



Town of Ayer
TOWN PLANNER

Job Description

The Town of Ayer is seeking a creative, team-oriented, and experienced professional capable of handling multiple responsibilities for the position of Town Planner

Town of Ayer, MA:

As a New England community that equally values local-traditionalism and incremental-transformation, the Town of Ayer is planning, designing, building and sustaining its future by the thoughtful redevelopment and improvement of our Downtown Commuter Rail Station District; by the preservation and strengthening of our traditional neighborhoods; by the innovative integration of land-use & transportation planning; by the expansion of multi-modal development patterns & New Urban lifestyles; by the attraction of high-quality investment and re-investment; by the conservation of precious open space and habitat resources; by the restoration and preservation of our heritage/historic assets; and by our community's dedication to citizen-participatory planning. The Town of Ayer is well-positioned to serve as a 21st century model for vitality, resiliency and sustainable growth in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Position Purpose:

The purpose of this position is to provide professional, technical and administrative ~~work~~ service in the development of planning and land use controls, and coordinating both short and long range physical, social, and economic development and improvement plans for the Town of Ayer; all other related work as required. The Planner is responsible for improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under his/her direction and control. Serves as the professional and technical advisor to the Ayer Planning Board. Oversees projects related to the Subdivision Control Law, special permit process, and site plan review; prepares reports and recommendation to the Ayer Planning Board; attends Ayer Planning Board meetings. The Town of Ayer offers this employment prospect to a highly-motivated municipal planner seeking to professionally engage and advance smart, sustainable, place-based, multi-modal, and innovative municipal development principles and practices.

Supervision:

Supervision Scope: Performs varied and responsible duties of a complex nature, requiring a thorough knowledge of departmental operations and the exercise of considerable independent judgment and initiative in carrying out the professional duties

Supervision Received: Works under the administrative direction of the Town Administrator. Serves as the professional and technical advisor to the Ayer Planning Board. The position's appointing authority is the Ayer Board of Selectmen.

Supervision Given: Supervises the Administrative Coordinator (with respect to Planning Board Work).

Job Environment:

Work is performed under typical office conditions; work environment has a moderate noise level; infrequent work is conducted in the field with exposure to various weather conditions; frequent local travel and attends evening meetings. From time-to-time on weekends respond to emergencies or to conduct a public workshop.

Operates automobile, computer, calculator, telephone, and other standard office equipment.

Makes frequent contacts with attorneys, developers, engineers, consultants, the general public, other town officials, other town department heads, federal and state agencies, and vendors. Contacts involve routine to complex discussion that require discretion, resourcefulness, and persuasiveness to achieve desired results. Communication is by means of telephone, email, social media, personal discussion and correspondence.

Has access to Planning Board executive session discussion related to pending litigation and/or negotiations, and personal information about citizens and developers related to planning programs and proposed developments.

Errors in planning procedures or in the interpretation of state and/or federal and/or local legislation, community attitudes and regional and local development impacts could result in recommendations affecting orderly community development and long range planning which in turn could result in serious delay and confusion, monetary loss, cause adverse public relations, lower levels of department service, and could subject the Town and/or Planning Board to litigation.

Essential Functions:

(The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustration of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statement 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 review of all development proposals including subdivisions, special permits, and site plan, checking for completeness, accuracy, and compliance with the Planning Board's regulations and Town bylaws.

Provides technical assistance to the Planning Board in evaluation of development proposals. Writes all Planning Board decisions for the issuance of permits and other documents; assists public in determining which applications and permits are required and explains the application and permit process; tracks permits and informs applicants of the status of their applications.

Composes correspondence for the Planning Board; prepares materials for Planning Board Members including meeting packets; attends meetings and presents issues and information to the Planning Board which will assist in making a decision. Responsible for submitting the annual report for the Planning Department.

Participates in plan review process; prepares information and summary reports; makes recommendations to the Planning Board on development proposals. Provides professional assistance to applicants on development proposals or other land use issues.

Under the direction of the Planning Board, provides professional support to members of the community including other Town board and committees; will also interface with residents, applicants and developers to answer questions regarding compliance with the Town of Ayer's bylaws and land use policies.

Reviews Zoning Bylaws, Design Guidelines and Planning Board Rules and Regulations and recommends revisions for bylaws and regulations that dictate land use in the Town in response to changing conditions, policies, laws, environmental issues, etc.

In consultation with the Town Administrator and Planning Board, develops an annual departmental budget.

At the direction of the Planning Board and/or Town Administrator, conducts studies and prepares reports and recommendations.

Serves as the enforcement agent of the Planning Board for the purposes of evaluating plans and monitoring construction activities to ensure compliance with the Town's regulations and other bylaws. Conducts field investigations as required. Works with the Building Commissioner where appropriate to ensure enforcement.

Coordinate Town planning goals and priorities with surrounding towns, state and local agencies, councils and committees and outside consultants as appropriate. Facilitates, in a collaborative manner, all long-range planning, including the development, updating and implementation of the Master Plan; assist the Town in creating a vision for its future and recommends strategies for realizing that vision.

Solicits and secures funds to support planning related activities to achieve Ayer's planning objectives. Researches the availability of grants and writes grant applications and administers programs with input from the Planning Board and other town departments when funds are granted, as appropriate.

Performs other planning and administrative functions and duties as required.

Recommended Minimum Qualifications:

Education, Training, and Experience:

Master's Degree in planning or related field is highly desirable with three (3) years of progressively responsible planning experience. Bachelors Degree in planning or related field with five (5) years of direct experience in Land Use or Municipal Planning will be considered. Certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is preferred. A valid driver's license and access to a vehicle is required.

Knowledge, Ability and Skill:

Excellent oral and written communication skills; grant writing experience; thorough working knowledge of land use concepts, familiarity with conservation and open space preservation issues including Chapter 61 land use; experience in operating Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Organizing and executing multi-function cross organizational tasks. Ability to meet and work with people appropriately and effectively. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationship with Town officials, Planning Board Members, Town Departments and Staff, and the general public. Proficiency in operating computers, Microsoft Office including PowerPoint, and all applicable software applications. Ability to make formal presentation to government agencies, businesses, developers, regional agencies, Town boards and the general public. Self-motivated and the ability to work independently.

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.)

While performing the duties for this job, the employee is frequently required to work at a desk; regularly convey information to employees and the public; regularly move about inside the office to access file cabinets and office machinery. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move objects weighing up to 20 pounds, such as supplies, folders, and books. Ability to operate a keyboard and calculator at efficient speed and to view computer screens and spreadsheets for extended periods of time. Position is intermittently required to conduct field inspection work which will expose the position to varying weather conditions, construction sites, and natural areas.

(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.)

Job Description Approved by the Ayer Board of Selectmen on July 18, 2017

Job Classified as a GRADE 13 by the Ayer Board of Selectmen on July 18, 2017