



CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
STATE COLLEGE, PA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT

THE CENTRE REGION

The Centre Region, (population 95,679), offers abundant all-season recreational activities, historic communities, the advantages of a progressive metropolitan community and yet retains the charms of a small town. The region is home to The Pennsylvania State University and is ranked among the best places to live in the country. The region offers a blend of urban, suburban and rural character enjoying all the amenities offered by a major university.

The Centre Region is characterized by a centrally located urban core, surrounded by a wide variety of land uses and development densities that help create an attractively built environment. Unlike many growing metropolitan areas that often see a loss of their original character, the Centre Region is fortunate to have many amenities similar to those found in more cosmopolitan areas while still possessing large expanses of agricultural and natural lands that help maintain the history and character of the region. In addition to the more urban form and development density found in the Borough of State College, small villages and towns are also found throughout the area.

As a university community, the Centre Region offers unique local and fine dining restaurants, juried art festivals, Big-Ten sports, national touring groups and concerts, coffee shops and brew pubs, and theater attractions. In addition, there are close-by state parks and game lands, many mountain biking and hiking trails, and world class trout fishing streams.

The region serves as a central transportation hub and hosts an expanding local airport and interstate highway linking to the northeastern United States and beyond. Internally, the region has the third largest transit system in Pennsylvania and is designated a Silver Level Bicycling Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclist.

The Centre Region is served by the State College Area School District that has earned a reputation for excellence and is characterized by a successful, diverse, engaged, high performing student body that has a graduation rate of over 97%. Medical services are excellent and are available through several health care providers. At its core is the Mount Nittany Medical Center, an acute care facility offering medical, surgical, diagnostic and community services.

DEMOGRAPHICS / ACCOLADES

Median Age: 25.8 (Includes student population)

Median Home Value: \$317,400

Median Household Income: \$74,112

#10 in Top10 Best Cities for Entrepreneurs to Live and Launch (Entrepreneur Magazine)

Ranked among the best places to live by Thrillist and CNN Money

#10 in Top 10 Mid Atlantic Communities

All Centre Region municipalities are ranked gold or platinum by Sustainable PA



THE ORGANIZATION

The Centre Region Council of Governments (COG), established in 1969, is a voluntary association, of the State College Borough and the Townships of College, Ferguson, Halfmoon, Harris and Patton. The COG's service area covers about 150 square miles with a population of 95,679 residents including 48,535 University students. The Centre Region residents are joined together economically, socially, and geographically as one community.

The Council of Governments is not another layer of government. Rather, it was formed to provide public services in an economical way that improves the quality of life and protects the safety of Centre Region residents. The Centre Region COG is the oldest and most successful COG in the Commonwealth, celebrating 55 years of service in 2024. Many of the COG's programs are models for other Pennsylvania communities and are regarded as best practices by the Commonwealth.

The COG provides Fire Protection, Emergency Management, Code Administration, Parks and Recreation, Library, Planning, and Refuse and Recycling services for the region. The COG has a budget of approximately \$29 M and 100 full-time and 30 part-time staff, as well as 300 seasonal and/or contract staff. Additionally, the COG provides Code Administration services to nearby Bellefonte Borough and Refuse and Recycling services adjacent to Benner Township. The COG is governed by a 32-member General Forum comprised of the elected officials from the member municipalities. Despite the size of the governing body, most votes are unanimous.

The COG operates in a committee structure with each member municipality appointing one member to each committee. The committees make recommendations to the General Forum. The position of General Forum Chair rotates annually between member municipalities and one member from each municipality is appointed to the Executive Committee which provides overall direction and guidance to the Executive Director.



COG Agencies and Services

Regional Fire and Rescue Services: COG provides fire protection for the Townships of College, Ferguson, Patton and the Borough of State College as well as to the Pennsylvania State University. The Regional Fire Protection program supports a mostly volunteer service which operates from three fire stations. Each fire station supports a firefighter live-in program and overnight bunkroom staffing.

Emergency Management Services: The COG has a single emergency operations plan, Emergency Operations Center, and emergency management coordinator for the entire region. Many emergency management activities are conducted jointly with Penn State University.

Regional Refuse/Recycling Services: The COG issues and administers a contract for providing collection services to over 16,200 residential customers in five municipalities.

Code Administration Services: The Code Agency performs inspections on approximately \$275M in new construction annually in seven municipalities and inspects over 21,000 rental units once every three years. The Code Agency is self-supporting and has earned one of the best ISO ratings in the United States.

Planning: The Planning Agency provides a broad range of professional regional and municipal land use planning services to create and sustain a vibrant, healthy, and economically diverse community. Among the planning tools utilized are a: Regional Comprehensive Plan, regional growth boundary, and sewer service area. A planning priority is the integration of sustainable practices into the community and local government practices following the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. Staff acts as a regional facilitator for projects that seek to implement the Plan's goals. The COG is also part of the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) along with Centre County government and works with federal, state, county, and municipal officials on long range transportation planning. A Transportation Grants Specialist position has just been added to staff to further the priority of obtaining the resources necessary to meet the region's transportation needs.



COG Agencies and Services (cont'd):

Parks and Recreation: The COG maintains approximately 1,000 acres of regional and municipal parks. It operates two swimming pools, the Millbrook Marsh Nature Center, and the vibrant Active Adult Center. It also provides over 600 instructional programs (introductory and advanced) in health, fitness, environmental education, and wellness, as well as Summer Camps, Sports Leagues, and Special Events.



Schlow Centre Region Library: The regional library is one of the most well utilized public buildings in the Centre Region. An average of 800 patrons per day visit the 38,000 sq. ft library that houses 176,000 items.



THE POSITION IN BRIEF

The Executive Director is responsible for providing executive leadership in the planning, coordinating, and administration of all COG programs and operations. The Director oversees nine direct reports including an administrative team of seven. The Executive Director reports to a 6-member Executive Committee of the General Forum, a 32-member governing body comprised of elected officials from each of the member municipalities. The Executive Director is responsible for the overall direction, guidance, and financial management of the organization. This frequently involves compromise and skillful diplomacy.

EXPECTATIONS AND PROJECTS

Several significant planning projects for the COG are currently underway. The next Executive Director will be expected to:

- Coordinate the implementation and development of priorities for the Centre Region Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan;
- Support completion of the regional initiative to determine the appropriate governance model for the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Agency;
- Coordinate the implementation of recommendations of the 2020 Fire Study that provides a guide for the future needs and sustainability of the Regional Fire Protection Program, including the addition of the first paid firefighter positions;
- Support completion and implementation of the recommendations of the strategic plan for the Schlow Centre Region Library;
- Support completion of the update of the Centre Region Comprehensive Plan and implementation of the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan;
- Continue the implementation of the recommendations of the five-year Information Technology Study, including selection and implementation of financial / budget and HRIS systems;
- Direct completion of an assessment of the COG's future staffing, space, and capital needs;
- Continue the phased implementation of the Classification and Compensation Study, including a plan to address areas of wage compression and a comprehensive review the COG benefit package;
- Develop a program for succession planning for the organization focusing on development of staff to ensure a continued high level of service and meet future business needs.

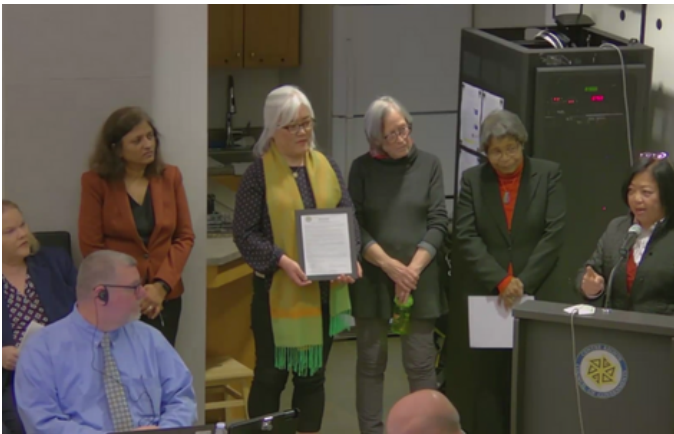
The next Executive Director will have the opportunity to work with the General Forum on developing plans that ensures the continued vitality of the region and reaffirms the benefits and values of regional cooperation. As such, the next Executive Director must be able to communicate and implement the mission and vision of the organization and the region by forming and sustaining effective working relationships with the COG staff, municipal partners, and stakeholders.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE SHOULD HAVE:

- A Bachelor's Degree in public administration, public policy or related field; MPA preferred;
- A minimum of eight years of experience in a leadership capacity; preferably in an organization of similar complexity;
- Experience developing and administering complex budgets;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with demonstrated experience in building consensus;
- The ability to mentor, lead, and develop staff;
- A passion and commitment to regional cooperation.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE WILL BE:

- Knowledgeable in budget development and administration, with the ability to explain complex information using non-technical language;
- Experienced in balancing competing service demands and priorities with sometimes limited resources;
- Outstanding at communicating effectively both orally and in writing;
- A visible leader with the ability to delegate authority and responsibility while maintaining appropriate levels of operational control;
- Politically astute and situationally aware with the ability to tactfully manage stakeholders' expectations;
- A motivating, empathetic and patient leader who can build consensus and maintain strong partnerships and relationships.



COMPENSATION, BENEFITS, AND THE ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE

There is long tenure among COG staff and among many of the elected officials serving on the General Forum. The organization prides itself on a work ethic of consensus building and collaboration. Economical and high-quality public service to the region's residents is paramount to the COG.

The starting salary is \$132,875-\$186,025 with excellent benefits.

LEADERSHIP

HOW TO APPLY

The recruitment for this position is being handled by GovHR USA. Candidates should apply by April 8, 2024 with resume, cover letter, and contact information for five work-related references to www.GovHRjobs.com to the attention of:

Charlene Stevens, Executive Vice President for Recruiting Services and/or Dele Lowman, Senior Vice President

GovHR USA
630 Dundee Road, #225
Northbrook, IL 60062
Tel: 847-380-3240

The Centre Region Council of Governments is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



Active Adult Center



CRCA Safety Trailer



CRPR - Welch Pool



Millbrook Marsh Nature Center



Parks Maintenance



Centre Region COG



Alpha Fire Station



Schlow Library



Refuse and Recycling