

CITY OF CHATTANOOGA
Classification Specification Title: Municipal Forester

Department: Public Works

Pay Grade: GS.13

Supervision Received From: Dep. Dir. City-wide Services

FLSA Status: Exempt

Supervisory Responsibility For: Gen. Supervisor, Forestry

Established: 6/29/07

Supervisor & City Laborer

Revision Dates: 4/2/25;

10/20/23; 10/06/23

CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY:

Incumbents in this classification are responsible for managing the operations of the Municipal Forestry Division. Duties include: developing strategies and plans related to the urban forestry program; attending City meetings; writing planting plans, and specification manuals; developing educational materials and programs and presents to citizens; providing advice to the public; coordinating tree issues with other City departments; conducting on-site inspections of urban forests; and, looking for signs of pests, pathogens, and other threats.

SERIES LEVEL:

The Municipal Forester is a stand-alone classification in the forestry group.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

(The following duties ARE NOT intended to serve as a comprehensive list of all duties performed by all employees in this classification, only a representative summary of the primary duties and responsibilities. Incumbent(s) may not be required to perform all duties listed and may be required to perform additional, position-specific duties.)

Supervises Municipal Forestry Division staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff is trained; ensuring that employees follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations.

Manages the day-to-day operations of the Municipal Forestry Division, which includes: planning, coordinating, administering, and evaluating programs, projects, processes, procedures, systems, standards, and/or service offerings; ensuring compliance with Federal, State, and Local laws, regulations, codes, and/or standards; coordinating activities between multiple service areas; and, working to integrate and coordinate service areas.

Serves as a liaison to the Tree Commission, which includes formulating plans to carry out initiatives, including: writing planting plans; preparing, reviewing, and analyzing vendor contracts; preparing specification manuals; developing long-term comprehensive plans; developing and disseminating educational materials and programs; giving presentations regarding tree care; preparing annual reports and presenting to the Commission; and, performing other related activities.

Communicates and collaborates with internal departments, external consultants, vendors, external agencies, the general public, and/or other interested parties to coordinate work activities, exchange information, and resolve problems.

Represents the City and/or the Division at a variety of internal and/or external meetings, public events, training sessions, on committees and Boards, and/or other related events in order to receive and/or convey information.

Performs on-site inspections to check the conditions of the urban forest and the status of projects; coordinates, through subordinate staff, the progress of work and the quality and timeliness of work completion; identifies pests, pathogens, and other threats to the urban forest; monitors the work of vendors and contractors; and, performs other related activities.

Maintains computer database of service requests, work orders, and work histories.

Prepares the annual tree planting plan, which includes: coordinating activities with applicable neighborhood associations, citizens, and various agencies regarding needs; checking street tree sites to identify vacant spots and dead trees needing replacement; preparing bid documents; coordinating the work of in-house crews and contract vendors for the installation of trees; inspecting quality of work and initiating corrective action when required; processing invoices for payment; and, performing other related activities.

Forecasts, prepares, and administers division budget, including capital improvement budget; prepares cost estimates for budget recommendations; submits justifications for budget items; monitors and controls expenditures; and, manages financial operations.

Supervises and participates in the preparation and evaluation of specifications, scopes of work, and requests for proposal for new vehicles, equipment, and services; negotiates related contracts.

Monitors the status of work in progress and inspects completed work; assists with complex problems and situations and provides related technical expertise.

Compiles and monitors operational, administrative, and statistical data related to fleet services operations, including productivity, depreciation, and related items; prepares related reports, charts, graphs, procedures, and documentation; and, analyzes data and identifies trends.

Monitors division inventory of equipment, tools, parts, and supplies; determines need for new tools and equipment; receives and approves purchase requests; and initiates and/or approves orders for new/replacement items.

Provides technical expertise and guidance to employees and contractors, ensuring compliance with applicable contract terms and conditions and authorizing contractor payments.

Supervisory Duties and Training Duties.

Manages the operations of two sections in addition to Forestry: the 24/7 Emergency section, and the Central Business District section.

Responsible for screening candidates and coordinating interview panels for candidates for roles in Forestry, Emergency, and CBD.

Ensures new employees are trained in safety and standard operating procedures.

Ensures that corrective actions are made promptly and fairly, as needed, as outlined in the

Employee Information Guide. Ensures that 24/7 staffing is maintained for the Emergency Section, including lining up substitute workers as necessary.

Responds to calls 24/7 from Emergency employees regarding road hazards or other issues.

Returns to work after hours as needed to help coordinate a response to weather-related or other emergency conditions.

Coordinates the activities of the Central Business District section to include emptying trash in metal cans, leaf collection, graffiti removal, sidewalk cleanup, tree pruning, herbicide and mulch application, and other downtown beautification duties.

Coordinates the 3rd shift pickup of downtown garbage and recycle, including communicating with employees in Solid Waste, Downtown Chattanooga Alliance, and business owners to ensure compliance with City code, and safe and efficient refuse collection.

Coordinates with the Solid Waste Coordinator, the Central Business District Crew Leader, the Forestry Supervisor, and the General Supervisor for Emergency to ensure garbage and recycling receptacles are staged and collected before and after special events.

Ensure employees are trained in basic tree ID and biology.

Ensure employees are trained in ANSI-compliant tree care techniques for pruning, rigging, removal, support systems, planting, air spade excavation, mulch application and others.

Ensure employees are trained in the key safety issues of chainsaw use, temporary traffic control, and electrical hazards.

Performs tree risk assessments in accordance with the International Society of Arboriculture's

TRAQ procedures; schedules tree maintenance or tree removal to mitigate hazards identified; schedules repeat risk assessments as needed.

Through 311 requests, internal communication, or proactive inspection, identifies trees on private property threatening the City's right-of-way and properties; completes tree risk assessments and communicates the findings with the Office of the City Attorney and private property owners; when tree removal is required, confirms compliance with such orders.

Stay informed on existing and new pests and pathogens that may threaten the health of the urban forest, through publications and continuing education events.

Maintain a C03 or C06 Pesticide Applicator's License from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture.

Survey street and park tree populations regularly to look for signs of pest infestations, disease, or widespread nutritional deficiency.

Take samples and identify forest health issues with the help of the University of Tennessee's diagnostic labs.

Formulate Integrated Pest Management Plans to address any forest health issue.

Review civil plans attached to Land Disturbing Permits to ensure compliance with the Tree Ordinance.

Inspect building sites prior to construction to ensure existing public trees are surveyed and protected during construction by fencing and other measures.

Enforce the tree replacement standards described in the Arboricultural Specifications Manual, so that any permitted removal of a healthy tree is mitigated 1:1 by caliper inch, through planting of new trees or through an equivalent reimbursement payment to the tree planting fund.

Require revisions to civil plans to ensure tree planting specifications are in alignment with City standards.

Direct the application of pesticides and soil amendments, including record-keeping.

Specify tree species for all new street tree planting, to continue or compliment existing street trees, in alignment with the Urban Forestry Master Plan.

Inspect tree protection measures during construction and new planted trees to ensure compliance with the stamped civil plan set.

Communicate regularly with developers, landscape architects, engineers and other construction professionals through the permitting process.

Forest Health duties.

Tree risk assessment duties.

Planning duties and Permitting duties.

Regularly meet with and coordinate efforts with other City departments, nonprofit organizations, and community groups on tree canopy and tree maintenance issues.

Annually publish a State of the Trees report summarizing operations over the previous year, and make the report available to City Council members and the Mayor's Office.

On a two-year cycle, ensure that a high-resolution tree canopy assessment is conducted by a trained contractor.

On a five-year cycle, ensure that the inventory of trees in the central business district and other commercial areas is updated by a trained contractor.

On a five-year cycle, update the Urban Forestry Management Plan to include operational needs, objectives, and strategies.

On a ten-year cycle, update the Urban Forestry Master Plan, incorporating the state of the urban forest, trends, threats, opportunities, and long term objectives, and specifying species to be used.

Uses, carries, and answers their cell phone for business purposes as determined by the assigned job duties and the department head.

Must meet regular attendance requirements.

Must be able to maintain good interpersonal relationships with staff, co-workers, managers and citizens.

Must accomplish the essential functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodations, in a timely manner.

Performs other duties as assigned.

This position is deemed essential during inclement weather situations, and must report to or remain at work, even when administrative closings are announced, as determined by the Department Head.

DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC DUTIES (if any):

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Masters Degree in Forestry, Horticulture, Landscape Architecture, or related field and six (6) years related experience.

LICENSING AND CERTIFICATIONS: Valid Driver's License. Certification as an arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

Knowledge of managerial principles; horticulture principles; urban forestry principles; landscape architecture principles; budgeting principles; contract management principles; tree care and maintenance principles and practices; tree identification and species principles; agronomy principles; water management principles; tree support and protection systems; tree assessment and risk management principles and practices; applicable Federal, State, and Local laws, ordinances, codes, rules, regulations, standards, policies, and procedures; Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) contents; and, public relations principles.

Skill in monitoring and evaluating the work of subordinate staff; prioritizing and assigning work; developing and managing budgets; managing the work of vendors and contractors; identifying tree species; diagnosing plant disorders; assessing hazardous tree situations; interpreting, applying, and communicating applicable laws, ordinances, codes, rules, regulations, standards, policies, and procedures; preparing equipment and tool specifications; managing inventory; providing customer service; managing databases; using a computer and related software applications; and, communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, and the general public, sufficient to exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Positions in this class typically require: fingering, grasping, talking, hearing, seeing and repetitive motions.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Light Work: Exerting up to 20 pounds of force occasionally, and/or up to 10 pounds of force frequently, and/or negligible amount of force constantly to move objects. If the use of arm and/or leg controls requires exertion of forces greater than that for Sedentary Work and the worker sits most of the time, the job is rated for Light Work.

Incumbents may be subjected to extreme temperatures.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

Safety Sensitive: Y

Department of Transportation - CDL: N

Child Sensitive: N

The City of Chattanooga, Tennessee is an Equal Opportunity Employer. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and encourage both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with the employer.