

Livable Communities Corps

Volunteer Position Description



Purpose: The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission is seeking volunteers in each community who are interested in becoming part of the Livable Communities Corps to be trained to use Geographic Positioning System (GPS) equipment, and conduct walkability assessments, and healthy food source data collection.

The project will focus on underserved census tracts to engage volunteers about local policies, how they can participate, and how they are able to shape the quality of life in their communities. Healthy communities will be encouraged by mapping healthy food choice options. The initiative is part of a larger project that will assist community leaders to implement policy changes that locate housing supply and new food source options to be within walking distance of one another. This project will provide the necessary information for municipal leaders to understand the long term health implications of creating mixed-use village centers that accommodate healthy food choices within walking distance of diverse housing and businesses.

This work is part of a three year initiative through an award to the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Challenge Grant program. Partners who are vital to the success of this project include the Dartmouth Hitchcock Healthy Eating Active Living Initiative, Granite United Way, Town of Hanover, Two River-Ottauquechee Regional Commission, Vital Communities, and the Upper Valley Housing Coalition.

Key Responsibilities: Volunteers will conduct a checklist audit of various food sources that will be identified by the Regional Planning Commission, locate the food source on the GPS unit, conduct a walkability assessment of the location, and ensure that the data is submitted to the Regional Planning Commission.

Location: The volunteer work will take place in your community and around the region. Valid driver's license and proof of vehicle insurance may be required. The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Commission area extends from Piermont to Charlestown along the Connecticut River, and from Wilmot to Washington to the East. Volunteers are encouraged to work in their local communities and anywhere in the region they are comfortable working. See our website for a map of the communities we serve.

Supervision/Support: All volunteers will receive training on conducting the assessments, how to approach store owners, how to use the GPS equipment, and instructions for providing the Regional Planning Commission with the data and follow up. There will be one or two general

training sessions conducted by the Regional Planning Commission and additionally one-on-one assistance and tutorials in the field as needed.

Length of Services: It is anticipated that all data collection will be completed prior to the end of November of 2011. However, the Regional Planning Commission is interested in continuing the Livable Communities Corps for future projects. If you are interested in the work that the Regional Planning Commission does we would be pleased if you would like to be kept informed about future opportunities.

Time Commitment: The time that you commit to this work may be as little as a few hours over the course of a week or many hours over the course of a few months. It is completely up to your schedule, the number of volunteers we recruit and the amount of data that will be collected.

Qualifications: There are no real required qualifications other than an interest in learning something new and assisting with collecting data that will aid your community in its decision-making in the future.

Benefits: The Regional Planning Commission hopes that all volunteers are excited about learning about their community and learning what the Regional Planning Commission does on a regular basis. Volunteers will learn to use GPS equipment, and can work with our GIS Planning staff to see how data is downloaded into the computer system if they choose to. All volunteers will be invited to a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to reveal the results of the data collected within the region and to thank you for your service. It is anticipated that this event will be held sometime in the spring of 2012 when mapping of the results of your work is completed.