

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title:	Principal Strategic Planner	Classification:	Band 7
Group:	Community & Planning Services	Business Unit:	Planning Strategy and Urban Design
Reports to:	Coordinator, Planning Strategy and Urban Design		
Direct Reports:	NA	Date:	2025

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Cardinia Shire Council is committed to building a sustainable shire for present and future generations to enjoy. Council plays an important role in contributing to life in our community. We provide services which supports the wellbeing of our residents now and into the future.

To deliver on our commitment, we are developing a skilled and professional workforce that embraces our organisational culture, values, and demonstrates key leadership capabilities. Our culture is defined by working together, working differently, and working for the future. We value teamwork, respect, accountability, communication, and customer focus. These values underpin our work and our behaviours ensuring we deliver on the Council's vision while maintaining a healthy, engaging, and inclusive workplace.

POSITION OBJECTIVES

- To contribute to the administration of the Cardinia Planning Scheme and to contribute to the development and implementation of an integrated strategic planning framework for Cardinia Shire.
- Ensure Councils strategic policies and strategies integrate economic, social and environmental considerations consistent with Local and State policy. To contribute to the effective and efficient management of the use, development and protection of land in Cardinia Shire
- To achieve soundly based and sustainable outcomes for the natural and built environment and wellbeing of the community in Cardinia Shire.
- To provide strategic planning advice and input into cross-council projects.
- To provide strategic planning advice to the Community and Planning Services Directorate and the broader Organisation.
- To provide leadership and mentoring to less experienced staff in Planning Strategy and Urban Design.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

Key responsibilities include, but are not limited to

- Manage, implement, monitor and review complex land use planning projects ensuring expected outcomes, budget and timeframes are met. This may require managing external consultants and preparing contracts, service agreements, grant applications and funding arrangements.

- Prepare and process planning scheme amendments, including the management of complex planning scheme amendments
- Develop and review local planning policies, strategies and studies.
- Contribute to the ongoing review of the Cardinia Planning Scheme, particularly the effectiveness of statutory controls.
- Review and respond to state planning initiatives including the review of policies, legislation and the Victorian Planning Provisions.
- Assist in the assessment and management of major applications, Environmental Effects Statements and combined planning scheme amendment / planning permit applications.
- Undertake consultation with internal and external stakeholders in relation to planning projects and planning scheme amendments.
- Establish and maintain links with government agencies, infrastructure service providers, community organisations and business with an interest in strategic planning activities.
- Provide expert information and advice in response to telephone and counter enquiries on planning matters.
- Prepare responses to written enquiries on planning matters.
- Provide expert advice to other Council business units or service providers on planning matters.
- Represent Council at VCAT hearings and panel hearings.
- Attend Council meetings and briefings as required and ensure Council resolutions are implemented.
- Provide leadership and mentoring to less experienced staff in the Unit. This may include formal and informal mentoring, providing day-to-day advice, assisting with projects and acting in higher duties where the opportunity arises.
- The position will involve some work outside of normal hours including consultative meetings, Councillor Briefings, Council meetings, management workshops and training as required.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE COMPLIANCE

- Adhere to (and promote) HR, IT, OH&S/Risk Management policies, procedures and practices.
- Demonstrate understanding and accountability for record keeping policy including the accuracy and capture of data, the sensitivities involved and the release and destruction of documents.
- Ensure compliance with Council financial and procurement policies and procedures in ensuring an adequate standard of internal control over finances is maintained.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY

- Responsible ensuring that tasks are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner.
- Responsible for ensuring that all relevant legislation, policies, strategies and other matters are taken into consideration in making or recommending a decision or providing advice.
- The quality of decisions, advice, and work completed will have a significant impact on Council and the community.
- Responsible for ensuring the accuracy and quality of work produced.
- Authority to sign documents and letters associated with the processing of planning scheme amendments and the provision of advice within the extent of delegation provided by Council.
- Responsible for managing and implementing projects, plans, policies and strategies, which further strategic planning objectives for Cardinia, including project managing strategic planning projects and planning scheme amendments.
- Accountable for leading teams associated with projects being project managed by this position.

JUDGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

- The position requires a high level of skill in problem solving using established techniques and applying

them to new situations as well as the ability to recognise when these are not appropriate.

- When developing policy, the identification and analysis of an unspecified range of options is required before a recommendation can be made.
- Ability to decide on the appropriate research and policy development methodology is essential.
- To operate with a level of autonomy, receiving limited direction in general day-to-day work, seeking direction from the Manager of Planning and Design, General Manager or Council approval/direction.
- Ability to apply discretion in decision making to ensure effective delivery of outputs.
- Investigate and make assessments of strategic planning policy and program issues so as to make recommendations and decisions from available options. Issues will, at times, be abstract and complex and require conceptual creative thinking and clear written and verbal communication.
- Exercise day-to-day problem solving with respect to the allocation of resources and time management.
- Guidance and advice is available within the time to make or recommendation a decision, or provide advice.

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- Ability to research and analyse information, and prepare concise reports and recommendations.
- Demonstrated understanding of the principles and practice of integrated land use planning to achieve sustainable outcomes in the built and natural environment.
- Manage, implement, monitor and review complex land use planning projects ensuring expected outcomes, budget and timeframes are met. This may require managing external consultants and preparing contracts, service agreements, grant applications and funding arrangements.
- Professional experience in the clear and structured presentation of information and concepts.
- Demonstrated commitment to excellence in customer service.
- A comprehensive understanding of the legal processes that operate in Victoria that relate to the Victorian Planning system and the Planning and Environment Act.
- .
- A high level of computer literacy, knowledge of project management software is desirable.
- An understanding of and commitment to continuous improvement.
- Knowledge and skills in community consultation processes. Knowledge of corporate values, objective and strategies, and how the position and department contribute to achieving these.
- Knowledge and skills in the use of the Microsoft Office software package.
- Facilitation skills
- Ability to effectively plan, organise and manage your own time and workload.
- Ability to achieve specific outcomes within set timeframes against conflicting priorities.
- Ability to embrace the Cardinia Way values and keys to success.

SPECIALIST SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Ability to research and analyse information, and prepare concise reports and recommendations.
- Knowledge and understanding of social, economic, environmental and political context of planning issues.
- Knowledge and understanding of planning processes including planning related legislation.
- Knowledge of corporate values, objective and strategies, and how the position and department contribute to achieving these.
- Knowledge and skills in the use of the Microsoft Office software packages.
- Skills in project management and project budget preparation and monitoring skills

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- Excellent communication (written and verbal) and interpersonal skills with the ability to liaise with a variety of internal and external contacts, including the capacity to deal with and resolve conflict.
- High-level written and verbal communication skills including discretion and judgement in working within a complex administrative and political environment.
- High-level negotiation skills, with the ability to encourage co-operation from groups and stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain significant strategic relationships.
- Ability to work effectively either independently or as part of a multi-disciplinary team.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- A tertiary qualification in planning or a related discipline.
- Extensive demonstrated experience in strategic land use planning is essential.
- Experience in policy/strategy development and practice in local government or other levels of government or similar organisations is essential.
- A current drivers licence.

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- Proven experience in strategic planning and policy development, including the ability to lead complex projects that involve land use, environmental, or community-based planning.
- Strong understanding of the broader planning context, including social, economic, environmental, and governance factors that influence land use and development.
- Familiarity with planning for non-urban land uses, such as agricultural, conservation, tourism, extractive industries, and rural-based businesses and the ability to balance competing values of the Green Wedge is highly desirable
- Knowledge of planning systems and relevant legislation, including the ability to interpret and apply statutory frameworks and policy directions.
- A demonstrated understanding of the legislative framework governing land use planning in Victoria, particularly the strategic planning responsibilities of councils under the Planning and Environment Act 1987, such as the requirement to prepare Green Wedge Management Plans under Section 46AE of the Act is highly desirable.
- Experience in developing or contributing to strategic land use plans such as structure plans, township strategies and planning scheme amendments, is also highly regarded.
- Knowledge of corporate values, objective and strategies, and how the position and department contribute to achieving these.
- Highly developed project management skills, tools and techniques to plan, execute and monitor a project to achieve specific goals within defined constraints like scope, time and budget.
- Highly developed interpersonal and stakeholder engagement skills, with the ability to build relationships and work collaboratively across departments, agencies, and community groups.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare clear reports, present complex information, and negotiate with diverse audiences.
- Experience in mentoring staff/leadership is desirable.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare clear reports, present complex information, and negotiate with diverse audiences.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Terms and conditions of employment are in accordance with the Cardinia Shire Council Enterprise Agreement 2024 and Cardinia's policies and procedures.

Tenure	This is a ongoing full time position
Pre-employment checks	All appointments are subject to a National Police Record Check, pre-employment medical check, and a six-month probationary period (new employees only). Certain positions may also require a Financial Background Check, Traffic Check or Working with Children Check.