



Town of Moraga

Principal Planner

Class specifications are only intended to present a descriptive summary of the range of duties and responsibilities associated with specified positions. Therefore, specification ***may not include all*** duties performed by individuals within a classification. In addition, specifications are intended to outline the ***minimum*** qualifications necessary for entry into the class and do not necessarily convey the qualifications of incumbents within the position.

Established: 2021
Revised: -
Employee Group: Mid-Management/Professional
FLSA Status: Exempt

CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTION

Purpose

Plans, organizes, oversees, coordinates, and manages staff and specific operations of the Planning function including current and long-range planning, zoning, development, and environmental review; prepares and presents a variety of studies, ordinances, and staff reports to Planning Commission/Design Review Board and the Town Council and serves on local and regional planning and technical review committee; manages the effective use of division resources to improve organizational productivity and customer service; provides complex and responsible support to the Planning Director in areas of expertise; and performs related work as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics

This is a management classification responsible for planning, organizing, and managing staff, operations, and activities of the Planning function. Incumbents are responsible for performing diverse, specialized, and complex work involving significant accountability and decision-making responsibilities, which include program evaluation, and recommendation and implementation of policies, procedures, goals, objectives, priorities, and standards related to planning functions. Incumbents serve as a professional-level resource for organizational, managerial, and operational analyses and studies. Performance of the work requires the use of considerable independence, initiative, and discretion within broad guidelines. The Principal Planner class is distinguished from the Senior Planner class by the greater complexity and sensitivity of assignments received, responsibility to lead and manage the most complex projects independently and is responsible for a major function of the Planning Department.

Equipment, Methods and Guidelines

Uses and applies principles of planning; federal, state and local planning laws, environmental laws, regulations and procedures. Uses computers and has knowledge of relevant computer programs including advanced GIS (geographic information system) applications. Uses telephones, other means of voice and written communications, and private vehicles.

Working Conditions

Work is conducted primarily in an office setting, but includes trips to other agencies and offices, visits to proposed and actual construction sites, and visits to sites of code compliance issues.

Work involves attendance at meetings held during the regular workday and in the evenings and may include occasional out of town travel.

Physical Demands

Attendance at evening meetings following a normal workday may require stamina, as well as heightened speech, hearing and vision. Site visits may involve stooping, crawling, climbing and balance.

Supervision Received and Exercised

Receives general direction from the Planning Director. Directs the work of consultant(s) related to planning applications and special planning projects. Supervises the associate/assistant planning professional and administrative staff, as assigned and is responsible for overseeing a major activity of the department. Serves as Acting Director in the absence of the Planning Director and assumes all duties and responsibilities of the Director position.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES

Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Assists in the administration of the Planning Department and is responsible for ensuring that major programs of the Department are carried out in accordance with Town policies and Council goals and reflects professional planning principals.
2. Serves as a member of the Department's management team and participates in departmental policy development, administrative planning, and problem resolution.
3. Reviews and processes development applications for a range of complex planning projects, including discretionary permits, major subdivisions, planned developments, use permits, and design review; works cooperatively with applicants, federal, state and local agencies, and stakeholders.
4. Serves as project manager for complex planning projects including analysis of site and architectural plans, performing technical review for routine project plans and applications, and making recommendations, and referring the projects to other departments, agencies and technical experts and consultants.
5. Researches, analyzes and interprets data, writes comprehensive reports and recommendations based on best practices, Town policy and regulations, and sound judgment for advanced and current planning projects; prepares, writes and presents staff reports, findings, resolutions, and related materials and makes professional presentations before authoritative bodies such as the Town Council, Planning Commission/Design Review Board, and other agencies, as assigned.
6. Coordinates and leads meetings for the purpose of providing and receiving information and developing viable solutions for projects and proposals; communicates effectively with the public using various methods (public meetings, social media, websites) to gain meaningful feedback; works in a collaborative manner with internal and external departments and stakeholders on a range of projects for problem solving, identifying key issues and concerns to advance a project.
7. Attends and represents the Town's interests or policy positions as representative for regional and inter-jurisdictional planning agencies, task forces, and legislative bodies.
8. Provides advice and information to the general public and developers regarding planning and zoning regulations and requirements; clarifies and ensures conformance to Town codes and regulations; participates in or conducts conferences with developers and property owners and resolves differences that may exist between them and Town codes.
9. Provides lead direction and supervision in major long-range projects, including performing research and analysis to develop updates and revisions to the General Plan, municipal code and policy, area plans, grant programs, and design guidelines.

10. Evaluates projects for compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and related federal and state environmental regulations and statutes; prepares and reviews Initial Studies; manages the preparation of CEQA documents, including Environmental Impact Reports and Negative Declarations by consultants; recommends determinations of the environmental impact of projects; reviews environmental documents of other agencies; performs mitigation monitoring and enforcement.
11. Develops and manages requests for proposals for professional and/or contracted services; prepares scope of work and any technical specifications; evaluates proposals and recommends award; negotiates contracts; administers contracts to ensure compliance with Town specifications and service quality.
12. Participates in the selection of, trains, motivates, and evaluates assigned personnel; works with employees to correct deficiencies; recommends and implements discipline and termination procedures.
13. Reviews the work of staff to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations.
14. Develops and standardizes procedures and methods to improve and continuously monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of assigned programs, service delivery methods, and procedures; assesses and monitors workload, administrative, and support systems, and internal reporting relationships; identifies opportunities and makes recommendations for improvement.
15. Conducts site inspections and field investigations, including determining if projects are in compliance with laws, regulations and ordinances. Makes recommendations or changes.
16. Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge and Abilities

1. Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to municipal planning, zoning, housing, transportation, environmental review and compliance, and/or code enforcement, including but not limited to California Planning and Zoning Laws, Subdivision Map Act, and California Environmental Quality Act.
2. Modern principles, practices, and techniques of governmental current and advanced planning, municipality and regional planning and development functions.
3. Techniques for effectively representing the Town in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
4. Recent and ongoing developments, current literature, and sources of information related to the operations of the Planning Department.
5. Methods and techniques of preparing technical and administrative reports, and general business correspondence.
6. Methods and techniques utilized in research including the collection, evaluation and presentation of data.
7. Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards, including architectural, development, site, and construction plans, relevant to the work performed.
8. Evaluate and develop improvements in operations, procedures, policies, or methods.
9. Supervise and participate in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data pertaining to planning, advanced planning, and housing functions.
10. Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.

11. Evaluate proposals and recommend denial, approval, or conditional approval or make changes as necessary.
12. Collect, analyze, interpret and understand technical data and documents.
13. Administer complex, technical, and sensitive planning, development, and related programs in an independent and cooperative manner.
14. Conduct effective negotiations and effectively represent the division and the Town in meetings and workshops with governmental agencies, community groups, and various businesses, professional, and regulatory organizations, and in meetings with individuals from varied backgrounds and situations.
15. Communicate effectively in English both orally and in writing; making presentations; and preparing clear, concise and accurate written materials.
16. Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines
17. Provide direction and supervising and reviewing the work of other professionals.
18. Effectively build and lead teams and manage the performance of others to achieve targeted results.
19. Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
20. Develop and implement goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
21. Understand the Town's vision and look for opportunities to align the department's operations to meet Council and community goals.

Education and Experience

Any combination of experience and education that would likely provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying. Generally, this will require:

- Experience: Five (5) years of increasingly responsible professional planning experience involving general plan, zoning, subdivisions, CEQA and development services, including two (2) years of supervisory experience. Master's Degree may be substituted for professional experience on a year-for-year basis, with a maximum of two years substitution.
- Education: Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in land-use planning, urban planning, landscape architecture. Master's Degree in a related field and municipal experience is highly desirable.

License or Certificate

A valid California Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record are conditions of initial and continued employment.

American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification is highly desirable.