

Building a Talent Pipeline for Municipal Planning Offices

Matthew Ulricksen, M.A.
Associate Professor of Political Science
Department of Social Sciences
Community College of Rhode Island



The Need for Municipal Planning Professionals

- Growing complexity of land use, housing, infrastructure, and sustainability challenges
- Shortage of qualified candidates for planning positions in Rhode Island

CCRI's Impact: Benefits for Rhode Island Municipalities

- **Sustainable Planning**

- Well-trained professionals ensure smart growth and sustainability across RI's cities and towns

- **Economic Development**

- Better planning leads to thriving communities and improved quality of life

- **Address Workforce Gaps**

- filling critical planning roles, especially in small towns and rural areas

What Can CCRI Do Now?

- **Geospatial Technology Certificate**

- Provides skills in GIS

- **Environmental Science Programs**

Understanding of sustainability, land use, and environmental policy

- **Business and Public Administration**

Foundational knowledge for managing local governance projects

What Could CCRI Contribute?

(Non-academic)

- Promote awareness of community planning as a career path
- Collaborate with APA-RI and RILCT to design/ implement professional development opps for municipal planning staff (upskilling)
- Collaborate with APA-RI, and RILCT to design/implement education and training programs for Planning Board members

What Could CCRI Contribute?

(Academic, long-range)

- **Associate of Science in Community Planning & Development**
 - applied, professional degree program to educate and train planning technicians
 - most required courses available now
 - faculty line for CPD specialization to develop and teach CPD-specific courses
 - work-based learning component
 - entry-level salary range for Planning Technicians in RI = \$45,000 – \$55,000
- **Civic Analytics Certificate**
 - professional credential combines civic technology and data analytics for government and non-profit sector professionals
 - coursework includes applied statistics, geospatial applications, data visualization, core public affairs courses
 - necessary courses currently offered, need to be organized as certificate
- **JAA (and JAA+ I)**
 - requires programs + articulation agreements with URI/RIC

Next Steps

- Align CCRI's current offerings with Municipal Planning Needs
- Develop and promote Planning Internships in local government offices
- Promote existing Certificate and Degree Programs
- Collaborate with RI-APA and RILCT to Build New Workforce and Academic Offerings

Conclusion

- CCRI is well-positioned to support Rhode Island's cities and towns by building a skilled workforce of municipal planners.
- Leverage CCRI's academic and workforce development strengths to meet the evolving needs of local governance.

Questions?

Contact:
Matthew Ulricksen, M.A.
Associate Professor of Political Science
Department of Social Sciences
Community College of Rhode Island
Phone: 401.825.2470
Email: mulricksen@ccri.edu

