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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNER

### NATURE OF WORK

The Economic Development Planner is a cross-functional position for the Region 1 Planning Council (RIPC), which is comprised of the Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning and the Economic Development District of Illinois. The Economic Development Planner supports RIPC's economic development, community development, grant writing, and analytical services. The position is a combination of long-term planning and short-term research and analysis projects. The Economic Development Planner will assist stakeholders in a multi-county region with developing plans and research studies related to economic development, workforce development, public safety, demographic trends, and community and government initiatives. The Economic Development Planner will also assist RIPC's Analytics team with gathering and analysis of data for time-sensitive client-response research support for economic development and government partners, for grant opportunities, and for planning documents and reports. This is a collaborative position that works with other RIPC and partner staff on cross-disciplinary research and planning projects.

### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS *(These essential duties are only illustrative.)*

Assist with the updating and maintenance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Northern Illinois Region, including tracking progress of projects within the plan, interacting with stakeholders, providing narrative and data updates, and associated tasks.

Lead the development of economic development sections of comprehensive plans for county and municipal partners.

Assist in the development of economic and community development studies for the region, including targeted industry cluster analysis, labor shed studies, and business outlook reports.

Synthesize raw research into narrative writing for grant applications, economic development marketing, planning documents, and government reports.

Assist economic development business attraction, retention, and expansion professionals with coordinating and drafting business client proposals.

Develop a working understanding of local and state incentives, taxes, permitting processes, and other topics pertaining to regional economic development.

Assist with the maintenance and updating of RIPC websites, particularly the Qualified Site Program website.

Utilize geographic information systems (GIS) to analyze, produce reports, and visually display regional economic, demographic, and infrastructure data for RIPC partners.

Assist the rest of the RIPC Analytics staff with research projects and data gathering, including developing scorecard and dashboard projects, quarterly Cost of Living Index data collection, and preparing frequently requested datasets for staff and partner use.

Design planning and report documents and presentations.

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Attend onsite and offsite meetings within the RIPC service area, including occasional evenings and weekends.

Maintains reasonable and predictable attendance.

Other duties as assigned.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED**

Works under the supervision of the Research and Information Director and the Executive Director of the RIPC. Work is reviewed daily for accuracy, completeness and adherence with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and RIPC rules and regulations. Work is also reviewed through reports and meetings for timely accomplishment of tasks and annually for overall results achieved. Special projects or situations may be reviewed in progress and at conclusion.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS & PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Work is performed primarily in an office setting, although work activities require attending meetings or field inspections that involve travel throughout the area.

### **SUCCESS FACTORS (KSAs)**

Demonstrate superior writing skills, including the editing, oversight or preparation of technical reports and the presentation of information to government entities and various committees and clients.

Have knowledge of the theory, principles, and techniques of economic development, including regional economic development planning.

Be proficient in economic and demographic research skills, including extensive familiarity of data sources such as the U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, etc.

Possess Internet fluency including excellent Web-searching skills.

Have superior computer literacy and proficiency in ArcGIS, MS Office Suite (especially Excel), and Adobe Creative Cloud (particularly InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator). Proficiency in data visualization programs desired but not essential.

Have skill in statistical analysis and synthesis of large amounts of information in a clear, ordered manner that is usable for a variety of audiences.

Have graphic design skills for creation of presentations and documents for a variety of audiences.

Exhibit strong interpersonal and public relations skills to work effectively with various clients, officials, staff, and citizens.

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Possess the ability to understand and perform in high-profile, sensitive, or controversial situations.

Demonstrate the ability to prioritize and manage tasks.

Organize and manage complex projects.

Hold strong problem-solving skills.

### **EDUCATION, TRAINING & EXPERIENCE**

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in urban planning, business administration, public administration, economics, or a related field. Three to five years of experience in economic development, planning, community development, business research, or related fields preferred. A Master's degree and relevant internships may be substituted for the work experience.

### **NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Possession of a valid Illinois driver's license.