

TOWN OF LA PLATA, MARYLAND

POSITION TITLE: Senior Planner

DEPARTMENT: Planning

SUPERVISOR: Director of Planning

FLSA Status: Exempt

Non-Essential Personnel

Job Summary

This position oversees all aspects of plan review and development in the town of La Plata. It includes, but not is limited to infrastructure review, site plan review, subdivision review, permits, zoning regulations, environmental review, site inspections, long-range plan development and Comprehensive Plan implementation. The position participates in staff support to the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Design Review Board, Historic Preservation Commission and Town Council.

The successful candidate will possess strong research and analytical skills, be able to clearly organize and communicate information; know and understand best practices in land use planning; review and implement regulatory requirements; apply appropriate federal, state, county, and local codes; and prepare written technical reports. The ability to present to citizen groups and public officials is essential.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities include the following:

- Manages, reviews, and evaluates various land-use applications such as site plans, subdivisions, special exceptions, and variances; provides comments to applicants for forest conservation exemptions, natural resources inventories/forest stand delineations (NRI/FSD), and forest conservation plans.
- Communicates with the general-public and collaboratively works with internal town departments and external agencies regarding land use, permitting, zoning, etc.
- Prepares and presents PowerPoint presentations to Town boards and commissions on behalf of the Planning Department.
- Identifies national and regional land-use and development trends and makes zoning recommendations.
- Provides professional support to Town boards and commissions on various zoning and land-use matters, including projects involving design review approval.
- Drafts ordinances and amendments to the Town's Zoning and Municipal Code.
- Supervises the work of assigned staff and mentors junior staff planners.
- Prepares and updates various zoning and land use maps, as necessary.
- Conducts and oversees various development plan checks within the Planning

Department.

- Prepares written staff reports to the Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, Historic Preservation Commission and the Town Council with project recommendations, conditions of approval and Board and Commission resolutions on all types of zoning and land use applications.
- The ability to provide excellent customer service to internal and external customers of the Planning Department.
- Manages and maintains records on approved developments and other land-use matters.
- Performs field inspections to gather data relevant to the development review process and/or to verify that development projects comply with approved plans.
- The ability to read and understand complex architectural and engineering drawings for new development.
- The ability read, write, and prepare professional correspondence and staff reports.
- The ability to read, comprehend, and synthesize specialized studies and reports to evaluate potential, project, impacts associated with land-use development such as traffic studies, photometric plans, noise studies, etc.
- Facilitates a team-work culture within the Planning Department.
- Performs related duties and responsibilities as required.

Qualifications

To perform this job satisfactorily, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills and/or abilities required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Education, Certification, and/or Experience

This position requires a bachelor's degree in urban planning, public administration, environmental management or a related field with five (5) years of progressively responsible planning experience in a municipal/county government or professional planning firm. The preferred candidate will hold a master's degree in urban planning and over five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in urban planning with AICP Certification and knowledge of GIS.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Advanced knowledge of the philosophies, principles, practices, and techniques of urban planning.
- Well-developed knowledge and experience with one or more specialized planning disciplines such as: transportation planning, environmental planning, urban design, housing, historic preservation, or economic development.
- Knowledge and experience in construction processes.
- Knowledge of principles, methodology, practices of research, and data collection.
- Knowledge of effective writing techniques.

- Knowledge of computer programs and applications, which include, but are not limited to Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe, Muncity, CivicPlus, and database management.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills for preparing and presenting planning reports and projects.
- Excellent interpersonal skills for facilitating and developing professional relationships.
- Creative problem-solving skills to gather relevant information to solve less well-defined planning problems.
- Ability to work under pressure on several projects and/or issues simultaneously.
- Ability to provide effective leadership, supervision, motivational skills for direct reports.
- Ability to manage projects effectively and meet firm deadlines.
- Knowledge of local, state, and federal environmental policies/requirements.

Technical Qualifications

Ability to maintain a professional atmosphere in customer service with officials, co-workers, and members of the general public. Knowledge of various computer software. Ability to take direction.

Requires knowledge of municipal practices, procedures, and goals. Ability to use a variety of tools and equipment including but not limited to multi-line telephone, calculator, copy machine, postage machine, two-way radio; a variety of general office equipment; computers and peripheral equipment; accounting, communications, and scheduling software.

Ability to exercise judgment and tact in dealing with the public, development community, board and commission members, management staff and other Town employees.

Language Skills

Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, with residents, property owners, government officials, the general public, fellow employees, and Town officials. Must be able to listen to and interpret problems, direct inquiries to appropriate staff or resources, exercise tact and diplomacy, and make clear written and oral reports and recommendations. Ability to read and comprehend instructions, and correspondence in English. Ability to write correspondence in a professional and tactful manner.

Physical Demands

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to talk, hear, and see. The employee is frequently required to sit and use hands to finger, handle or feel objects or controls. The employee is occasionally required to stand; walk; reach with hands and arms; balance; and stoop, kneel or crouch. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to or in excess of twenty (20) pounds. Must have visual acuity to work independently and consistently with permits, forms, building plans and maps in paper and electronic formats.

Environmental Conditions

All employees are subject to indoor environmental conditions. There is protection from weather conditions but not necessarily from temperature changes. Noise level and lighting conducive to an office setting.