

a new design on urban planning

FIRM PROFILE



M-GROUP

m-group.us

CAMPBELL | SANTA ROSA | BERKELEY



a new design on urban planning

M-Group delivers innovative and effective planning solutions throughout the Bay Area and beyond. Since our founding in 2006, our Bay Area offices have provided a full range of planning and design services to over 80 northern California cities and counties.

M-Group's planning and design professionals are committed to **a new design on urban planning**. This approach to planning takes many forms, both in the services we provide and in the lasting relationships we develop with our clients.

Thinking of the Future

We are a socially responsible firm and work to address pressing issues in our evolving communities. We underscore our work with a commitment to equity and respect for the natural and man-made environments by planning for long-term sustainability.

Dedication to the Profession

We hire the most talented and experienced planners and give them the support they need to expand their knowledge and passion. As a firm and as planners, we uphold the AICP Code of Ethics in everything we do.

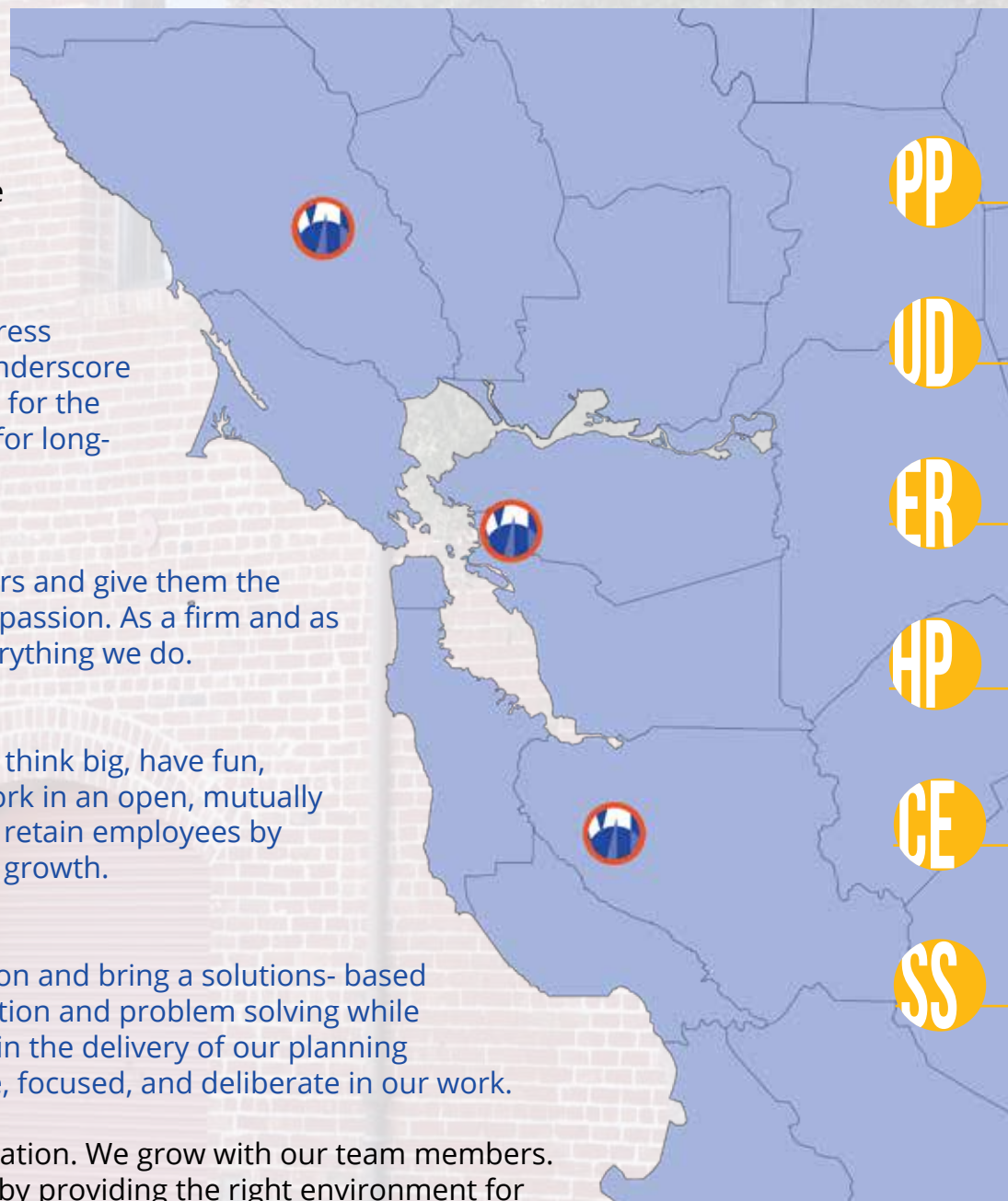
A Commitment to Our Staff

Our company culture encourages M-Group staff to think big, have fun, and create great plans for our communities. We work in an open, mutually supportive, and collaborative manner. We strive to retain employees by providing job satisfaction and solid paths to career growth.

A Commitment to Our Clients

We use direct, clear, and transparent communication and bring a solutions-based approach informed by facts. We emphasize innovation and problem solving while integrating local, regional, and global perspectives in the delivery of our planning services. M-Group's professional staff is responsive, focused, and deliberate in our work.

Our story is one of teamwork, innovation and collaboration. We grow with our team members. We foster the creativity and expertise of our planners by providing the right environment for initiative and self-determination. We believe that by supporting our teammates' curiosity and continuing self-improvement our firm will continue to grow our in-house talent and potential.



PP POLICY PLANNING

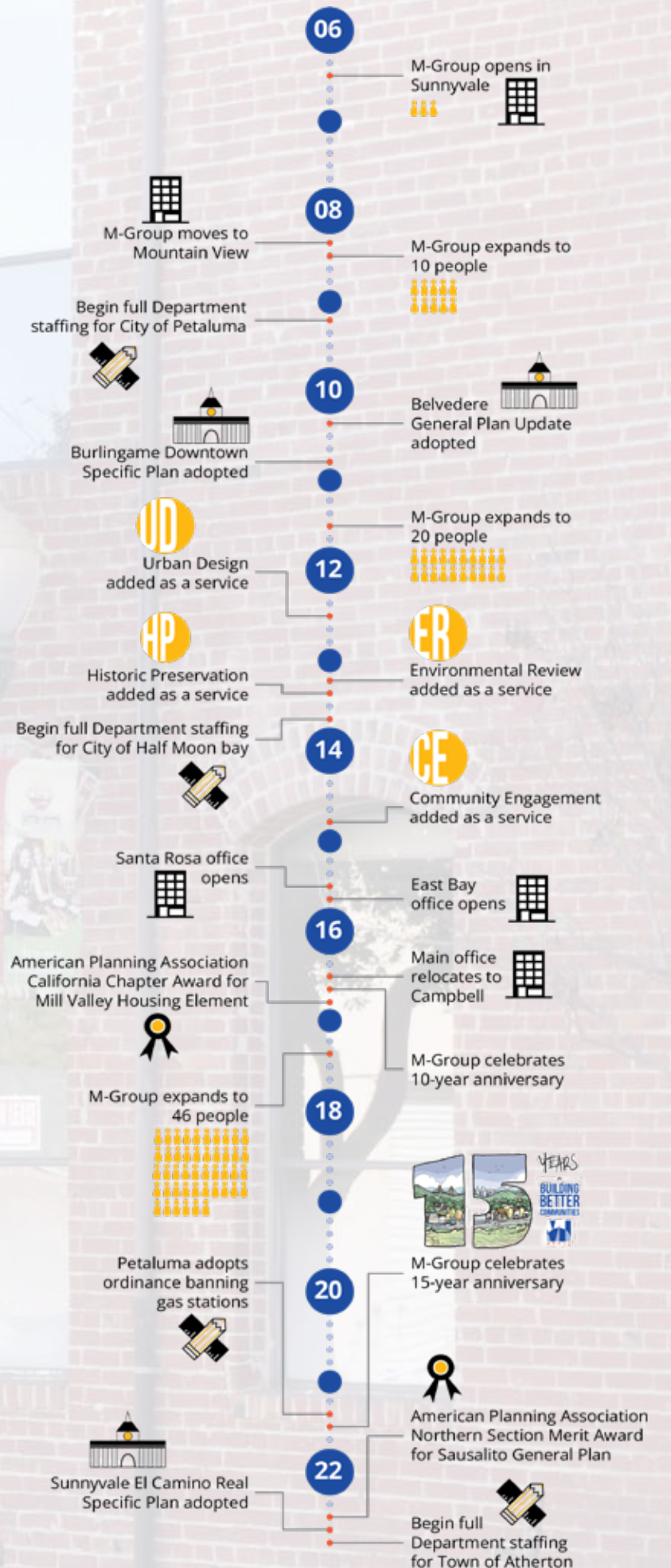
UD URBAN DESIGN

ER ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

HP HISTORIC PRESERVATION

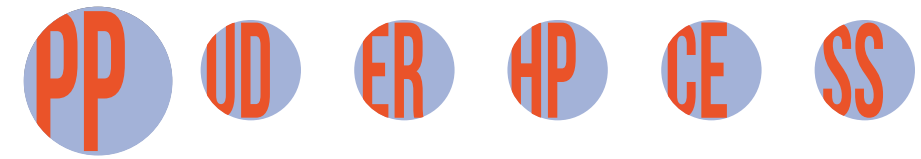
CE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SS STAFFING SOLUTIONS





POLICY PLANNING



We engage in collaborative *Policy Planning* that helps create a community's long-term vision and shapes effective guiding policies and plans.

Our planners have extensive experience creating General Plans, Specific Plans, Housing Elements, and Zoning Codes from the visioning process through to the crafting of goals, policies, and actions that ensure successful implementation. We couple our in-house capabilities with quality specialists to create planning documents and policies based on comprehensive analyses and technical expertise.

We recognize that effective stakeholder engagement is a key piece in the delivery of a policy document that is truly representative of a community. We create tailored engagement strategies designed to be interactive and inclusive. The insight gained from the engagement process ensures the plans we author are firmly rooted in a community's identity and long-term goals.

Climate Initiatives



More now than ever before, jurisdictions must contend with the impacts of climate change when making policy decisions. M-Group has developed innovative strategies and policies to help communities mitigate climate change and become more resilient to changing environmental conditions.

Sustainability Element

City of Sausalito

M-Group worked collaboratively with the City of Sausalito's Sustainability Commission to develop the Sustainability Element of the city's 2040 General Plan. Located along the bay shores of Marin County, sea level rise is a primary concern for the community. The Sustainability Element provides a framework for climate mitigation and adaptation strategies that will guide City decisions over the next 20 years.



Gas Station Ban Ordinance

City of Petaluma

Working as contract planners for the City of Petaluma, M-Group planners worked on a new zoning ordinance that prohibits the construction of new gas stations in the city. With City Council adopting this ordinance in 2021, Petaluma became the first city in the U.S. to permanently ban new gas stations, bringing the city one step closer to reaching carbon neutrality by 2030.



GENERAL PLAN 2040 AND EIR | CITY OF SAUSALITO



M-Group led a consultant team to update the City of Sausalito's General Plan. The update includes a clear community-driven vision for the next 20 years and adds two new Elements to the General Plan. In addition to updating policies to reflect current conditions and anticipated future needs, a new Waterfront and Marinship Element provides greater focus on the city's susceptibility sea level rise; a new Sustainability Element addresses long-term sustainability and adaptation to the impacts of climate change. The 2040 General Plan was adopted by City Council in 2021 and subsequently won an Award of Merit from the American Planning Association, California Northern Section.



MILPITAS METRO PLAN | CITY OF MILPITAS

M-Group, as a subconsultant to Urban Field Studio, issued the final draft of the Milpitas Metro Plan for the City of Milpitas. The Metro Plan is a Specific Plan for the area surrounding the Milpitas BART/VTA Transit Center. The plan includes the creation of additional capacity for 7,000 new housing units in the plan area; a strategy for the Great Mall of Milpitas to evolve into a multi-use district; and the creation of a commercial/industrial Innovation District adjacent to the Transit Center. The plan sets forth standards for transportation improvements and pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the district. The plan also articulates a new direction for City parks planning to focus on providing access to a variety of amenities within walking and biking distance of homes and workplaces.





URBAN DESIGN

The *Urban Design* projects and plans we develop synthesize policy direction with tangible design solutions.

M-Group has a solid background in the preparation of community design standards, mixed-use development regulations, and urban infill development strategies. Our urban design work demonstrates the community benefit that derives from a sustained emphasis on the pedestrian realm and the creative integration of multi-modal planning.

M-Group's urban designers bring a range of design disciplines to the projects we create. Our extensive background preparing design guidelines together with our experience with the design review process draws on the varying backgrounds of our designers to create compelling urban design plans and visions. The resulting design work shows an attention to detail and design thinking that creates place-specific, high-quality environments.

OUTDOOR BUSINESS ACTIVITY PROGRAM | CITY OF REDWOOD CITY

M-Group worked with the City of Redwood City to create concise and user-friendly templates for the design and implementation of parklets to occupy on-street parking spaces. The primary use of these parklets is for outdoor dining, although other retail businesses may also make use of a parklet. The templates streamline the design and development of these community-oriented spaces for Redwood City restaurateurs and merchants and provide design alternatives that accommodate specific site conditions and enhance the public realm. Template development included engagement with staff from multiple City departments as well as restaurant owners and merchants.



EL CAMINO REAL SPECIFIC PLAN AND EIR | CITY OF SUNNYVALE



The El Camino Real Specific Plan provides policies and design strategies that will increase the economic vitality of the city and intensify residential development along this regionally significant transportation corridor. The Plan refocuses land use goals and transportation priorities along the corridor to support mixed-use development and multimodal transportation opportunities, including greater facilitation of pedestrian and bicycle use. Policies and design guidance will implement new housing, while building on historical development patterns and transportation nodes. The Plan implements Sunnyvale's contribution to the Grand Boulevard Initiative, a regional initiative to improve the safety, performance, and the aesthetics of El Camino Real. The El Camino Real Specific Plan was adopted and its EIR certified by the City Council in June 2022.

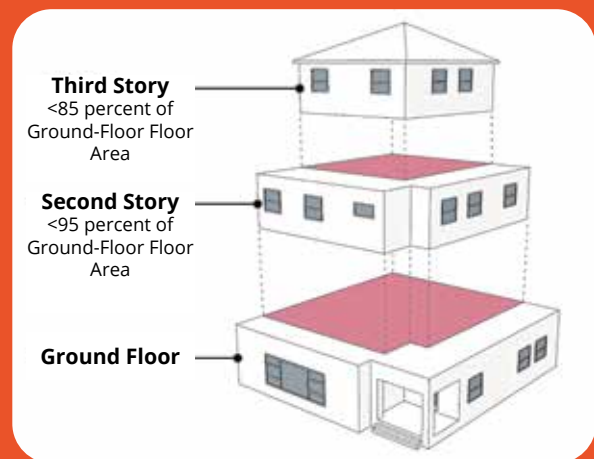


Objective Standards



Recent State housing legislation has increased the potential for expedited ministerial review of residential development rather than a jurisdiction's design review process. Such a streamlined process can be utilized for accessory dwelling units and projects meeting minimum affordability targets. To effectively ensure new development meets a community's desired character and goals, the ministerial review process may only use adopted development standards that are objective and involve no personal or subjective judgment.

M-Group is preparing Objective Design Standards for communities across the Bay Area, including Lafayette, Monte Sereno, Los Gatos, and Calistoga. This work supplements M-Group's portfolio of "hybrid" form-based design guidelines for commercial, residential, and mixed-use neighborhoods in many Bay Area communities.





M-Group provides a thorough range of *Environmental Review* services that enable our clients' projects to withstand critical examination during the public review process.

Our team has extensive experience working on environmental review projects of varying size, scope, and complexity throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. Our past projects include typical community development and infrastructure projects; large scale residential and commercial developments; and comprehensive long range planning documents. Our expertise in environmental, policy, design, and preservation disciplines allows us to provide evidence-based and technically sound documents that meet CEQA provisions.

M-Group offers the full range of CEQA services from Exemption Justifications to EIRs and Initial Studies. We believe in a future where urban development and natural systems coexist. Accordingly, we work diligently through the CEQA process to ensure that development occurs in the most responsible and sustainable manner.

38 DEGREES NORTH IS/MND | CITY OF SANTA ROSA

M-Group provided environmental review services to the City of Santa Rosa, including the development of technical studies, peer review of applicant prepared studies, preparation of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and submittal of documents to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to public agencies. Services also included identifying and resolving issues of concern, managing a team of technical specialists, and ongoing coordination with the project team.



The project consists of the development of 172 residential apartments, a 2.54-acre open space preserve, and reservation of a 1.04-acre site for the future development of an approximately 21,000-square-foot community shopping center on an approximately 10.9-acre parcel located at 2660 Petaluma Hill Road in the City of Santa Rosa. The open space preserve, located in the center portion of the site, contains seasonal wetlands and an ephemeral creek, and separates the site into north and south development areas. A pedestrian crossing over the creek would provide connectivity between the north and southern portions of the site.



MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS | CITY OF ST. HELENA

M-Group provides on-call environmental services to the City of St. Helena and completed the streetscape improvement project in downtown St. Helena along Main Street/Highway 29, which is with a Caltrans facility. M-Group managed the environmental review process, overseeing preparation of environmental documentation, and coordinating with a team of experts. The focus of environmental review relates to the historic character of downtown St. Helena and protection of biological resources including the riparian corridor of Sulfur Creek. M-Group provided interagency coordination and worked on behalf of the City of St. Helena to secure environmental clearance through Caltrans for CEQA/NEPA purposes.



VERANDA AT INDIAN SPRINGS | CITY OF CALISTOGA

M-Group evaluated the environmental impacts for the development of a 96-room hotel proposed for downtown Calistoga. The project involved the demolition of seven existing single-story structures that were subject to a historic resource evaluation. M-Group's team of subconsultants prepared a traffic impact analysis to evaluate VMT, an air quality/greenhouse gas emissions report, and a biological resources assessment. M-Group assisted the City with preparing and filing all CEQA forms and notices and, working collaboratively with the City and the applicant team, published a Final IS/MND and mitigation monitoring and reporting program. The Project was approved by the City Council in 2020.





NEW SERVICE!

Urban Heat Resilience

M-Group recently launched a special service area to assist jurisdictions combatting the effects of increased temperatures due to human-caused climate change. The new effort augments our existing service area offerings and draws on M-Group staff’s policy experience in public health, equity, and community engagement.

Extreme heat is the leading cause of death due to climate change impacts. As average temperatures have continued to rise, the impact on surface temperatures—together with building materials, paved surfaces, and roof designs—creates localized higher temperature areas known as urban heat islands. These areas cause increased energy consumption, elevated emissions, and impaired water quality.

M-Group is partnering with cities and counties to implement short- and long-term solutions to **beat the heat**. Policy and implementation solutions include tailored community outreach efforts, model ordinances, heat audit mapping, vulnerability assessments, and identification of funding sources and models.

WHO WE ARE ...

We believe diversity enriches us all individually and as communities. Diversity of thoughts and ideas grow from diversity of life experiences and perceptions which are influenced by race, color, gender, language, national origin, religion, sexual orientation and age.

We embrace differences, value inclusion, and strive for an equitable, diverse and dynamic workplace and society.

We commit to the elimination of systemic racial bias in the practice of urban planning by working to reverse the historic use of planning and zoning to segregate people by race and income in order to create more just communities.

WHAT WE ARE ABOUT



Investing in Future Planners

We fund the permanent M-Group Scholarship for first-generation City & Regional Planning undergraduates at California Polytechnic State University, to increase diversity and equity within the field.

Our funding supports the Cal Poly Scholars Program, which seeks to recruit and retain high-achieving, low-income students from California schools while providing support through financial, academic, and community resources. Additionally, our internship program brings students into M-Group offices to work alongside team members.

M-Group in the Community

M-Group team members have taken part in work parties at multiple Habitat for Humanity Bay Area locations. These collaborative sessions match the skillsets of M-Group team members to the non-profit’s construction and project needs. The day-long sessions provide an opportunity for our staff to collaborate in a focused way outside of the office and workday.





HISTORIC PRESERVATION

M-Group's *Historic Preservation* services are performed by a qualified team that understands historic preservation within the complex regulatory environment.

We emphasize an impartial and comprehensive work product. Our capabilities in preparing historic resource evaluations, performing CEQA and Section 106 compliance, and creating historic preservation policy and regulatory documents allows us to support the preservation planning process from multiple sides and to seamlessly integrate historic preservation with both short and long term planning goals.

Our aim is to help our clients successfully navigate the preservation planning process in order to promote cities and towns that exhibit a visible continuity and distinct individuality of place. We maintain an up to date knowledge of new methods, regulatory changes, and innovations in the preservation field to continuously offer our clients well-informed and sound recommendations.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE | CITY OF NAPA



M-Group prepared a comprehensive update to the City of Napa's Historic Preservation Ordinance to implement preservation-related goals and objectives outlined in the City's General Plan and to refine and streamline the scope and applicability of existing preservation requirements. M-Group worked collaboratively with staff, facilitated outreach efforts, and presented the ordinance update to the Cultural Heritage Commission for recommendation and the City Council for adoption.

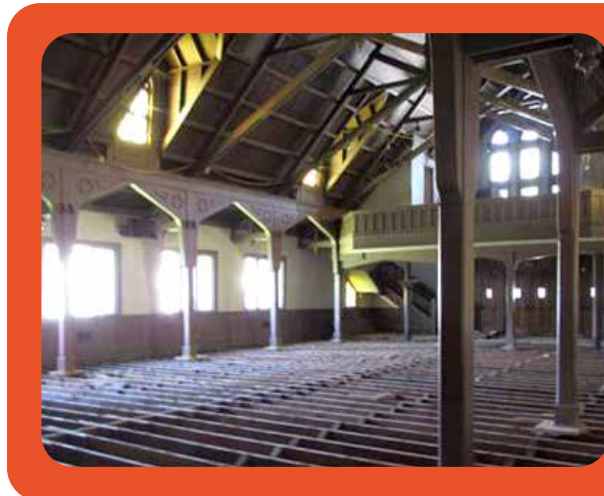
YORK HOUSE NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION | CITY OF NAPA

The York House property is located on the west side of downtown Napa and was built in 1892. The Queen Anne house is heavily decorated and features varied exterior surfaces and sits atop a stone foundation with a full basement. The house suffered structural damage during the 2016 Napa Earthquake and the property owners wanted to explore designation on the National Register of Historic Places in order to qualify for Historic Tax Credits for the necessary repairs. M-Group prepared the necessary documentation and National Register nomination.



HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT UPDATE | TOWN OF COLMA

As part of the Town of Colma's comprehensive General Plan Update, M-Group was hired to update the Town's existing Historic Preservation Element. To produce a document well-tailored to the Town's goals, M-Group updated the historic preservation policies and objectives to better reflect contemporary practices and encourage effective use of preservation incentives to encourage and celebrate the preservation of the Town's heritage. The Element emphasized the use of educational tools and methods to incentivize preservation and encourage more community-wide preservation efforts.



Historic Resource Evaluations

A key component of M-Group's Historic Preservation practice is our portfolio of historic resource evaluations. Our qualified staff possess strong technical abilities, coupled with an understanding of the complexities of historic resources, ensuring that our preservation services are both efficient and comprehensive. Our work ranges from full historic resource evaluation reports to peer review of previously prepared evaluations. We have provided historic resource evaluations for properties in a variety of cities in the Bay Area, including Redwood City, Palo Alto, Petaluma, Santa Rosa, and Napa.



STAFFING SOLUTIONS

When a need for skilled and experienced planners arises, M-Group provides *Staffing Solutions* that allow cities to respond to changing demand.

Our team of planners bring diverse expertise and extensive experience managing development projects in communities across the Bay Area. We are a committed group of professionals with the ability to seamlessly integrate into existing planning teams and help our client cities manage and plan for the future.

M-Group is able to provide both short and long term staff to assist with peak workloads and fill temporary vacancies and interim positions. We have a proven track record of building strong relationships within the cities we work and the communities they serve.

FULL-SERVICE STAFFING

On a long-term basis, M-Group can provide current and advanced planning staffing services, filling the role of a community's full-service planning department. Staffing Solutions vary widely by city and can include counter customer service; preparation of well-written staff reports; environmental documentation from Exemptions to Mitigated Negative Declarations; and managing consultant teams for long range planning projects.

M-Group has served in a department-wide role for the cities of Petaluma since 2009 and Half Moon Bay since 2013. We understand the importance of communication and collaboration within a City. M-Group strives to build strong relationships both within the cities we work as well as with the communities they serve.

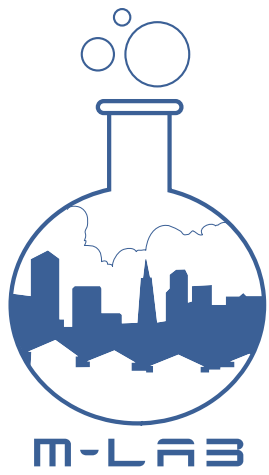


ON-CALL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Our team has the training and background to provide independent development and design review on a full range of projects. Our breadth of knowledge in multiple disciplines and experience working closely with cities are key to our ability to assess good design in architecture, site planning, urban design, public spaces and infill opportunities.

From Sunnyvale to Healdsburg, San Benito to South San Francisco, Menlo Park to Vallejo, M-Group planners utilize a range of planning disciplines and professional experience to augment and support the efforts of community planning departments throughout the Bay Area and beyond. Over the course of M-Group's history, we have revisited many of our clients to provide discreet planning solutions as necessary.





M-LAB: A THINK TANK FOR CITIES

To examine new approaches and solutions to issues facing California's cities, residents, and environment M-LAB provides a forum for interactive discussion.

Local governments face continuing unprecedented change as they grapple with shrinking revenues and expanded demands for services. They require access to new ideas and innovations as they strive to provide for a rapidly increasing population. Methods should be developed to assure emerging technologies are adaptable to the cause of improving the lives of all residents. As M-Group's Research & Innovation arm, M-LAB provides a forum to address these issues.

IS A DOUGHNUT THE KEY TO HEALTHY GROWTH?



M-Group Associate Planner Erin Tou explores the doughnut economic theory of balancing sustainability and equity to achieve healthy development and how this model is being applied at a regional level in the Bay Area.

<https://www.m-group.us/m-lab/blog/2021/3/12/is-a-doughnut-the-key-to-healthy-growth>

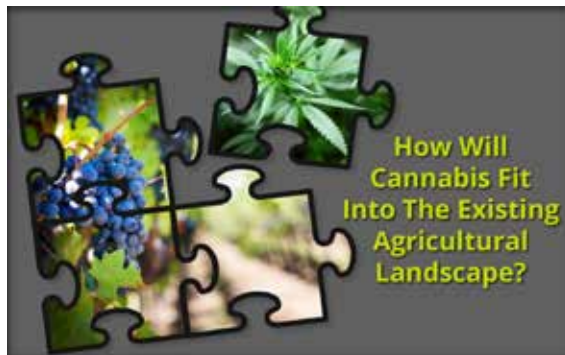
THE FUTURE OF WORK AND THE FUTURE OF LOCAL LAND USE

M-Group Associate Planner Asher Kohn examines the economic and equity implications of remote work and the opportunities for changes to land use strategies in a post-Covid-19 world.



<https://www.m-group.us/m-lab/blog/2021/3/1/the-future-of-work-and-the-future-of-local-land-use>

CANNABIS: THE LAND USE CONCERNS OF CULTIVATION



M-Group Associate Planner Michelle Audenaert examines the impacts of cannabis cultivation on surrounding agricultural land and how this could impact future land use decisions.

<https://www.m-group.us/m-lab/blog/2020/1/8/cannabis-the-land-use-concerns-of-cultivation>

JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT [M-GROUP.US/M-LAB](https://www.m-group.us/m-lab)

I have been consistently impressed with the firm's public outreach skills and ability to work closely with staff and community representatives to develop policies and regulations that meet the unique interests of the city.

—CITY OF BURLINGAME

M-Group [has] been amazing to work with on our mapping and graphics needs for our Land Use Plan update. The attention to detail, responsiveness to our often last-minute needs, and high quality work has been so appreciated and well-received by our staff, community, and decision-makers.

—CITY OF HALF MOON BAY

The Marinship Workshop was a home run, particularly in terms of turnout and in participation from community members.

—CITY OF SAUSALITO

Ethical principles have been closely observed including fairness to applicants and full disclosure to the public and decision makers. The principals of the firm have been accountable and have always followed up on commitments.

—CITY OF PETALUMA

Their professional planners offered valuable advice to staff, willingly accepted ownership and responsibility, and demonstrated unique dedication to a very complex project and process. M-Group provided all of this in a friendly and enthusiastic manner.

—CITY OF PALO ALTO

The cohesiveness of the [parklet] designs, of the materials, used real quality. It's going to have a look that we don't have now. That's wonderful.

—CITY OF REDWOOD CITY COUNCILMEMBER

CLIENT CITIES

NORTH BAY

CITY OF BELVEDERE
CITY OF BENICIA
CITY OF COTATI
CITY OF MILL VALLEY
CITY OF NAPA
CITY OF PETALUMA
CITY OF SAN RAFAEL
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY OF SAUSALITO

CITY OF ST. HELENA
CITY OF SONOMA
CITY OF VALLEJO
COUNTY OF MARIN
COUNTY OF SONOMA
TOWN OF CORTE MADERA
TOWN OF ROSS
TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO
TOWN OF WINDSOR

EAST BAY

CITY OF ANTIOCH
CITY OF CONCORD
CITY OF DUBLIN
CITY OF EL CERRITO
CITY OF FREMONT
CITY OF HAYWARD
CITY OF HERCULES
CITY OF LAFAYETTE
CITY OF MARTINEZ
CITY OF NEWARK
CITY OF PLEASANTON
CITY OF SAN RAMON
CITY OF UNION CITY
CITY OF VALLEJO
CITY OF WALNUT CREEK
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA
TOWN OF DANVILLE
TOWN OF MORAGA

SAN FRANCISCO/PENINSULA

CITY OF BELMONT
CITY OF BURLINGAME
CITY OF DALY CITY
CITY OF FOSTER CITY
CITY OF HALF MOON BAY
CITY OF MILLBRAE
CITY OF MENLO PARK
CITY OF PACIFICA
CITY OF REDWOOD CITY
CITY OF SAN BRUNO
CITY OF SAN CARLOS
CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
CITY OF SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO
TOWN OF ATHERTON
TOWN OF COLMA
TOWN OF WOODSIDE

SOUTH BAY

CITY OF CAMPBELL
CITY OF COALINGA
CITY OF CUPERTINO
CITY OF GILROY
CITY OF LOS ALTOS
CITY OF MILPITAS
CITY OF MONTE SERENO
CITY OF MORGAN HILL
CITY OF PALO ALTO
CITY OF SAN JOSE
CITY OF SANTA CLARA
CITY OF SARATOGA
CITY OF SOLEDAD
CITY OF SUNNYVALE
COUNTY OF SAN BENITO
COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS
TOWN OF LOS GATOS



**POLICY
PLANNING**

**URBAN
DESIGN**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
REVIEW**

**HISTORIC
PRESERVATION**

**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

**STAFFING
SOLUTIONS**



CAMPBELL

51 E Campbell Avenue
#1247
Campbell, CA 95009
408.340.5642

SANTA ROSA

499 Humboldt Street
1st Floor
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
707.540.0723

BERKELEY

2808 Adeline Street
Unit 1
Berkeley, CA 94703
510.473.3090