional**
FLSA:	**Y**
EEO/SOC CODE:	**SC/37-3019**

NATURE OF WORK:

Plans, schedules, implements, monitors, and evaluates work for trees and forest stands in City parks, public spaces, open space areas and right-of-way areas. Performs technical tree work, provides tree hazard assessments, makes recommendations for forest stand management, removals and plantings. Responsible for selection, care, operation, maintenance and replacement of equipment in program. The work requires a variety of specialized techniques and equipment for climbing and rigging. Serves as lead to staff assigned to program area; provides training, technical guidance, day-to-day direction and provides input on performance evaluations. Coordinates activities with other sections of the Parks Department, other City departments as well as developers and contractors. Represents the City as a consulting arborist for City departments, providing a professional opinion and written reports on City tree issues. Provides input on budgetary requirements, tracks and orders materials, equipment and supplies for program area, including price and product evaluation as well as bid packet creation and evaluation.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

This position is distinguished from the Park Technician – Urban Forestry by its responsibility for the Urban Forestry program area, to include monitoring, evaluating, scheduling, and implementing work. While the Park Technician operates primarily in a hands-on capacity, supporting the program by implementing the Park Specialist's approved work plan, the Park Technician – Urban Forestry operates in a broader, more strategic capacity. Incumbents in this position require an in-depth knowledge and understanding of trees, tree care and tree problems as they relate to the urban environment as well as less managed ecosystems. The specialized nature of this work requires a high level of mental and physical proficiency to perform technical tree work, including aerial work.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Reports to the Park Urban Forest Field Supervisor . Work is performed under general supervision and the guidance of City and Department policies and procedures and applicable regulations. Serves as lead to Park Technicians, Park Workers, and seasonal employees as assigned. Works with and monitors the work of outside contractors. Maintains close working relationships with Park Operations staff and other City Departments.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

1. Under general supervision, develops and implements work programs and schedules for program area. Plans, schedules, implements, monitors, and evaluates work activities involved in managing the City's urban forest. Trains and leads the work of others in tree care practices including lifting and lowering devices, chainsaw operation, aerial lift operation,

felling, pruning, and chipping. Completes necessary written and computerized reports for area of assignment. Works with Park Urban Field Supervisor to plan and prioritize tree work activities.

2. Represents the City as a consulting Arborist for Parks, Planning, and Public Works, as well as developers and contractors. Reviews plans, provides plans, makes recommendations and monitors implementation in the field. Provides job time and cost estimates. Uses GIS and other mapping/information systems to identity and track urban forestry assets in City controlled areas.

3. Performs technical tree work such as pruning, tree felling, bucking, brush clipping, and tree removals using a variety of ground and aerial techniques and equipment. Utilizes rope and saddle and spur and flip line climbing techniques, aerial man lifts, cranes, chainsaws, and rigging systems. Performs aerial rescue, as needed.

4. Assesses hazard tree concerns, considers the City's potential risk and liability and provides recommendations, including written reports. Provides input and shares information with City Attorney's office regarding tree damage claims.

5. Assesses tree situations and provides recommendations for actions including plantings, removals and other management practices.

6. Serves as lead worker in program area. Provides training, technical guidance and day-to-day direction to staff assigned to the program area. Provides feedback regarding employee performance to supervisor.

7. Leads daily job safety planning by conducting job safety meetings, performing thorough site hazard assessments and walkarounds, refines work plans for crew and equipment, establishes job hazard announcements and facilitates post-job debriefs to identify lessons learned and continuous improvement opportunities. Leads or participates in weekly safety meetings.

8. Inspects, documents and updates inventories and maintenance requirements for program area. Manages equipment, including maintenance coordination, inventory and repair history and replacement.

9. Operates a wide variety of equipment such as trucks, brush clippers, tractors, loaders, chainsaws, blowers, trimmers, as well as other power equipment and hand tools. Operates large dump trucks with large brush chippers in tow. Performs routine maintenance on tree care gear, tools and equipment.

10. Completes service requests, work orders, inspections and other reports using a computerized maintenance management system. Ensures that work orders are complete, accurate and adhere to Parks maintenance standards.

11. Assists in the development of program area budget including maintenance and project costing and tracking, costing and purchase of equipment and materials and supplies including bid package formation, submittal and review.

12. Processes and approves street tree permits in the absence of supervisor. May represent the department on the Landmark Tree Committee, responding to tree requests from developers and the public as needed.

13. Answers questions and concerns from the public and from other City staff.

14. Trains others in tree and shrub care and the care and use of the related equipment.

15. Applies pesticides in accordance with City, state and federal regulations.

16. Performs work of the class below as needed or assigned.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. May attend evening meetings.

2. Performs related duties within the scope of the classification as assigned.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities):

Knowledge of:
- Arboriculture in tree species, characteristic and requirements best maintenance practices, pests and local ecology.
- Working knowledge of horticulture including a wide range of both native and ornamental plants including characteristics and maintenance requirements.
- Working knowledge of soil science.
- Working knowledge of integrated pest management concepts and strategies for best management practices.
- Working knowledge of managed and natural ecosystems.
- Arboricultural equipment operation, care and maintenance.
- Maintenance management systems.

Skill in:
- Team skills including leadership, problem-solving, interpersonal skills, adaptability/flexibility and time management.
- Good judgment, assertiveness, courtesy and tact necessary to work effectively with diverse groups of people including the general public, other City employees and personnel from local agencies.
- Computer skills in word processing, GIS and database applications.

Ability to:
- Ability and knowledge to perform technical aerial tree work including rope and saddle, spurs and flip line as well as aerial lifts.
- Read, understand and work from plans and drawings.
- Approach, diffuse and resolve confrontational situations.
- Understand and follow City policies and procedures.
- Ability and willingness to follow directions and to perform assigned work independently with minimal supervision.
- Ability and willingness to pursue on-going training to improve knowledge and skills and to stay current with developments within the field of arboriculture.
- Ability and willingness to adhere to provisions of the team agreements for the Operations Division.
- Ability and willingness to work outdoors in all weather conditions.
- Ability to perform work with minimal supervision.

- Ability to maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical abilities to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
  - Frequently climb and work from heights of at least 150 ft.,
  - Frequently communicate accurate information and ideas with others;
  - Balance, flexibility, and agility to climb and conduct work in trees,
  - Frequently move between work sites;
  - Frequently lift objects weighing up to 50 lbs., and transport objects weighing up to 100 lbs.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

The majority of work is performed out-doors, in all weather conditions, performing technical tree work and assessing tree hazards and other situations in the City's areas of responsibility. The work environment creates potentially hazardous conditions, including working at considerable heights with chainsaws and rigging and working in traffic zones. Work is conducted in natural areas, developed park sites, and urban streetscapes. Work requires use of appropriate safety equipment. Some work will be performed in an indoor setting while performing documentation of work and some equipment maintenance. Responds to emergency call-out at all hours. There is a possibility of exposure to hostile and offensive language from the public.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Four years of recent experience in technical arboriculture including technical tree removals and pruning, rope and saddle, spurs and flip line, aerial lifts, rigging and related tools and equipment.
- Successful completion of two years of coursework related to arboriculture may be substituted for one year of required experience.
- Two years experience participating in the planning and execution of arboriculture in significant rural or urban environments including hazard tree assessment and written reports.
- Current International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist credential required at time of hire.
- One year lead worker experience preferred.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Employment contingent upon passing a criminal convictions check, child and adult abuse records check and local background check.
- Valid Washington State driver's license by time of hire and good driving record. A three-year driving abstract must be submitted prior to hire, with periodic submission of driving abstract per City policy.
- Ability to secure a Washington State Pesticide License within 12 months of hire.
- Ability to secure a valid flagging/traffic control certification within 12 months of hire.
- Ability to secure a valid First Aid and CPR certification within 12 months of hire.
- Ability to secure Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) Certification within 12 months of hire.

- Must possess and maintain International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist certification throughout employment.
- Must pass pre-employment drug test prior to hire.
- Willingness and ability to respond to emergency callouts on weekends and evenings or when special circumstances require.

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COMMISSION ADOPTION: 8/12/26