

Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)
Executive Director

About the Agency: The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments was established in 1963 under Chapter 40B of the Massachusetts General Laws and is one of thirteen (13) regional planning agencies in the Commonwealth. NMCOG provides professional planning services and technical assistance in the areas of transportation, economic development, land use, community development, permitting, housing, historic preservation, emergency management, conservation and open space preservation, geographic information systems (GIS), municipal service delivery, sustainability, energy and environmental protection. The Council's governing body is comprised of a chief elected official, Planning Board member, and an alternate from nine Greater Lowell communities.

The agency strives to bring a regional and interregional perspective to all areas of planning and resource management by fostering cooperation between municipalities, and encouraging collaboration between the public and private sectors. NMCOG promotes the interests of the local communities at the state and federal level, and often acts as a liaison between the municipalities and other levels of government.

As technical and administrative staff for the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO), NMCOG is responsible for carrying out the regional transportation planning process, including the preparation of federally required certification documents needed to maintain the region's eligibility to receive federal transportation dollars. In addition, NMCOG prepares and maintains the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and recently submitted an application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) requesting that the region be designated as an Economic Development District (EDD). NMCOG serves as EDA's regional partner in the Greater Lowell area.

NMCOG is funded through modest per capita assessments from its member communities, and through state and federal grant programs. In addition, NMCOG contracts with member communities to provide special services, technical assistance, grant writing assistance and grant administration.

NMCOG is viewed as a capable and trusted resource by its local communities. The agency strives to ensure that its planning processes are undertaken in a manner that is fair, unbiased and inclusive of the region's diverse population of nearly 300,000 persons. The Executive Director is expected to maintain and enhance the agency's reputation as an informed, objective and skilled partner and facilitator.

About the Position: The Executive Director provides leadership, management and oversight of all aspects of the agency's operations, and reports to the NMCOG Council. This position involves direct management of planning programs and supervision of interdisciplinary professional staff for a regional planning agency/council of governments/metropolitan planning organization. Duties cover project management and administration, staffing and personnel management, budgeting, grant preparation, policy

and program design, report preparation, and public presentations. The Executive Director is responsible for preparing the annual budget, fiscal management, policy initiation and strategic planning, contract preparation and management, and ensuring that work completed by the agency is of the highest quality possible and consistent with the agency's standards. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to seek and secure state and federal grants and contracts to ensure the continued fiscal viability and health of the agency.

The Executive Director is the public face of NMCOG, representing the agency at meetings, events, and public forums, and engaging with press to explain and resolve issues on complex topics related to planning. Through the leadership of the Executive Director, it is important that the agency continue to collaborate and coordinate with regional stakeholders and partners, such as business organizations, non-profits, institutions of higher education, and neighborhood organizations.

This position includes direct supervision of 13 staff professionals. It is important that the Executive Director provide a positive work environment that challenges, inspires and motivates agency staff, so that employee retention remains high and the agency is able to recruit highly qualified staff in the future.

Essential Job Responsibilities:

- Proposes and implements the programs and policies approved and adopted by the Council
- Develops the annual budget and any needed mid-year adjustments with the assistance of the Financial Officer and Finance Committee
- Develops project proposals, work programs, RFPs, contract documents and project/contract budgets
- Maintains cost controls relative to all agency contracts and consistent with the agency budget
- Pursues, prepares or oversees the preparation of grant applications for projects and programs, in order to meet the agency's goals, priorities and financial needs
- Tracks the progress of all work items/projects to ensure adherence to contract schedules and budgets
- Reviews and approves all employee timesheets
- Approves progress reports and invoices prior to submittal for payment
- Ensures the agency compliance with all relevant local, state and federal laws and regulations
- Assigns, supervises and reviews the work of technical and administrative staff.
- Trains staff to ensure skill development necessary to fulfill contract obligations
- Provides input and advice to the Personnel Committee and Council regarding staff recruitment, hiring decisions and salary adjustments
- Prepares employee evaluations and performance reviews

- Prepares and delivers presentations to the public, local, state and federal officials, the business community, non-profits and advocacy groups
- Establishes and maintains positive working relationships with local municipalities, state and federal agencies, community organizations, the business community, and the public.
- Updates the Council on pending legislation, government policy matters, and funding opportunities and present the findings of studies undertaken by NMCOG staff.
- Advocates for policies, regulations and legislative initiatives that respond to the needs of the region and its communities.

Qualifications:

- Ten or more years of directly relevant work experience with demonstrated supervisory and personnel management experience
- Master's Degree in planning, public administration, or a related field is required
- Work experience in the public sector, preferably with a regional agency or planning-related organization is highly desirable
- Extensive knowledge of the principles and practices applied in regional planning is preferred
- Core knowledge in the areas of land use, zoning, transportation, housing, environmental protection, sustainability, municipal service delivery, economic development, energy, and climate issues is necessary
- Demonstrated success in writing, securing and managing complex grants is highly desirable
- Strong understanding of public finance, accounting principles and budget development is required to ensure agency performance and accountability
- Ability to prepare technical documents and reports is required
- Familiarity with laws, regulations and policies relevant to NMCOG's programs, and with municipal governance and decision-making. is highly desirable
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, responsibilities and projects, sometimes under considerable time pressure, is necessary
- Demonstrated skill in working cooperatively with a multitude of state and federal agencies, municipal leaders and groups, business organizations, non-profits, and various stakeholders is required.
- Must be able to respond positively and proactively to unexpected agency opportunities and challenges.
- Ability to be a consensus builder through dialogue and compromise when faced with differing opinions and competing priorities is a necessity.
- Outstanding organizational, leadership, communication and presentation skills are required

Physical Requirements:

- The ability to operate a computer and standard office equipment
- A driver's license and travel across the region and the state. Travel requires using a personal vehicle on NMCOG business on a year-round basis, sometimes in variable weather conditions and often at night. Frequent trips to Boston, Worcester and other locations are typical.
- Frequent attendance at evening meetings and long work days.

Salary Range: \$120,000 - \$150,000

Please forward resume and cover letter to Beverly Woods, bwoods@nmcog.org, no later than October 31, 2021.