



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Senior Planner – Comprehensive Planning

FLSA: Exempt

Reports to: Director

Affiliated: No

Summary

Coordinates the development of the Cowlitz County Comprehensive Plan, which will include a number of required and optional elements such as housing, transportation, natural resources, economic development, demographic/economic information, etc. Position requires significant experience and expertise in comprehensive planning and working with a project steering committee and subcommittees. Prepares and administers this work program, tracks its budget, and oversees and/or carries out associated studies. Work is performed with considerable latitude for independent judgment and action within the scope of work and agency programs and policies.

Typical Duties

- Coordinates and monitors the comprehensive plan work program and budget.
- Arranges meetings for and otherwise communicates and interacts with the project steering committee, its subcommittees, area elected officials and staff of other agencies and organizations associated with plan development.
- Oversees, coordinates and participates in the investigation, analysis, and preparation of documents, materials, and draft text for the comprehensive plan.
- Establishes, implements and/or oversees methodologies for data collection, analysis, and studies related to plan elements (population/demographics, land use, transportation, housing, environmental impacts, historic preservation and other topics).
- Coordinates the development of plan elements by other COG staff, acting as the project lead for the comprehensive plan staff team.
- Provides technical and administrative assistance as comprehensive staff planner for member organizations and committees.
- As applicable to this project, provides supervision and training for assigned staff in analyzing plan content and related policy issues.

- Works closely with Cowlitz County Building and Planning staff throughout the development and adoption process for the comprehensive plan.
- Scopes and reviews the work of consultants, contracting agencies, and other organizations as appropriate.
- Responds to public inquires for data and information regarding the comprehensive plan, its work program and related policies, procedures, statute requirements and regulations.
- Advises appointed and elected officials on public policy issues, planning procedures, comprehensive planning, and related regulations.
- Prepares and presents reports regarding the plan to hearing bodies, committees, community groups, and private organizations.
- Participates in intergovernmental committees at the request and on the behalf of the Director to analyze, evaluate, and resolve public policy issues.
- Advises the Director, County Building and Planning, steering committee, and, if appropriate, decision-making or advisory boards on the need for program amendment or expansion.
- If applicable to this project, develops grant applications and administers and maintains agreements and contracts with funding and participating agencies and organizations.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The applicant should possess the following attributes:

- Comprehensive knowledge of planning principles, practices and techniques as they relate to all functional areas, such as land use, transportation, environmental impacts, or other related areas.
- Advanced knowledge of a functional area of planning and its relationship to the comprehensive planning process, and/or technical expertise in a functional area of the planning process and the associated methodologies and techniques.
- Ability to prepare and administer work programs, budgets, grant applications and requirements, work schedules and progress reviews.
- Ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing with individuals and groups regarding comprehensive plans, complex or controversial public policy issues or regulations.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relations with agency members, planning staff, and the community.

- Skills in written and graphic communication and computer applications appropriate for the assigned tasks, including familiarity and experience with GIS applications.

Distinguishing Features

The Senior Planner classification is distinguished from those of Associate and Assistant Planners by the greater degree of responsibility for technical, administrative and public policy elements of the work program and/or the comprehensive expertise and achievement in a particular area of planning. Senior Planners are given broad latitude to use independent judgment in developing recommendations and making decisions in their program area and dealing with the public and appointed and elected officials. Senior Planners may have a greater degree of supervisory responsibility as determined by the Director although that is not a requirement of the classification.

Working Conditions

Work is performed in an office environment with some field work required. Frequent travel to meetings and conferences is required, some of which occurs during evening hours and weekends.

Requirements

A Master's degree in urban or regional planning or a related field and a minimum of five years of experience within a planning process related to urban or regional plans, comprehensive plans, transportation or community development or a bachelor's degree and six years of experience.

Must have valid driver's license.

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