COLUMBUS
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MEMO

To: Mayor & City Council Members
From: Elizabeth Mursko, City Administrator
Date: January 23, 2023
RE: Code Compliance Inspector Position

Background:
During our 2022 budget meetings, the Mayor and City Council discussed creating a new forty (40) hour city staff position to primarily ensure compliance with the zoning code to investigate and document complaints pertaining to nuisance, health, and safety. Code enforcement is an essential local government function that includes enforcing ordinances related to municipal issued permits, licenses, and land use.

How would Columbus utilize this position?

1. Zoning Code Permit Inspections
2. Residential Zone Business Inspections
3. Building Permit "Zoning" Inspections
4. Zoning Code Questions requiring Visual Inspections of Property
5. General Code Compliance
6. Nuisance Investigation
7. Community Education, Outreach and Events
8. Prepare Letters, Electronic File Tracking, and Documentation for Litigation
9. Miscellaneous Inspections as requested by other staff members
10. Miscellaneous tasks as needed seasonally

Job Description: See Attachment
Job Posting: See Attachment

Recommendation:

1. Approve job description for Code Compliance Inspector
2. Approve new 40-hour position to include pay scale, pay equity point allocation for Code Compliance Inspector
3. Direct City Administrator to post ads, review applications and recommend candidates to personnel committee for interviews.

16319 Kettle River Boulevard, Columbus, MN 55025
651.464.3120 Twin Cities **651.464.5922** Fax
www.ColumbusMN.com

Job Posting: League MN Cities, Linked In, Website, Electronic Sign

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City:	City of Columbus
Position Title:	Code Compliance Official
Starting Hourly Wage:	26.90-XX
Application Deadline:	February 17, 2023 4:00 pm

Do you like working with people? The City of Columbus is seeking a person that would be responsible for education and enforcement of city zoning permits, public nuisance codes, and related inspections. The City's code compliance program is carried out through complaint-based and proactive enforcement efforts, with emphasis on respect, customer service and problem solving; and will pertain to nuisance, health, and safety and/or compliance with imposed conditions and standards on business/residential permits. This position will collaborate with internal and external partners on zoning and building department applications critical to the future development of the city.

This full-time position is eligible for vacation, sick, and holiday accrual of benefits. Applicants must submit a cover letter, completed City application and current resume to be eligible for this position. City Application forms and more information is available at Columbus City Hall, 16319 Kettle River Blvd., Columbus, MN 55025 or by going to the website: ColumbusMN.us

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Similar Skill Set and Classification: 228-245 (233) points

Scale: 26.90-33.36 (238 points) ($55,952.00 – 69,388.80)

City of Columbus - Code Compliance Inspector

Draft Job Description

01.17.2023

Under general supervision of the City Administrator/Zoning Administrator, the Code Compliance Inspector is responsible for education and enforcement of city zoning and nuisance codes, and related inspections. The City's code enforcement program is carried out through complaint-based and proactive enforcement efforts, with emphasis on respect, customer service and problem solving; and will pertain to nuisance, health, and safety and/or compliance with imposed conditions and standards on business/residential permits. The Official educates and seeks voluntary compliance, or if non-compliance continues, proceeds along an approved procedural pathway including but not limited to issuing citations and initiating abatement procedures. Extensive field work is required, with rare weekend and evening work.

Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will have a working knowledge of municipal codes, zoning and building standards, proper investigation methods, and techniques for code compliance enforcement, rules, and procedures. Skill in preparing written and oral reports is required, as well as the ability to educate members of the public about municipal codes and regulations, and the expertise to interpret laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations. Must maintain effective working relationships with City staff, elected officials, and the public, and communicate effectively verbally and in writing. Successful performance of the work requires frequent use of tact, discretion, and independent judgment. This is an experienced level position in code enforcement which requires organizational skills and ability to prioritize work, meticulous follow up and documentation and ability to consistently meet critical deadlines.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Code Compliance Officials require **knowledge** specific to:

- Understanding and interpreting City ordinances and state laws relevant to code enforcement.
- International property maintenance code
- Administration
- Departmental rank structure
- OSHA standards and regulations concerning employee safety
- Inspections
- Construction and procurement of materials
- Courtroom procedures

Code Compliance Officials require the following **skills and abilities**:

- **Interpersonal skills:** Code Compliance Officials interact with a variety of individuals, from government officials to contractors to property and business owners. They should have strong social skills and be comfortable working with people. They should be able

to work in adverse conditions and remain calm under pressure. Must work effectively as a team member with other city staff and consultants.

- **Communication skills:** Similarly, Code Compliance Officials should speak and listen carefully and respectfully to people about code violations and the steps needed to fix them. They must maintain confidentiality and be adept at using radios and other communications equipment.
- **Problem-solving:** When these professionals find code violations, they need to recommend the most effective ways to resolve them. They need to be skilled in conflict resolution and de-escalation tactics.
- **Technology:** Code Compliance Officials should have the computer skills to perform research and update databases and case records and be able to effectively use office equipment such as a telephone, fax, copy machine, and digital camera.
- **Organizational and Time Management:** It is imperative that the Officer maintains organized and accurate records, can effectively multi-task and work effectively with frequent interruptions. Understands and follow departmental and City policy and procedures.
- **Observation:** Because visual observation is an important part of code enforcement, officers should have good eyesight, depth perception, peripheral vision, and color awareness.
- **Leadership:** Code Compliance Officials should have the confidence and leadership skills to guide and influence people and enforce rules.

Work environment

Code Compliance Officials spend some time in an office doing data entry and research on a computer. They spend most of their time, however, driving between and visiting inspection sites. They work in all types of weather conditions and need the strength and stamina to walk, stand, crouch, and lift heavy objects.

General Duties

Responds to Complaints

- Responds to a wide variety of citizen complaints of a non-emergency nature, such as neighborhood disputes and ordinance violations. Investigates complaints to determine whether there is a public nuisance, health or safety ordinance violation, document accordingly and determine and communicate steps toward resolution.

Educates

- Meets with property owners, tenants, and businesses to review and explain code requirements and violations or potential violations for the purpose of securing code compliance. Provides public education by effectively communicating how to comply with City ordinances.

- Provides information and answers questions related to enforcement topics addressed in code, including but not limited to the following: minimum interior and exterior standards of building property maintenance; outside storage of material, vehicles, trailers; waste removal and storage; temporary signs and events; right of way obstruction; nuisance weeds and grass, snow/ice removal, noise, lighting; residential parking; placement of fences and other improvements on property line; vacant and foreclosed properties; and similar property code enforcement requirements.

- Advises non-compliant residential- zoned businesses on the appropriate commercially zoned areas for possible relocation.

- Attends community stakeholder meetings.

Performs Prompt, Accurate and Respectful Inspections

- Performs inspections for compliance with conditions included in Conditional Use Permits, Interim Use Permits and other non-building related permits.

- Performs inspections on a multitude of reported or observed issues, e.g., abandoned/stored vehicles; commercial, residential-zoned business and interim use permit violations; noise complaints; junk; sanitation, residential permit violations, etc. Discuss ordinance violations with property owners, inspect property, document issues, and prepare investigative reports.
- Re-inspects properties cited in violation for compliance, and issues appropriate follow-up correspondence/notices/citations.

Communicates and Facilitates Steps towards Compliance

- Develops and communicates realistic timelines for bringing noncompliant properties into compliance.
- Drafts correspondence to noncompliant properties documenting the nature of City ordinance violation and issues notices of required corrective action and follows up on status of corrections to ensure compliance.
- Prepares criminal complaints; hires contractors; issues warning notices, compliance orders, and citations; and collaborates with other departments or agencies to resolve nuisance, property maintenance and zoning code violations.
- When necessary, testifies at administrative hearings and in court regarding violations and corrective action.
- Facilitates abatement of nuisance properties when necessary, following legally required procedure.

Performs Necessary Research and Maintains Accurate and Complete Records

- Research land ownership records, permitting records and past or current code violations using computer.

- Maintains accurate electronic records and related documentation of nuisance, zoning, and property maintenance code complaints in a manner consistent with requirements

for possible use in court proceedings. Maintains a detailed and accurate log of complaints, investigations, actions taken, and resolutions.

- As directed, assists in researching, revising, and recommending changes in the processes and procedures associated with code enforcement.

Reporting

- Prepares monthly and annual reports regarding code enforcement activity as directed by supervisor.
- Keeps supervisor up to date regarding status of significant code enforcement complaints and cases and suggests process improvements and code amendments for discussion and consideration.
- Prepares and distributes a variety of correspondence, memoranda, notices, flyers, brochures, media releases and reports relating to code enforcement issues which may include memorandums related to property code compliance matters for the Police Department, Community Development Department, and occasionally for the City Council.

Coordinates with Other City Departments or Jurisdictions

- Works in compliance with other departments responsible for code compliance (e.g., Building Official, Public Works, Watershed Organizations, Anoka County Sheriff Dept.) and maintains communications for establishing coordination with other departments/agencies relevant to code enforcement activities.

- Refers noncompliant properties to other enforcement entities (Sheriff's Office, County Office, MPCA, etc.) when necessary.

Maintains Professional Demeanor

- Maintains cleanliness of assigned vehicle and equipment.
- Projects and maintains a positive image when dealing with emotional or angry citizens.
- Performs other related duties of a comparable level or type, as apparent or assigned.

Minimum Qualifications Required: Equivalent to graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in law enforcement, building inspection or a field related. Additional experience as outlined below may be substituted for the required education on a year-for-year basis up to a maximum of two years. Two (2) years of experience in the enforcement of zoning laws and building codes with a public agency. This work must have included significant public contact and the exercise of investigative or inspection skills.

Preferred Requirements: Bachelor's degree in law enforcement or related field with experience working with municipal ordinances/policies and code enforcement. Familiarity with municipal planning and zoning.