

Yolo County administrator tapped for county planning post

David Morrison has agricultural experience



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Napa County is close to hiring a new planning director, bringing on David Morrison, a current assistant planning and public works director for Yolo County.

County Executive Officer Nancy Watt has recommended the Board of Supervisors appoint Morrison to the position, which has been filled on an interim basis by Pete Parkinson, the former planning director for Sonoma County.

Former Planning Director Hillary Gitelman left the job last fall to fill a similar position with the city of Palo Alto.

The Board of Supervisors is scheduled to make Morrison's hire official during its March 11 meeting.

"Preserving agriculture and the environment is vital to the success of Napa County, and David's depth of experience in this area will be valuable in guiding the department forward," Watt said in a statement.

Morrison's base salary is approximately \$140,000 annually, according to the county's salary schedules. He'll be in charge of a department of 72 people and a \$10.7 million annual budget, according to a county news release.

Morrison has been the assistant director for Yolo County planning and public works since 2000. In that position, he oversaw numerous projects that will translate to his new job in Napa.

That includes helping produce updates to the Yolo County General Plan and Housing Element, as well adoption of a Climate Action Plan, streamlining the county zoning code, and helping create the Cache Creek Nature Preserve.

“Napa County is the birthplace of agricultural protection in California and has long been a leader in managing land uses consistent with local values,” Morrison said. “I am honored to be a part of creating solutions to meet the challenges that face our community and to maintain Napa’s role as the forefront of rural sustainability.”

Morrison also has worked as a guest lecturer at UC Davis since 2007, primarily devoted to the subject of how agriculture interacts with urban areas, according to the news release.

Before coming to Yolo County, Morrison was an associate planner with Tulare County and a planning intern for Fresno County.

He received bachelor of arts degrees in economics and anthropology from California State University, Fresno, as well as a master’s degree in city of and regional planning from the same school.