

Senior Planner

Lead Big Projects!
Shape Communities!
Make a Regional Impact!

Job Description

Position Title:	Senior Planner
Department:	Planning Services
Position Type:	Full-Time, Permanent
Employee Group:	Professional / Technical
Reports To:	Chief Administrative Officer
Location:	Lethbridge, Alberta
Date:	February 2026

Position Summary

The Senior Planner is an advanced professional position responsible for delivering high-level planning expertise, leadership, and advisory support to the Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC) and its member municipalities. This role manages high-complexity planning files, politically sensitive matters, major statutory plan projects, and intermunicipal negotiations. It provides expert advice to municipal leadership, supports organizational governance, and mentors planning staff. The Senior Planner operates with a high degree of autonomy, demonstrates strong political awareness, and ensures consistent, high-quality professional planning services across the organization. This position requires experience working in both rural and urban municipal settings.

Key Responsibilities

Municipal Advisory and Planning Leadership

- Serve as a senior-level planning advisor to assigned municipalities, including on complex or politically sensitive matters.
- Lead preparation, review, and implementation of major statutory planning documents (MDPs, ASPs, IDPs, Land Use Bylaws).
- Provide expert advice and presentations to Councils, CAOs, Municipal Planning Commissions (MPCs), and ORRSC leadership.
- Represent ORRSC at regional, provincial, and inter-agency committees or working groups.
- Exercise signing authority for subdivision approvals, as delegated.

Intermunicipal Collaboration and Governance

- Lead intermunicipal negotiations and collaboration initiatives.
- Facilitate conflict resolution on high-stakes or appeals-related land use matters.
- Support municipal partners in navigating complex legislative or interjurisdictional issues.

Senior Planner

Lead Big Projects!
Shape Communities!
Make a Regional Impact!

Legislative, Technical and Quality Control Functions

- Demonstrate advanced expertise in the Municipal Government Act, Subdivision and Development Regulations, and related provincial legislation.
- Oversee subdivision conditions, endorsement processes, legislative compliance, and appeals preparation.
- Provide senior-level review and quality control of planning reports, bylaws, and statutory documents, ensuring clarity and professional standards.
- Provide technical expertise on land title processes, instruments, and documentation requirements associated with subdivision and development.
- Ensure consistent application of legislation, policy, and planning best practices across all assigned files.
- Exercise signing authority for subdivision approvals, as delegated.

Organizational Leadership and Internal Development

- Mentor, coach, and provide guidance to planning staff, including active oversight of junior planners.
- Support succession planning, skills development, and the professional growth of the planning team.
- Develop internal templates, workflows, processes, and training materials to support organizational efficiency and consistency.
- Support the CAO in strategic, policy, governance, and project budget matters.
- Act in a supervisory or managerial capacity during CAO absence, when delegated.

Enforcement and Issue Management

- Guide enforcement strategies for complex or ambiguous situations.
- Lead resolution of contentious planning, development, or land use issues requiring high-level professional judgment.

Qualifications

Education

- Post Secondary degree in Planning, Urban and Regional Studies, Geography, or a related discipline.
- Completion of the Applied Land Use Planning Certificate would be considered an asset.

Experience

- Minimum 5 years of progressively responsible experience in land use planning, with 7 or more years preferred, preferably in an Alberta municipal setting.
- Experience working in both rural and urban municipal planning environments.
- Experience working across multiple planning disciplines, such as:
 - development and subdivision,

Senior Planner

Lead Big Projects!
Shape Communities!
Make a Regional Impact!

- long-range and current planning,
- conceptual design and community visioning,
- social and economic data interpretation,
- stakeholder and public engagement,
- bylaw enforcement,
- legislative analysis and appeals.

Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

- Advanced understanding of Alberta planning legislation, planning law, and municipal governance
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Strong political acuity and the ability to work professionally with elected officials and senior municipal administration.
- High degree of autonomy, professional judgement, and decision-making ability
- Strong organizational and time management skills with consistent attention to details.
- Ability to manage multiple municipal clients, complex files, ongoing inquiries, and both short- and long-term projects.
- Demonstrated ability to mentor, lead, oversee, and advise planning staff at all levels.
- Proficient computer skills, including MS Office, Adobe, GIS-related tools (asset), and general office software.

Working Conditions

- Office environment with frequent travel to member municipalities.
- Attendance at evening Council or board meetings may be required.
- Works closely with municipal partners, elected officials, ORRSC staff, and external agencies.
- Alberta Class 5 drives license.
- Only candidates who are authorized to work in Canada will be considered.

Organizational Impact

The Senior Planner contributes significantly to ORRSC's reputation for professional planning excellence. The position ensures consistent, high-quality service delivery, supports informed municipal decision-making, strengthens intermunicipal cooperation, and plays a key role in staff development, mentorship, and organizational continuity.

Disclaimer

This job description reflects the general scope and responsibilities of the position but is not intended to be an exhaustive list of duties. Responsibilities may evolve to meet organizational needs.