

TOWN OF PORTSMOUTH, RI
ASSISTANT TOWN PLANNER/ASSISTANT PLANNER

Department:	Planning
Reports to:	Town Planner
Supervises:	None
Position Status:	Non-Exempt
Union/Non-Union:	PMEA Union

Position Summary/Purpose:

The purposes of this position are to assist the Town Planner in the development, coordination, implementation and administration of programs related to comprehensive community planning, zoning, subdivision regulations, and all other planning-related activities. The work requires professional application of thorough technical knowledge. The Assistant Town Planner is required to exercise considerable independent judgment to ensure actions meet local, regional, state and federal law, and is responsible for maintaining and improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under his/her direction and control.

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

- Assists in the maintenance and updating of the Comprehensive Community Plan, the Zoning Ordinance and various other ordinances and regulations, as needed.
- Gathers and analyzes a variety of statistical data and prepares reports and maps on topics such as census information, land use, tax base data and economic indicators.
- Reviews or assists in the review of proposed land development proposals in the Town and prepares recommendations, when requested.
- Provides planning-related technical assistance to the Town Planner, Planning Board, Zoning Board, Town Administrator and Town Council, when requested.
- Acts as Geographic Information System (GIS) Technician for the Planning Department to design and prepare graphic representations of spatial data, using GIS hardware or software applications; analyze GIS spatial data to identify spatial relationship and display results using maps, graphs, or tabular data; maintain and update the Planning Department's existing GIS databases, as needed.
- Issues Zoning Certificates and performs other official zoning administrative duties, such as updating the official zoning map, as needed.
- Prepares for and attends Planning Board and Zoning Board of Review meetings to report on zoning issues and advise on issues related to zoning administration. The issues may include, but are not limited to, specific project proposals; special use permit applications; zoning amendments; variances, and appeals.

- Conducts all work in a safe manner and all work safety practices are followed.
- Consistent on-site office and on-time attendance is essential for this position, including some evening and weekend meetings.

Other Functions:

- Performs similar or related work as required, directed or as situation dictates.
- Continues required training and professional development; keeps current with trends.
- Assists other department staff as needed to promote a team effort to serve the public.

Minimum Required Qualifications:

Education, Training and Experience:

Recommended qualifications required would generally be a Bachelor’s Degree in Planning or related field and 3 years professional planning experience; or any equivalent combination of education, work experience and training. In addition, 2 years GIS technical expertise under professional supervision, preferably in a municipal setting.

Special Requirements:

Valid driver’s license.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Knowledge of, and abilities to apply the principles, practices and techniques of comprehensive community planning (i.e. land use, transportation, environment, economic development, etc.).
- Working knowledge of zoning principals and procedures, subdivision regulation and land development standards.
- Strong ability to use planning graphics, GIS and other spatial data display and mapping techniques.
- Working knowledge of federal, state and local laws and ordinances related to planning, zoning administration and community development.
- Ability to write grant applications and administer grant-funded municipal projects.
- Ability to work in a self-directed and independent manner.
- Strong communication and customer service skills required, including the ability to deal diplomatically and work effectively with colleagues, officials, boards, community groups and the general public. Maintains high standards of ethics and behavior.
- Strong report writing, presentation and mapping skills.
- Ability to conduct remote meetings with live stream or recorded capabilities.

Supervision:

Supervision Scope: Performs a wide variety of technical responsibilities requiring knowledge of public policy and land use laws; and the performance of planning work, including GIS data. Performs responsibilities requiring independent judgment and initiative.

Supervision Received: Reports to the Town Planner; follows planning principals and regulatory requirements, and instructions as provided.

Supervision Given: None.

Job Environment:

Technical and administrative work is performed in moderately noisy conditions, with interruptions during the day from the public and Town department staff in person or via the phone, email or faxes.

Requires the operation of computers, large-format plotter, GIS, calculators, copiers, scanners, facsimile machines, and other standard office equipment.

Occasionally makes contact with the general public to handle residents’ questions and requests. Frequent and periodic contacts are with employees in the department or other Town departments, state agencies, commissions, boards, contractors, surveyors, engineers, and a GIS vendor. Communication is frequently in person, by telephone, fax, email and in writing.

Errors in judgment or omissions could result in delays or loss of service, monetary loss and/or rework and legal ramifications and/or potential liability.

Physical and Mental Requirements:

Work Environment

	None	Under 1/3	1/3 to 2/3	Over 2/3
Outdoor weather conditions		X		
Work in high, precarious places	X			
Work with toxic or caustic chemical	X			
Work with fumes or airborne particles	X			
Non-weather related–extreme heat/cold	X			
Work near moving mechanical parts	X			
Risk of electrical shock	X			
Vibration	X			
Driving		X		

Physical Activity

	None	Under 1/3	1/3 to 2/3	Over 2/3
Standing		X		
Walking		X		
Sitting				X
Talking and hearing			X	
Using hands/fingers to handle/feel				X
Climbing stairs		X		
Stooping, kneeling, crouching, crawling		X		
Reaching with hands and arms				X
Tasting or smelling	X			
Bending, pulling, pushing		X		

Lifting Requirements

	None	Under 1/3	1/3 to 2/3	Over 2/3
Up to 10 pounds		X		
Up to 25 pounds		X		
Up to 50 pounds		X		
Up to 75 pounds	X			
Up to 100 pounds	X			
Over 100 pounds	X			

Noise Levels

	None	Under 1/3	1/3 to 2/3	Over 2/3
Very quiet (forest, isolation booth)		X		
Quiet (library, private office)		X		
Moderate noise (computer, light traffic)			X	
Loud noise (heavy equipment/traffic)	X			
Very loud (jack hammer work)	X			

Vision requirements

- Close vision (i.e. clear vision at 20 inches or less)
- Distance vision (i.e. clear vision at 20 feet or more)
- Color vision (i.e. ability to identify and distinguish colors)
- Peripheral vision (i.e. ability to observe an area that can be seen up and down or left and right while the eyes are fixed on a given point)
- Depth perception (i.e. three-dimensional vision, ability to judge distances and spatial relationships)
- No special vision requirements

(This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee. It is used as a guide for personnel actions and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.)