



Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT / REGIONAL PLANNER

\$52,413 - \$68,098

Plus Excellent Benefits

Apply by

March 15, 2020

(First Review, Open Until Filled)

PROTHMAN



WHY APPLY?



Located in Kelso, WA, the Cowlitz - Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) serves the communities primarily within the southwest Washington counties of Cowlitz and Wahkiakum.

This Lower Columbia region is nestled between the Cascade Mountains and ocean beaches and is considered one of the Northwest's best outdoor playgrounds. Fishing, hunting, hiking, camping, boating, mountain climbing, and skiing are among the many activities one will find in Southwest Washington.

CWCOG offers an experienced community development or regional planning professional an outstanding career. If you are looking for a diverse and challenging position and want to live in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, then this is the perfect opportunity for you!

THE REGION

Conveniently located between Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington on the I-5 corridor, the region offers residents a comfortable, small-city lifestyle while having access to big-city recreational and cultural opportunities. Within an hour's drive of the Pacific Coast and home to some of the most prominent mountains in the Cascade Range, residents can enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities year-round. Only an hour drive south, the City of Portland offers an international airport, chain and boutique hotels, exceptional food options, and plenty of shopping.

Cowlitz County is the 13th largest out of the 40 counties in Washington State and is home to approximately 108,950 residents. The county covers 1,166 square miles within Washington's southwestern region. Kelso is home to the county seat, and its largest city is Longview.

Wahkiakum County is the third smallest of Washington's 40 counties covering 287 square miles and lies near the mouth of the Columbia River. The area was once known as the "Timber Capital of the World" and still produces a large supply of lumber for domestic and international markets while maintaining its beautiful and scenic Northwest appeal.

THE ORGANIZATION

The Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) was established in 1961 as the Cowlitz Regional Planning Commission. In 1974, it was reorganized and renamed the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Governmental Conference and, in 1992, the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments. The agency is a voluntary association of general and special purpose governments and agencies within the Lower Columbia region. CWCOG is supported by a membership of 36 entities made up of counties, cities/towns, ports, school districts, utility districts, fire districts, economic development councils, a community college, 911 public authority, chambers, and non-profit agencies in the region.

CWCOG has a highly varied work program with initiatives undertaken in the areas of long and short-term regional and local planning, transportation and economic development planning, community development, technical assistance, and a wide array of contractual services. Financial support for CWCOG services comes from annual membership fees, project specific federal and state grants, and contractual revenues. CWCOG is a board-directed organization that meets once-a-month to oversee operations, approve policy direction, and discuss issues of importance to the region. CWCOG's 2020 annual budget is \$1.02 million and covers approximately 6.5 FTE's.

CWCOG programs include:

Economic Development

CWCOG collaborates with local governments, economic development councils, non-profit agencies and the community to address issues and resources needed to advance the region's economic condition and strengthen its competitive advantages.



Transportation

The CWCOG is designated as a bi-state Metropolitan Planning Organization, comprised of the urbanized area of Longview and Kelso, Washington, and the City of Rainier, Oregon across the Columbia River. The urbanized area, originally designated as an MPO in 1982 by federal and state governments, covers an area of over 62,000 people. CWCOG is also the lead agency for the five-county Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SWRTPO) comprised of Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Pacific and Wahkiakum counties.

Planning/Community Development

The CWCOG's experienced, professional planning team helps communities with short-range and long-range planning services, code updates, development review services, comprehensive planning, neighborhood and park plans, and other services requested by its members, such as document research and preparation; code and permitting assistance, grant application development, and community visioning.

THE POSITION

Reporting to the Executive Director, the Community Development Planner is a general planning position responsible for research, development, and the implementation of plans, studies, and recommendations pertaining to transportation, land use planning, comprehensive planning, community development, housing, urban growth management, demographic information, economic development, environmental issues, and other regional and community planning areas. A planner filling this position will conduct data research and analysis, prepare reports, work with local jurisdiction staff, committees, planning commissions, and the public, assist with development of scopes of work for agency contracts and grant applications, and author plans and studies.



The position compliments two other planning positions working collaboratively on a variety of technical and procedural activities related to the agency's current programs and projects. The position also involves working with committees of member jurisdiction, staff, elected officials and the public.

Other responsibilities include:

- Applies working knowledge in establishing and using methodologies for research, analysis, preparation, and coordination of data to support studies, prepare documents and materials for public policy issues, planning, and community development.
- Prepares and presents reports, graphics and other materials, designs or identifies training opportunities, facilitates work group sessions and develops outreach materials to further understanding of project or program planning efforts and impacts on the community.
- Adheres to federal, state and local regulations as they apply to the assigned project or program in order to demonstrate compliance.
- Under guidance of the Executive Director and senior staff, may develop grant applications, scopes of work for contracts for and with funding and participating agencies and organizations.
- Assists with revising local policies, plans and legislation, projecting trends, and monitoring socioeconomic changes with respect to individual programs and projects as needed.
- Responds to public inquiries for data and information on planning processes or program related public policies, procedures and regulations.
- Works with multi-jurisdictional advisory committees at the local and state throughout all phases of assigned planning program or projects, as well as, staff at the local, state and federal levels.
- In coordination with other staff and participating jurisdictions, helps develop and prepare plans and documents applicable to assigned programs and projects.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The CWCOG leadership has set a goal to strengthen and refresh partnerships, products and relationships that have been in place for several years. With a membership of 36 agencies and over 70 members and alternates compiling the agency's main board, making meaningful connections can be challenging. The CWCOG Executive Director is looking for staff with abilities to aid in refreshing the agency's vision, strengthening its relationships, and partnering with leadership to build more effective collaboration amongst stakeholders. Bringing new, innovative ideas to an area deemed economically distressed takes creativity, energy, vision and commitment to see the ideas flourish. Engaging in long and short-range planning in an ever-changing environment requires big-picture vision with the ability to see the details to make it work.

IDEAL CANDIDATE

Education and Experience:

A Bachelor's degree in Urban and Regional Planning or a similar field, and three (3) to five (5) years of planning experience. Experience related to transportation, economic development or city planning is a plus. A graduate degree in Urban and Regional Planning or a related field, and GIS experience is preferred.

Necessary Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Knowledge of and demonstrated experience with principles, practices, regulations and techniques in the fields of transportation, land use, environmental, community development and other areas of planning.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relations with state and local agency members, planning staff and the community.
- Strong generalist skills including requisite planning, organizational and people skills preferred.

- Ability to prepare reports, processes and tools that are the key outcomes of important projects, and the ability to make recommendations regarding broader situations or events in accordance with professional principles.
- Ability to work in a team environment to enhance the growth, development and livability within the region.
- Ability to write clear, concise and defensible reports, documents and plans, and effectively communicate them.
- Experience with and enthusiasm for organizing, conducting and participating in public meetings and hearings.
- Knowledge of and experience with geographic information systems, graphics design and public presentation methods and materials preferred.
- Knowledge of and experience in research and survey methods and the ability to compile, analyze and present data in meaningful formats and mediums.
- Knowledge of Washington State laws, policies, guidelines, and regulations in the areas of community planning is preferred.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

- **\$52,413 - \$68,098 DOQ**
- Medical, Dental, Vision
- 10 paid holidays plus one floating holiday
- Paid vacation and sick leave
- Washington State Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), in lieu of Social Security
- VOYA 457(b) Plan (*Optional*)
- Long-Term Disability

Please visit:
www.cwcog.org



CWCOG is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **March 15, 2020** (first review, open until filled). Applications, personal writing sample – not collaborative, supplemental questions, resumes and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. To apply online, go to www.prothman.com and click on "submit your application" and follow the directions provided. Resumes, cover letters and supplemental questions can be uploaded once you have logged in.



www.prothman.com

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