

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
SENIOR PLANNER
Job Description

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Senior Planner position is multi-faceted, requiring advanced professional planning experience of high complexity and variety, and broad knowledge of municipal and regional comprehensive planning, federal and state planning law, and a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory implementation tools.

The Senior Planner works independently under the general direction of the Executive Director and, in consultation with the Executive Director, may oversee specific Commission programs. The Senior Planner is expected to work closely and effectively with other staff as part of a strong interdisciplinary planning team. The position requires significant contact, communication, and coordination with volunteer groups, municipal representatives, and regional and state organizations and agencies.

Work is required throughout the region and attendance at a substantial number of evening meetings and some weekend meetings is required. Limited field work may be required.

MAJOR AREAS OF WORK

Major areas of work will vary among Senior Planners. Major areas of work are assigned prior to the hiring/promotion process. Initial areas of work will be documented in an employment offer or employee promotion letter. Major area(s) of work will also 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. Special projects and duties outside major areas of work typically would constitute no more than 25% of the Senior Planner's workload. The Commission may designate a Senior Planner to function as Acting Director in the absence of a Program Manager, but in no case shall an employee function in this capacity without written documentation in the employee's personnel file.

CHARACTERISTIC DUTIES

- Perform advanced professional work related to a variety of planning assignments.
- Manage complex planning studies, review development applications, and review consultant proposals and deliverables.
- Develop and review complex long-range plans, studies, analysis, and policies.

- Develop project budgets, administer bidding process, verify contract expenditures and compliance.
- Conduct research and prepare statistical reports on land use, physical, social and economic issues.
- Provide professional planning assistance to member communities on varied planning projects.
- Work in regional-level program areas relating to major area(s) of work.
- Schedule and conduct meetings with advisory groups, local boards, and elected officials.
- Present reports and other findings to municipal boards and officials and State and Federal agencies. Serve as liaison to project and program committees.
- Write funding applications.
- Work on statewide project teams with staff from other Regional Planning Commissions, when designated.
- Supervise more junior planners within the organization.
- Pursue professional development opportunities.

TYPICAL KNOWLEDGE

- Advanced knowledge of the philosophies, principles, practices and techniques of planning.
- Well-developed knowledge of one or more areas of specialization, including but not limited to the Commission's Major Areas of Work.
- Knowledge and experience in construction processes.
- Knowledge of principles, methodology, practices of research and data collection.
- Knowledge of effective writing techniques.
- Knowledge of computer hardware and software programs, which may include Microsoft Office, Internet applications, and GIS.
- Knowledge of spatial structure or physical design and the way in which cities and rural areas work.
- Extensive knowledge of plan-making and project evaluation.
- Well-developed understanding of local, state, and federal government programs and processes, including regulations that guide those programs.
- Well-developed understanding of the social and environmental impact of planning decisions on communities.
- Sufficient understanding of the legal foundation for land use regulation to review and comment on proposed legislation and state and federal policy.
- Understanding of the interaction among the economy, transportation, health and human services, and land-use regulation.

TYPICAL SKILLS

- Excellent oral and written communication skills for preparing and presenting planning reports and projects.
- Excellent interpersonal skills for facilitating relationships with elected/appointed officials or other decision-makers.
- Mastery of techniques for involving a wide range of people in making decisions.
- Group facilitation skills for use with community workshops, including the ability to function as a mediator or facilitator when community interests substantially conflict.
- Creative problem-solving skills to gather relevant information to solve less well-defined planning problems.
- Ability to analyze demographic information to discern trends in population, employment, and health, and to frame policies to influence those trends.
- Ability to work with the public and articulate planning issues to a wide variety of audiences.
- Ability to envision alternatives to the physical and social environments in which we live and develop projects and policies to achieve those alternatives as appropriate.
- Demonstrated ability to work on several projects or issues simultaneously.
- Demonstrated ability to manage projects effectively and meet firm deadlines.
- Experience in providing effective supervision and staff management to achieve team goals.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Degree in planning or closely related field and seven years of professional experience in planning or related field.
- AICP or similar professional certification preferred. CFM, GISP or other program-specific certification is preferred.
- Supervisory experience is preferred.
- 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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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.

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