

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – JOB DESCRIPTION

Position Summary:

As the chief executive officer of the Planning Commission (PVPC) the Executive Director is responsible for the overall management of the agency including its staff, work programs, activities, contracts and finances. The Executive Director also serves as the primary public “face and voice” of the organization in the discharge of the position’s wide array of work tasks and responsibilities. The Executive Director is charged with successfully implementing the agency’s adopted Mission Statement and working collaboratively with public officials, civic leaders, business executives, citizens and others to identify and advocate for the Pioneer Valley region’s priority needs and opportunities while, simultaneously, providing leadership, management and oversight of a diverse and skilled staff. Through an internal network of supervisors, the Executive Director’s work agenda includes general responsibility for the selection, development and effective utilization of the agency’s staff resources as well as the development, negotiation and direction of programs, organizational financing, intergovernmental relations and external relations. Within the framework of policies, work programs and budgets adopted by the Commission, duties of the Executive Director are typically performed with a wide latitude of action in planning, directing and communicating the programs undertaken by the Planning Commission. Work performed by the Executive Director is continually monitored and reviewed by the full Commission and its Executive Committee through meetings and reports. The Executive Director monitors the effectiveness of the agency’s performance and results.

Illustrative Examples of Work:

The Executive Director’s work responsibilities typically encompass:

- Maintaining a working knowledge of trends, best practices and significant developments in the fields of municipal and regional planning as well as understanding how these trends may impact the region and its people.
- Working toward maintaining and enhancing the PVPC’s reputation as an informed and trusted resource for unbiased, professional information, advice and assistance as well as continually building upon its established role as a key and respected regional leader and partner.
- Supporting the Commission, its Executive Committee and multiple advisory and decision-making bodies in discharging their duties helping to determine, establish and implement plans and policies on issues and topics which are within the agency’s broad purview.
- Providing leadership in crafting and outlining solutions for the Commission and/or the Executive Committee to consider when setting policies for the agency and its planning region, and for their effective implementation over time.
- Working in concert with the Commission, its Executive Committee and PVPC’s 43 member communities to formulate, refine and implement plans and programs which in turn strengthen and broaden the scope of PVPC products and services that are in alignment with local and regional needs and opportunities.
- Ensuring ongoing agency compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
- Working with staff to develop and maintain sound fiscal and accounting practices, as well as reliable revenue streams, that can sustain the PVPC’s work over time while also helping to maintain the PVPC’s financial stability.
- Managing the PVPC’s companion nonprofit, namely the Pioneer Valley Regional Ventures Center, Incorporated.
- Acting as a principal representative for the PVPC with the public, media, and elected and appointed public officials.
- Working closely with the region’s state and federal legislative delegations in order to track legislative initiatives along with trends and opportunities of consequence to the PVPC and its member cities.

- Advocating at all levels of government for the adopted policies, plans and policy positions of the PVPC that respond to the needs and opportunities of the region and its member municipalities.
- Representing, as necessary and appropriate, the PVPC on local, regional and statewide committees and boards, as well as filling assigned gubernatorial appointment(s).
- Providing leadership, direction and overall management of a diverse and talented professional staff that is engaged in pursuing the PVPC's overarching mission while effectively implementing its plans, policies and programs.
- Offering leadership and thoughtful guidance to the agency's staff which encompasses: the development of personnel policies and procedures; continual monitoring of the Commission's work activities and products; managing the staff hiring and retention processes; providing staff opportunities for professional development and training; and striving to assure PVPC compliance with all applicable federal and state personnel laws and regulations.
- Leading a diverse and skilled professional planning and support staff which currently encompasses approximately 50 people.
- Striving to continually maintain an open and positive work environment which enables the PVPC to attract, maintain and motivate a top quality and dedicated staff.
- Spearheading efforts to build an agency that's fully committed to being open, transparent, inclusive and respectful in all of its deliberations, decisions and ethical operations and conduct.

Qualifications:

A) Education, Training and Experience Requirements Include:

- Fifteen or more years of directly relevant work experience preferred with demonstrated increasing supervisory and management experience required.
- Relevant Bachelor's degree required while a Master's degree in planning or public administration is strongly preferred.
- Work experience with a regional agency or organization similar to the PVPC is highly desirable.
- Demonstrated success in writing, securing and managing complicated grant awards is highly desirable.
- Exceptional oral and written skills are required.
- Strong understanding of public finance and accounting principles are required as are measures of agency performance and public accountability.
- Commitment to live within the Pioneer Valley, or broader western Massachusetts area, within 15 months of employment.
- Leadership and interpersonal skills.

B) Core Knowledge Requirements Include:

- Land use; transportation; economic development; housing; environmental protection; climate change adaption/mitigation; shared municipal and regional services; community development; and data/GIS services, among others.
- Principles and practice of public finance, budget development/management and accounting.
- Personnel management policies, practices and applicable federal and state regulations.
- Laws, legislative initiatives and regulations that are relevant to the PVPC's work and which affect municipal and regional governance and decision making including demonstrated expertise in municipal and/or regional agency structure and operations.
- Working knowledge of relevant office software and technologies.
- Extensive knowledge of the principles and practices applied in regional planning and governance.

- Extensive knowledge of the principles and practices of public administration, especially in the context of local government, inclusive of the intergovernmental relationships and arrangements between local government and the state and federal levels.

C) Personal Characteristics Include:

- A high energy self-starter who can effectively manage and expand, as appropriate, an ambitious agency work program.
- Can respond positively and proactively to unexpected agency opportunities and challenges.
- A strong and committed coalition builder who is capable of communicating and working effectively with a wide spectrum of internal and external partners and stakeholders.
- A consensus builder
- Strives through dialogue and negotiations, to achieve consensus among differing opinions and the potential for competing priorities.
- Ability to handle and prioritize multiple work tasks and responsibilities while exercising sound and independent judgment within the context of the agency's policy guidelines.
- Adept at analyzing problems, developing options and formulating recommendations on how to move forward.
- Readily takes responsibility for agency programs and projects as well as their implementation.
- Broad understanding of contract agreements and work arrangements that can achieve timely and cost effective results often despite complicated and demanding circumstances.
- Possess a strong commitment to staff training and development along with a solid record of successful staff recruitment efforts that have helped attract a diverse, talented and committed team of staff professionals.
- Open to and respectful of the comments, ideas, suggestions and other forms of feedback received from Commission members, staff, public officials, civic and business leaders and the general public that are relevant to the PVPC and all aspects of its mission and work agenda.

D) Important Skills Include:

- Outstanding written, communication and presentation skills.
- Organizational and leadership skills.
- Experience and high comfort level in being an outgoing spokesperson and relationship builder for the agency and the region it serves.
- Ability to convey, in concise and understandable language, complex information, issues and topics to a broad cross-section of public officials, regional leaders, agency staff and the public at large.

E) Physical Requirements Include:

- Frequent attendance at evening meetings coupled with ongoing long work hours.
- Operation of standard office equipment including computer hardware.
- Continual movement through the office, the PVPC region and Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as multiple locations situated out-of-state.
- Traveling using personal or agency-owned vehicles or other modes of travel on PVPC business on a year-round basis in variable weather conditions and often at night. Frequent trips to Boston, Worcester and Hartford, Connecticut and other locations which are 200 miles or less in distance from PVPC's headquarters in Springfield, Massachusetts.
- Attendance and participation 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.