

PRINCIPAL PLANNER

(LAND USE, ZONING, HOUSING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT)

Fair Labors Standard Act: (Professional) Salaried-exempt position

Position Purpose:

The purpose of this position is to assume responsibility for the accomplishment of a planning work program for the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC). Acts as supervisor for other professional staff and as a project manager when assigned. Principal Planner shall conduct independent planning research and technical writing, surveys, and analyses and public presentations. Works with others as member of a multi-disciplinary team. Performs all other related work as assigned which may occasionally include other disciplines.

Supervision:

Supervision Scope: Exercises considerable initiative, and independent judgment in the planning, administration and execution of the department's programs and services.

Works under the policy directive of the Director of Planning and Development, functioning independently referring specific problems to supervisor only when clarification or interpretation of town/board policy or procedure is required.

Supervision Given: May act as a project or team leader as assigned. May supervise other employees as assigned.

Job Environment:

Administrative work is performed under typical office conditions; work environment is moderately noisy. Attends evening meetings.

Operates an automobile; utilizes computer, telephone, copier, facsimile machine, and other standard office equipment.

Makes frequent contacts with the general public, other MRPC employees, local/regional/state/federal agencies, local colleges, local chambers of commerce, developers, attorneys, real estate appraisers, architects, and planning consultants. Contacts require excellent customer service skills and considerable resourcefulness.

Errors in judgment could result in reduced levels of service, cause confusion and delay, adverse public relations, and have legal repercussions.

Essential Functions:*(The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific*

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statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.)

General:

Prepares and implements MRPC's long and short-range planning programs including: community development; environmental planning and resource protection; economic development and housing planning and development.

Capable of working independently preparing public and private sector grants. Preparation and presentation of reports is also an essential function.

Implements projects including written products and fulfillment of all contractual obligations.

When assigned as a team leader, develops detailed work schedules and coordinates work assignments of other planners. Ability to work both independently and as a team player is an essential function of the Principal Planner to ensure quality products.

Conducts meetings and carries out planning research analysis.

Receives citizen input and articulates various alternatives.

Prepares documents for contracts with various local, state and federal government agencies, following the policies of the Commission.

Manages work progress and resolves various conflicts for a timely fulfillment of contractual obligations for assigned projects.

Identifies, prepares, and administers grant applications to provide funding for technical assistance in planning to member communities.

Provides explanations of new and existing programs to local and regional officials.

Identifies new opportunities for delivery of MRPC's services to communities under the directive of supervisor.

Participates and complies with procurement statutes and procedures in order to deliver services to clients.

Coordinates, facilitates, moderates and/or attends public meetings and hearings as needed.

Represents the MRPC at local, regional, state, and federal meetings.

Compiles and analyzes data on the Region's economic, social, and physical characteristics.

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Coordinates planning projects including those assigned to consultants. Administers consultant contracts.

Provides technical assistance to communities with identifying community development needs; recommends the resources needed to implement local improvements.

Specific Planning Areas as Assigned:

Conducts research, analysis and writing tasks as needed to fulfill the obligations of local, state, and federal-funded planning and/or protection programs and initiatives. These may include projects such as open space and recreation planning, master planning, health district planning, arts and culture planning, housing planning, energy planning, economic development, and brownfields planning and redevelopment.

Assists local officials with zoning ordinances/bylaws, subdivision regulations and other related land use and development codes; analyzes state and federal legislation pertinent to land use planning; and monitors innovative regulatory approaches to land development. Assists MRPC staff to update the regions Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document and prepare Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications on behalf of member communities.

Other Duties as Assigned:

Performs research and design work involved in developing various sections of the comprehensive planning program.

Carries out supervisory, coordinating, and liaison activities relative to work being conducted by other agencies or consultants.

Attends meetings of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC), its affiliates and committees and makes presentations to the MRPC as requested by supervisors.

Provides monthly status reports to supervisor.

Recommended Minimum Qualifications:

Education, Training and Experience:

Bachelor's degree in planning or public administration; Master's degree highly preferred; Ten years desired experience or equivalent combo of education and experience. Prior experience with land use, zoning, housing and economic development required.

Special Requirements:

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Possession of a valid motor vehicle operator's license.
American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification is helpful.

Knowledge, Ability and Skill:

Knowledge: Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of planning and zoning. Working knowledge of the Massachusetts General Laws pertaining to subdivision control, zoning, wetlands protection, urban renewal, and home rule petitions. General knowledge of community and economic development concepts and incentives.

Ability: Ability to establish and maintain effective and harmonious working relationships with municipal officials and departments, agencies, businesses, and the general public. Ability to work individually and ability to work as a team player. Ability to conceptualize and define the goals and objectives of the department. Ability to analyze complex issues and to develop relevant and realistic plans, programs and recommendations. Ability to recognize region-wide priorities and work cooperatively to support their accomplishment. Ability to communicate effectively in written and oral form. Ability to prioritize multiple tasks and deal effectively with interruptions, often under considerable time pressure.

Skill: Skill in operating computers and applicable software applications. Good written and verbal communication skills. Good grant-writing skills.

Physical Requirements:

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Minimal physical effort generally required for work performed in the office. Light physical effort occasionally required in the performance of field investigations. Operates a computer keyboard. Vision and hearing at or correctable to normal ranges. Communicates to large audiences at public meetings.

(This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.)

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