SOUTHWESTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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**Position Opening**

# Associate Planner

Purpose: SWWRPC is seeking an experienced planning professional to lead and manage community planning projects, build strong relationships with local communities, and contribute to the organization's long-term leadership and regional impact. The successful candidate will bring sound professional judgment, strong project management skills, and the ability to work independently while collaborating across disciplines.

Position Description: The Associate Planner will engage communities on a wide variety of planning projects that address three primary issues facing our rural communities: demographic shifts, climate change, and financial solvency. The Associate Planner will work alongside communities in southwestern Wisconsin to build a vision for their community that is resilient, future-oriented, and grounded in local culture. We are looking for individuals interested in advancing traditional and non-traditional models of community and economic development. Our work spans a wide range of regional and rural issues, including economic resilience, inclusive and equitable development, job growth/decline, talent attraction, civic infrastructure, affordable housing, and sustainable development. The work of the Associate Planner will be to support communities as they develop, to capitalize on opportunities that arise, and to identify and mitigate weaknesses or threats.

The Associate Planner will execute the SWWRPC Mission by working on strategies, policies, and projects that create opportunities and solutions to address local capacity shortages stemming from workforce or financial shortfalls. Long-term success for the Associate Planner will come through the development of relationships and project ideas that enable our rural communities to continue to sustain themselves in the face of funding and population shifts.

A Day in the Life: During the first year, the Associate Planner will balance implementing planning projects with building relationships with local officials, community leaders, partner organizations, and residents throughout southwestern Wisconsin.
This relationship building will be augmented by the execution of the project management, administrative, and planning tasks associated with various projects.

This work will lead to direct community engagement around these issues, or the incorporation of this work into other SWWRPC
planning initiatives, including comprehensive plans, county hazard mitigation plans, and economic and community development projects.

About Us: We have been providing southwestern Wisconsin with community and economic development services for 56 years. We advocate for necessary and positive change grounded in a history of agriculture, food production, manufacturing, small business development, and abundant natural resources. Our staff is interdisciplinary and service driven. You can read our Strategic Plan here: https://www.swwrpc.org/about-us.

Location: The Associate Planner will begin working at our Platteville office and may adopt a hybrid work schedule once acclimated to their duties. A hybrid remote/in-office schedule is available once regularly scheduled deadlines and tasks are fully understood.

The Associate Planner will also be required to attend or facilitate occasional evening meetings. SWWRPC makes an effort to plan and schedule meetings in a timely manner and inform employees of their meeting calendar in advance of all meetings.

Requirements:

- Demonstrated experience and knowledge of effective tactics for strategic planning, community engagement, meeting facilitation, and visioning.
- Knowledge of principles, methodology, and practices of research and data collection and analysis.
- Demonstrated understanding of and expertise in planning laws and practices in Wisconsin, specifically as they relate to comprehensive plans and zoning.
- Familiarity with current issues facing small rural communities, including demographics, finance, cultural, agriculture, and climate-related risks and opportunities and risks.
- Understanding of local government functions and operations.
- Ability to analyze problems, identify alternative solutions, project consequences of proposed actions, and implement recommendations in support of goals.
- Demonstrated ability to verbally communicate complex ideas with clarity and ease.
- Strong written communication and analytical skills, able to organize complex information for a wide variety of audiences.
- Proficiency with the Microsoft Office applications Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Ability to work independently on complex projects that require strategic thinking and decision-making, balanced with the ability to work collaboratively alongside a team of staff members or community colleagues bridging disciplines and jurisdictions.
- Familiarity with geographic information systems (GIS), spatial analysis, and the presentation of planning data to support community decision-making.

Education or Experience:

- A bachelor's or master's degree in urban or regional planning, public management, public administration, economics, geography, or a related field associated with rural demographic, economic, or governance issues.

Duties and Responsibilities (percentages may vary following the first year of employment):

- Community Planning and project management – 50%
- Research, analysis, and technical support – 20%
- Community engagement and relationship development – 15%
- Organizational collaboration and professional development - 5%
- Other duties as assigned – 10%

Compensation:

- Position type: Full-time permanent. FLSA exempt
- Salary range: $60,000-$70,000, depending on qualifications and experience.
- Health insurance: SWWRPC pays 88% of premiums (approximately $13,000 for a single plan and $33,000 for a family plan).
- Other benefits: Dental and Group Life Insurance, Income Continuation Insurance, Flex Spending, participation in the Wisconsin Retirement System.
- 40 days of annual paid time off, including holidays (12 days), vacation (15 days), and sick leave (13 days)
- Paid family leave for those who qualify
- Hybrid remote/in-person work opportunity
- Generous professional development opportunities

Those interested should submit a resume to jobs@swwrpc.org. Only electronic applications will be reviewed. Applications are due by 8:00 am on Monday, November 23rd. The first round of interviews is anticipated to begin the week of November 30th. Applications will be accepted until a suitable candidate is found.

*SWWRPC is fully committed to attracting, retaining, developing and promoting the most qualified employees without regard to their race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, citizenship status, veteran status, or any other characteristic prohibited by state or local law. We are dedicated to providing a work environment free from discrimination and harassment and where employees are treated with respect and dignity.*