

Assistant Community Planner

Job Description

Class Title: Assistant Planner
Department: Economic and Community Development
Location: City of Gardiner, Maine

- Thirty hours per week until January, 2014; approximately two days per week starting January, 2014, pending additional grant funding
- Salary Range \$18.00-21.00/hour based on experience and qualifications
- Must be available to fly to Chicago to attend paid training meeting February 23-26, 2012

Background

Gardiner is a small Maine city with a historic waterfront downtown surrounded by a large rural community. Gardiner also boasts several walking trails, historic neighborhoods, and a new waterfront recreational park and marina situated on the Kennebec River. Gardiner is located within Augusta, Maine's Capital business region and is home to 5,800 residents, countless small businesses and non-profit organizations, and the Libby Hill Business Park.

Gardiner seeks a part-time Assistant Planner to serve as our Orton Family Foundation Heart & Soul Planning Grant Project Coordinator, grant specialist, and leader on community planning projects in the Department of Economic and Community Development. The Assistant Community Planner will assist with municipal planning functions, including an initiative to develop and implement the City's Comprehensive and Master Plans with assistance from an Orton Family Foundation Heart & Soul Planning grant (the "Project").

The ideal candidate will have professional experience with municipal planning, strong communication skills, and the technical knowledge and ability to capably perform a diverse range of tasks. The Assistant Community Planner will have proven grant writing and stewardship ability with demonstrated past success. The Assistant Community Planner will work as needed with all City staff and elected officials, as well as with partner community leadership organizations and a private foundation.

Work involves land use planning; staffing and providing technical assistance to pertinent City committees; researching, analyzing data, and administering land use and planning related projects; maintaining accurate records; and public contact. Work will be supervised by the Director with considerable independence of action. The Director will review work with the Assistant Planner via review of obtained results, submitted reports, and efficiency of methods.

Candidates must demonstrate the ability to: analyze facts involved in the land use decision-making process; conduct technical research and data analysis; assist in preparing and conducting planning projects; interpret and apply City Ordinances and policies; understand and draft ordinances and zoning restrictions; and work effectively with the public. A working knowledge of GIS, historic preservation, architecture, and building design is strongly preferred.

The Assistant Planner must be able to work productively with local and regional leaders, and to focus conversations and data-gathering efforts into community action plans. The Assistant Planner will work with several City committees, particularly the Planning Board and the Historic Preservation Committee. Attendance at evening meetings is required.

A qualified applicant will have a Bachelor's degree in municipal planning or an allied field. Applications will be accepted until Thursday, February 2, 2012. The City reserves the right to accept or reject applications. Gardiner is an equal opportunity employer.

This is a part-time, 30 hours per week position with an hourly rate range of \$18.00-21.00. The City will provide a modest budget for technology and travel related to the position. The budget for this position is funded in part by an Orton Family Foundation Heart & Soul Community Planning grant, which ends January, 2014. The position will be reduced to approximately two (2) days per week after the grant period. Additional hours may be available pending successful future grant applications, for which the Assistant Community Planner will play a key role. Applicants should send a cover letter, resume, and contact information for at least three references via e-mail to: dbrown@gardinermaine.com or by mail to this address:

Assistant Community Planner Position
c/o City of Gardiner Human Resources Department
6 Church Street
Gardiner, ME 04345

Deadline for Applications: Thursday, February 2, 2012

Review of applications will begin on February 3, 2012 and will continue until the position has been filled. For more information, including a complete job description, please visit: www.gardinermaine.com

General Duties of Project Coordinator

GENERAL PURPOSE

The Assistant Planner provides high-level administrative, technical and professional work in overseeing the City of Gardiner's community development, grant writing, and planning activities including project coordination for the Orton Family Foundation Heart & Soul Community Planning grant.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

The Assistant Planner works under the general supervision of the Director of Economic and Community Development. Work is performed with considerable independence.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

None

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Project Coordinator will work a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours per week to achieve the goals of the Project with guidance from the Project partners, Community Advisory Team and Orton Family Foundation (collectively the “Partners”). He or she will be responsible for ensuring that the day-to-day operations of the project are carried out including but not limited to project management, meetings/events coordination, communications and evaluation. He or she will often be the public face for the Project.

The Assistant Community Planner will also work approximately six (6) hours per week on community development projects and to research and apply for new grant opportunities that fit with Gardiner’s strategic plan for community and economic development, and to perform grant maintenance for existing grants awarded to the City of Gardiner.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Community Outreach

- a. Coordinate Community Advisory Team activities and work to keep its members engaged in the Project.
- b. Work with partners to engage a broad and diverse representation of the community in project activities.
- c. Work with the Team and Foundation to design, schedule, and advertise an extensive program of public meetings, including community-wide and small group gatherings using various public processes.
- d. Work with the Partners to develop and implement innovative and creative public outreach and relations techniques throughout the Project.

2. Project Management

- a. Work with the Partners to design the Project with a strong emphasis on broad-based community engagement.
- b. Work with the Partners to create and maintain a detailed project action plan, timeline and budget.
- c. With assistance from the Partners and others, carry out project activities as defined in the project action plan.
- d. Manage consultant contracts in cooperation with the Partners.
- e. When available and appropriate, recruit and manage volunteers to advance the Project goals.
- f. Coordinate with the Partners to evaluate the project by organizing, distributing, and collecting project evaluation information including, but not limited to, surveys prepared by the Orton Family Foundation.
- g. Identify community goals as expressed through the Project activities, and seek grant funding opportunities that could advance municipal/community partnership on City’s strategic plan for economic and community development.

- h. Manage municipal community planning functions as needed.

3. Planning, Coordination, and Facilitation

- a. Work with local partners and leaders to make arrangements for meeting logistics.
- b. Lead/facilitate public meetings as appropriate.
- c. Coordinate volunteers and/or professional facilitators.
- d. Prepare meeting information and distribute materials in a timely manner.
- e. Ensure meetings are documented and shared as appropriate.
- f. Liaison with any contracted community planners hired to help the city draft a Comprehensive Plan or otherwise assist with the Project.
- g. Identify and apply for grants that fit with Project goals and strategic plan for economic and community development.
- h. Manage grant stewardship (data collection, report writing) for Gardiner's existing grants.
- i. Manage municipal community planning functions as needed.

4. Communications

- a. Develop and maintain regular communications with the Partners.
- b. Work with Partners to design Project website and ensure that it is maintained.
- c. Work with the Team and Foundation to effectively publicize meetings with an emphasis on community-wide participation using a full range of media options.
- d. Keep members of the public and local officials informed of Project activities and progress.
- e. Maintain contact with consultants and contractors participating in the Project.
- f. Maintain contact and reports as required by Gardiner's grant partners and municipal projects.

EXAMPLES OF WORK (ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY)

- Assists in providing focused leadership and direction for all community development activity within city
- Collects land use data for use in comprehensive City planning and review of zoning regulations and variance requests
- Conducts community development operations to achieve goals within available resources
- Assists City officials and committees in the preparation and redrafting of City zoning ordinances for the Planning Board and City Council
- Provides technical assistance to various City committees, tasks forces, boards, and City Council
- Attends and staffs Planning Board meetings; prepares appropriate notices, agendas, staff reports and supporting documents; reviews and distributes meeting minutes
- Attends and staffs Historic Preservation Committee meetings as needed on matters that impact economic and community development
- Attends and staffs Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings as enacted by City Council and directed by City Manager; prepares appropriate notices, agendas, staff reports and supporting documents; reviews and distributes meeting minutes
- Assists Director and staff by taking the lead role in identifying grant opportunities, preparing and submitting grant material
- Assists with grant implementation, maintenance, and closeout

- Prepares studies, reports, graphics, charts, tables, financial data, promotional materials, etc., for decision-making purposes dealing with matters related to community development
- Initiates project plans to address long-range goals
- Responds to citizen inquiries about local community development activities and opportunities
- Assists other staff members as needed
- Performs related work as required

PERIPHERAL DUTIES

- Represents the City on various regional planning agencies
- Monitors local, State and Federal legislation and regulations relating to community development, and report findings, trends and recommendations to supervisor
- Monitors inter-governmental decisions and legislation affecting community planning operations and takes appropriate action
- Assists Code Enforcement Officer as needed with review and verification of all applications for subdivision and shoreland zoning permits; advises applicants and Planning Board of application status and compliance with ordinance as needed; coordinates review with appropriate municipal departments as needed
- Helps develop and communicate official plans, programs, policies and procedures to staff and the general public
- Maintains current, professional knowledge of planning issues and regulations as well as on other current events and developments pertaining to comprehensive planning
- Prepares and drafts long range plans and other special projects as requested
- Provides staff support to the various Boards and commissions concerned with the growth and development issues facing the City
- Provides training workshops for City boards on planning issues

QUALIFICATIONS

- Degree in community planning, community development or other related field or possessing equivalent in demonstrated experience
- Experience with public outreach and community organizing
- Experience with project design, management and evaluation
- Experience managing teams and committees
- Familiarity with innovative planning tools and processes, particularly as they relate to community engagement
- Proven leadership, listening qualities and interdisciplinary thinking
- Excellent oral and written skills and comfort speaking publicly
- Experience with bringing together a wide variety of groups and diverse constituencies to achieve common goals
- Strong organizational skills and ability to manage multiple tasks
- Enthusiasm for experimentation and learning
- Experience with a variety of communication technologies including online formats and social media

- History of honesty and integrity
- Commitment to the goals and approach of the Project
- Willingness to travel and work evenings
- Demonstrated success in community development and/or municipal planning
- Demonstrated experience and capability in managing the grant application and stewardship cycle, including grant identification, writing, implementation, reporting, and communication with partner agencies
- Knowledge of both private and public financial programs and sources of funds for community development

NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- A. Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of municipal land use planning, design and development.
- B. Ability to analyze and interpret laws, ordinances, rules and regulations.
- C. Knowledge of all municipal ordinances, including the subdivision and zoning statutes.
- D. Ability to prepare and analyze comprehensive and technical reports and data.
- E. Knowledge of legislative process and recent legislation.
- F. Knowledge of grant development and writing; budget development and grant administration.
- G. Ability to communicate well orally and in writing.
- H. Ability to keep varied records, to assemble and organize data, and to prepare standard reports from records.
- I. Ability to maintain detailed records and to prepare reports.
- J. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with outside agencies, municipal officials, employees and the general public.
- K. Some knowledge of civil engineering, map making and reading, and photo interpretation.
- L. Knowledge of title search and filing procedures.
- M. Knowledge of the techniques of graphics and layout.
- N. Skill in the operation of the listed tools and equipment.
- O. Ability to manage relationships and expectations required to work independently and remotely is vital to success.

This position will be subject to an at-will, part-time employment contract with the City of Gardiner, with no paid benefits. Funding at the 30 hour per week level will extend for the period of the Orton Family Foundation Heart and Soul Community Planning grant (approximately two years, ending January 31, 2013). Upon the end of the grant, the position will be funded at a level equivalent to approximately two (2) days per week, but additional grant opportunities may provide budget for increased hours.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Valid State Driver's License, or ability to obtain one

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT USED

Personal computer, including word processing, spreadsheets, internet, and data base; motor vehicle; calculator; phone; copy and fax machine

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

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.

Work is performed mostly in office settings. Some outdoor work is required in the inspection of various land use developments and construction sites. Hand-eye coordination is necessary to operate computers and various pieces of office equipment.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to talk or hear; sit; use hands to finger, handle, feel or operate objects, tools, or controls, and reach with hands and arms.

The employee is occasionally required to stand or walk.

The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 10 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee occasionally works in outside weather conditions. The employee is occasionally exposed to wet and/or humid conditions, or airborne particles.

The noise level in the work environment is usually quiet in the office, and moderate in the field.

Applicants intending to work remotely must demonstrate access to a suitable environment for interruption-free work, as well as adequate means of communication via phone and Internet.

WORK HOURS

Work shall be performed within normal City Hall hours (currently M-F 8 AM – 4:30 PM) with night meetings and weekends as needed.

Although maximum office presence is valued and expected of the Assistant Community Planner, certain aspects of the work may be performed remotely provided that adequate levels of contact and communication, as set by the Director of Economic and Community Development, are maintained and work goals established with the Assistant are consistently met to the Director's satisfaction.

SELECTION GUIDELINES

Formal application, rating of education and experience; writing sample review; oral interview(s) and reference check; job related tests may be required.

The duties listed are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or logical assignment to the position.

The 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 requirement of the job change.