



NWARPC Job Opportunity - Regional Planner

Agency: Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission

City: Springdale (Northwest Arkansas—Benton and Washington Counties-AR, McDonald County-MO)

State: AR-MO

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC), serving as both a Council of Governments and the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, leads collaborative efforts to shape a safe, connected, and resilient region—supporting communities through innovative planning, transportation choice, and responsible growth that enhances quality of life across Northwest Arkansas.

Job Description Summary:

The **Regional Planner** provides direct technical and policy support to member governments within the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission region. This position leads and manages projects that advance regional planning in areas such as land use, zoning, comprehensive planning, transportation, and intergovernmental collaboration.

Key responsibilities include assisting with land use and transportation planning, policy research, zoning regulations, and comprehensive plan development. The role also supports project programming across all travel modes and facilitates public engagement to ensure broad, inclusive community participation.

The Regional Planner works closely with local and state governments, community organizations, and internal teams to coordinate planning efforts and implement regional initiatives. The position also plays a central role in delivering training and educational support to local government staff and elected officials, helping to build planning capacity and foster cross-jurisdictional collaboration.

We offer a comprehensive benefits package including medical benefits and retirement. Salary is negotiable, depending on experience.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide technical assistance to member governments on land use planning, zoning, subdivision standards, and local policy development; support the preparation of comprehensive and small area plans; conduct research and spatial analysis; and provide review of development proposals to ensure alignment with local and regional planning goals, as requested by member governments.
- Formulate projects and design programs that respond to community and regional needs; support projects from concept through implementation by working independently and in teams; identify opportunities for policy or programmatic innovation and negotiate direction or recommendations as needed.
- Conduct policy analyses using multiple research methods and tools; collect, manage, analyze, and present data related to land use, transportation, housing, and community development using GIS, spreadsheets, databases, and statistical software.
- Manage planning projects and initiatives from inception to completion, including coordination of interdisciplinary teams, oversight of consultant-led work, development of project timelines,

tracking of deliverables, and ensuring high-quality, consistent outcomes.

- Supervise or lead project teams; solve problems as they arise and ensure that project objectives are met within established timeframes.
- Develop and deliver training sessions, workshops, and guidance materials for local planning staff and officials, while facilitating peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and promoting best practices in planning and local governance.
- Coordinate with local and state governments, community groups, and transportation stakeholders to align local efforts with regional plans and objectives.
- Lead and participate in public engagement activities, including in-person meetings, online outreach, and public comment processes.
- Represent the agency's policies and positions on internal and external committees; initiate and maintain contact with stakeholders to advance regional projects and programs.
- Serve as a liaison or media contact as needed to promote agency initiatives and foster external partnerships.
- Staff, lead, and manage the activities of agency and community boards, committees, and working groups. This includes setting agendas, preparing materials, presenting content, and providing logistical support for meetings, which may occur during office hours, evenings, or weekends.
- Communicate effectively and professionally with a wide range of audiences, including staff, local officials, public stakeholders, and board members.
- Prepare written materials including technical reports, policy recommendations, presentations, and outreach materials.
- Maintain and expand professional knowledge through continuing education, attendance at relevant conferences or workshops, and review of current literature and best practices.
- Perform other duties as assigned to support agency goals and initiatives.

Education and Experience:

Requires a bachelor's degree in planning, geography, public administration or a closely related field and five years of related planning work experience, preferably at the local government level in current and long-range planning.

Licenses and Certification:

Preferred - Certification from American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

Valid driver's license.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Knowledge of the principles and practices of urban and regional planning, transportation planning, environmental planning, and community planning and/or other related disciplines.
- Demonstrated experience using data and data tools to drive decisions in innovative directions.
- Thorough knowledge of the principles of research, standard statistical procedures, sources of

planning information, and techniques used in the preparation of materials for presentation.

- Analytical abilities required to collect, integrate and interpret data from various sources, to produce information and reports, and to develop, evaluate, and present planning information and analysis.
- Skill in managing projects, staff assigned to specific projects, and the corresponding budgets, schedules, and general communications.
- Interpersonal skills necessary to effectively interact with and manage internal staff.
- Interpersonal skills necessary to effectively communicate with the general public, media, and outside organizations to successfully present information, respond to questions and consult with others.
- Public speaking skills necessary to effectively interact with committees, governmental bodies, the general public, and outside organizations to successfully and accurately present information.
- Effective writing skills to accurately and succinctly summarize highly technical data into an organized and easy-to-read format.
- Skill in operating computer programs and applications using spreadsheet, database, word processing, presentation, geographic information systems, project management and other relevant programs.
- Skill in interpreting complex graphic and/or computer output related to the urban planning process.
- Skill in identifying and developing grant opportunities and submitting grant proposals.
- Must be able to effectively operate standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, and filing cabinets.
- While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to talk or hear. Specific vision abilities are required by this job to accomplish computer and office work. The employee frequently is required to move from location to location; use hands to finger, handle or feel; and reach with hands and arms. This position is occasionally required to traverse rough terrain, excavated areas, pre-construction, and construction sites.
- Frequent regional travel by car in the Northwest Arkansas area and outside of the region to state DOT offices in Little Rock-AR, Jefferson City-MO, and Springfield-MO is expected for this position.

Application Process:

Applicants may apply by submitting their resume to ngibbs@nwarpc.org. The position is open until filled.

Equal Opportunity Employer:

NWARPC is an equal opportunity employer does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, age, national origin, religion or disability, in the admission, access to and treatment in NWARPC's programs and activities, as well as the NWARPC's hiring or employment practices.