

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk's office at (310) 618-2780. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. [28CFR35.102-35.104 ADA Title II]

Direct questions or concerns to the Commission Liaison at (310) 618-2967 or individual department head prior to submission to the Commission. Parties will be notified if the complaint will be included on a subsequent agenda.

The Civil Service Commission is an advisory body to the City Council that meets on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers and on other Mondays as required. All meetings are open to the public except for those portions related to personnel issues that under law may be considered in closed session.

**TORRANCE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION AGENDA**  
**REVISED**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2025**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**6:00 P.M. IN LeROY J. JACKSON COUNCIL CHAMBER**  
**AT 3031 TORRANCE BL.**

**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION MAY TAKE ACTION ON ANY ITEM LISTED ON THE AGENDA**

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL:** Commission members Adelsman, Hamada, Kohus, Lohnes, Sasaki, Chair Herring

**2. FLAG SALUTE:**

**3. REPORT OF STAFF ON THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Bl. and on the City's Website on Wednesday, February 19, 2025.

**4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED, AND/OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS**

**5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

*This portion of the meeting is reserved for comment on items under the Consent Calendar or items that are not on the agenda. Under the Ralph M. Brown Act, Commissioners cannot act on items raised during public comment, but may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed; request clarification; or refer the item to staff. Speakers under this Public Comment period will have no longer than 1 minute per speaker. Speakers please turn off or leave your cellular phone when you come to the podium to speak.*

**6. CONSENT CALENDAR**

*Matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion and one vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed by a Commissioner from the Consent Calendar and considered separately.*

**6A. Approve the Examination for Supervising Plans Examiner.**

Recommendation of the Human Resources Director that your Honorable Body approve conducting the Supervising Plans Examiner examination on an open continuous basis consisting of an Application Review (Qualifying), a Performance Test (30%), and an Oral Interview (70%). Staff is requesting approval for a three-month eligible list.

**7. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

**7A. Deny Protest of Eligible List for Fire Engineer.**

Recommendation of the Human Resources Director that your Honorable Body deny the protest of the eligible list for Fire Engineer.

*Consideration of public employee employment will be conducted in closed session per California Government Code Section 54957(b)(1), unless the employee requests to have the appeal conducted in public session.*

**8. HEARINGS**

No Business to Consider.

**9. CLOSED SESSION**

**9A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL- EMPLOYMENT (California Government Code §54957(b) (1)):**

- 1) Deny Protest of Eligible List for Fire Engineer.

**10. COMMISSION ORAL COMMUNICATION**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

- 11A.** Adjournment of Civil Service Commission Meeting to Monday, March 3, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.



Honorable Chair and Members  
of the Civil Service Commission  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

**Honorable Members:**

**SUBJECT: APPROVE THE EXAMINATION FOR SUPERVISING PLANS EXAMINER**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommendation of the Human Resources Director that your Honorable Body approve conducting the Supervising Plans Examiner examination on an open continuous basis consisting of an Application Review (Qualifying), a Performance Test (30%), and an Oral Interview (70%). Staff is requesting approval for a three-month eligible list.

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:**

There is no current eligible list for the classification of Supervising Plans Examiner. There is one (1) current vacancy in the Community Development Department due to a retirement.


The class specification has been reviewed by the Community Development Department and appropriately reflects the position for the examination process.

The previous examination in 2019 was weighted as follows: Application Review (Qualifying), a Performance Test (30%), and an Oral Interview (70%). There will be no change in the exam types and weights.

There is not a sufficient pool of internal candidates to qualify, therefore, an open recruitment is recommended.

Respectfully submitted,

HEDIEH KHAJAVI  
HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

By   
Leallani Stewart  
Human Resources Analyst

CONCUR:



Hedieh Khajavi  
Human Resources Director

NOTED:



Brianne Cohen  
Civil Service Manager

Attachment: A) Supervising Plans Examiner Class Specification



City of Torrance  
**SUPERVISING PLANS EXAMINER**

<b>CLASS CODE</b>	3117	<b>SALARY</b>	\$48.71 - \$59.22 Hourly \$8,443.07 - \$10,264.80 Monthly \$101,316.80 - \$123,177.60 Annually
<b>BARGAINING UNIT</b>	Engineers Association & Torrance Fiscal Employees Association	<b>ESTABLISHED DATE</b>	November 01, 1977
<b>REVISION DATE</b>	January 01, 2019		

**DEFINITION**

Under direction, supervises assigned staff involved in permit and plan check processing. Examines, checks and approves engineering plans, specifications, and reports for a variety of complex structures; reviews applications for building permits; does related work as required.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS / SUPERVISION EXERCISED/RECEIVED**

Distinguished from the Assistant Building Regulations Manager in that the incumbent is responsible for the overall day to day operation of Plan Checking including supervision, training, and discipline. Work is judged primarily on overall results with latitude in determining work methods and assignment requirements. Work may require the development of recommendations consistent with directives, policies, and regulations. Distinguished from Building Inspection Supervisor in that the incumbent checks structural plans of greater complexity requiring a more thorough understanding of plan checking including the ability to calculate load and stress factors.

Receives supervision from Assistant Building Regulations Manager. Supervises Plans Examiners and support staff.

**EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL DUTIES**

*The following duties represent the principal job duties; however, they are not all-inclusive.*

- Examines, checks and supervises the checking of plans for residential, commercial and industrial structures involving complex structural features and design for conformance to City building codes and State Housing Act;
- Supervises staff; supervisory duties include instructing, assigning, planning and reviewing work, evaluating work performance and completing performance evaluations, coordinating activities, maintaining standards, allocating personnel, acting on employee problems, selecting new employees, implementing employee discipline, providing training, advice and assistance as needed;
- Supervises a group of employees engaged in accepting and checking plans at a public counter prior to the issuance of building permits;

- Makes engineering calculations of loads, stresses and other calculations necessary to approve proposed plans;
- Confers with architects, engineers, contractors and owners regarding methods of construction and features of designs;
- Makes field investigations to determine compliance with approved plans and to verify and approve solutions to unexpected and unforeseen difficulties that arise during construction;
- Makes analyses of proposed structures including load stress determinations, occupancy factors, weather factors, seismic and other types of natural disasters that may occur to structures;
- Prepares and supervises the preparation of technical engineering reports covering a wide variety of structural problems;
- Reviews output of computer programs related to the plan checking process;
- Assists with the technical training of various field personnel engaged in building inspections;
- Oversees the maintenance of computer databases for records;
- Directs and supervises records and imaging activities.

#### **Examples of Other Duties:**

*The following duties represent duties that are generally performed by this position, but are not considered to be principal job duties:*

- Participates as a member on interdepartmental and intradepartmental teams, committees and boards as required;
- Receives and responds to public inquiries and requests for assistance and takes appropriate action to resolve problems;
- Performs related duties as assigned.

### **QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES**

#### **Education and Experience**

*Any combination of education and experience that would have provided the required knowledge and skills is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and skills would be:*

Bachelor's Degree in Civil or Structural Engineering, Architecture or a related field; and three years progressively responsible professional experience in engineering or architecture involving structural design and/or plan checking of residential, commercial and industrial structures. One year in a supervisory or lead capacity is preferred.

Possession of an ICBO Certificate in Plans Examining or Registration as a Civil Engineer may be substituted for one year of the required experience.

#### **License and/or Certificates**

Possession of a valid Class C Driver's License.

#### **Knowledge of**

- Principles and techniques of supervision and training;

- Building trade methods and terminology;
- Applicable Federal, State, and local regulations including Building Code, and all other parts of the City Code and State laws required to be enforced by the City, such as State energy, noise and handicapped regulations, City zoning codes, uniform building codes, and State Housing Act;
- Methods and engineering principles used in calculating structural loads, stress and other design tolerances to approve plans;
- Nomenclature used in plan checking;
- English usage, spelling, grammar, and punctuation;
- Office methods and equipment including filing systems;
- Organization, procures and operating details of the assignment;
- Best practices in customer service;
- Budget preparation principles;
- City and Department mission, including strategic goals and objective;
- City ordinances and administrative rules and regulations affecting departmental operations and personnel matters;
- General City operations.

### **Ability to**

- Supervise subordinates including training, assigning, reviewing and evaluating work performance, counseling and disciplining staff and resolving grievances;
- Exercise sound judgment and logical decision making;
- Analyze complex issues, evaluate alternative solutions, develop sound conclusions, and recommend a course of action;
- Interpret and apply policies, procedures, laws and regulations pertaining to assigned programs and functions;
- Interpret and apply Memoranda of Understanding, City ordinances and administrative rules and regulations affecting departmental operations and personnel matters;
- Review documents related to department operations;
- Observe, identify and problem solve office operations and procedures;
- Understand, interpret and explain department policies and procedures;
- Interpret and implement City rules and procedures; laws pertaining to supervision;
- Read and interpret plans, blueprints and specifications;
- Calculate structural loads, stress and other calculations necessary to approve proposed plans;
- Prepare technical engineering reports on a wide variety of structural problems;
- Explain and interpret City building codes and State Housing Act to other employees, engaged in plan checking or building inspections, architects, contractors, engineers and owners of structures;
- Conduct field inspections to insure compliance to approved plans;
- Understand and interpret computer output relating to the plan checking process;
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work including City employees, City and other government officials, and the general public;
- Make clear and concise oral and written presentations.

### **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

*Performance of the essential duties of this position includes the following physical demands and/or working conditions:*

Work is performed in a standard office environment with extensive public contact and constant interruptions.

Physical demands include the ability to stand or sit for prolonged periods of time; to occasionally stoop, bend, kneel, crouch, reach, and twist; to lift, carry, push, and/or pull light to moderate amounts of weight; to operate office equipment requiring repetitive hand movement and fine coordination including use of a computer keyboard; and to verbally communicate to exchange information.

Must be available to work evenings or weekends for special assignments.

**CAREER LADDER INFORMATION**

Experience gained in this classification supplemented by additional education, training and certification may serve to meet the minimum requirements for promotion to Assistant Building Regulations Manager.

**ESTABLISHED/REVISED DATE**

Established Date: November 1977

Revised & Retitled: January 2019

Department Review Date: February 2025

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the Civil Service Commission  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

**SUBJECT: DENY PROTEST OF ELIGIBLE LIST FOR FIRE ENGINEER**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommendation of the Human Resources Director that your Honorable Body deny the protest of the eligible list for Fire Engineer.

**BACKGROUND**

At your meeting of September 23, 2024, your Honorable Body approved the ordering of the Fire Engineer examination to be conducted on a promotional basis. This exam would produce an eligible list to fill current vacancies, as well as other vacancies that would occur within the two (2) year duration of the eligible list.

The Fire Engineer examination consists of a Written Test (Qualifying) and Performance Test (weighted 100%), which is comprised of a Driving Practical (25%), Pumping Practical (50%), and Truck/Aerial Operations Practical (25%). The recruitment period for this position started on November 4, 2024 and closed on November 18, 2024. There were nineteen (19) applications received. All 19 candidates met the minimum qualifications and were invited to the written test which was administered on December 4, 2024. Fifteen (15) candidates successfully passed the written test and were invited to the performance test which was administered the week of January 27, 2025 to January 30, 2025. The performance test was the last component of the examination. An eligible list was promulgated on February 3, 2025 and the eligible list contained seven (7) candidates.

On February 3, 2025, a candidate submitted a protest of the eligible list to the Civil Service Manager, stating they would like to protest the results and that they believed there were two possibilities as to why they failed the driving portion of the performance test (Attachment A). The candidate then spoke to the Civil Service Manager and stated they would provide further documentation regarding their reasons for protesting the eligible list (Attachment B).

**ANALYSIS**

The candidate states they are protesting the performance test and are "specifically protesting the driving portion of the exam." The candidate states in the protest that there were two items of concern regarding why they believe they failed this portion of the test. The two (2) items that are referenced in the protest are the following: 1. Stopping the apparatus in the crosswalk to avoid hitting a vehicle and 2. The apparatus was parked on a hill and rolled backward when the candidate tried to move the apparatus forward.

There were two subject matter experts (SME) who were observing the candidates during the driving exercise. The driving exercise assesses the candidate's knowledge, skill, and ability to safely and appropriately operate a fire apparatus while on the road. This exercise provides "real life" simulations that the candidate may experience while driving the apparatus. Prior to starting the driving portion of the exercise, the candidate states there was a problem with the seat belt sensor which they brought to the SMEs attention. The SMEs acknowledged that the apparatus was having "issues" with the seat belt sensor, however, the seat belt sensor did not in any way affect the results in a candidate's ability

to manipulate the apparatus appropriately. If there had been issues with the apparatus to the extent that it would have affected a candidate's driving, the apparatus would have been replaced.

#### Item #1 Stopping in the middle of the pedestrian crosswalk

The candidate states that while conducting the driving exercise they were instructed to make a left turn and, as they were passing the pedestrian crosswalk, they saw a vehicle approach at a fast rate of speed from the other direction. They made the decision to stop the apparatus in the crosswalk to allow the vehicle to pass through the intersection as to ensure there would not be a possible collision. The candidate states that they continued to the objective which was a simulated need for medical aid. The two SMEs who were observing the candidate during this exercise did not see this as a failing action and therefore did not mark the candidate as failing to meet the objective of this section of the exercise.

#### Item #2 Apparatus rolls backward

The candidate states that upon reaching the area of the simulated medical aid, they were told to park the apparatus. The area the candidate was told to park in front of was on a hill. The candidate states that when they parked the apparatus, they turned the wheels left and placed the chocks as they were trained to do. Upon completing this part of the exercise, they were told to move on to the next exercise and to drive up the hill to the next simulation. The candidate states that when they placed the apparatus in drive that they put slight pressure on the throttle to avoid the apparatus rolling backwards while releasing the maxi brake (parking brake). They state that when they did this, the apparatus did not go into gear and they had to put their foot on the throttle and slowly release the maxi brake. As they slowly released the maxi brake, they state they felt the engine not respond to the throttle and had to put their foot on the service brake immediately which made the apparatus roll back. They also state that they were able to stop the apparatus before the tires hit the curb.

The goal of the take-off from the uphill parked position is to test the candidate's ability to safely drive away from a parked position on an uphill incline. As the candidate is operating a 40,000 lb. vehicle and due to the mechanics of gravity while operating this vehicle on an incline, the Torrance Fire Department's expectation during the exam process is that a candidate does not roll backwards at any time during the exercise. This expectation is in place to protect life and property.

As an apparatus can differ in their operation, all the candidates were informed on January 13, 2025 of the apparatus that would be utilized on the Engineer's exam. The apparatus that was utilized in the exercise requires the following sequential operation: Place the transmission shifter in gear (D for drive), note that it is in appropriate gear, then throttle up, and release the maxi brake to move forward. If the candidate had noticed that the transmission did not shift into gear appropriately, the candidate should not have released the maxi brake. This is important as it is the only thing holding the apparatus in place on the hill.

The candidate could also have left their foot on the service break, release the maxi brake, place the transmission in drive, and with their right foot on the throttle slowly release the brake foot and increase the throttle to move forward. If the candidate did not throttle up enough to counteract gravity, then the apparatus would roll backward. If the candidate had followed either of these two operations, the apparatus would not have rolled backwards. Per the SMEs, the candidate released the maxi brake and the apparatus began to roll backward, which demonstrates that the candidate failed to have the transmission in the correct gear or he failed to give enough throttle to overcome the incline on the hill.

It should also be noted that per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) regarding the operation of this type of vehicle: when the maxi brake is reapplied, the transmission will default to neutral so that when the candidate thinks they are pulling against the maxi brake, they are actually

throttling up in neutral, not drive. This also means that when the maxi brake is released, the vehicle will roll backwards in neutral while the driver continues to rev the engine in neutral until the vehicle is stopped, which in this case it was stopped by the curb.

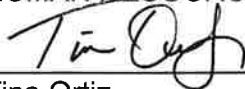
The candidate states that they repeated the same process again when they tried to move the apparatus forward a second time. On their second attempt, the candidate was able to drive the vehicle forward on the incline as the apparatus was no longer having to fight gravity. Also, since the vehicle was now resting against the curb and could no longer roll back, this allowed the apparatus to move forward after the candidate applied enough throttle.

Per the SMEs who were assessing the candidate during the driving exercise, they both stated that the candidate should receive an "automatic fail" due to the candidate's unsafe actions which allowed the apparatus to roll backwards on the hill. The candidate believes that there was not significant movement of the apparatus when they rolled the apparatus backwards. However, both SMEs state in their comments that the apparatus was rolling backwards down the hill and that it was the wheels hitting the curb that stopped the vehicle, not the candidate (Attachment C). If the wheels had not been turned left, the apparatus could have possibly gone downhill and hit an object or person. An uncontrolled roll back is considered an "automatic fail" as the candidate failed to demonstrate to the SMEs that they were able to operate the apparatus in a safe manner.

In conclusion, based on the analysis of the information provided, staff recommends that your Honorable Body deny the protest of the Fire Engineer eligible list.

Respectfully submitted,

HEDIEH KHAJAVI  
HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

By   
Tina Ortiz  
Principal Human Resources Analyst

CONCUR:

  
Hedieh Khajavi  
Human Resources Director

NOTED:

  
Brianne Cohen  
Civil Service Manager

Attachments: A. Fire Engineer eligible list first protest received 2/3/25 (Commissioner Only)  
B. Fire Engineer eligible list first protest received 2/5/25 (Commissioner Only)  
C. Driving Exercise – Performance Panel Rating Sheets (Commissioner Only – Test Material)

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the Civil Service Commission  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

**Honorable Members:**

**SUBJECT: CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION CLOSED SESSION**

The Civil Service Commission will meet in Closed Session for the following purpose:

a. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EMPLOYMENT (California Government Code §54957(b) (1)):

- 1) Deny Protest of Eligible List for Fire Engineer

Respectfully submitted,

*Brianne Cohen*

Brianne Cohen  
Civil Service Manager