

# SOUTHEAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (SEARPDC)

## JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Community and Economic Specialist

Department: Community and Economic Development

FLSA: Grade:  
Safety Sensitive Job: No  
Security Sensitive Job: Yes

Job Description Prepared: February 2022

Note: Statements included in this description are intended to reflect in general the duties and responsibilities of this job and are not to be interpreted as being all-inclusive. The employee may be assigned other duties that are not specifically included.

### Relationships

Reports to: Community and Economic Development Director

Subordinate Staff: None

Internal Contacts: Community and Economic Development Director

External Contacts: General Public; Local Officials and Businesses; Community Groups; Economic Development Administration (EDA); United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); State Data Center at University of Alabama; Governmental Officials; Henry County Commission

### Job Summary

Under the general supervision of the Community and Economic Development Director, the employee collaborates and works with area and local officials to determine public facility, housing, and infrastructure needs. The employee also performs an array of collaboration duties to include working with area business leaders and government officials to enhance economic growth, assisting local businesses/individuals with financial packages, and providing technical assistance in area of expertise. The employee also conducts necessary research and writes grant applications for funding, sets up systems

for project administration and follows guidelines in monitoring progress. This job is considered security-sensitive and is subject to a pre-employment background check.

### Essential Functions

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:** The following list was developed through a job analysis; however, it is not exhaustive and other duties may be required and assigned. A person with a disability which is covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) must be able to perform the essential functions of the job unaided or with the assistance of a reasonable accommodation.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION: Program Planning. Gathers and compiles information, attends meetings and collaborates to plan and execute community efforts effectively and efficiently.**

1. Gathers information on innovative strategies initiated by other communities to enhance planned community development efforts.
2. Attends area city council meetings and informal community events to maintain knowledge of community needs; develops and maintains relationships with local officials.
3. Works with clients through process of loan application and approval.
4. Assists with preparation of financial reporting requirements to EDA, USDA/Rural Development, and other organizations.
5. Assists the Community and Economic Development Coordinator in loan operations.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION: Project Development. Conducts research and analysis, consults, and confers with various entities, and prepares resolutions and budgets for the development of projects.**

1. Consults with area officials to discover public facility, housing, and infrastructure needs.
2. Conducts necessary background research/analysis to determine needs priorities, feasibility of specific projects, and courses of action.
3. Conducts surveys to determine possible low- and moderate-income beneficiaries.
4. Confers with the Community and Economic Development Director, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, SEACED group, and other staff to assist in the planning of overall scope and objectives of region.
5. Assists in revising and updating the CEDS every five years.
6. Gathers information on innovative ideas/programs initiated by other communities to improve economic development efforts.
7. Visits communities for first-hand observation/information.
8. Maintains continuing affiliation with State Data Center at University of Alabama.

9. Prepares resolutions and estimates of costs of projects; develops proposed budgets.
10. Initiates fitting proposed project into rating criteria for maximum points and greatest chance for funding.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION: Grant Preparation. Compiles, organizes, writes, and submits grant applications.**

1. Compiles and organizes all information required for completing grant applications.
2. Writes applications for local governments for specific grants from state and federal agencies.
3. Submits grant applications through appropriate channels for approval.
4. May rewrite or resubmit application if application is denied.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION: Project Administration. Conducts assessments, sets up project files, and monitors progress to facilitate the effective administration of projects.**

1. Receives letter of general conditions to be satisfied for funded projects.
2. Conducts environmental assessments and procures necessary professional services.
3. Sets up filing system for each new project following established state/federal guidelines.
4. Monitors progress of project according to established procedures; maintains detailed records of all work completed and costs incurred.
5. Prepares pay requests of charges to budget.
6. Reviews and files invoices and financial statements for community.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION: Technical Assistance. Responds to requests and provides technical expertise to various entities.**

1. Provides technical assistance to area citizens, business leaders, and officials regarding community development, planning, and related issues.
2. Responds to requests for information/assistance in related areas of expertise.
3. Refers individuals to appropriate agency/office as required.
4. Performs other related duties for the Commission or county-wide area as requested.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION: Professional Development. Actively engages in professional development efforts and opportunities.**

1. Reads selectively to acquire new ideas and innovative strategies in area of specialty.
2. Attends professional meetings, workshops, or classes in area of specialty.

3. Travels to locations to observe economic/community development efforts which might be applicable to Commission's communities.

**NON-ESSENTIAL FUNCTION:**

Performs other job-related duties as required or assigned.

**Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

(\*Can be acquired on the job)

1. \*Knowledge of SEARPDC rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
2. Knowledge of techniques and administration of economic and community development programs, specifically state and federally funded programs.
3. Knowledge of administration of Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs).
4. Knowledge of the operations of local, state, and federal governments.
5. Knowledge of research resources and techniques.
6. Knowledge of federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines which affect the Commission's activities.
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9. Knowledge of state and federal laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines which affect the Commission's activities.
10. Knowledge of financial loan packaging, administration, and collection of specific projects.
11. Writing skills to develop position statements, reports, proposals, guidelines, and related documents.
12. Oral communication skills to deliver presentations, negotiate, counsel, issue instructions, answer questions, and respond to a variety of people.
13. Comprehension skills to understand and respond to present and emerging policy issues.
14. Analysis and planning skills to develop proposals, forecasts, budgets, strategies, and various types of plans.
15. Ability to communicate with, motivate, and lead professional and support staff.
16. Ability to relate productively to external groups including business/community groups, state and local officials, and the public in general.
17. Reading skills to understand and interpret federal, state, and SEARPDC policies directives, procedures, and instructions.
18. Math skills to perform basic calculations (add, subtract, multiply, divide).
19. Ability to operate standard office equipment.
20. Ability to use computers and office productivity software (e.g., Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook).
21. Ability to maintain professional attitude.

22. Ability to deal with all contacts in a courteous and patient manner.
23. Ability to handle dynamic situations in a calm and courteous manner.
24. Ability to maintain strict confidentiality dealing with SEARPDC records.
25. Ability to prioritize work projects and multi-task.
26. Ability to organize files and work projects.
27. Ability to work with little or no supervision.
28. Ability to drive.

### Minimum Qualifications

1. Possess a bachelor's degree in economics, public administration, urban development, political science, finances, accounting, geography, or related field from an accredited college or university.
2. Minimum of one (1) year experience with jurisdictional planning, development, or organization; or any combination of education and experience commensurate with the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.
3. Possess a current and valid driver's license; must be insurable.
4. Ability to work non-standard hours.
5. Ability to travel for professional meetings or workshops.
6. Ability to pass a pre-employment background check.

### Physical Demands

The work is sedentary. Typically, the employee may sit comfortably to do the work. However, there may be some walking; standing; bending; carrying of light items such as papers, books, small parts; driving an automobile, etc. No special physical demands are required to perform the work.

### Work Environment

The work environment involves everyday risks or discomforts which require normal safety precautions typical of such places as offices, meeting and training rooms, libraries, and residences or commercial vehicles, e.g., use of safe work practices with office equipment, avoidance of trips and falls, observance of fire regulations and traffic signals, etc. The work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated.