



Director, Planning Services – Kingston, Ontario

Job Number: J0126-0161

Bargaining Unit: Non-Union

Job Type: Regular Full-Time

Hours of Work: 35 hours per week

Salary Range: \$160,968.72 to \$201,234.75

Closing Date: February 13, 2026 - midnight

Opening Statement

We acknowledge that the City of Kingston is situated on traditional Anishinabek (Ah-nish-in-ah-bay), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-o-show-nee) and Huron-Wendat (huron-wen·dat) territory and thank these nations for their care and stewardship over this shared land. Kingston is a smart, livable city in the heart of eastern Ontario. Its stable and diversified economy includes global corporations, innovative start-ups and all levels of government.

At the City of Kingston, we believe that diversity and inclusion are essential elements of a thriving workplace. We value the unique perspectives and experiences that each individual brings to our team. As we continue to grow, we are dedicated to creating an environment where all employees feel welcomed, respected, and empowered to contribute their best work. The City of Kingston views diversity as its strength and we encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds, including those from underrepresented communities.

As staff, you play a pivotal role in enhancing people's lives by delivering exceptional, customer-centered services while working for an organization known for excellence and innovation.

Position Summary

Under the general direction of the Commissioner, Growth & Development Services, the Director, Planning Services / Chief Planner is responsible for the overall direction, management, and oversight of all municipal land use planning, development review, building services, and often economic development initiatives.

The Director guides sustainable growth, ensures compliance with provincial and municipal legislation, and fosters a high quality of life for residents by shaping the built and natural environment. This position plays a critical role in providing expert advice and recommendations to Council, Committees of Council, and the public on complex

development and land use matters.

The Director of Planning Services/Chief Planner plays a leadership role in the development of growth-related policies and assists in providing policy advice to other City initiatives related to economic development, Brownfield redevelopment, transportation, accessibility, and environmental aspects of City development.

The Director, Planning Services / Chief Planner is responsible for integrating strategic planning, operational activities, and the interests and needs of stakeholders, while ensuring fair, ethical, and responsible decision making, and appropriate management of resources.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

Strategic Oversight:

Provides visionary and strategic leadership for the Planning & Development department, aligning initiatives with the municipality's Strategic Plan, Official Plan, and other corporate goals.

Develops, recommends, and implements progressive land use policies, bylaws, and programs to guide growth, protect natural heritage, promote sustainable development, and enhance community design.

Leads the review and updating of the Official Plan, Zoning Bylaw, and other significant land use planning documents.

Stays abreast of changes in provincial legislation (e.g., Planning Act, Building Code Act, Development Charges Act, Municipal Act) and emerging trends in urban planning, development, and building sciences, ensuring municipal compliance and proactively preparing for impacts.

Contributes to corporate-wide strategic initiatives and cross-departmental projects as a member of the Senior Management Team.

Lead the department on all on Planning & Development policies, programs and services affecting the City in order to provide exceptional service to Council, Committees, the CAO, staff, and residents.

Coordinate and manage projects of major corporate significance, prepare reports, present, and defend policy recommendations related to planning issues.

Develop and monitor annual plans, objectives and performance measures for the department which includes land use policy planning, coordinating the municipal response to development applications and zoning administration.

Serve as the City's Chief Planning Official; attend Planning Committee, Council, and

other public meetings to present and defend planning recommendations. Serve as the City's Chief Planning Official.

Develop and maintain key partnerships with community organizations, business associations, applicants, planning consultants.

Oversee the human and financial resources for the department to ensure they are being used effectively, including:

Preparation and oversight of budgets and related programs.

Management of direct reports by monitoring progress toward goals with sustainable results, and resolving problems in alignment with the organization's vision and strategic plans.

Effectively manage the Planning Services team by engaging staff, providing development opportunities, mentoring as required and developing successors, fostering a positive work environment while demonstrating a high degree of integrity, maintaining, and projecting an image of trust and public service.

Development Review & Approvals:

Oversees and manages the entire development approvals process, including official plan amendments, zoning bylaw amendments, plans of subdivision and condominium, site plan control, consents, and minor variances.

Ensures efficient, transparent, and customer-service-oriented review processes for all planning applications and building permits.

Provides expert planning and technical advice to applicants, developers, consultants, and the public on complex development issues and regulatory requirements.

Manages and/or oversees the preparation of comprehensive planning reports and recommendations for presentation to Council, Committees, and the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT).

Facilitates and leads pre-consultation meetings and public engagement processes (e.g., public meetings, open houses) for major development proposals.

Oversees the administration of development agreements, including monitoring conditions, managing securities, and facilitating assumption processes.

Team Leadership & Management:

Leads, mentors, and manages a team of planning professionals, building officials, and administrative staff, fostering a positive, collaborative, and high-performance work environment.

Responsible for recruitment, training, performance management, and professional development of departmental staff.

Develops and manages the departmental operating and capital budgets, ensuring fiscal responsibility and accountability.

Promotes a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and customer service excellence within the department.

Oversee the administration of the City's Zoning and Tree By-Laws, Committee of Adjustment amongst others. Implements and manages Council's delegation of authority pursuant to By-Law 2006-75.

Final subdivision approval, site plan control approval, removal of holding symbols, part lot lift control, release of agreements, reduce/release site plan securities, draft plans of subdivision, amend condominium declarations/descriptions, cash-in-lieu of parking and technical consents.

Stakeholder Relations & Communication:

Establishes and maintains strong, collaborative relationships with internal stakeholders (CAO, Council, other departments) and external stakeholders (developers, consultants, community groups, public, provincial agencies, Indigenous communities).

Acts as the primary municipal representative on complex planning and development matters with provincial bodies (e.g., Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ontario Land Tribunal).

Prepares and delivers compelling presentations to Council, Committees, public meetings, and professional forums.

Manages sensitive and sometimes controversial issues with tact, diplomacy, and strong conflict resolution skills.

Responds to public inquiries and complaints related to planning and development.

Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications, Competencies

Master's degree in planning or related program.

University Degree in Urban and Regional Planning, or a related discipline (e.g., Geography, Environmental Studies, Public Administration, Civil Engineering).

Minimum of 7-10 years of progressively responsible experience in municipal land use planning and development, with a significant portion at a senior management or leadership level.

Demonstrated experience in leading, developing, and managing professional staff and complex departmental operations.

Extensive experience interpreting and applying the Ontario Planning Act, and other relevant provincial and municipal legislation.

Proven track record of successful project management for major development initiatives.

Experience presenting to and advising elected officials, statutory committees, and tribunals (e.g., Ontario Land Tribunal).

Experience in corporate strategic planning process, annual budget process, financial reporting/forecasting, and in development of urban and rural planning policies.

Experience in leading culture change and implementing and providing excellent customer service.

Experience in the integration of customer services best practices.

Experience with public consultation process.

Full membership in OPPI/CIP or recognized professional planning designation.

Full membership in the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) with a Registered Professional Planner (RPP) designation is typically required.

Skills, Abilities, Work Demands

Extensive knowledge and understanding of Provincial Policy Statement, Planning Act, planning methodologies, building codes, legal requirements for municipalities, other related statutes and regulations, and contract law relative to the Department and Corporation.

Ability to negotiate and complete development agreements, site plan agreements and subdivision/condominium agreements.

Excellent communication and public relations skills.

Demonstrated political acumen and the ability to build business relationships, resolve conflicts, negotiate, mediate, facilitate and deliver information to a wide variety of

audiences.

Ability to build trust and credibility in a politically sensitive role with competing demands and priorities.

Demonstrated ability to manage financial, human, and physical resources.

Excellent leadership skills with the ability to coach, motivate and develop employees.

Knowledge of, and demonstrated ability in, change management design, process, and implementation strategies to optimize both quality and cost effectiveness of service delivery.

Strong computer skills particularly with Microsoft Office.

Demonstrated ability to effectively research and analyze, and effectively respond to emerging opportunities and risks.

Thorough knowledge of land use planning principles, practices, and current issues affecting municipal government.

Comprehensive understanding of the development approvals process, urban design, growth management, and sustainability principles.

Exceptional leadership, strategic thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Superior communication (written and verbal), negotiation, and presentation skills.

Strong political acumen, judgment, and ability to navigate complex stakeholder environments.

Demonstrated ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with diverse groups.

Proficiency in relevant software applications, including GIS, Microsoft Office Suite, and permit/application tracking systems.

Ability to work effectively under pressure, manage competing priorities, and meet tight deadlines.

Valid Class G Ontario Driver's License in good standing.

Candidates are required to obtain a satisfactory criminal record check.

Closing Statement

Please apply to Career Opportunities at: www.cityofkingston.ca/Careers

Please inform us of any accommodation we need to make to ensure a barrier-free recruitment experience. Accommodation is available in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) at any stage in the recruitment process. We're happy to provide more information if you email us at HRCity@cityofkingston.ca

Your resumé must demonstrate how you meet position requirements. Please upload to your profile any educational Degrees, Diplomas and/or Certificates that are relevant and required for the position. We thank all who apply, however, only those selected for further consideration will be contacted. Information collected will be handled in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The City of Kingston may utilize artificial intelligence (AI) assisted tools throughout the recruitment process. All final hiring decisions are made by qualified municipal staff.

Please CLICK HERE to Apply