Position Summary

This summary describes the organization, duties, and requirements of a State of Michigan vacancy. The official position description for this position is available from the HR office for the agency.

Position Code: TRPLNRAB10R

Civil Service Class and Level: TRANSPORTATION PLANNER-A

Working Title (What the agency calls the position): Transportation Planner - Transportation Vulnerable Populations

Name and Position Code Description of Direct Supervisor: PETERSON, BRADLEY; TRANSPORTATION PLANNING MGR-3

Department/Agency: TRANSPORTATION CENTRAL OFFICE

Work Area:

Work Location/Hours of Work: 425 W. Ottawa Street, Lansing, MI 48933 / M-F, 8:00 am-5:00 pm (hours may vary)

General Summary of Function/Purpose of Position: This position functions as a senior Transportation Planner responsible for the statewide Transportation Vulnerable Populations (TVP) program components of environmental assessments (EAs), environmental impact statements (EISs), etc. This position ensures that social impacts of proposed transportation projects are identified, minimized, and mitigated; ensures the Department's transportation project actions comply with the National Environmental Policy Act's (NEPA's) mandate to identify, analyze, and document potential TVP impacts for proposed transportation projects; prepares environmental clearance documents for proposed transportation projects and regional system plans; interacts with the public and with staff of other divisions, departments, and agencies to ensure that the department complies with the requirements of all applicable state and federal legislation related to the TVP; acts as the lead environmental planner on major action projects and provides technical assistance related to transportation project TVP aspects and responds to inquiries and concerns from internal and external stakeholders; leads TVP policy implementation under NEPA statewide; and leads in the management and analysis of planning studies, operational studies, and related consultant contracts for project development activities as assigned.

Assigned duties and tasks for each duty.

Duty 1 **Percentage: 50**

Ensure the department's compliance with state and federal TVP regulations for proposed Michigan Department of transportation (MDOT) projects, including major action projects, as required by NEPA and the completion of feasibility studies and operational studies for project development activities. Major action environmental documents are based on the project's scope of work where the proposed project is expected to have significant social, environmental, and economic effects and requires federal, state, and local agency consultation and coordination along with public outreach and involvement. The complexity of a major action environmental document is in the number of disciplines and outside agencies, stakeholders, and citizens that the staff person guides through the decision-making process to achieve an environmentally acceptable transportation project.

- Prepare NEPA documents, guide interdisciplinary teams of environmental specialist, planners, and engineers, and oversee the consultant preparation of NEPA categorical exclusion and major action documents for community impact assessments. Take action as needed to keep studies on schedule.
- Respond to inquiries from department staff on TVP compliance requirements under NEPA and applicable associated laws, including, but not limited to, the Clean Air Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Orders, and guidance documentation from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).
- Research new and/or revised legislation, rulemaking, and guidance as it pertains to TVP and notify MDOT staff of updates to ensure compliance on MDOT projects and potential changes regarding MDOT policies and procedures.
- Provide expertise on TVP subject matter for both internal and external MDOT customers. Represent MDOT in TVP issues to agencies including, but not limited to, federal agencies (e.g., FHWA, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), etc.), state agencies (e.g., Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), etc.), and local agencies (e.g., Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Rural Task Forces, planning organizations, local governmental entities), and the general public on issues related to social and community impacts.
- Make recommendations to leadership in negotiating program and process changes with the FHWA, other areas within MDOT, and state and federal regulatory agencies on matters regarding TVP aspects of NEPA clearance of complex, environmentally challenging federal aid projects (e.g., potential controversy, lack of local support or understanding, TVP communities).
- For major projects, function as the environmental lead and primary point of contact in the Environmental Services Section (ESS) and prepare, review, oversee, and direct quality reviews of consultant EAs, EISs, and Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) studies and Section 4(f) Evaluations to comply with NEPA and the CEQ's regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1508).
- Facilitate public engagement and agency review of proposed projects. Document TVP project impacts, mitigation, and decisions and advise MDOT staff and consultants on public involvement strategies for engaging affected TVP populations. This includes ensuring the technical aspects of the documents are summarized and explained in a language easily understood by the public.
- Plan and lead public involvement activities for environmental factors. This includes working with the MDOT Public Involvement and Hearings Officer to organize and facilitate internal reviews of materials developed and communications strategies to inform and engage the public and agencies on all major action projects. Ensure the public understands the implications of the project by ensuring training and communication are in common terminology for wide consumption.
- Attend public meetings and hearings as the TVP subject matter expert and lead MDOT representative to provide information to the public and to receive and address comments back to MDOT project team staff. Ensure responses to comments are consistent with compliance requirements for TVP.
- Use environmental document analysis techniques and perform on-site field inspections.
- Utilize/prepare charts and maps and other tools, such as geographic information systems (GIS), for the analysis of data.
- Lead meetings and collaborate with internal and external project stakeholders to coordinate data and analysis findings with local, state, and federal agencies and to determine best options for analysis reporting.
- Assist MDOT staff and consultants in coordinating and completing documentation of the identification of all potential environmental impacts relating to TVVP resulting from project proposals. Identify mitigation for unavoidable effects to the environment. Edit, print, and distribute related documents.
- Author and process special provisions for compliance with TVP policies and procedures in MDOT plans and proposals.
- Develop innovative approaches to avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating TVP environmental impacts. Vet innovations with other areas of MDOT (e.g., Regions, Roadside Development, Wetlands) to ensure they can be implemented.

Duty 2 **Percentage: 20**

Maintain the MDOT Environmental Procedures Manual. This manual serves as a guide to both FHWA and MDOT on the procedures to process environmental clearance on federally funded transportation improvements.

- Collect and analyze new information related to changes in TVP laws or guidance, collect manual updates from other staff specialists to be updated in the Environmental Procedures Manual.
- Identify training needs and oversee the development of training materials related to the Environmental Procedures Manual for MDOT staff and consultants.
- Coordinate with ESS IT Specialist to maintain information on SharePoint and Teams site for staff use.
- Contact the authors of individual Environmental Procedures Manual chapters and topic areas to collect information about updates, review updates with FHWA for their concurrence, and incorporate updates into the manual.
- Author revisions for social factors and community impacts analysis chapter information and processes.
- Process change requests related to TVP in affected MDOT policies, procedures, and manuals as needed to reflect the updated guidance in the Environmental Procedures Manual.

Duty 3 **Percentage: 10**

Provide expertise, guidance, and training concerning environmental clearance procedures in general, and TVP community impacts identification and analysis in particular, by representing the section on department-wide interdisciplinary teams, committees, and task forces, including, but not limited to, Complete Streets, Project Scoping, Title VI, etc.

- Guide interdisciplinary teams, committees, and task forces related to TVP requirements and program.
- Research, develop, prepare, and oversee the preparation of presentation and training materials on major action environmental processes for both internal and external stakeholders.
- Identify and evaluate vendors' NEPA credentials/qualifications to provide training for MDOT staff and consultants. Work with vendors to customize NEPA training.
- Schedule and conduct trainings on the TVP program.
- Organize, oversee, and provide quality reviews of web guidance materials for MDOT's SharePoint and Internet web pages.

Duty 4 **Percentage: 10**

Consultant selection and support.

- Maintain and update information on consultant costs and hours of environmental work.
- Prepare and edit boilerplate scope of services tasks and deliverables for individual project needs and current NEPA compliance standards. This includes adding in environmental tasks and schedule, coordinating with other areas of expertise (e.g., archaeology, historical) and ensuring time, tasks, elements, and deliverables all match what is needed for the project.
- Lead consultant pre-qualification activities for MDOT environmental work ensuring the right staff are selected to perform the tasks/deliverables as indicated in the Request for Proposal (RFP).
- Identify, evaluate, review, and provide comments on consultant credentials/qualifications related to social factors and TVP for preparing major action environmental documents. Review and coordinate the comments of other subject matter experts' (e.g., archaeology specialists, historical specialist, wetland specialist, etc.) as needed.
- Serve on consultant selection committees as requested by project manager to review RFPs and scoring for consultant proposals.
- Provide TVP support to project managers in preparing RFPs for consultant studies.

Duty 5 **Percentage: 10**

Perform other duties as assigned by the Supervisor.

- Reply to correspondence as assigned and/or received.
- Prepare reports and/or recommendations as needed.
- Attend conferences and training events as needed to maintain TVP expertise and transportation planning professional development.
- Other duties as assigned.

Types of decisions made independently and whom or what those decisions affect: Apply state and federal laws to environmental clearance regarding community impacts from proposed MDOT projects. Determine appropriate techniques and procedures to apply to a given situation, including 1) relative priority of assignments, 2) level of detail and emphasis needed to comply with federal/state requirements, and 3) amount of time needed/available to complete assignments. These decisions affect professional specialists, planners, and engineers involved in the project development and clearance processes, either by affecting their schedules or by changing the scope and cost of proposed projects.

Types of decisions that require the supervisor's review: The supervisor's guidance is asked for in instances that require obtaining pertinent information from other agencies and divisions within the department, decisions which may affect department policies, when conflicting priorities arise, or when other situations arise that require upper management approval prior to implementation.

Physical effort used to perform this job and environmental conditions of this position: The position requires the ability to read, research, and respond to reports, letters, and other written materials. Must be able to travel by commercial transportation or automobile to attend meetings, project locations, or other work-related activities. Project reviews may require the ability to traverse various types of terrain. Extensive time is spent utilizing a computer. Must be able to represent the department and make presentations in meetings with the general public, local officials, legislators, transportation agencies, and other organizations. Attendance at out-of-town and night meetings is required. Position may require availability outside normal working hours based on operational needs.

Names and classes and levels of employees whom this position immediately supervises:

Essential functions of this position: This position functions as a senior Transportation Planner responsible for the statewide TVP program components of EAs, EISs, etc. This position ensures that social impacts of proposed transportation projects are identified, minimized, and mitigated; ensures the Department's transportation project actions comply with NEPA's mandate to identify, analyze, and document potential TVP impacts for proposed transportation projects; prepares environmental clearance documents for proposed transportation projects and regional system plans; interacts with the public and with staff of other divisions, departments, and agencies to ensure that the department complies with the requirements of all applicable state and federal legislation related to the TVP; acts as the lead environmental planner on major action projects and provides technical assistance related to transportation project TVP aspects and responds to inquiries and concerns from internal and external stakeholders; leads TVP policy implementation under NEPA statewide; and leads in the management and analysis of planning studies, operational studies, and related consultant contracts for project development activities as assigned.

Function of the work area: The function of the unit is to provide the impact identification, analysis, documentation, and general technical assistance needed for the department's project development and major action environmental clearance activities, as required by state and federal laws and regulations. This position is responsible for all TVP components of those functions in the ESS, providing the clearance required for proposed projects to proceed. This position fits into the function by coordinating with other professionals within the department, with other departments and agencies, and the public and prepares documentation necessary for the unit to complete its project development and environmental clearance functions and responsibilities.

Education, experience, and credentials typically needed to perform the position's essential functions [Equivalent combinations of education and experience can also be evaluated on an individual basis for applications providing sufficiently detailed descriptions of the other experience.]:

EDUCATION:
Possession of a bachelor's degree with at least 30 semester (45 term) credits in one or a combination of the following: planning (city, community, environmental, regional, and/or urban), environmental studies and/or sustainability, environmental sciences, engineering, statistics, mathematics, data science, geography, geographic/geospatial information systems, logistics and/or supply chain management, or economics.

EXPERIENCE:

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Three years of professional experience in the planning, mapping, or assessment of transportation, land use, environmental, or community systems equivalent to a Transportation Planner, including one year equivalent to a Transportation Planner P11.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of:

- Federal and state laws related to transportation planning.
- The potential social, economic, and environmental principles as they pertain to transportation.

Ability to:

- Use appropriate tools to compile and analyze data.
- Prepare reports and correspondence.
- Communicate effectively with others.
- Maintain favorable public relations.

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS:
Possession of a valid driver's license is preferred.