CITY OF BELLINGHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: **Public Works Assistant Director – Strategic Affairs** **E-PLAN SG:E2-12**

DEPARTMENT: **Public Works** **CS:N FLSA:N EEO4/SCOCODE:OA/11-2032**

JOB SUMMARY:

Responsible for planning, organizing, staffing and directing the strategic communications, external affairs, public engagement, education and policy support functions of the Public Works Department. Assists the Director of Public Works in developing and implementing department-wide programs and policies that support the City's goals, enhance organizational effectiveness, foster a positive work environment and contribute to the City's long-term success and financial sustainability.

Engages and collaborates with local, state, federal agencies, tribal nations and community partners to advance the mission and goals of Public Works and the City. Assures compliance with department and City policies and procedures, collective bargaining agreements and legal requirements. Promotes the Public Service competencies of service orientation, results orientation and teamwork and cooperation. Ensures that business practices and standards of performance are accomplished in an effective and cost-efficient manner. Actively engages in policy discussions, public involvement, and engagement, working with elected officials, policy makers, and community members. Develops and maintains relationships with staff, other departments, individuals and entities outside City government to foster collaboration, inclusion, and effective use of resources. Promotes and supports the One City approach by demonstrating a commitment to public service, fostering Citywide collaboration, taking accountability for outcomes, and leading with curiosity, humility and respect to deliver consistent, effective and meaningful service to the community.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP:

Reports to the Director of Public Works. Work is performed under general guidance and direction and in accordance with applicable local, state and federal regulations, policies and procedures, and contract agreements. Serves as a senior member of the Public Works management team. Provides supervision, guidance and direction to assigned Public Works staff supporting communications, outreach, education, and engagement functions. May act in responsible charge in the Director and Deputy Director's absence as assigned.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

1. Leadership: Serves as a senior member of the Public Works Management team. Provides leadership in strategic planning and policy development on a broad array of Public Works related issues. Coordinates the Public Works strategic communications, external affairs, public engagement, education and policy support activities with other departments and offices to ensure alignment with the City's critical objectives, vision and values. Provides program and project support to other departments to help the City deliver great government. Supports and promotes One City by working collaboratively across departments, approaching challenges with curiosity and humility and taking ownership of outcomes to deliver equitable, consistent, high-quality services and solutions that contribute to a safe, thriving and future-ready community.

2. Strategic Planning: Assists the Public Works Director in providing leadership and direction in the development and implementation of strategic short and long-range plans, programs, goals, performance measures and objectives related to communications, external affairs, public engagement, education and policy support for the Public Works Department. Anticipates and identifies emerging issues and engagement trends, stakeholder concerns and evolving challenges that may affect Public Works programs, projects, services and initiatives and develops proactive strategies to address them. Applies awareness of multiple co-existing regional interests to identify and understand potential concerns and impacts. Oversees or conducts research to obtain required data to establish or review policies, procedures or programs.

3. Policy Development: Assists the Mayor, City Council, and City departments in the establishment and implementation of various City policies, procedures, and regulations with significant public, operational, or regulatory implications for Public Works programs, services, and operations. Identifies City interests and concerns and develops achievable policies and proposals to address City and inter-jurisdictional interests and concerns. Provides strategic recommendations regarding public messaging, stakeholder outreach and engagement approaches. Keeps current in new developments in the field through professional membership, attendance at conferences, networking with other professionals, research and reading. Uses this contemporary knowledge for program, work system, and service delivery improvements.

4. Fiscal and Business Management: Provides technical, administrative and fiscal direction to assigned Public Works programs and functions, including program planning and management, budget preparation, interdepartmental and interagency coordination, and personnel administration. Facilitates and coordinates cooperative planning efforts with other divisions, departments, outside governmental agencies, community resources and entities as required.

5. Personnel Management: Develops and maintains a workforce committed to, and with highly developed competencies in, customer service, results orientation and teamwork. Serves as a primary point of contact for personnel matters for assigned staff and functions. Manages employee relations by promoting open communication, collaboration and accountability. Establishes systems for staff engagement and ensures timely completion of performance appraisals. Consults with supervisors on personnel actions and addresses labor relations matters in compliance with labor agreements and personnel policies. Actively supports strategies and programs to foster an inclusive workplace and create a culture of respect and belonging.

6. Public Involvement and Communications: Presents reports, recommendations, budgets and issues for resolution to department heads, Mayor, City Council, boards and commissions, including summarizing data and statistics and analyzing findings. May represent the department director at public meetings, boards and commissions, interagency meetings, or special interest groups and other public settings; interacts regularly and directly with community members and partners. Serves on boards and committees. Directs engagement strategies tailored to the needs, interests and impacts of affected communities and ensures opportunities for meaningful public participation. Collaborates closely with Communications Department staff to implement Citywide communications strategies, public information and engagement efforts that support department and City priorities.

7. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Actively contributes to and implements strategies and programs to foster an inclusive workplace, ensure equitable practices and reduces biases. Collaborates with staff across the City to create a culture of respect and belonging.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Performs other related work of a similar nature and level.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities):

Knowledge of:

- Working knowledge of Public Works Department operations and procedures and the operations of other City departments with related responsibilities.
- Working knowledge of relevant government and/or community institutions, organizations, procedures and processes, and pertinent federal, state and local regulations. Familiarity with area neighborhood issues and concerns.
- The full range of current strategic communication, media relations, public involvement and public opinion research strategies, tactics, techniques, formats and platforms and how to apply them in various circumstances.
- Public Works related regional public policy, including transportation, solid waste, water, wastewater, and natural resources.
- Fiscal management including budget preparation, grant and contract administration, service and intergovernmental contract administration, cost and budget analysis, expenditure control and records management.
- Government processes, including legislative, regulatory, agency mandates and local authority.
- Current principles, practices, strategies and techniques of public engagement and public-sector communications. Applicable local, state and federal laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures related to the areas of assignment.
- Computer operation and a variety of software including work processing, spreadsheet, database and other applications specific to the area of assignment.
- Safety and security hazards, precautions, standards, policies and procedures pertinent to the area of assignment.
- Best practices for fostering equitable practices and an inclusive workplace.

Skill in:

- Highly effective team building and leadership skills including consensus-building to resolve conflict, negotiate agreements and gain cooperation among competing interest groups.
- Strong business and fiscal management skills.
- Strategic planning and development of short and long-term plans and programs.
- Estimating and analyzing costs and effectiveness of programs, monitoring information, working accurately with numbers, and interpreting statistical information.
- Listening attentively and communicating effectively, both orally and in writing, with individuals and groups in clear, concise language appropriate for the purpose and parties addressed, including preparing and making public presentations which can be understood by non-technical listeners and preparing and directing preparation of comprehensive written reports, materials and correspondence.

Ability to:

- Apply good judgment and problem-solving techniques to make reasoned, timely and consistent decisions on administrative matters and resolve technical problems.
- Use tact, discretion, respect, persuasion, diplomacy and courtesy to gain the cooperation of others and establish and maintain effective teams and a professional relationship and rapport with public officials, representatives of other agencies or entities, department heads, co-workers, employees and diverse members of the public.
- Maintain a high level of personal and professional integrity and honesty.
- Quickly grasp and manage highly complex and technical issues in a fast-paced environment and in a context of inter-related issues, systems, projects and strategies.

- Interpret, explain and apply complex guidelines, codes, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Maintain current knowledge for assigned areas and adapt to new technologies, keeping personal and team technical skills up-to-date and using technology to increase productivity.
- Maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical ability to perform essential functions of the job, including:
  - Frequently operate a computer and other office machinery such as a keyboard, mouse, phone, and fax machine;
  - Communicate accurate information and ideas with others;
  - Occasionally move between work sites;
  - Infrequently traverse on uneven surfaces such as gravel parking lots, docks, and lake side beaches with a mix of sand, gravel, pebbles and rocks;

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is primarily performed in an office setting and involves travel to various work sites and meeting locations throughout the City. Extended periods of concentration and sedentary work are required. Work may also infrequently require visits to field locations throughout the City which may include walking for long distances through varying terrain. Possibility of exposure to a variety of environmental allergens standard to the area of assignment. Frequently drives motor vehicle to perform duties. Uses appropriate safety equipment and follows established safety policies, practices and procedures. This is a position with minimal to moderate physical exertion requirements.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, communications, environmental policy, planning, or a related field required; master's degree preferred.
- Minimum of five (5) years progressively responsible experience in strategic communications, public administration, public policy development, public engagement, intergovernmental coordination, or related area, including three (3) years of supervisory experience required.
- Municipal supervisory experience preferred.
- Experience in municipal government, including strategic planning and the development and implementation of public-facing programs or initiatives is preferred.
- An equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to provide the applicant with the knowledge, skill and ability to successfully perform the essential functions of the job will be considered.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

- Employment contingent upon passing a criminal background check.
- Valid Washington State driver's license and good driving record. Candidates must submit a three-year driving abstract prior to hire.
- Willingness and ability to frequently attend and participate in evening meetings.

PREPARED BY: M. Olinger
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10/26

REVIEWED BY: _____
Joel Pfundt,
Director of Public Works