**Class Summary**

The responsibilities of this classification involve maintaining and developing a rate forecast in support of sewer rate and capacity charge determinations, short and long term financial forecasting, short and long-term customer projections, economic and demographic modeling, long-term capital planning, commodity price and inflation tracking, economic impact analysis, and assessing policy issues and technical documentation. Utilities Economist may lead or supervise staff.

**Distinguishing Characteristics**

This is a single-level classification. Responsibilities include providing expert economic analysis and advice to a self-funded utility with a debt portfolio and capital program subject to high levels of financial complexity and regulations from internal King County policies and external sources such as bond covenants and requirements.

This classification is distinguished from a Budget and Finance Officer IV in that the Utilities Economist is recognized as an expert in long term demographic, demand and utility rates forecasting for a regional wastewater utility while a BFO IV oversees the development, implementation and monitoring of budget and other revenue generating systems and administers financial programs and systems.

This classification is distinguished from the Financial Services Administrator in that the FSA serves as the primary advisor in the areas of financial systems, processes and projects, and coordinates and administers high-level, complex financial systems, projects and processes while the Utilities Economist serves as a lead for economic analysis and designs on-going and unique analytical, technical and statistical support for Wastewater Treatment and its customers.

**Examples of Duties**

1. Maintain and develop the Division’s rate forecast to complete financial forecasts in support of sewer rate and capacity charge determination and issuance of bonds.
2. Track, analyze and project long-run and short-term changes in the Wastewater Treatmemt Division customer base demographics, including differentiating effects among various customer types. This includes designing and applying statistical, econometric and other economic analysis to determine relationships among variables affecting the level and growth of the customer base and monitoring trends to provide periodic updates to forecasts.
3. Design, evaluate and use complex financial models needed to determine inputs to the capacity charge forecast, including historic estimates of the new customer share of costs and revenues from prior years, forecasts of the new customer share of future capital projects and expenditures, allocations of growth and existing customer shares of prior years of treatment and conveyance capacity, and detailed forecasts of capacity charge revenues for the future.
4. Monitor and revise forecast assumptions and risk factors in order minimize the risk of negative financial outcomes and maintain the credibility of financial forecasts with the County Executive and Council, bond rating agencies, and Wastewater Treatment Division’s component agencies.
5. Monitor capital funding requirements; facilitate development of capital financing options with the County’s finance staff and financial advisor; coordinate the preparation of official statements and related presentation materials; and provide staff support for review by bond rating agencies.
6. Participate in policy discussions and development of recommendations and presentation materials for determination of rate and policy options and assessment of the utilities financial outlook.
7. Serve as lead for economic analysis of Wastewater Treatment Division projects and applications such as combined sewer overflow, reclaimed water, and quantitative decision making in capital projects. Additionally, serve as lead in evaluation of current financial policies and development and assessment of changes.
8. Perform other duties as assigned.

**Knowledge/Skills**

Knowledge of financial analysis and forecasting techniques and principles

Knowledge of economic analysis concepts and methods

Knowledge of statistical forecasting methods

Knowledge of and experience with accounting and budgeting techniques and principles

Knowledge of project management techniques and principles

Advanced analytical skills and abilities

Problem-solving and conflict resolution skills

Decision-making skills

Presentation skills

Skill in policy analysis and design

Skill in strategy planning

Skill in adjusting to changing priorities

Skill in working in a political environment

Skill in working with a variety of individuals from diverse backgrounds

Ability to work independently and as a team member

Skill in using current office software programs including word processing, spreadsheet, database and email

**Education and Experience Requirements**

Bachelor’s degree in economics or related field and five years of increasingly responsible experience in providing expert economic analysis and advice to a utility with a debt portfolio and capital program or similar industry

OR any combination of education and experience that clearly demonstrates the ability to perform the job duties of the classification

**Licensing, Certification and Other Requirements**

Some licenses, certifications and other requirements determined to be necessary to meet the business needs of the employing unit may be required.

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| **FLSA Designation** | Exempt (Professional) |
| **Service Status** | Career Service |
| **EEO Code** | 2 |
| **Levels within same series** | None |
| **Class History** | 02/2012 Created  11/2015 Updated format |