

Background

Somerset County, a recognized leader in planning in New Jersey, is seeking an experienced, detail-oriented and motivated professional to serve as the Supervising Planner – Environmental & Resiliency, in the Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development.

The Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development works with the Board of County Commissioners, County departments, divisions and Boards and Commissions, local governments, non-profits, and the business community to coordinate efforts to build a strong economic environment, develop high-wage employment growth, and protect open space and historic resources throughout the County. The Office oversees the Office of Economic Development, Office of County GIS Services and the Office of the Cultural and Heritage Commission. The Office serves as staff to the Somerset County Planning Board, Somerset County Agriculture Development Board, Somerset County Cultural and Heritage Commission, the Somerset County Energy Council, the Open Space Advisory Committee and the Regional Center Partnership.

Position Description

The Supervising Planner – Environmental & Resilience is a key member of the Office's staff. They will work closely with municipalities, community-based organizations, and environmental justice communities to advance regional solutions that ensure people and nature will be able to thrive in the face of climate challenges. They report to the Deputy Director and collaborate closely with other Office staff across multiple disciplines. The position provides technical support and expertise on environmental planning, climate change adaptation and resiliency to internal divisions and municipalities. The position accomplishes its goals by conducting research, holding public outreach and consensus building meetings, writing reports, oral presentations and by providing planning assistance to various governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, and the general public.

Requirements:

The successful candidate will be a licensed planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and in the State of NJ and will have a combination of technical, project management, communication, and leadership skills. A master's degree in regional or urban planning, natural resource management or a related field plus seven (7) to ten (10) years of experience is required. Bilingual English and Spanish proficiency is desirable, but not required. Public agency experience is desirable, but not required.

Specific areas of expertise should include:

- Planning and conducting community engagement activities, including engagement of environmental justice populations.
- Environmental planning including but not limited to wastewater planning, brownfields remediation, planning and redevelopment and green Infrastructure implementation projects
- Familiarity with the concepts of stormwater management, flood mitigation strategies, flood modeling techniques, green infrastructure techniques, the impacts of climate

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change on municipalities and municipal infrastructure, and the unique challenges posed by climate change for vulnerable and historically underrepresented populations.

- Excellent writing and interpersonal communication skills (effective with both technical and non-technical audiences) and an ability to master new topics independently including topics of a technical nature.
- Managing projects including preparing and managing multi-partner grant applications.
- Working effectively with municipal staff and local officials.

Key responsibilities include:

- Overseeing all environmental planning initiatives undertaken by the County of Somerset including Wastewater planning activities, Brownfields planning and redevelopment efforts, Green Infrastructure implementation projects.
- Key leadership role in the formation of a new regional stormwater collaborative for Somerset County communities, identifying shared adaptation priorities, building consensus around regional solutions (including innovative green infrastructure, land use management, and social infrastructure solutions and incentives), and translating those into implementation projects & programs.
- Meaningfully engaging residents and business community—especially environmental justice neighborhoods, people of color, and those with limited means—around development of municipal adaptation priorities and strategies that effectively address the needs of climate vulnerable populations.
- Working with interdisciplinary partners and consultants to evaluate impacts of flooding, heat, drought and other climate challenges on residents, and natural and human made infrastructure.
- Supporting the Environment and Utilities Committee.
- Monitoring legislation related to environmental planning, climate change, resiliency, as well as NJDEP's activities.
- Assisting with grant applications and legislative initiatives to support implementation of priority solutions.
- Managing implementation projects and associated grant contract reporting, budgets, and compliance.
- Planning and organizing project-related public engagement and participation activities, using a variety of interactive approaches both in person and online.
- Identifying and building long-term working relationships with partners, including community-based organizations, representatives of environmental justice populations, municipal staff and local officials.
- Providing technical support to colleagues on planning, land use regulation and environmental issues.
- Supporting communication and development staff to document results through writing, presentations, photography and social media.

This position may require participation in evening meetings and occasional involvement in weekend events.

Preferred

- Strong team player displaying enthusiasm and a true commitment to personal and team growth and development.
- Interest and ability to work in a collaborative manner functioning as an active participant.
- Works as a problem solver.
- Flexibility and the ability to adapt to ever-changing situations.
- Ability to analyze scientific, environmental, economic and hazard data.
- Leverages decision-support tools to evaluate impacts (direct and cascading)
- Excellent constructive communicator, both written and verbal.
- Ability to successfully support complex and time sensitive projects, manage time and client requests and resolve issues in a timely manner.
- Proficient using MS Office software including Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
- Proficiency in GIS, Adobe Creative Suite, In Design a plus; Urban Design Skills are preferred, but not required.
- Ability to manage time well and work on tasks as part of a larger project team.
- Highly motivated, client focused and work well in a team environment.
- Have excellent written and verbal communication, client interaction and organizational skills.
- Strong work ethic.

Applicants should be enthusiastic about the mission of the organization, motivated to achieve tangible results for the benefit of the community, and intrigued by the technical, social and political challenges in building climate and community resilience within the County.

This is a full-time, permanent position, which is available to commence work immediately.