



Position Description

Principal Planner

The City of Port Phillip celebrates a vibrant and diverse work environment and community, which includes people of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, people of diverse sexual orientation and gender, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people of varied age, health, disability, socio-economic status, faith and spirituality. Employees are able to develop both professionally and personally whilst planning and delivering a range of important services and programs to the community.

POSITION TITLE:	Principal Planner
AWARD CLASSIFICATION:	Band 7
DEPARTMENT:	City Development
DIVISION:	Development, Transport and City Amenity
DATE APPROVED:	January 2021
APPROVED BY	George Borg, Manager, City Development

ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS:

REPORTS TO:	Statutory Planning Coordinator
SUPERVISES:	N/A
INTERNAL LIAISONS:	Council Employees and Managers, Executive Team and Councillors
EXTERNAL LIAISONS:	Government representatives, Statutory Authorities, clients, suppliers, consultants and Contractors

POSITION OBJECTIVES

- Assist the Planning Coordinator in managing the team and its output.
- Provide efficient, sensitive and analytical assessment of significant planning applications and provide guidance to other planners regarding their applications.
- Pro-actively assist in developing improved effectiveness and efficiency in the office.

KEY RESPONSIBILITY AND DUTIES

- Act as the senior planner for complex, significant/key applications and exercise a high standard of decision making in relation to Council's planning responsibilities (timely,



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accurate, thorough and professional advice and analysis) and provide advice to other planners on complex matters.

- Make decisions as a key Delegated Officer in accordance with the Delegation Manual.
- Assist the Planning Co-ordinator in the management of the team (leadership and mentoring), promote responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness in office procedures; promote responsibility and accountability and to fill in for the Co-ordinator in his/her absence where appropriate.
- Develop a professional partnership and high levels of communication with the relevant Ward Councillors and key stakeholders on all planning issues.
- Assist in managing and monitoring team member's workloads including registered customer complaints.
- Professional representations on behalf of Statutory Planning including attendance at Council meetings, Neighbourhood Forums. Liaise with other Council departments.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY

- The position acts independently under the guidance of the Co-ordinator.
- Act as a delegate for Council in decision making under delegated authority in an efficient and timely manner.

JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING

- Ability to independently exercise judgement and decision making under the guidance of the Planning Co-ordinator including ability to think holistically and consider options and implications of various decision points.
- Ability to identify and comprehend the relevant issues in significant planning and political matters affecting the team and ensure the adoption of processes that effectively manage the issues in accordance with whole of organisation objectives.
- Ability to generate creative and innovative approaches in problem solving and generate outcomes to meet Councils strategic directions.
- Ability to make difficult decisions in a timely manner amongst competing interests.
- Ability to process complex and sensitive proposals and use inclusive processes and communication strategies that lead to an appropriate decision in reasonable timelines using creative / innovative problem solving techniques and a professional knowledge of statutory requirements within the political and community context.
- Ability to understand issues concerning Councillors and immediate staff and provide options and solutions.

SPECIALIST SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- An excellent understanding of the Planning Scheme and all relevant Acts and heritage, urban design, environmental planning principles as they relate to projects in the municipality.



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- To understand the goals and function of the broader organisation and an ability to communicate and work towards whole of organisation goals to advance the objectives of the unit.
- Excellent analytical research and investigative skills.
- An excellent knowledge and understanding of the principles and practice of local planning, the planning system and legislation and their application at the Local Government level and the ability to effectively communicate and apply information about them.
- Excellent negotiation and conflict resolution skills.
- People and performance management skills.

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Demonstrated ability to provide leadership including the ability to assist Coordinators supervise, empower and motivate staff.
- Ability to set priorities and organise, assign and monitor work to meet the required outputs and timelines.
- Ability to critically analyse and proactively improve systems and processes.
- Highly developed time management and planning skills.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

- Take every reasonably practicable step to ensure your health and safety, and the health and safety of all others that may be affected by your work.
- Comply with all relevant legislation and regulation, as well as City of Port Phillip policies and procedures and reasonable work instructions.
- Ensure that all hazards, unsafe conditions, incidents and near misses are reported promptly and within set timeframes.
- Participate as appropriate in an early and safe return to work program after a workplace injury.
- Participate in the improvement of health and safety, including incident investigations and risk management processes.
- Maintain knowledge of OHS issues relevant to your work.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Highly developed communication skills (written and oral).
- Confidence in speaking in a diverse range of public and internal forums.
- The ability to gain the co-operation of co-workers, applicants and the public to achieve acceptable solutions to difficult planning problems in a friendly and co-operative manner.
- Proven ability to develop and encourage a team spirit.



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- A sound understanding of customer service principles and effective means of delivery.
- Advanced negotiation, conflict resolution and problem solving skills.
- Confidence in decision making and interpretation.
- Ability to cope with uncertainty and display flexibility in response to dynamic situations.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- **Academic:** Tertiary qualification in Urban Planning / Urban Studies / Environmental Planning or a closely related field.
- **Experience:** Demonstrated experience delivering effective results in a Local Statutory Planning Office
- **Experience:** Experience leading and working in a team and / or inter-disciplinary environment

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Tertiary qualification in Town Planning / Urban Studies / Environmental Planning or a closely related field together with several years' experience in a similar role.
- Considerable experience in a local government town/urban planning office and VCAT, preferably in Victoria.
- Demonstrated experience in assessing complex proposals within the context of relevant Acts, regulations, Planning Scheme provisions and planning and related policies.
- High level skills in report writing, reporting to Council and external correspondence and being able to explain complex planning issues with members of the public.
- Proven ability to set priorities and organise the work required to achieve expected timelines and outcomes.
- Ability to work in a team environment to analyse and proactively improve systems and processes and communicate this process to members of the team.