

Friends of the Chicago River



Job Description

TITLE: Planning Director

REPORTS TO: Executive Director

DATE REVISED: February 2, 2019

SUMMARY OF POSITION

Friends of the Chicago River seeks a planning director to advance our mission to improve and protect the Chicago River system and help realize our vision of the river as a 156 mile blue/green corridor of healthy accessible open space that supports and connects people and wildlife. A key member of the leadership team, the planning director will be conservation minded with an advanced degree in urban planning, or a related field, and have demonstrated experience communicating with a diverse audience of partners, stakeholders, and government agencies.

As the only organization exclusively dedicated to improving the Chicago River, Friends seeks an individual who has experience with and is committed to the environment and views the river as an important part of the history, culture, and future of the Chicago region.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead the development and implementation of a plan to achieve Friends' goal of a continuous blue/green corridor along the Chicago River system including a continuous Chicago River trail
- Coordinate outreach and interactions with major developers and private landowners along the river system and manage new development strategies
- Establish rich relationships and serve as chief liaison with local and regional planning agencies, municipalities, and other government agencies.
- Co-chair Friends' volunteer Planning Committee which reviews river-edge development
- Develop an implementation plan for Friends' new Public Lands Assessment to the benefit of people, wildlife, and the river
- Advance the use of publicly owned land for public access, stormwater management, and wildlife habitat within the river corridor
- Represent Friends on committees, task forces
- Testify at public meetings
- Become conversant with incentives for nature based solutions and river-friendly river-edge development
- Manage the full time planning specialist
- Develop and manage project budgets and provide financial reports
- Assist in fundraising and development efforts
- Participate in Friends' signature events
- Special projects as necessary

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The planning director must be an organized, creative, and energetic self-starter with excellent communication and project management skills who enjoys working within a collaborative team dynamic and possess:

- An advanced degree in urban planning or related field
- Eight or more years with increasingly responsibilities in relevant fields
- Familiarity with Chicago area planning agencies, government partners, and Chicago River system stakeholders
- Strong analytical and program management skills
- Experience in group facilitation, public process design, and public engagement
- Familiarity with GIS or other analytical tools
- Demonstrated verbal, written, and graphic communication skills
- Ability to communicate complex ideas and information to a broad range of audiences
- Expectation to attend public meetings on evening and weekends
- Experience working in a non-profit organization
- Experience managing staff
- A commitment to access, equity, and inclusion
- A valid driver's license and access to an automobile
- The ability to serve with alacrity
- Proficiency in the Spanish language is a plus.

This position requires occasional night and weekend hours to represent Friends at meetings, work days, and special events.

BENEFITS

Friends offer excellent benefits including generous paid leave (three weeks to start), medical and dental insurance, and a retirement match after two years of employment. Salary commensurate with experience. Friends of the Chicago River is an equal opportunity employer.

TO APPLY

Please send your resume and cover letter as PDFs files describing: 1) your interest in this position, 2) the ways in which you satisfy the qualifications specified above, 3) salary requirements, and 4) two project samples to the attention of Margaret Frisbie, Executive Director via email to jobs@chicagoriver.org, **subject line: Planning Director** or mail to Friends of the Chicago River, 411 S. Wells, #800, Chicago, IL 60607.

No applications will be considered without a personalized cover letter detailing the applicant's specific interest in this position. **NO CALLS, PLEASE.**