



Dawson Regional Planning Commission

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JOB DESCRIPTION

Section 1 - Identifying Data

Position Title: **Planning Technician**
Supervisor: Acting Senior Planner
Location: Dawson City, YT
Date Amended: July 2014
Salary Range: \$61,603 - \$74,348 per year (based on full time, 37.5 hours per week)

Section 2 - General Summary

The Dawson Regional Planning Commission (“DRPC” or “the Commission”) is an independent six-member body, mandated under Chapter 11 of the Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in Final Agreement and the DRPC Terms of Reference (2010) to produce a Recommended Land Use Plan for the Dawson planning region. The plan will provide a vision for the future use and development of land in the region, and provide direction to the Parties (Yukon Government, Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in, and Vuntut Gwitchin Government) on management of land and resources within the region. The Commission is committed to a transparent decision-making process and strives to find creative solutions to complex issues.

The Planning Technician is responsible for implementing a variety of communications initiatives, providing technical analysis and expertise, and assisting with all aspects of plan production and day-to-day office operations. This position plays a key role in providing accurate information to the Commission for decision-making, and in creating communications products that accurately explain planning concepts and information to a wide variety of audiences.

Section 3 - Organizational Structure

This position reports directly to the DRPC Acting Senior Planner, who reports to the Commission Chair.

The two DRPC staff positions are responsible for the daily operations of the Commission. They are supported by a larger regional planning team that includes Commission members, technical representatives of the Parties (Technical Working Group), senior policy level advisors of the Parties (Senior Liaison Committee), staff of the Yukon Land Use Planning Council, and occasional technical or support service contractors.

Section 4 - Principal Duties and Responsibilities

The Planning Technician will:

Implement a variety of communications initiatives to keep stakeholders and the public informed and engaged

- Implement ongoing communications initiatives, including: maintain current contacts list for distribution of materials, send regular updates via e-mail about Commission progress and activities, post updates on community notice boards, and continuously update and improve the DRPC website
- Produce a variety of visual and written communications materials that accurately explain planning concepts and key information in creative and engaging ways, utilize consistent messaging, are tailored to different target audiences, and promote participation in Commission activities and events (e.g. thematic maps, posters, graphics, illustrations, displays, newsletters, brochures, press releases, advertisements,

newspaper articles, mail-out cards, fact sheets or Frequently Asked Questions, information packages, plain language summaries, radio announcements, Power Point presentations, website updates, posts on social media sites)

- Assist in the development of targeted communications strategies to promote the release of major Commission planning products, and assist with the coordination of activities during associated public review and feedback periods (e.g. determining timing and location of public meetings, event advertising, tracking of media coverage, monitoring and management of online tools to distribute information and collect feedback)

Provide technical analysis and expertise to the Commission

- Help ensure that the Commission has access to the most accurate and up-to-date information on which to base their decisions, including: scientific data, traditional knowledge, stakeholder interests and issues, views of the general public, policies and strategies from other jurisdictions, and any other relevant sources
- Conduct research on various land and resource management topics, analyze the information, and prepare concise summaries and recommendations for Commission consideration as directed (e.g. briefing notes, backgrounders, fact sheets, reports)
- Maintain a database of applications within the planning region currently under review by the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, monitor status of decisions, and prepare draft Commission responses where required
- Accurately compile and organize feedback received during official public review periods, ensure all confidentiality requests are respected, identify major trends and themes, and prepare analyses and summaries to support Commission discussions and decision-making
- Assist with writing and preparation of planning documents and reports, including the Draft Land Use Plan and Recommended Land Use Plan (e.g. designing document layout and graphics, contributing plain language suggestions, explaining concepts and methodology, and effectively communicating the rationale for Commission decisions)
- Provide professional advice, recommendations and technical assistance to the Commission based upon personal knowledge and experience
- Attend and actively participate in all Commission meetings, Technical Working Group sessions, stakeholder workshops, and public events
- Maintain current awareness of technical, legislative, regulatory, and legal information with relevance to regional land use planning in the Yukon and identify trends or issues which require further information or new knowledge
- If interested and as knowledge and skills allow, assume progressively senior roles and responsibilities

Assist with the daily operations and administration of the Commission office (these duties are shared by staff)

- Develop and implement internal processes and procedures for the DRPC office
- Provide administrative and secretarial support to the Commission, including but not limited to: preparation of meeting agendas and information packages; drafting and distributing Commission correspondence; keeping written records (notes and/or official minutes) of Commission meetings, workshops and public proceedings; and planning, coordination and logistics for all meetings and events
- Respond to general inquiries and provide information about the Commission as requested (by phone, email, and in person)
- Maintain organized electronic filing systems for documents and email correspondence

- Maintain effective working relationships with Parties, stakeholder groups and members of the public to exchange information, facilitate access to advice, coordinate input on Commission work, and identify issues and concerns
- Identify information gaps and support needs, and make recommendations on strategic approaches or initiatives that would make the planning process more functional, efficient and effective
- Perform a variety of general office duties and administrative tasks as required (e.g. maintaining office supplies inventory, equipment maintenance and repairs, checking mail, cleaning, etc.)

Section 5 - Contacts

- Daily interaction with DRPC Acting Senior Planner to receive direction, discuss tasks and priorities, exchange information, and discuss and resolve issues related to the planning process
- Weekly to monthly contact with Commission members, Technical Working Group members, other technical support or service contractors, and Yukon Land Use Planning Council staff to conduct meetings, exchange information, provide advice and recommendations, and seek direction and input
- Contact with representatives of stakeholder groups and members of the general public to present information, answer inquiries, identify and attempt to resolve issues, promote understanding, gather input and feedback, and advise on opportunities for involvement in the planning process
- Contact with local and regional businesses, vendors and suppliers to arrange for facility rental, catering services, and other logistical support required for meetings and events
- Contact with staff of government and non-government organizations to exchange information, gather input, and discuss issues in order to maintain a working understanding of a broad range of information relevant to Commission decision-making
- Occasional contact with media representatives to answer questions, clarify information, and direct requests for interviews to the appropriate Commission spokesperson

Section 6 - Specific Accountabilities

What are the impacts of performing the Principal Duties and Responsibilities?

DRPC staff members are the primary point of contact with technical staff of the Parties, stakeholder groups, and members of the general public. Staff members' knowledge of the planning process, the accuracy of the information they present, their decisions and actions, and their attitude and level of service create an important impression of the Commission for those who contact or visit the office. This in turn influences the public image of the Commission and the perceived legitimacy and value of its work.

The accuracy of technical information processed and presented by this position is critical as Commission decisions may be based upon it. The effectiveness of Commission communications strategies, which this position has a primary responsibility to implement, is also critical to ensure the Commission message reaches a broad variety of audiences and that valuable input and feedback is received. Commission decisions and recommendations, and the outcome of the Dawson planning process, will reflect upon future regional land use planning processes in the Yukon and the appropriate implementation of First Nation Final Agreements. The Planning Technician is responsible for determining his/her own work priorities within established deadlines and budgets, for ensuring confidentiality of any information deemed as such in the course of their duties, and for the accuracy of information presented to the Commission and to the public. This position may make recommendations to his/her supervisor and to the Commission pertaining to technical data requirements or tools, the conduct of public review and feedback periods, the analysis and resolution of planning issues, and other relevant matters in which they have expertise and experience.

By performing the Principal Duties and Responsibilities, this position will contribute significantly to the achievement of the following results:

- There will be an enhanced community and public understanding about the origin, requirements, goals and objectives of the regional land use planning process in the Yukon as laid out in First Nation Final Agreements and the Commission's Terms of Reference
- Strategic decisions will be made by the Commission that meet the goals and objectives of the planning process, and are based upon the most up-to-date and relevant information including important values of the region, current and projected future land uses, relevant legislation and regulations, and new initiatives and policy directions
- Governments, stakeholder groups, and members of the public will be aware of the current status of the planning process, existing and planned activities and initiatives, and opportunities for participation and provision of input and feedback
- The Commission will be perceived as fair, consistent, effective, credible and responsive to input and feedback from the Parties, stakeholders and members of the general public
- The reasons and rationale for Commission decisions will be openly and honestly communicated

Section 7 - Working Environment

Generally this position works in an office environment (the primary location of work is the DRPC office in Dawson City), with occasional activities held in other facilities such as boardrooms and community halls. On a daily basis, a significant amount of time is spent seated at a computer. For monthly Commission meetings, this position is expected to interact directly with Commission members, presenting information and providing ideas and recommendations. For occasional stakeholder workshops and public meetings (particularly during official public review periods for draft Commission products), this position may be responsible for assisting with meeting facilitation, delivering presentations, and responding to questions in a formal setting. Occasional short-term travel (by aircraft or vehicle) may be required to Whitehorse and Old Crow for these purposes.

The Commission currently has only two permanent staff members (this position and the Acting Senior Planner) with a high workload and expectations. Individual dedication as well as excellent teamwork are essential to achieving success. The work involves a continuous requirement to deal with imposed critical deadlines and a fixed budget, multiple and conflicting demands for time, changing priorities, and frequent interruptions. There are periods of intense activity surrounding monthly Commission meetings, just prior to the release of major planning products, and during public review and feedback periods. Overtime for this position is not mandatory, but is requested to deal with the increased workload during these times.

This position regularly deals with people and organizations who have diverse and conflicting perspectives and expectations of the regional land use planning process. The position may occasionally deal with a high level of dissatisfied people as a result of decisions made by the Commission, which could cause emotional stress. Staff must manage such situations by employing sound judgment, tact, diplomacy, and a variety of conflict resolution and communications tools. Staff must also manage their own personal views and values and maintain a professional, open and impartial perspective at all times.

The workplace and the Commission itself are based upon a participatory and consensus decision-making environment. Individuals are encouraged to share their expertise and experience while respecting other diverse perspectives and opinions that may differ from their own, and both Commission members and staff are expected to abide by the code of conduct as laid out in the Terms of Reference. Decisions are made in an open and transparent manner with clear and documented rationale, and all planning partners are encouraged to share information and work together to find creative solutions to complex issues.

Section 8 –Desired Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Education

- Post-secondary education in land use planning, environmental sciences, geography, natural resource management, or a related field AND/OR post-secondary education in communications, journalism, public relations, graphics design or a related discipline
- Training courses in various computer software programs are desirable (e.g. Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat, Adobe InDesign or similar publishing and graphics design programs)
- Training in Geographic Information Systems (e.g. ArcGIS) would be an asset

An equivalent combination of education, training and experience in a field related to the position will be equally considered.

Work Experience

- Minimum of one year work experience in land use planning, resource management, sustainability planning, environmental monitoring, project assessment, or any other field where experience was gained in finding ways to balance economic, environmental, social and cultural values
- Demonstrated experience in activities related to communications, public consultation, media relations, community engagement, or public sector decision making
- Demonstrated experience in research, writing, production of documents and reports, and presentation of information for decision-making purposes
- Demonstrated experience researching and synthesizing complex information and presenting it to a wide variety of audiences
- Experience working with First Nations or in another cross-cultural setting is a definite asset
- Experience in meeting or workshop facilitation, working with boards or committees, involvement in multi-stakeholder initiatives, or conflict resolution is a definite asset

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

The ideal candidate will have:

- Basic knowledge of environmental science, environmental and socio-economic impact assessment, and land and resource management approaches
- Basic knowledge and awareness of the Yukon's legislation and regulatory processes with respect to land and resource management, land use permitting, and environmental and socio-economic impact assessment
- General knowledge of the cultures, traditions and lifestyles of Yukon First Nations as well as negotiated Final Agreements and their implementation
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills, including the ability to explain complex topics or highly technical concepts in plain language
- Experience in conducting research, assembling information, analyzing data, and preparing summaries or recommendations
- Experience in the design and production of creative, high quality, written and visual communications materials for public distribution

- Ability to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with a wide variety of individuals and groups, and to work with people of differing viewpoints and values
- Strong analytical skills and attention to detail
- Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Office programs (Word, Excel, Power Point) as well as document layout and graphics design programs (e.g. Adobe Acrobat, Adobe InDesign)
- Proficiency using GIS programs to produce maps, and/or experience using maps or other visual materials to assist in decision making or to illustrate project results
- Experience with website design and/or maintenance using content management software (e.g. Joomla)
- Comfortable with the use of the Internet as a research tool and medium for information distribution, and aware of the potential uses of social media and online tools (e.g. Survey Monkey) to collect and record feedback
- Knowledge of general office practices and procedures, including the ability to maintain accurate and organized records and files
- Exceptional organizational and time management skills with a proven ability to prioritize tasks, take initiative, and meet critical deadlines

Personal Suitability

- Self-motivated, able to work independently and complete tasks with little or no supervision
- Able to work as an effective member of a collaborative team
- Positive attitude and a willingness to undertake a variety of tasks as needed to achieve overall goals
- Excellent interpersonal skills as well as cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Understands the importance of community consultation and engagement in public sector decision making processes
- Uses discretion, tact, and diplomacy and is able to handle confidential information and data
- Dependable, thorough, and committed to a high personal standard of excellence in their work