

**JOB DESCRIPTION**  
**Principal Planner**

Date of Last Revision December, 2020

 <p align="center"><b>WESTERLY</b> Rhode Island</p>	<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Development Services - Planning		
	<b>REPORTS TO</b>	Town Planner		
	<b>FLSA STATUS</b>	Exempt; Full-Time		
	<b>POSITION TYPE</b>	Non-Union	<b>PAY GRADE</b>	

**POSITION OVERVIEW**

Under the general direction of the Town Planner, Principal Planner is responsible for assisting Development Services personnel in performing a variety of short and long-term municipal planning activities, supporting the Town Planner and various Boards and Commissions, and taking an active role in various initiatives undertaken by the Department of Development Services.

**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS**

- Provides staff assistance and technical support to the Planning Board and Town Planner by reviewing development plan and subdivision applications and conducting periodic site inspections to ensure compliance with approved subdivision and development plans.
- Works on routine and complex planning issues and will collaborate on planning policy amendments to the zoning ordinance, development regulations or comprehensive plan in response to a variety of complex planning and land-use issues.
- Represents the Town and serves as an internal expert on panels, committees, and task forces.
- Works with other Town departments, state agencies, interest groups, and jurisdictions on highly specialized policy and planning issues as assigned.
- Meets with and responds to the inquiries of the general public on planning, zoning and related matters associated with the Department of Development Services.
- Assists in the preparation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications and works with partners to administer awarded grant funding, including monitoring, financial and reporting requirements, and providing technical assistance to sub-grantees.
- Identifies grant programs for which the Town may be eligible and prepares grant applications and administers financial and reporting requirements of awarded grants.
- Attends public meetings, prepares meeting agendas, mailings and minutes and prepares administrative, fiscal, analytical and written reports as assigned.
- Performs other duties as assigned generally in the area of land use and development, resiliency, conservation, the environment, and economic development.

**ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS**

- Attends Town Council, Planning Board, Zoning Board, and various other Board and Commission meetings (such as Architectural Review Board, Conservation Commission, Harbor Management Commission, Municipal Land Trust, etc.) as required.
- Other duties and projects as assigned.

**REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

*For successful performance in this position, the incumbent will need to demonstrate the following:*

**KNOWLEDGE of:**

- Local government operations.
- Principles and procedures of community planning, municipal land use law, economic development and resiliency.
- Mapping and data analysis, geographic information systems (GIS)
- Municipal finance tools as they pertain to development projects.
- Grant writing and administration.
- Technical expertise in the interrelationships between regulatory rules, procedures, practices, and laws and engineering and design principles.

**SKILLS in:**

- Organizing and prioritizing work, exercising independent judgment, wisdom, and common sense within established procedures guidelines and rules.
- Interpersonal, verbal, and written communication for interaction with elected and appointed officials, employees, agencies, other governmental units, vendors and the public.

**ABILITY to:**

- Prepare and analyze comprehensive reports and carry out assigned projects to their completion.
- Demonstrate good customer service skills with the ability to problem solve.
- Utilize Microsoft Office Suite applications such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, Power Point and Excel in addition to other related software.
- Handle confidential material and information in an ethical and professional manner.
- Effectively communicate with, present information to, and respond to questions from Town officials and management, other government agencies, vendors, and the general public; explain complex concepts to non-professionals and to resolve issues with diverse and often opposing groups.
- Maintain a professional attitude and maintain punctuality and consistent attendance with advance notification of absences.
- Perform detailed work accurately and on time and initiate and maintain necessary follow-up.
- Prepare and submit clear, concise and accurate reports either orally or in writing.
- Utilize conflict resolution and negotiation skills.
- Work hours beyond the regularly scheduled workday when needed.
- Continue education and professional development to improve public service through expertise.

**MINIMUM POSITION REQUIREMENTS****EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Bachelor's Degree in Government, Community Planning, Public Administration, Urban Studies, Environmental Science or related field.
- Minimum of four (4) years of experience in planning and zoning, community or land use development.
- Any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience that provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully perform the essential job functions of this position.

**LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS**

- A valid driver's license.
- Certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) is highly preferred.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS****ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS including:**

- Working in an office environment with light to moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS including:**

- Sedentary office work although standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required.
- Finger and hand dexterity to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator, and to operate standard office equipment.
- Mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen, make color distinctions, and have normal depth perception; ability to smell fumes like odorous gas; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone.
- Occasionally bending, stooping, kneeling, reaching, pushing, and pulling drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information.
- Ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects weighing up to thirty (30) pounds.

*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.*