

Planning Manager

Pagosa Springs, Colorado



EXECUTIVE
RECRUITMENT
PROVIDED BY





THE COMMUNITY

Refreshingly Authentic

Archuleta County was created in 1885 with the Town of Pagosa Springs incorporated six years later in 1891. Pagosa derives its name from the hot springs in the heart of town, which the Utes called “Pah gosah,” meaning “healing waters.” Visitors from around the world come to enjoy Pagosa’s hot springs, both at developed spas and the small pools sprinkled along the banks of the San Juan River.

With its roots in ranching, Pagosa Springs has evolved into an adventure mecca, showcasing thousands of acres of wilderness to explore. Recreation is always in season here – from alpine skiing at Wolf Creek Ski Area to Nordic skiing and snowshoeing at numerous trailheads. Snowmobiling, boating, and water sports at Navajo Reservoir offer thrilling options, while hiking, horseback riding, and camping in the San Juan Forest and Weminuche Wilderness attract outdoor enthusiasts. The San Juan River invites rafting, kayaking, tubing, and fishing, and exploring Chimney Rock National Monument adds a historical touch. Whether seeking adventure or simply enjoying wandering, Pagosa Springs has it all! Tourism drives the economy here, with restaurants, shops, and small industries fueling a vibrant downtown experience.

The Town’s population is an eclectic mix of cultures and communities. Resilient retirees, working families, telecommuters, and part-time residents are all hosts to the many visitors who come to experience a distinctive way of life.

This community is growing, and with it, the businesses and amenities that support Pagosa’s unique outdoor lifestyle while maintaining the character that defines its community and roots. The Planning Manager will help guide the community’s growth into the future.

GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

The Town of Pagosa Springs is a home-rule municipality operating under a council-manager form of government. The seven-member Town Council — a mayor and six members elected on a non-partisan basis to four-year terms — provides policy direction to Town staff, enacts laws, and adopts a budget. Council members also have the power of appointment over the Town Manager, Town Attorney, and Municipal Court Judge.

Town Manager David Harris joined the organization in November 2023, bringing more than 26 years of experience in local government, particularly in financial management, economic development, and capital improvements. He oversees an annual budget of approximately \$12.4 million and a staff of 58 full-time employees and eight part-time.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Community Development Department includes the Planning Division, Building Division, Housing Division, and Projects Division and promotes sustainable community growth consistent with the vision, values, and goals of the Town. Department staff foster public involvement and creativity and assist decision-makers and the public in formulating and implementing policies that balance the community's economic, social, and environmental needs. Essential services include:

- Development & Zoning Services
- Building & Inspection Services
- Preparation of Special Plans, Studies and Long-Range Planning
- Municipal Project Management and Consultant Oversight
- Initiating and Overseeing the Achievement of Workforce Housing Goals
- Providing staff support to the Town Council, Boards and Commissions
- Collaborating and coordinating with other departments, outside service providers, adjacent municipalities, and regional and state agencies

With a team of three full-time employees and one part-time, and an annual budget of over \$350,000, the Planning Division formulates policies, plans, and regulations with guidance from appointed and elected boards to further the Town Council's adopted goals and objectives. Staff provide land use consultations to developers and landowners, assist with development reviews and applications, manage and implement the Town's adopted plans and codes, administer FEMA floodplain and stormwater containment regulations, and represent the Town on various boards, including the Colorado Main Street Board and the Pagosa Springs Arts Council.





ABOUT THE POSITION

Under the guidance of the Community Development Director, the Planning Manager organizes, directs, and coordinates the daily operations of the division, overseeing the development and implementation of comprehensive current and long-range master planning as well as the enforcement of town regulations and codes.

The position develops, implements, evaluates, and revises department policies, practices, priorities, and strategies; serves as an administrative advisor and liaison to the Town Council, planning boards, and commissions; assists developers, the business community and the public on land use, planning and development-related matters; and coordinates personnel, contractors, consultants, and resources as needed to accomplish projects and programs. The role also coordinates neighborhood and/or public meetings and surveys as required, coordinates activities with other divisions and departments, and works closely with the public, continually educating through reports, public meetings, presentations, and the media. Other essential duties include:

- Maintaining ongoing comprehensive planning processes and procedures; identifying alternatives for converting policy ideas into action plans affecting town development, expansion, transportation and related public programs; and assisting in the preparation, solicitation, review, and administration of contracts for various services
- Reviewing and processing development applications and proposals and providing zoning, land-use, and other code information to developers, property owners, contractors, and the general public
- Processing petitions and other information associated with annexations
- Serving as a public relations officer for the Town by answering inquiries and complaints and working with the news media
- Directing or conducting feasibility studies and long-range planning studies
- Reviewing and updating ordinances affecting planning, zoning, signage, land use, development, annexations, and related departmental areas
- Creating new maps for Planning and other departments and conducting field inspections on development proposals, land-use issues, surveys, planning studies, and other projects
- Preparing and submitting division budgets and monitoring fiscal activity
- Developing local historic preservation programs and serving as the Historic Preservation Officer for the Historic Preservation Board and the Certified Local Government program

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The new Planning Manager will address a number of opportunities and challenges in the years ahead, tasked with implementing long-term strategies for the managed growth of the community and working with other departments and stakeholders to implement effective policies, procedures, and regulations in alignment with industry best practices.

Although great strides have been made in recent years, this role will continue to improve communication and public engagement efforts and focus on workforce housing developments, a priority for Town leaders. The new hire will also recognize and value a healthy and authentic downtown as the community's heart and oversee progress for downtown Pagosa Springs through Main Street and other programs. The Town has several exciting projects and plans that will help inform the new hire's work:

- Pagosa Gateway River Project
- Town to Pagosa Lakes Trail Connection
- East End Multi-Modal Planning
- Land Use and Development Code Update
- 64-unit Workforce Housing Development



IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Town of Pagosa Springs seeks an experienced and proactive Planning Manager to take this wonderful and dynamic community to the next level. The ideal candidate will be a thoughtful and compassionate leader with exceptional strategic planning skills who is willing to commit to Pagosa Springs' future and is excited not only by the current energy but also for the community's future potential.

Reporting to the Community Development Director, the new hire will have the opportunity to oversee and influence plans and initiatives impacting the long-term vitality and economic strength of the town, guide the Main Street Program, and implement various community enhancement programs centered around public arts, historic preservation, trail and road development for enhanced multi-modal connectivity, and more.

The successful candidate will be a strong and personable community-minded leader who desires to become a part of this tight-knit municipality and join in the effort to bring together public and private partners to enhance the local economy and grow a balanced community. Experience in local government planning will also be critical, as this role implements strategic and master planning efforts like the Pagosa Springs Forward Town Comprehensive Plan, Roadmap to Affordable Housing and other housing plans and initiatives, Public Arts Plan, East End Multi-Modal Plan, and more.

With an eye for process improvement and outstanding customer service skills, the right fit for this position understands how to keep their focus on high-quality services and outcomes. They are diplomatic, collaborative, detail-oriented, and adaptable — with exceptional communication and organizational management skills — and they pair their planning and zoning knowledge with experience handling budgetary matters and a team of dedicated public servants.



EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

This role requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in urban planning, public administration, or a closely related field. Candidates should also have at least five (5) years of related experience, including two (2) of supervisory/managerial experience.

Certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners is a plus, and an equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

The successful candidate must hold a Colorado driver's license throughout their tenure. This position is also subject to pre-employment drug testing and a background check.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Pagosa Springs is offering a salary range of \$68,793 to \$96,103 for this position, dependent upon the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate.

In addition, the Town offers a competitive benefits package that includes personal time off and holiday pay, a 401a retirement plan with up to a 7% match, a 457 deferred compensation plan, health, dental and vision insurance, life insurance, short-term disability, and an employee wellness program.

APPLICATION PROCESS

[Please apply online](#)

For more information on this position, contact:

Larry Gilley, Senior Vice President

LarryGilley@GovernmentResource.com

325-660-4208



The Town of Pagosa Springs is an Equal Opportunity Employer that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Applicants selected as finalists will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

RESOURCES

Town of Pagosa Springs

<https://www.pagosasprings.co.gov/>

Community Development Department

<https://www.pagosasprings.co.gov/community-development>

Visit Pagosa Springs

<https://visitpagosasprings.com/>

MyPagosa Public Platform

<https://mypagosa.org/>

Pagosa Springs Chamber of Commerce

<https://pagosachamber.com/>

