

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission



Executive Director, Agency and Region Profile



Unique Leadership Opportunity

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) seeks an Executive Director with a strong background in regional planning, management, communications, public policy development and advocacy who can facilitate consensus and proactive decision-making between and among the region’s public, private, nonprofit and civic sectors.

PVPC Mission

The 43 cities and towns comprising the PVPC are committed to preserving and enhancing the quality of life for its individual member communities and for the over 630,000 residents of the region as a whole by:

- Developing policies, programs and projects that address regional problems or opportunities whenever such efforts can benefit from sound regional planning work;
- Serving as a strong advocate for the PVPC’s regional communities as their needs and circumstances dictate;
- Engaging in an open and broadly participatory planning process that’s firmly grounded in ethical principles.
- Engaging in an ongoing pursuit of high quality public services.
- Providing technical assistance and grant management to member communities.

A Summary Profile of the Commission and the Region it Serves

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) is the state-designated regional planning agency for the Pioneer Valley region of Massachusetts encompassing 43 cities and towns within the Connecticut River Valley of midwestern Massachusetts that’s located approximately 100 miles due west of Boston. The region is diverse and scenic, nearly 1200 square miles in area, and over 630,000 in population including New England’s seventh largest metropolitan area. Created in April of 1962 under the provisions of state enabling legislation, Chapter 40B, Section 3 of the Massachusetts General Laws, by the 1980s all 43 member communities had voluntarily decided to join the PVPC’s planning district. The PVPC’s state enabling legislation is purposely designed to permit cities or towns to plan jointly in order to promote the greatest efficiency and economy, coordinated and orderly development within their jurisdictions, and the general welfare and prosperity of their citizens.



The Planning Commission works in concert with a professional planning and support staff of nearly 50 talented individuals, plus a broad array of public agencies and officials, to define and direct solutions to area-wide problems as well as to pursue regional opportunities that cannot be effectively addressed by member communities working alone. The scope of the PVPC’s work agenda is broad and diverse and covers a range of topics, including, but not limited to:

- Community Development
- Demographic Data & Analysis
- Historic Preservation
- Land Use & Environment
- Domestic Violence Program
- Climate Change
- Clean Energy
- Hazard Mitigation
- Rural Development
- Municipal Shared Services
- Transportation
- GIS Mapping
- Bikeway & Trail Development
- Economic Development
- Water Quality Management
- Housing
- Public Health & Emergency Response
- Policy Development & Advocacy

In addition to these regionally-focused work activities, the PVPC also prides itself on offering its member communities free, local technical assistance in order to help address a variety of planning issues and needs prominent at the local level (e.g. local zoning regulations, master plan guidance, traffic counting, grant applications, development reviews etc.)

As it carries out its ambitious work agenda, the PVPC is constantly promoting regional collaboration between and among its 43 member municipalities. Currently it is the primary agency responsible for increasing communication, cooperation and coordination among all levels of government as well as the region's private business sectors in order to benefit the region and improve the quality of life for its current and future residents. In addition, the PVPC serves as an informed and proactive advocacy voice for the region as well as its individual member cities and towns.



PVPC's consolidated annual budget for Fiscal Year 2019 is \$7.2 million, 1.4% of which comes from assessments of its member communities, while 98.6% comes from contracts, grant awards and other revenue sources. At any given time over the course of a fiscal year, there are hundreds of active grants and contract activities which the PVPC is engaged in. Under the agency's current organizational structure, 9 department heads are managed directly by the Executive Director with assistance provided by a Deputy Director of Operations and an Executive Assistant/Office Manager. Since the PVPC was first established 57 years ago, the PVPC has had only 2 Executive Directors. The current PVPC Executive Director has held this post since 1981 and has notified the Commission that he plans to retire in the fall of 2019.

The Organization

The governing board of the PVPC is comprised of designated representatives from the Pioneer Valley region's 43 member cities and towns with these Commissioners drawn from the membership of local planning boards. In addition, an Alternate Commissioner is appointed by the chief elected official of each PVPC member community. The full Commission typically meets five times per year between September and June, mostly at two established meeting venues in Springfield and Hadley, Massachusetts.



While the full Commission is responsible for major policy issues and decisions, day-to-day oversight of PVPC functions and activities is delegated to a 9 member Executive Committee that includes the Commission's 5 officers and 4 members elected at large. The Executive Committee normally meets on a monthly basis except in those instances when there is insufficient business for the Committee to take up as well as in July when a short summer recess is typically observed.

The Position

The Executive Director is the chief executive officer of the Planning Commission and is responsible for the overall management of the organization including its staff, work programs, activities, contracts and finances. This portfolio includes planning and regulatory functions, staff direction and oversight, budgeting and financial management as well as external relations and communications with public entities, the media, public and private sector leaders as well as the public at large.

The Executive Director performs a key leadership role by striving to coordinate all Commission activities and initiatives and providing professional advice to the Commission members and PVPC member communities in the development, implementation and administration of policies, goals, action strategies, regulations and other applicable statutory requirements that affect the Commission, its member communities and/or the residents of the PVPC planning district at large.

The Executive Director is accountable to the full Commission and its Executive Committee and must perform his/her duties under policies established by the Commission, in conformance with regulatory laws and regulations consistent with the Code of Professional Ethics promulgated by the National Association of Regional Councils which the PVPC has adopted.

The Ideal Candidate

The PVPC's Executive Director must be a dedicated and effective leader with an exceptional ability to coordinate the agency's planning, project implementation, communications and operational activities. The ideal candidate should be collaborative, flexible, future-focused, fiscally prudent and politically savvy yet apolitical in carrying out the duties of the position. The Executive Director must be proactive and a forthcoming, skilled and honest communicator who can anticipate and respond to issues, concerns and opportunities facing the agency and/or the planning region at large. He/she must have substantial knowledge of federal, state and local politics coupled with practical, hands-on work experience affecting policy development and plan implementation.



Candidates must be capable of maintaining PVPC's position as a regional leader as well as managing internal and external change, encouraging member cities and towns to be aware of and engaged in meeting the region's needs. Moreover, candidates should possess the ability to thoughtfully analyze situations, identify and present alternative solutions, anticipate the consequences of proposed actions and implement recommendations in concert with the Commission and its staff. The candidate must be proficient at allocating limited resources in a timely and cost-effective manner. The candidate must be able to travel as needed on behalf of the PVPC.



It is expected that the PVPC's Executive Director will attend and participate at relevant national conferences and programs of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and American Planning Association (APA), among others.

The ideal candidate will be self-motivated and visionary with an entrepreneurial spirit that can help sustain the Commission, maintain its relevance, and provide needed services to its 43 member communities operating in a dynamic and ever-changing environment. In addition, the ideal candidate will be an open, inclusive and thoughtful organizational manager who strives to empower the agency's staff to attain maximum effectiveness and creativity such that the PVPC can continue to attract and retain highly skilled and talented staff who are likewise fully committed to the agency's core mission.

Once selected, the successful candidate must commit to living within the Pioneer Valley, or broader western Massachusetts area, within 15 months of employment.

Education and Experience

For this position, the PVPC is seeking any equivalent combination of experience and education that would provide the required knowledge, experience and abilities that can be deemed qualifying. Preferred candidates will have 15 years of increasingly responsible supervisory and management experience in the public or private sector. Substantial public sector experience at the local and/or regional level is highly desirable. Position requires a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in planning, public administration or other related field although a Master's degree is strongly preferred.

Compensation

The PVPC will offer a compensation package that is competitive and comparable with similar public sector organizations. It is anticipated the new Executive Director's normal starting salary will be between \$145,000 to \$160,000 per year based on qualifications and experience. Annual increases will be based on performance. Attractive benefits including health, dental and vision insurance, 11 paid holidays, and upwards of 4 weeks of paid leave per year are examples of the total compensation package to be offered.

To Apply

Submit in confidence, preferably by electronic submission, on or before the Friday, March 8, 2019 target date a cover letter, resume and 1- to 6- page writing sample to:

EDSearch@pvpc.org

Alternatively, mail the above-cited application materials marked confidential to:

Walter Gunn, Chair
Executive Director Search Committee
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
60 Congress Street, Floor 1
Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

Following the closing date, resumes will be reviewed according to the outlined position qualifications. The full Commission has authorized its nine member Executive Committee to coordinate and oversee the search process relying on the recommendations of a nine (9) member Search Committee (with 7 voting members) which will review applications and interview the most qualified candidates in confidence. The first round of interviews may be conducted via Skype, FaceTime, or preferably, in person. Based on this first round of interviews, a selection of finalists will be made followed by a second round of interviews to be conducted in person.

Following the second round of interviews, and completion of background checks, the Search Committee will advance at least two finalists to the full Commission accompanied by its recommendation. The Commission, following its vote on the recommendation of the Search Committee, will name the candidate to fill the Executive Director position and authorize the Executive Committee to enter into negotiations of employment. The starting date is negotiable but anticipated by early fall of 2019.

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) is an EEO/AA employer

