

Junior Policy Strategist

Turner Drake & Partners Ltd.



A Career Like no Other!

Join us: there are challenges to meet, opportunities to be created, horizons to conquer; be part of the excitement! From our headquarters in Halifax we are undertaking assignments throughout Atlantic Canada and beyond.

We've put our own spin on Planning consultancy. Breaking from the typical association with design and engineering, we approach the built environment from an economic viewpoint. Over the past decade we've leveraged the firm's near half-century of experience in real estate consulting to build a Planning Division unlike any other. Our practice focuses on the interplay of demographic forces and economic trends, public interest and private profit, policy goals and practical outcomes, and how all of this determines whether plans garner results... or gather dust. With this approach, our work spans all manner of interesting and important topics related to the form and evolution of our communities, and the people who comprise them.

With a well-established foundation in research and analysis, our services are sought by all sectors when there is a need to answer "what is really happening?" in creative and insightful ways. From here, we continue to expand into strategy, answering "what should we do about it?" with thoroughly considered advice that points to sensible, effective actions. We are looking for a policy-minded new professional to help us continue the journey!

Though working closely in a team of planners, economists, and spatial analysts, you will draw on the support of the entire firm; a group of professionals and resources painstakingly assembled, a smorgasbord of complementary skills whose whole is greater than the sum of its parts, able to provide clients with unique solutions. Our services span Valuation and Appraisal, Property Tax, Economic Intelligence (GIS), Counselling, Lasercad® Space Measurement, and Brokerage (Sales & Leasing). Check our web site www.turnerdrake.com for more detail about us and our work.

Skills and Qualifications

You will have a related degree (urban planning, policy studies, public administration, political science, etc.), and be a recent graduate or have a couple years under your belt. Regardless of education or experience, we seek someone enticed by new and novel challenges, comfortable working with the ambiguous and intangible, and able to coordinate the activities and contributions of various internal and external stakeholders. Strong communication skills and a command of the written word is essential; our work demands an ability to distill complex topics into cogent language. Skills in project management, familiarity accessing and understanding legislative, policy, and regulatory documents, and subject matter expertise in contemporary policy issues (e.g. housing) are strong assets. A working knowledge of typical Microsoft 365 programs is required, while additional technical proficiencies (e.g. ESRI GIS, R Stats, Python, etc.) are considered a bonus. Though not essential as an applicant, an understanding of the real estate markets and general context of Atlantic Canada is also valuable.

Though we'd like someone who can hit the ground running, we care more about fit than finish. You should be ambitious, enthusiastic, a strategic thinker, creative, and open to viewing issues through different perspectives. You must have an interest in real estate economics and developing your expertise in order to share our team's common foundation, but an ability to acquire and integrate knowledge across broader topics, see the bigger picture, and communicate it effectively. You will relish challenge, enjoy working in a multi-disciplinary team, and crave to broaden your horizons. You will be interested in a career rather than just a job. You will want to work with colleagues who share your enthusiasm and clients who appreciate your contributions. You will enjoy variety and merit the respect of your peers. You will value working in a team environment, have an eye for detail, be thorough, trustworthy, reliable, and will benefit from the opinion of your colleagues ... and they of yours. You will have an enquiring mind and a sense of humour.

The Challenge

Planning and related areas of public policy seek to shape the built environment to achieve greater collective benefit, but understand little about the forces that actually build it. As the world becomes more complex, and policy problems with it, the situation calls out for new expertise and analysis. Affordable housing, local economic development, demographic upheaval, built heritage conservation, climate adaptation, municipal fiscal resiliency... truly addressing these challenges requires a different set of tools, and the courage to apply them critically to unfamiliar situations rather than merely reprise past precedents. You will therefore expand your education, supplementing your current knowledge with an understanding of real estate valuation, land economics, market analysis, and more.

As you develop this particular set of skills, you will lead and assist in a variety of tasks:

- (1) Working with public sector clients and multi-firm consulting teams you will undertake projects that:
 - (a) Provide background research and jurisdictional scans covering a variety of subjects such as demographics, economic development, housing, land needs, and market trends, among others;
 - (b) Review and apply existing policy and regulation to understand options and implications;
 - (c) Consult and collaborate with key stakeholders and community to understand issues, gather insights, and evaluate ideas;
 - (d) Analyse policy impacts, usually with a focus on land development economics and the real estate market;
 - (e) Communicate current conditions and explain trends or outcomes;
 - (f) Advise on the design and implementation of new plans, policy tools, and market incentives;
 - (g) Generally assist local and provincial governments with understanding and leveraging real estate market conditions and functions in support of their goals.
- (2) Working with private clients such as developers, property owners, and advocacy groups you will:
 - (a) Evaluate and communicate the effect of current or future policy and regulation on property development options;
 - (b) Undertake specialist analyses to supplement project applications and provide policy justification;
 - (c) Provide strategic advice, identify opportunities, and evaluate project feasibility;
 - (d) Liaise with planners and other staff or stakeholders on behalf of clients through public engagement processes.
- (3) Assisting staff in other Turner Drake divisions, you will:
 - (a) Collaborate closely with our Economic Intelligence Unit team to support their projects, or leverage their assistance on yours;
 - (b) Support assignments undertaken by all other divisions by providing relevant analysis and advice, as needed;
 - (c) Draw on your professional network, working knowledge, and other resources to provide information and insights on various matters related to real estate assets, land development projects, planning applications, approval processes, policy changes, etc.;
 - (d) Work with colleagues and support staff to respond to tender calls, develop new consulting services or marketing initiatives, and generally grow our business and client base.

The Exciting Stuff

We asked members of our professional staff who had recently joined us after university what they enjoyed most about their careers with us. This is what they said:

"What I like most about the job is that I've only been working full-time for just over a month and I have already been given the chance to do work on my own, which gave me a sense of pride and felt rewarding. It's something that I never thought that I would be doing (a career in real estate) but have found it very interesting and I am always learning new things".

“Dealing directly with business owners ... ability to be autonomous in my work ... having the breadth of knowledge in the different Divisions means that I’ve got access to colleagues who provide advice on so many facets of real estate: it would probably take three to four companies to amass the same type of exposure to these types of people if I hadn’t come to Turner Drake. At my former employer (a bank) we also spanned several Divisions but generally the physical separation of employees prevented a lot of exposure to different business lines”.

“The workload is always changing and evolving. The knowledge base which we are surrounded by is incredible and always available to us. We can walk across the hall and get advice from some of the industry’s leading consultants while also having in-house training modules and post-secondary studies provided by the company ... The training schedule provides structure and motivation looking forward to the future”.

“One of the benefits that I saw in working here when I was first starting out was the opportunity to be mentored by some of the most highly-educated and well-respected individuals in the industry (all of whom ultimately proved most generous in sharing their time and expertise).

“I also saw real estate consultancy to be a unique application of the skills I’d acquired at Dal – it combined them in a way that other disciplines I’d considered did not.”

“I think a main benefit of working here is that you are able to learn a new field through on the job experience and the knowledge of senior staff and through education, the UBC courses. It is an opportunity to continue your education with a company that is willing to invest in you while gaining experience in a competitive field.”

Other highlights from our staff include:

- Continuous education through company funded courses at the UBC Sauder School of Business.
- Your own work area. No hot desks or shared workstations, giving you privacy and consistency.
- Social events with the company.
- You’re a consultant, not an assistant. You will do real work with real deadlines.
- Opportunity for traveling throughout Atlantic Canada.
- TDP has a strong reputation.

Compensation

This is a salaried position with a benefits and pension package (after a vesting period). Salary increases are garnered through individual performance, and completion of company sponsored training milestones, so your progression is only limited by your ambition and ability.

Enjoy a central urban office location in Atlantic Canada’s capital city, and an office culture that values a civilised work-life balance. Our operating model is firmly “office based” to support day-to-day collaboration and foster long-term professional development, with the flexibility to work remotely when the situation demands it.

Commencement Date

Our focus is on finding the right candidate. While we have a current need, we will provide the time and flexibility needed if the talent is worth it.

Application

Submit your CV (with a *copy* of your University Transcript) together with a covering letter explaining why you believe you are suited for this position to:

Neil Lovitt, LPP, MCIP, CPT
Vice President, Planning & Economic Intelligence
Turner Drake & Partners Ltd.
6182 North Street
Halifax NS B3K 1P5
email: nlovitt@turnerdrake.com

Please direct any enquiries to Neil Lovitt (902) 429-1811 Ext. 349 or toll free (800) 567-3033 Ext. 349

Closing Date

Applicants will be evaluated and interviewed as they apply. An “official” version of your University Transcript is not required at this stage; a copy will suffice. The posting will be closed when the position is filled.

Confidentiality

All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.