

Who we are:

Transportation is so basic that many of us overlook its overwhelming importance in our daily lives. Practically everything used in our homes, offices, or schools across Tennessee – from furniture to food items to clothing – requires a large and complex transportation network. The Tennessee Department of Transportation provides citizens of Tennessee and travelers with one of the best transportation systems in the country. TDOT is a multimodal agency with responsibilities in building and maintaining roads, aviation, public transit, waterways, railroads, cycling and walking. Our involvement ranges from airport improvements to funding transit buses to planning for river ports. The Department of Transportation has approximately 3,500 employees with four statewide region facilities in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Jackson.



Planning Director
Planning Division
\$164,448 annually

Job Overview

The Planning Director will lead, mentor, and train each Division Manager through empowerment, communication, and delegated authority. This position will collaborate with Department leadership in developing programs, technical direction, organizational structure, and section budgets that align with TDOT's organizational goals and the Division's strategic vision. The Planning Director will supervise Division staff and assist in developing performance plans, schedules, and performance metrics that ensure expected outcomes, accountability of each team member, and alignment with the Department's Work Program and programs administered by the Division.

This position will ensure the availability of resources necessary for the success of the Planning Division. This position will empower staff to implement national best practices that drive innovation, improve performance, and ensure program and project alignment with the Department's mission, vision, and values and asset management lifecycle framework.

Essential Job Responsibilities

Collaborate with TDOT leadership to guide the management of resources, staff utilization, and financial performance across the Planning Division. Partner with the divisions of Professional Services and Procurement in the oversight of consultants and vendors, including negotiation of contracts, development of scopes, review of invoicing, management of contract tasks, and completion of consultant and vendor evaluations.

Establish and ensure that there is a direct relationship between quality and work outcomes by developing standards for the Planning Division, coordinating with the Bureau of Planning, and overseeing quality control activities in alignment with TDOT's Quality Management process.

Provide strategic leadership in the development of procurement plans and oversight of external partners by developing and facilitating programmatic industry and stakeholder outreach. Ensure appropriate staff serve on selection committees for professional planning and engineering services. Support the development of the Request for Proposal (RFP), Requests for Qualifications (RFQs), Requests for Information (RFIs), Invitations to Bid (ITBs), and other contract solicitation processes by ensuring appropriate staff participation in project-specific meetings, establishing scoring criteria, participating in project information sessions, serving as a scorer as part of the consultant procurement process, and attending consultant de-brief

meetings, as needed, including those for projects that utilize Alternative Delivery methods.

Manage change by clarifying and supporting the vision, fostering effective communication, maintaining transparency, and holding yourself and others accountable throughout the process.

Establish touchpoints with Project Teams during the planning, scoping, and preliminary design phases to ensure all programs and projects are aligned with the Planning Division's statewide priorities, data-driven analyses, and performance goals. Collaborate with TDOT Regions, Divisions, and external partners to integrate resources, including Statewide Planning and Program Development, Community Transportation Planning, Roadway Data, and Forecasting and Visualization, into early project development. Provide oversight and guidance on funding eligibility, risk management, and compliance strategies to ensure projects are advanced effectively within the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) when located in a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area. Support cross-functional coordination so that long-range plans, corridor studies, traffic forecasts, roadway data, and GIS tools inform decision-making from the outset. Lead initiatives that expand statewide planning capacity, strengthen stakeholder engagement, and ensure transportation investments improve mobility, safety, resilience, and sustainability across Tennessee.

Lead the Planning Division in providing exceptional customer service to both internal and external customers, exercising effective listening skills, providing prompt responses, maintaining complete and accurate documentation, and applying active listening skills. Guide the professional growth of Division staff by fostering continuous learning, mentorship, and promoting workforce strategies that strengthen succession planning and sustain the Division's capacity to deliver on its mission. Encourage collaboration and knowledge-sharing across teams to build a resilient workforce that is prepared to meet emerging challenges.

Continuously monitor evolving Federal and State regulations, FHWA guidance, funding programs, and transportation policy trends that impact program delivery and programs administered by the Division. Translate emerging guidance into actionable strategies, procedures, and training efforts to ensure the Planning Division remains aligned with the Department's expectations and opportunities. Update internal procedures, coordinate with oversight agencies, and provide guidance to project teams and stakeholders accordingly.

Guide the development and implementation of a tracking mechanism in partnership with the TDOT Information Technology Division to ensure the scope, schedule, budget, and quality of all Planning Division deliverables support the delivery of the Department's Work Program and programs administered by the Division. Ensure full compliance with Federal and State regulations, laws, standards, and policies.

Ensure the Planning Division deliverables are consistent, predictable, and repeatable by developing and monitoring performance metrics that reflect the Division's responsibilities and contributions to the Department's Work Program and programs administered by the Division. Strengthen accountability, mitigate risk, and establish a track record of success in advancing statewide planning efforts.

Qualifications

Education and Experience: Bachelor's Degree

10 Years total of demonstrated competency in planning, engineering, or transportation-related field that includes at least:

2 years of demonstrated competency in supervision

2 years of demonstrated competency in management

Ideal Candidate

The Planning Director is a leader, collaborator, and relationship builder who provides strategic direction for the Planning Division's diverse and highly specialized and technical capabilities. They skillfully align the Division's varied programs, resources, and expertise with TDOT's long-term transportation goals, ensuring that strategic priorities are met while advancing multiple complex initiatives simultaneously. The Planning Director is a motivator who instills high standards of performance and quality, and fosters excellence in both technical work and service delivery. They create a culture of accomplishment and commitment by communicating effectively, setting clear and achievable expectations, and delegating responsibilities in a manner that maximizes the strengths of individuals and teams. Recognized as a thoughtful and inclusive leader, the Planning Director promotes cooperation and integration across specialized sections, ensuring that each area's expertise is leveraged for the collective success of the Division. They are a prudent steward of agency resources and workforce, maintaining alignment between strategic priorities, operational efficiency, and the delivery of high-quality planning products.