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Chester
Deep River
East Haddam
Essex
Haddam
Lyme
Old Lyme
Old Saybrook

Zoning & Municipal Support Specialist (Part-Time/Contract)

Overview

The Connecticut River Gateway Commission ("Gateway Commission") seeks qualified professional support to carry out its statutory and advisory responsibilities related to land use, development review, and resource protection within the designated Gateway Conservation Zone of the Lower Connecticut River Valley. This role provides technical, zoning, and meeting support to the Commission and serves as a liaison between the Commission and member municipalities.

The position is part-time (up to 70) hours per month and may be filled by an individual consultant or an organization with demonstrated zoning and municipal land use capacity.

Mission of the Gateway Commission

The Gateway Commission's mission is to protect the visual, environmental, and cultural resources of the Lower Connecticut River Valley Gateway Conservation Zone. The Commission's work includes reviewing property development proposals within the Gateway Conservation Zone and providing coordinated, consistent guidance to member municipalities, consistent with adopted Gateway Standards and applicable state law.

Authority and Role

The Gateway Commission is a regional body established by Connecticut statute in 1973 to conduct advisory reviews of land use proposals referred by member municipalities within the Gateway Conservation Zone. The Commission develops standard regulations that municipalities adopt into their municipal zoning regulations. The Commission acts in an advisory capacity, issuing findings and recommendations intended to inform local land use decision-making, while respecting municipal land use authority and locally adopted regulations. The Gateway Commission has no enforcement authority and relies on participating municipalities to enforce regulations. However, the Commission has standing to appeal decisions made by zoning boards of appeal and to oppose zoning regulation changes that negatively impact the Gateway Conservation Zone.

Scope of Work

Under the direction of the Gateway Commission, the position provides:

- Professional review of land use referrals submitted under Gateway procedures
- Ongoing coordination with municipal land use officials and zoning staff
- Technical and administrative support to Gateway Commission meetings
- Support for continuity of Commission operations, records, and institutional knowledge

Required Skills and Experience

Qualified candidates should demonstrate the following:

Core Competencies

- Strong working knowledge of Connecticut municipal zoning, land use, and planning regulation
- Experience with zoning enforcement and land use administration
- Direct experience staffing or participating in municipal boards, commissions, or public meetings
- Ability to interpret site plans, zoning applications, and development narratives in relation to adopted standards
- Familiarity with intermunicipal and regional land use coordination

Professional Skills

- Clear written and verbal communication skills suitable for public records and formal decision-making bodies
- Ability to manage referral timelines, agendas, minutes, and correspondence
- Strong organizational skills and attention to statutory and procedural detail
- Professional judgment and neutrality in advisory review contexts

Functions and Responsibilities

The position shall perform the following functions:

Referral Support

a. Referral Review

- Serve as point of contact for calls and emails regarding development in the Gateway Conservation Zone
- Direct calls and emails to appropriate town and state authorities.
- Conduct intake of referrals including electronic filing and agenda updates.

- Conduct research and site visits for referrals
 - Write reviews of referrals for Technical Advisory Group (TAG), a subset of Commission that provides technical review of referrals before full Commission review
 - Draft and email referral responses to town and state authorities
- b. Staffing for Regular and Special Meetings
- Staff regularly scheduled meetings each month with one week advance reminder and agenda provided by the chair. The meetings are understood to be as follows:
 - ☐ Connecticut River Gateway Commission on the 4th Thursday January -November and 1st Thursday of December, at 7:00pm
 - ☐ Rules Committee on the 3rd Thursday at 6:00pm
 - ☐ Communications Committee at 5:00pm
 - ☐ Special meetings as required
 - Staffing for meetings shall include the following:
 - ☐ Prepare and send agendas to be posted and post on CRGC website
 - ☐ Prepare and distribute staff report and meeting materials
 - ☐ Manage technical aspects of meetings using Zoom, which may include training commission members to use equipment and Zoom software
 - ☐ Take minutes as needed and post minutes to website
 - ☐ Save Meeting Recordings to electronic file owned by CRGC
 - ☐ Administer CRGC FOIA request responses
- c. Liaison for Municipal Officials and Commissions
- Serve as liaison between the Commission and relevant municipal planning and zoning officials
 - Maintain working relationship with relevant municipal planning and zoning staff
 - Relay issues of interest and importance in the Gateway Conservation Zone to relevant municipal planning and zoning staff
- e. Special Projects
- Manage or conduct special projects which may include mapping and data analysis or research

Bookkeeping Support Functions

- Monthly check writing/recording, investment recording, bank reconciliations, reporting, and maintenance of bookkeeping files
- Annual review of 1099 vendor payments to report to Treasurer

Technical Services Support Functions

- All work performed for the Commission will be securely stored in digital form and backed up as part of the ordinary course of business

Working Conditions and Logistics

- Position requires regular evening meeting attendance at up to four (4) evening meetings each month.
- Workspace may be provided through a partner organization, subject to agreement
- Position may be structured as an individual contract or as services provided through a mission-aligned organization

Preferred Background (Not Required)

- Prior experience serving as a Zoning Enforcement Officer, planner, or land use consultant
- Experience working with riverfront, historic, scenic, or environmental overlay districts
- Experience working with municipal commissions, public records and FOIA requirements
- Familiarity with Gateway Standards and regional planning coordination

Contact

Submit questions about the position, your cover letter and resume to sbeckman@rivercog.org.