



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

posted 3/2/26 9:55am
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MEETING NOTICE

There will be a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

of the

BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 9:45 a.m.

This will be a hybrid meeting as allowed by An Act relative to extending certain measures adopted during the COVID-19 emergency which extended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A sec.20, until June 30, 2027.

To participate in person, the meeting will be held in the 2nd Floor Conference room in the BRPC office located at 1 Fenn Street, Pittsfield, MA ([Directions - Berkshire Regional Planning Commission](#))

To participate virtually, join the Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85209850246?jst=1>

Meeting ID: 852 0985 0246

Dial by location, 646 931 3860, 646 558 8656, 305 224 1968

Meeting materials are on BRPC's website: www.berkshireplanning.org.

Click the calendar of events, then the meeting name, and follow the link to the materials.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order & Open Meeting Law Statement
- II. Roll Call of Search Committee Members Attending the Meeting
- III. Vote to Approve the Minutes of the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee Meeting of February 11, 2026
- IV. Open Comments from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternate Delegates, not to be further discussed at this meeting by the Search Committee
- V. Description of the Interview Process
- VI. Interview with Jason Zogg for the BRPC Executive Director Position
- VII. Interview with Laura Brennan for the BRPC Executive Director Position
- VIII. Discussion of the Hiring Process Next Steps
- IX. Adjournment



DRAFT Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Search Minutes Wednesday, February 11, 2026

This was a virtual meeting as allowed by An Act relative to extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the state of emergency, extending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A sec.20 until June 30, 2027.

I. Call to Order & Open Meeting Law Statement

Search Chair Buck Donovan called the meeting to order at 5:02pm. He stated that BRPC was recording the meeting and said that if anyone else wanted to record it, they needed to inform him.

II. Roll Call

Caitlin Davis, Office Administrator, read the roll call:

Members Present:

Buck Donovan, Search Chair, Lee Delegate
Malcolm Fick, BRPC Chair, Great Barrington Alternate
Sheila Irvin, Berkshire Brownfields Committee Chair, Pittsfield Delegate
Laura Kittross, BRPC Staff
Marybeth Mitts, Select Board Chair

Not Present:

Kyle Hanlon, At-Large, North Adams Delegate
John Duval, Former Adams Alternate

Staff Present:

Tom Matuszko, Executive Director
Caitlin Davis, Office Administrator

III. Vote to Approve the Minutes of the BRPC Executive Director Search Committee Meeting of February 7, 2026*

Malcolm Fick motioned to approve the Minutes from the 2.7.26 Search Committee minutes. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion.

The motion passed with affirmative votes from: Buck Donovan, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Laura Kittross and Marybeth Mitts.

IV. Open Comments from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission Delegates and Alternate Delegates, not to be further discussed at this meeting by the Search Committee.

There were no comments from alternates and delegates.

V. Vote to Enter into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(8) to Consider Potential Candidates for the BRPC Executive Director Position because Considering Potential Candidates in Open Meeting will have a Detrimental Effect Obtaining Qualified Candidates

Marybeth Mitts motioned to enter into Executive Session to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(8) to Consider Potential Candidates for the BRPC Executive Director Position because Considering Potential Candidates in Open Meeting would have a Detrimental Effect Obtaining Qualified Candidates.

Malcolm Fick seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion.

The motion was approved with affirmative votes from: Buck Donovan, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Laura Kittross and Marybeth Mitts.

The meeting entered into Executive Session at 5:05pm.

VI. Discussion of the Hiring Process Next Steps

The meeting returned to open session at 5:12pm.

There were several items determined for the next round of interviews. All interviews going forward would be conducted in open session.

References

- References would be checked before the next round of interviews but before the Commission vote
- Reference results would not be presented in open session
- Buck Donovan would conduct the reference checks for each candidate
- Questions 1-4 on the Standardized Reference Check Template would be the basis for questions asked for each candidate's references

Background checks

- Background checks would be done after the second round of interviews
- The type of background checks done would be educational, social media, criminal as well as another type of CORI (after permission was obtained)
- Background check results would not be presented in open sessions

Interview schedule

- All interviews would be conducted in person in the BRPC office conference room. The search committee and candidates would meet in person. The interviews would also be hybrid for staff, alternates, and delegates
- The interviews would be held on a Saturday and all candidates would be interviewed in the same meeting. Tom would take the following proposed dates to the candidates- 2/28 and 3/7. The interviews would be held in open session starting at 10am. The recordings would be made available on BRPC's YouTube channel. There would be brief discussion after all the interviews were completed by the search committee.

Interview Structure

- Each candidate would get 45 minutes total and would keep their answers to about 5 minutes per question
- Same format as the first round of interviews would be used with the search committee members each taking turns asking questions
- Interview and follow up questions would only be allowed to be asked by the search committee

Questions

- There would not be input from staff and Commission members in developing questions for the candidates
- The search committee would send Tom and Buck questions they want to ask, prioritizing the most important. Tom and Buck would compile 8-10 questions

Other items

- Marybeth Mitts asked what the process would be for selecting the next executive director. Tom stated that the search committee would need to recommend at least two candidates to the Commission to vote on
- Buck Donovan would invite the finalists for second round interviews via email and ask for three references

VII. Adjournment

Malcolm Fick motioned to adjourn the meeting. Sheila Irvin seconded the motion.

The motion passed with affirmative votes without discussion from: Buck Donovan, Malcolm Fick, Sheila Irvin, Laura Kittross and Marybeth Mitts.

The meeting adjourned 5:54pm.



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Description of the Interview Process for Executive Director Search Committee Meeting March 7, 2026

For the sake of time and fairness the Chair will time each interview. Each interview will be allotted a total of 45 minutes.

Only the Executive Director Search Committee Members will be allowed to ask questions to avoid potential legal issues. Various State and Federal laws ban certain questions from being asked.

Search Committee members may ask brief follow-up questions after each question. The Search Committee Chair may limit follow-up questions if it appears there will not be enough time to ask all the questions. After all the standard questions have been asked, if there is any time available within the allotted 45 minutes, Search Committee members may ask questions follow up questions.

There will be no discussion after the interviews about the candidates at this meeting.

The interview will be posted on the BPRC YouTube channel, [Berkshire Regional Planning Commission - YouTube](#)

The next BRPC Executive Director will be voted on by the Commission Delegates and Alternate Delegates. That vote is proposed to occur at the March 19, 2026 Commission meeting. Candidates may be discussed at the March 19th Commission meeting.

The Search Committee intends to meet prior to the March 19th Commission meeting to decide if it wants to recommend a single candidate as a preferred candidate.

Dear Berkshire Regional Planning Commission:

I am an entrepreneurial, outgoing, and highly self-motivated planning leader with 17 years of experience spanning government, the private sector, non-profits, and consulting. My career has equipped me with broad expertise in planning, talent and budget management, and coalition-building across agencies and stakeholders. I am known for my curiosity, adaptability, and ability to deliver results in both resource-rich and resource-scarce environments. My communication, writing, and storytelling skills enable me to inspire communities and stakeholders.

A common theme throughout my career is building support and leveraging relationships to complete cross-jurisdictional collaborative projects, often on property my organization does not own or control but can influence. I excel at presenting to the public, briefing elected officials, and working out fine details with technical experts to implement projects. I have readily played the role of convener, facilitator, and negotiator both inside my organization and with external decisionmakers, working toward balanced outcomes that satisfy all parties. This is exemplified by my role at the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, where I collaborated with multiple city departments and the MBTA to enhance the experiences of bus riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians in two projects that required all of these professional characteristics to achieve outcomes desired by all parties. Additionally, I have used these qualities to execute multiple open space plans, from Beacon Park and Michigan Central in Detroit to Grand Junction Park in Cambridge, and multiple trails in Tysons.

In all my positions, I have been the key connection for policymakers, developers, contractors, anchor institutions, retailers, non-profits, and advocacy groups—asking the right questions and learning stakeholders' challenges and needs to build trust and relationships. I take pride in my ability to quickly get up to speed on new topics, recognize patterns of interaction, and draw connections across different parties. This is exemplified by the adoption of the Infill Development Concept Plan for Kendall Square in Cambridge, which enabled the construction of millions of square feet of mixed-use residential, lab, retail, and office space. My expertise in placemaking, zoning, stakeholder engagement, and real estate development was critical in balancing the priorities of the master developer, city council, community benefits, and market needs.

I also excel at administration with an eye toward quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. I enjoy mentoring and guiding team members so they share in the successes of the organization and see their contributions to the communities they serve. At DTE, CRA, Ford, and TCA, I managed and mentored staff with diverse backgrounds and skill sets, resulting in positive feedback and successful outcomes. At the TCA, my strengths-based leadership and culture-building model emphasizes continuous improvement. The results are evident, with staff now thriving and becoming key assets to the Tysons community overall. This success is a result of the integration of everyone's efforts through the unified workplan I authored for my departments, which aligns outcomes with what was envisioned in the enabling MOU for the TCA.

I also bring a long personal connection to the region: I worked at BRPC as a traffic counting intern in 2006 and grew up in Albany, where I had the opportunity to thoroughly enjoy the natural and cultural abundance of the Berkshires. This history gives me both professional familiarity with, and deep personal affection for, the communities BRPC serves. Additionally, my partner is accepting a job near Albany, and we want to be closer to aging parents. The Executive Director role at BRPC represents a rare chance to lead a respected regional planning agency in a place I know and love, bringing both professional expertise and personal commitment to BRPC's work.

I look forward to discussing this opportunity further.


Jason Zogg

Profile

A curious self-starter, who enjoys solving complex problems with insights from public, private, non-profit and consulting sectors. Adept at rapidly embedding within established organizations, learning quickly, connecting, convening and facilitating. I build relationships, coalitions and consensus. I am a systems thinker and an implementer.

Professional Experience

Tysons Community Alliance – Vice President of Transportation and Placemaking **2024 - Present**

Direct a team overseeing a multimillion-dollar budget to execute a strategic vision for the Tysons district, transforming it from its uncompetitive sprawling 1970s/1980s form into a vibrant urban and cultural hub.

• *Leadership and Management*

- Combined two departments' work and staffing plans to execute improvement projects and planning initiatives ensuring alignment with outcomes detailed in the Tysons Comprehensive Plan
- Crafted new policies and an employee manual as key member of the senior leadership team
- Recruited new talent and focused on retention through career mentorship and promotion
- Managed the design and build-out of TCA's new \$650,000 office in street-level retail space

• *Key Responsibilities, Project Milestones, and Accomplishments*

- Secured two grants valued at \$1.2M, + \$125,000 from project sponsorships and in-kind services
- Liaised with regional transportation partners including the MPO and mode-specific agencies
- Streamlined compliance for commercial and residential developers with regulatory commitments on transportation demand management by assembling standardized best practices
- Negotiated a complex arrangement with 3 property owners to make a \$100,000 investment in a privately owned portion of a public trail system that had fallen into disrepair
- Implemented a rapid roll out of a district-wide bicycle and pedestrian trail wayfinding sign system
- Partnered with Fairfax County Departments of Planning and Transportation to take ownership of a signature urban multi-modal path project called the Tysons Community Circuit
- Established a new relationship with the Virginia Department of Transportation to advance district-wide beautification, enhancements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure not previously embraced, gaining positive press attention and Board of Supervisors support

Georgetown Heritage / Georgetown BID – Director of Planning, Design, Construction **2023 - 2024**

Directed the planning, design, and construction of a visionary reimagining of Georgetown's segment of the C&O Canal National Historical Park (NHP).

• *Leadership and Management*

- Led a comprehensive strategic planning process to bring the organization into its second decade, including refinement of the organizational chart, financial plan, board diversity, operational efficiency, and mission enhancement
- Developed a comprehensive implementation and funding strategy for the marquee canal plan project with a 10-year milestone schedule approved by the board of directors
- Reinvigorated the organization's relationship with the National Park Service including executive leadership at Superintendent and Regional Director level
- Led the organization's response to our canal boat grounding emergency during a drought

• *Key Responsibilities, Project Milestones, and Accomplishments*

- Secured \$2.8M from the DC City Council to implement the first phase of the canal plan
- Executed a \$235,000 engineering contract for pre-design and exploratory excavations
- Developed the co-design processes to govern future phases of design work in collaboration with NPS, DC government, and stakeholders
- Re-opened the existing Georgetown Visitor Center for the C&O Canal NHP after 10-year closure
- Visioned the planning/design approach and prepared the business plan for a new visitor center and secured \$625,000 from the DC City Council to advance the plan

Ford Motor Company – Planning, Urban Design, Public Realm & Transportation Manager **2019 - 2022**

Key advisor to an executive team composed of automaker professional backgrounds on Ford's intention to make a legacy investment in a treasured icon, Michigan Central Station, and transform surrounding neighborhood into a mobility innovation district.

- *Leadership and Management*

- Proposed the mobility-focused innovation district strategy and redevelopment business model that focused the strategy of the \$1B Michigan Central Redevelopment project
- Assembled stakeholders including businesses, community members, and government officials to create a transparent, collaborative, and inspired vision for ensuring the redevelopment model enhanced the neighborhood while preserving valued character, and the residential/business mix
- Led the land survey, zoning, permitting and approval processes with Detroit city departments
- Planned for \$200M of public realm improvements with support of consultants valued at \$15M
- Recruited, hired, managed, and mentored planning staff

- *Key Responsibilities, Project Milestones, and Accomplishments*

- Guided the creation of the district master plan and urban design framework to include new streets, public open spaces, and millions of square feet of housing, hotel, office, retail, and lab/fabrication innovation space
- Managed the design and programming of all 14 acres of privately owned public space on Ford land as well as their integration with adjacent publicly owned parks and multi-use trails
- Led the storm water and environmental sustainability approach for the development
- Advised the efforts to support the formation of a BID following completion of the project

Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA) – Project Director

2014 - 2019

Inaugural member of a new team that built and executed CRA's new mission, restored public trust, started and managed strategic initiatives in areas such as real estate, urban design, transportation, sustainability, workforce development, and public art.

- *Leadership and Management*

- Developed and administered new urban design guidelines and review processes
- Created the annual staff work program: the Kendall Square Implementation Plan
- Enhanced working relationships with the Board, Kendall Square Association, elected officials, retailers, real estate developers, City Council, municipal staff, community members, and the media
- Supervised, trained, and mentored staff members, and contributed to the new personnel policies

- *Key Responsibilities, Project Milestones, and Accomplishments*

- Collaborated with elected officials to adopt a major amendment to the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan and Article 14 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance
- Completed the first new Infill Development Concept Plan, and negotiations with the developer on the land price and public benefits agreement for 1 million square feet of mixed use residential, retail, and office/lab space
- Created a new annual micro-grant program which supports tactical urbanism projects that better the public realm by non-profits, community groups, and small businesses
- Developed the MOU for the first transit benefit fee program in the MBTA service territory working with city staff, MBTA, MassDOT, and private developer
- Managed the design, construction, and operations of a \$750,000 park and separated bike path
- Reinvented the CRA's annual transportation data report and contributed to the CRA annual report
- Executed public outreach and created website and marketing content for key projects

DTE Energy – Lead Urban Planner / Major Enterprise Projects

2012 - 2014

First urban planner at one of the nation's largest utilities that advised senior executives on the highest and best use of large scale company investments in downtown Detroit to stabilize and transform the DTE's HQ neighborhood, becoming a model for anchor institutions around the city during Detroit's municipal bankruptcy.

- *Leadership and Management*

- Shaped the strategic approach to redevelopment of corporate owned land next to HQ in downtown Detroit with corporate leadership including financing and implementation strategies
- Collaborated closely with developers, land owners, and city and state agencies to break down implementation barriers and advance ideas for development and streetscape improvements
- Managed and hired both professional consultant teams, junior staff, and interns for several signature projects

- *Key Responsibilities, Project Milestones, and Accomplishments*

- Managed the \$10M / 1.7 acre land acquisition and redevelopment of an adjacent parcel into a signature park, renovation of a vacant historic building, and created the first district master plan

- Crafted and implemented an outreach process to engage stakeholders that cultivated a network of champions inside and outside DTE, facilitating a public-private coalition to advance development
- Implemented a company bicycle share to support employees leaving the HQ and engaging with downtown Detroit retail and recreation opportunities during lunch and after work
- Liaised with SEMCOG (the MPO), the state and city DOT, the regional transit authority
- Developed comprehensive project scopes with for all projects' RFPs/RFQs

Prior positions in-brief (see [LinkedIn](#) for additional details)

- **Challenge Detroit** / *Innovation Consultant* – Detroit, MI **2012 - 2013**
- **VHB, Inc.** / *Sustainability, Transportation, and Aviation Planner* – Watertown, MA **2009 - 2011**

Professional Accreditation

- **LPM** | Leadership in Place Management | International Downtown Association | 2025
- **LEED AP** | Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Accredited Professional | 2009

Selected Professional Organization Activities and Presentations

- **National Parks Conservation Association** | 2024-Present / Mid-Atlantic Regional Advisory Council
- **International Downtown Association** | Vice-Chair, 2018 Council on Future of Urban Transport
- **Detroit Regional Transit Authority** | 2013-2014 / Citizens Advisory Committee
- **Transportation Research Board (TRB)** | 2010-2014 / Member, Aviation Terminals Committee
- **American Planning Association (APA)** | 2009-2014 / Member, frequent conference presenter

Training

- **Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt** | Project management and continuous improvement | DTE Energy | 2014
- **Engaging Leadership** | Intensive course on utilizing the Gallup StrengthsFinder system to be a measurably more engaging, effective leader | DTE Energy University | 2014
- **Transit 201** | a mini course covering the nuts and bolts of public transit implementation | 2013
- **Placemaking: Making it Happen** | Project for Public Spaces | 2013
- **Health Impact Assessments 101** | Health Resources in Action | 2011

Education

- **Real Estate Development Certificate** | Urban Land Institute (ULI), Washington, DC | 2016
- **Master in Regional Planning / Urban Transportation Focus** | University at Albany, SUNY | 2008
 - American Institute of Certified Planners - Outstanding Graduate Planning Student Award
- **Bachelor of Arts** | University at Albany, SUNY | 2007
 - Double Major in Urban Planning and Political Science/International Relations, Business Minor

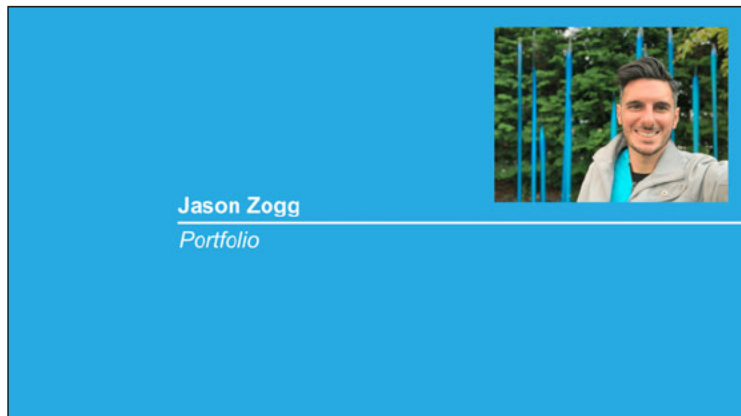
Visual Portfolio

The following links go to the same downloadable PDF of my visual portfolio (as of 2026). No password required. More details of each individual project in my visual portfolio can be discussed in an interview.

Dropbox: https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/zdagcc2onsd07slo709zt/JasonZogg_Portfolio_v2026update-reduced.pdf?rlkey=q00qgqeind7e5zffvepmqbez8&st=t2q4cp0l&dl=0

Google Drive:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_hbWenLoA71fMVfDkqMcWXhnOfJ5ZEpr/view?usp=sharing



Management Philosophy for Leading a Regional Planning Agency

A mentor recommended I put together my thoughts on my management philosophy as I started transitioning my career towards leadership positions. I articulated my philosophy via a series of infographics that are robust and visually oriented. Please click a link to view: ([google](#)) / ([dropbox](#)).

Leadership vs Management

My management philosophy draws a distinction between effective leadership and disciplined management. Leadership sets the vision, inspires collective action, and models the values that guide an organization. Management translates that vision into reliable and accountable systems/processes, clear roles, and measurable outcomes. A successful executive must do both—articulate a worthwhile work plan while building the organizational capacity to deliver it.

Lead with vision and transparency

Leadership means more than internal direction; it requires the ability to lead people, lead public audiences, and lead organizations. It requires a shared vision tied back to a clear aspiration, purpose and system of values. It requires the use of storytelling and data to make that vision and the results of our work concrete.

Manage across multiple dimensions

Management is multi-faceted: organizational management, people management, project management, and board management are all core competencies of a good leader. This requires alignment with organizational strategic goals, and tracking organizational progress and individual performance. It is the job of the executive to maximize and optimize the value we are providing to the communities we serve, and always finding the sweet spot for our role – what is the “but-for” work that no other entity would have (or could have) done, but resulted in an outcome everyone was looking for.

People-centered, strengths-based management

Effective people management starts with attracting and retaining top talent who take initiative. I align individual strengths and motivators with annual work plans and outcomes. I hire for curiosity, critical thinking, adaptability, then enable staff to do their best work by removing barriers, providing the right tools/resources, and investing in professional development. My default language is “we” not “I”—cultivating a culture of shared ownership and credit, mutual respect, trust, continuous improvement and learning.

Operational rigor, efficient systems and processes

I balance visionary goals with pragmatic systems: project charters, clear scopes of work, risk registers, rigorous work plan scheduling and budgeting with defined goal dates, and precise personal calendar management. These tools create predictability, facilitate decisions, reduce “analysis paralysis,” and increase efficiency and accountability. Work planning is an imprecise science, so I like to have backup plans that leave enough flexibility for pivoting and reacting to unplanned opportunities or challenges such as funding shifts, legislative changes, or emergent community needs.

Board partnership and public stewardship

Effective board management means preparing concise but well-illustrated and presented materials, offering clear options, and facilitating deliberations that respect differing perspectives. As the public face of the agency, I commit to accessible communication, thoughtful advocacy, and respectful engagement with elected officials and the media.

State of the practice and trends

It is critical to stay up to date on the state of the practice in planning as well as track major societal, economic, technological and climate trends at multiple scales – within the state, the northeast, or the nation so BRPC can predict and anticipate how the Berkshires will be impacted by a given trend and facilitate preparation. Anticipating, mitigating, and adapting to trends is about seeing signals through the noise, having the capacity and flexibility to address issues like demographic change, infrastructure needs, and climate impacts quickly with stakeholder and data-driven solutions.

In sum, my approach combines inspirational leadership with disciplined management, a strengths-based people strategy, operational systems that enable efficient delivery of our work plan, and a commitment to continuous improvement and learning. This blend will sustain and enhance a dynamic, trusted regional planning agency capable of advancing meaningful, lasting results for the Berkshires.

Laura Brennan

December 22, 2025

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
Attn: Executive Director Search Committee
1 Fenn Street, Suite 201
Pittsfield, MA 01201

Dear search committee members,

Section 16 of MGL Chapter 40B provides a succinct description of the characteristics expected when selecting an executive director, who "shall be qualified by education, training and experience in economic development, regional and program planning, and community relations." I am proud to embody each of these and look forward to a discussion to explore them with you.

The executive director position description further articulates a wide range of responsibilities. These include knowledge of planning and governance trends, discernment of how these may affect Berkshire County, fidelity to the mission, vision, and values of BRPC while setting policy and developing strategies, clear-spoken composure as a representative of the agency, diplomacy with partner organizations and governmental agencies, as well as confidence in guiding a large and diverse staff. Thanks to the experience afforded by my role as Assistant Director, I am uniquely suited to assuming these responsibilities in a seamless transition.

Ample experience and sincere enthusiasm for the work of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission lead me to request your consideration of my resume and related materials for this role. I have successfully stewarded increasing responsibility within the regional planning agency for the last eight years, with several years of directly relevant experience just prior to that while employed at the state-designated Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) and Regional Tourism Council (RTC) for Berkshire County, Berkshire.

I have secured a graduate certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management through Suffolk University in partnership with the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), offering further insight into the needs and priorities of the municipalities we serve as well as the financial and performance management mechanisms applicable to public entities. This certificate sets the stage for me to continue pursuing a master's degree in public administration at Suffolk University or a similar program offering hybrid or fully remote classes.

I have extensive experience identifying, securing, and administering grants from both governmental and private sources. I participate in several regional and statewide committees, offering valuable exposure and insight into state agencies and the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) operations and priorities. I am also well practiced at serving as a contact for members of the press and communicating frequently with members and staff of our state and federal delegations.

I am inspired by the many, varied, and meaningful ways Berkshire Regional Planning Commission serves the Berkshires and am enthusiastic about leading the agency as it continues to grow and evolve.

Sincerely,



Laura Brennan

Laura Brennan

www.linkedin.com/in/laura-brennan-275bb16/

My background includes extensive program and project management, fundraising & development, marketing & communications, and operations. Throughout my career, I have been recognized for improving program quality and procedural consistency. In each organization, I have been entrusted with increasing levels of responsibility and have navigated these steps successfully and with dedication.

Relevant Professional Experience:

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

Assistant Director & Economic Development Program Manager

July 2023 - Current

In addition to the responsibilities listed below, responsible for a broad range of agency communications, messaging, and visual identity and branding, including the BRPC website, public relations/press releases, social media accounts, branded documents and reports, and other collateral including the FY25 Annual Report. Supervise staff compiling monthly e-newsletters and led teams producing agency events such as 5th Thursday and the Annual Meeting. Support the executive director in representing the agency on several regional and statewide committees. Provide staff support to the Commission Development Committee and the CEDS Committee.

Continued strong leadership of the Economic Development program, including: co-creation of www.berkshiresoutside.org, a comprehensive, user-friendly online resource presenting hundreds of outdoor recreation access points throughout the Berkshires; oversight of the Berkshire Funding Focus initiative, with responsibility for fundraising and committee coordination, and frequent participation in complex group grant applications. Recently secured grants to conduct a county-wide buildout analysis and priority redevelopment sites strategy.

Economic Development Program Manager

April 2021 – June 2023

Established a new program area devoted to economic development planning, overseeing a growing departmental staff and several interns. In addition to the responsibilities listed below, managed a 2.5-year CARES Act federal award for building economic resiliency and delivering economic recovery services to the region's municipalities, businesses, and non-profits. Secured Economic Development District (EDD) status for Berkshire County, a long sought-after designation recognizing regional coordination and collaboration and providing partial salary support for multiple BRPC staff. Provided staff support to the Regional Issues Committee and the CEDS Committee.

Senior Planner, Economic Development

November 2017 – March 2021

Within the Community and Economic Development program area, served as the lead staff person for economic development planning which included working with individual municipalities on specific local goals and initiatives through a Shared Economic Development Planning service, as well as coordinating the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Berkshire County according to the requirements of the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA). Provided staff support to the CEDS Committee.

1Berkshire Strategic Alliance

Director of Client Services, 1Berkshire (after merger)

2016 – 2017

Orchestrated the development of a comprehensive Client Services program to serve all former constituents of the merged Berkshire Visitors Bureau, Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, and Berkshire Creative. Marketed 1Berkshire opportunities and programs within the region, assisting with the merger alignment process and in-region communication strategies. Oversaw educational and leadership development programs and signature events, regular networking and member recognition opportunities.

Director of Member Services, Berkshire Visitors Bureau (prior to merger)**2013 - 2016**

Responsible for recruitment and retention of member businesses, maximizing the use of benefits by full membership roster. Oversight of customer service to participating businesses, delivery of member programs and initiatives including annual meetings, two annual online auctions, visitation programs, social media coaching, and professional development series. Participation in strategic planning and budget development.

Hancock Shaker Village**Director of Operations and Marketing****2011 - 2013**

In addition to the responsibilities listed below, responsible for the day-to-day oversight of the museum campus, coordinating all senior staff efforts to deliver public programming and directly overseeing the retail division. Also served as *Acting Director* late 2012 to early 2013.

Director of Marketing**2006 - 2011**

Responsible for all external communications, including supervising an advertising agency and public relations consultant, maintaining multiple websites, and designing collateral. Led staff producing all special events, including multi-day festivals, traveling educational seminar program, workshops, and other special events. Also responsible for all school and commercial group tour business development.

Member and Visitor Services Coordinator**2006**

Reporting to the Directors of Development and Marketing, maintained membership and donor database, promoted membership to on-site visitors and through on-site and direct mail solicitations, assisted with major events across departments.

Education:**Suffolk University – Sawyer Business School; Boston, MA/Massachusetts Municipal Assoc.**

Public Administration Program
 Graduate Certificate in Local Government Leadership & Management, 2025
 Earned an overall 98.83% average

Franklin and Marshall College; Lancaster, PA

Bachelor of Arts, 2000
 Major - History (concentration in US History); Minor - Religious Studies
 Awards: Dean's List, Hackman Fellowship

Current* and Previous Board/Committee Service and Community Involvement:

1Berkshire Foundation Board of Directors
 ArtWeek Berkshires co-chair*
 Berkshire Grit Alliance steering committee*
 Berkshire Initiative for Growth (BIG)
 Berkshire United Way
 Development Committee
 Berkshire United Way volunteer*
 Berkshire Visitors Bureau board member
 Berkshire Young Professionals
 Berkshire Leadership Program graduate, 2008

Habitat for Humanity volunteer
 Mill Town Foundation board member*
 Nonprofit Business Network Board,
 Berkshire Chamber of Commerce
 Networking & Recognition Committee,
 Berkshire Chamber of Commerce
 Pittsfield Tourism Commission member
 Red Tee Tournament volunteer*

Recent Conference Presentations:

Presenter/Panelist at One Cape Regional Conference, 2025
 Co-presenter at Southern New England APA Conference, 2024
 Guest Speaker at joint Southern Berkshire Chamber/Downtown Pittsfield, Inc. meeting, 2024
 Panelist & Planning Committee member at 1Berkshire Small Business Expo, 2023

Laura Brennan

Management Philosophy

“The way I would measure leadership is this: of the people that are working with me, how many wake up in the morning thinking that the company is theirs?” This quote from [David M. Kelley](#) resonates with me because I can find within it the three qualities I believe are most critical for effective management: a) an ongoing passion for improvement, b) sincerity and trustworthiness, and c) a strong connection to the shared values of the organization.

First, presuming this is spoken from the perspective of an owner or director, they imply that management bears responsibility for the creation of an atmosphere in which everyone feels both a sense of pride in and a sense of responsibility for the overall success of the organization.

These three qualities also build upon each other. A passion for improvement will stave off complacency and demonstrate that standards are high. Framed positively, it can inspire and motivate team members. Such actions should be paired with sincere verbal interactions that build trust. As trust increases, the alignment of internal goals and expectations, as well as outward messaging and brand building, becomes smoother and easier. All of this sets the stage for the third factor: embodying the shared values of the organization.

Kelley's words reinforce an approach I have endeavored to embrace since first hearing it from management consultants while working at Hancock Shaker Village. John and Anita Durel of [Durel Consulting Partners](#) shared what they referred to as the “Strategic Job Description.” Although it is likely derived from an established text, I am not aware of the original source.

The core message was this:

- Your **first** responsibility (no matter your position) is to pursue the organization's goals.
- Your **second** responsibility is to ensure the success of your coworkers.
- Your **third** and final responsibility is to perform the tasks of your own job.

This concept was reasonably easy to embrace, at least philosophically, within the realm of a mission-driven non-profit organization. None of us was there for high pay or a light workload, and a passion for the organization's purpose was what drew us and kept us coming back.

After leaving the nonprofit world, adhering to the Strategic Job Description has required more intention and thought. The billable hours business model of regional planning agencies might be seen to encourage the exact opposite: *focus on your specific assignments; if you have extra capacity, support your peers; aim to do it all in service of the organizational mission.*

Thankfully, with support from our executive director and willing partners in our management team, I have been able to operate with an agency-wide mindset and be a part of several initiatives that have improved our communication, strengthened our brand, added efficiencies to our systems, solidified our policies and procedures, and increased the range of ways we support and serve the region. Despite the constraints we face, I am confident that our team will embrace bigger picture thinking that will enable forward momentum even as details threaten to bog down progress. This openness and enthusiasm for innovation will grow our collective adoption of the “Strategic Job Description” and allow BRPC to thrive.