

Kenai Peninsula Borough

Planning Department

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brent Johnson, Assembly President
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

THRU: Peter A. Micciche, Mayor *PM*
Justen Huff, Human Resources Director *JH*

FROM: Robert Ruffner, Planning Director *RR*

DATE: October 26, 2023

RE: Resolution 2023-074 Authorizing the Reinstatement of One Full-Time GIS Analyst
Classified Service Position (Mayor)

The Borough's Planning Department respectfully requests that we begin to rebuild our Geographic Information Systems ("GIS") division back to pre-Covid status. This request is to reinstate the GIS Analyst Position within the Planning Department.

The scope of the GIS division is most often associated with the public viewer and the creation of parcels; however, GIS is a critical component of KPB emergency management response, 911, Assessing, Elections, Roads, and Planning Departments. The GIS Division does not just make maps, it relies on a rich and complex database management process combined with specialized programming development that allows for the end product of visual display. GIS has been progressively increasing the efficiency of other departments by creating solutions that reduce staff hours required to perform everyday tasks. This includes field applications, public outreach applications, procurement and delivery of aerial imagery, and the development of custom internal solutions. The GIS Division is also relied upon to provide accurate and readily-available data, high-quality maps and comprehensive technical assistance to the public, private businesses, and other agencies.

In 2020, GIS staff was reduced from five positions to three while demand for the above support continued to increase. Two positions were not replenished and eventually cut from the budget. It is important that we begin to add full capacity back to the GIS Division to accommodate succession planning for such a critical function in the KPB organization.

With the addition of a Borough surveyor position, the Planning Department will be moving toward improving the accuracy of our parcel fabric – the foundation layer for much of our geospatial data infrastructure – which is used in our public facing viewers, in third party apps (such as the heavily-used app "OnX"), and most importantly in day-to-day Borough operations including tax assessment functions.

Page -2-

October 26, 2023

RE: R2023-074

The current demands on staff are already unrealistic to meet the needs of the Borough. GIS is not equipped to handle the additional workload created by the work of the surveyor at current staffing levels.

This analyst position will assist both GIS specialists in their day-to-day work load and – possibly more importantly – provide a depth to the Department that is currently lacking as staff currently has no ability to cross train or share responsibilities and/or create adequate documentation or SOPs for their position. This leaves the above-mentioned Departments in a vulnerable position if even one staff member is missing. The analyst will begin to cross-train under one or both specialists, create SOPs, other documentation, and metadata (background information that documents and describes the provenance, nature and quality of the data as well as its intended use). This type of information will be critical as process and data is removed from its original source.

This position will also assist other Borough departments and service areas with the acquisition of geospatial data and the associated set-up and maintenance of software/ hardware to support the unique individual needs of Borough staff.

The Planning Department projects that it will have sufficient lapse in personnel to cover the costs of this position in FY24, assuming a hire date of 02/01/2024.

Your consideration is appreciated.

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT
FUNDS/ACCOUNT VERIFIED**

Account: 100.11232.40110_____

Amount: \$ 79,500 for the remainder of the FY

By: CJ Date: 10/26/2023

By: BH