

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ASSISTANT PLANNER

Job Description

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Assistant Planner is the entry-level, professional planning position. It allows a relatively new graduate to complement formal education with valuable experience gained by working with other professional staff, and recognizes the potential for advancement within the organization. With regular supervision, the Assistant Planner provides supplementary staff assistance to other staff and various boards and committees to assist in the collection of field data, the development of planning studies, local and regional plans, ordinances and regulations, and other similar projects.

The Assistant Planner works under the direction of the Executive Director, and may also receive considerable supervision from senior planners. Employees in this position will begin by working together with an experienced planner and may assume primary staff responsibilities based on evaluation of performance. The position involves professional-level duties and judgment as well as routine administrative tasks.

Work may be required throughout the region and attendance at evening meetings and some weekend meetings is required. Typically, field work is required.

MAJOR AREAS OF WORK

This position provides general planning assistance to more experienced staff. The intent of this position is to introduce an early career employee to a variety of planning disciplines and to build a broad base of knowledge and skills. Typically, no pre-identified major area of work is assigned to an Assistant Planner prior to hiring.

When major areas of work are assigned, they will vary among Assistant Planners. Major areas of work may be assigned as the Assistant Planner's knowledge and skills grow. If assigned, major area(s) of work will be included as an attachment to the job description in an employee's personnel file.

The Commission may modify or add to major areas of work and/or may assign special projects or duties outside major areas based on its needs.

CHARACTERISTIC DUTIES

- Gather and maintain demographic data and other related statistics.
- Assist with or conduct field inventory and assessments.
- Participate in the research, analysis, and interpretation of social, economic, population and land use data and trends.
- Compile information and make recommendations on special studies.
- Prepare technical reports.
- Make presentations to committees, community groups and outside agencies.
- Prepare staff reports and graphic displays.
- Research and draft documents for review.

- Attend a variety of meetings and participates in professional meetings.
- Maintain awareness of new trends and developments in the field of municipal and regional planning.
- Incorporate new developments as appropriate into programs.
- Assist with grant writing.
- Complete GIS mapping and prepare printed resource materials.
- Pursue professional development opportunities.

TYPICAL KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge of the principles and practices of planning.
- Knowledge of a relevant specialization, such as transportation, land use, or affordable housing, is desired.
- Knowledge of principles and practices of research and data collection.
- Knowledge of effective writing techniques.
- Statistical, algebraic, or geometric knowledge and ability to apply such knowledge in practical situations.
- Knowledge of computer hardware and software programs, which may include Microsoft Office, Internet applications, and GIS.

TYPICAL SKILLS

- Ability to present ideas and findings (both written and oral) clearly and concisely.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.
- Creative problem-solving skills to gather relevant information to solve vaguely defined practical problems.
- Ability to review plans and apply provisions of the ordinances and codes to determine compliance with such regulations and to apply regulations to field conditions.
- Ability to create graphic designs and development strategies, and to render site plans via sketches and/or computer graphics is highly desirable.
- Ability to work on several projects or issues simultaneously, both independently or in a team environment.
- Ability to attend to details while keeping big-picture goals in mind.
- Ability to work proficiently in a Microsoft Office environment, including word processing, spreadsheets, and databases.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Master's degree in planning or closely related field and 1 year of experience, or a bachelor's degree in planning or closely related field and 3 years of professional planning experience. The experience may include internships as determined relevant by the Commission.
- The employee must be flexible in their scheduling and have their own means of transportation.
- Must be a U.S. citizen or otherwise lawfully authorized to work in the United States.

Adopted: 5/2/16

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MAJOR AREAS OF WORK
Cross-Discipline Duties

Public and Community Engagement

- Serve as staff support and a technical resource for standing and advisory committees established by CVRPC and for various modal or project based committees, including conducting orientation meetings with new committee members.
- Develop draft correspondence, reports, presentations, publications, newsletter, press releases, and digital media articles.
- Prepare contact lists, surveys, databases, and mailings, and coordinate printing and distribution as necessary.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with government officials at all levels, private groups, the press, and the public.
- Attend meetings with local and regional officials, boards, and committees as needed.
- Work with, and be responsive to, local officials and the public on matters of local and regional planning.
- Respond to requests for information and data.
- Serve on committees of statewide or regional focus to represent CVRPC's interests.
- Represent the region on regional and state projects during their development.
- Conduct informational meetings and public hearings.
- Prepare and implement public engagement plans for Major Area of Work.

Training and Education

- Organize and/or conduct trainings, conferences, and educational workshops for local officials, regional commissioners, and/or the general public.
- Develop handbooks, templates, and model documents for use by local boards and officials.
- Maintain and update CVRPC's digital and hard copy files, federal and state data, and library resource materials.
- Monitor relevant legislation and inform the Executive Director and other staff of legislation development and potential impacts.

Municipal Technical Assistance

As they relate to Major Areas of Work, provide technical assistance to member municipalities in areas including, but not limited to:

- comprehensive plan and bylaw development and adoption;
- local bylaw administration and project reviews;

- municipal ordinances and policies;
- growth management;
- project development including use of non-regulatory tools to achieve Major Area of Work and community development goals;
- grant writing, project development, and grant administration;
- special studies; and
- proper procedures and compliance with state and federal law.

Regional Planning

- Participate in, assist with, and/or serve as project coordinator/manager for special projects and regional planning efforts as assigned, including but not limited to: data collection, analysis, and report/draft preparation associated with regional plan development and updates, other Commission work areas, and special studies.
- Participate in state planning efforts. Review state agency plans, policies and programs for conformance with regional planning efforts. Prepare draft responses to public and agency correspondence for review by the Executive Director.
- Coordinate local and regional planning activities with state and federal agencies.
- Provide primary technical planning support to other Commission staff, CVRPC and its standing and advisory committees, and other groups as assigned.
- Undertake professional technical analysis, prepare written reports, and/or make public presentations as needed.
- Identify municipal and regional needs, develop projects and funding applications to meet those needs, and manage implementation projects.
- Develop project budgets, administer bidding process, and verify contract expenditures and compliance as needed.
- Work with the Finance/Office Manager and Executive Director on administration and management of relevant planning program, including, but not limited to:
 - preparing and administering project proposals, funding applications, work plans, budgets, and contracts; and
 - soliciting, managing, and supervising contractors.
- Carry out the Local Liaison Role as outlined in the DEMHS/RPC Memorandum of Understanding when requested by CVRPC's emergency management staff.

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CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
MAJOR AREAS OF WORK
Land Use

Municipal Technical Assistance

- Provide technical assistance to member municipalities regarding proper procedures and compliance with 24 V.S.A, Chapter 117.
- Conduct municipal consultations and the municipal plan regional approval process per 24 V.S.A., Chapter 117. Serve as staff support and a technical resource for CVRPC's Town Plan Review Committee.

Regional Planning

- Serve as staff support and a technical resource for CVRPC's Regional Plan Committee.
- Conduct project reviews and participate on behalf of CVRPC in state regulatory proceedings, including but not limited to Act 250 and Section 248 hearings. Serve as staff support and a technical resource for CVRPC's Project Review Committee.
- Maintain and update CVRPC's planning and permit tracking databases and files and US Census and other federal and state data.
- Carry out activities in CVRPC's Agency of Commerce and Community Development performance-based agreement.

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CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

MAJOR AREAS OF WORK

Other Areas of Work

CVRPC continually strives to increase the breadth of services to its member municipalities and State and Federal agencies. The following areas represent additional areas of work for CVRPC that may evolve into Major Areas of Work in the future.

Housing

- Support public awareness campaigns related to housing, housing issues, and partnerships concerned with the availability and affordability of housing.
- Work with abutting regional commissions to understand growth pressures and plan to mitigate possible impacts.
- Craft regional policies with the understanding that choices on transportation, economic development, basin planning, etc. impact the supply and cost of housing.
- Review development plans to ensure that projects create housing, and do so in an appropriate way and in an appropriate location.
- Assist municipalities in addressing the location, type, scale, energy efficiency, and density of housing in local plans and regulations.
- Assist municipalities with public sewer and water improvement projects, environmental due diligence, housing planning and construction grants, and revisions to regulations to allow the adaptive reuse of space in abandoned or underutilized buildings for housing and to increase housing density as desired.

Agriculture and Food Systems

- Support local and regional food systems planning.
- Assist communities to develop and support agricultural and agripreneurism enterprises.
- Facilitate municipal and agricultural transition to composting requirements.
- Develop and implement strategies and tools for regions, municipalities, and landowners to maintain and enhance agricultural viability.

Forest Integrity

- Engage stakeholders in conversations to identify priority forest landscapes, values, and issues and to maintain and enhance the forest products economy.
- Provide technical assistance to municipalities to identify critical forest blocks and wildlife corridors, to plan for invasive species impacts, and to plan for the needs of forest operations.

- Develop strategies and tools for regions, municipalities, and forest landowners to maintain and enhance forest integrity.

Energy Efficiency, Conservation and Development

- Draft energy or climate action plans.
- Assist the Region and communities to implement energy conscious land use regulations and create internal policies aimed at reducing municipal energy use.
- Review proposed alternative energy generation facilities.
- Design and implement projects and programs that have a transformative effect on individual and community energy use.
- Support local and regional energy committees.

Healthy Communities

- Assist the health community and municipalities to implement a Health in All Policies approach aimed at improving community health outcomes.
- Work with local, state, and national partners to prevent chronic diseases and reduce health gaps through development and promotion of lasting strategies that help people make healthy choices where they live, learn, work, and play.
- Design and implement projects and programs that have a transformative effect on community health.

Natural Resource Planning

- Assist municipalities with conservation and open space planning, natural resource inventories, wildlife corridor protection planning, management plans for conserved lands, and other natural resource planning activities.

Community and Economic Development

- Provide technical assistance to member municipalities and non-profit partners for facility and service projects that further community development, such as health care, libraries, schools, social services, cultural institutions, water and wastewater, housing, and a positive civic ethic that promotes growth, cooperation, and inclusion.
- Assist residents, governments, businesses, organizations, and institutions to pursue and utilize broadband infrastructure and technology.
- Assist in the creation of new cross sector partnerships, the identification of broadband technology gaps, and the creation of regional and statewide strategies and actions.

Adopted: 5/2/16