



Position: Vice President, Policy & Government Affairs

Status: Full-time

Location: Louisiana or Washington, DC with monthly travel to Louisiana | Hybrid

About CPEX

The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) is a unique non-profit planning organization that provides planning and policy services, drives cross-agency and collaborative statewide planning initiatives and guides urban, rural, and regional planning and implementation in Louisiana. We provide best-practice planning models, innovative policy ideas, and technical assistance to communities that wish to create and enact a broad spectrum of plans, including master plans and those dealing with transportation and infrastructure needs, environmental issues, and healthy community design. CPEX brings together community members and leaders from across the state and provides guidance as they work toward a shared vision for future smart growth and sustainable development. CPEX continues to be on the cutting edge of climate, resilience, and healthy community design in Louisiana.

About the Role

CPEX seeks its first Vice President, Policy & Government Affairs to establish and lead a new policy portfolio for the organization. This is a foundational leadership role responsible for setting CPEX's policy vision, developing a comprehensive policy agenda, and building a program that translates CPEX's on-the-ground work in Louisiana into meaningful policy progress for Louisiana communities.

Focused on Louisiana, this role will deepen CPEX's understanding of local policy dynamics and meet stakeholders where they are—across parishes, agencies, industry, and community organizations. The Vice President will develop a policy agenda and strategy grounded in the realities Louisiana communities are navigating: significant land use pressures, rapid industrial build-out, regressive economic development, environmental risks, shifting housing markets, and climate impacts. Through this work, the Vice President will shape CPEX's policy voice, build durable relationships across government, industry, and community stakeholders, and lay the groundwork for a growing government affairs function.

This role can be filled by someone based in either Louisiana or the D.C. area. CPEX's Louisiana offices are based in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. If working from the D.C. area, the position will be housed at CPEX's partner organization, [Smart Growth America](#), where the Vice President of Policy & Government Affairs can connect with policy and planning experts that will elevate their ability to be impactful in Louisiana.

Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate is a strategic and entrepreneurial policy leader who is comfortable building organizational functions from the ground up, cultivating a team, and driving progress. They will bring experience navigating state and local policy environments and are able to connect policy development to real-world implementation. They are a strong communicator who can translate complex planning, infrastructure, and energy issues into clear, actionable strategies, and can build fruitful relationships across sectors and political perspectives.

Primary Responsibilities

Policy Strategy and Development

- Develop a strong vision for CPEX's policy work and lead CPEX's policy agenda across key issue areas, including:
 - Land use and community planning
 - Infrastructure and transportation
 - Renewable energy and grid systems
 - Coastal resilience and environmental policy
 - Economic development
- Identify opportunities to influence legislation, funding, and regulatory processes at the state, local, and federal levels
- Align policy strategy with CPEX's programmatic work and long-term priorities
- Design and implement internal systems for tracking, prioritizing, and responding to policy developments at the federal and state levels

Organizational Leadership

- Set and lead CPEX's policy vision and strategic direction, ensuring alignment with organizational priorities and driving measurable impact for Louisiana
- Establish, scale, and lead CPEX's policy and government affairs functions, building the structure, priorities, and operating model from the ground up
- Serve as a member of CPEX's senior leadership team, contributing to organization-wide strategy, decision-making, and cross-functional alignment
- Provide strong guidance, mentorship, and growth and learning opportunities for CPEX team members
- Ensure strong integration between policy and practice, working closely with Louisiana-based staff to align policy strategy with on-the-ground implementation and programmatic goals

Government Affairs and External Engagement

- Build and maintain relationships with:
 - Louisiana state government
 - Louisiana Legislators
 - Local governments and elected officials
 - Partner advocacy organizations
 - Industry, philanthropic, and community partners
 - Congressional offices
 - Federal agencies (e.g., DOT, DOE, HUD, EPA)
- Represent CPEX in coalitions, working groups, and national forums
- Develop and execute strategies to advance CPEX's policy priorities

Thought Leadership and Policy Translation

- Translate CPEX's work into policy insights, recommendations, and scalable models
- Develop policy briefs, memos, and other written materials
- Provide public-facing thought leadership, including speaking engagements, convenings, and briefings
- Partner with communications staff and partners to ensure clarity and consistency in messaging

Qualifications and Skills

- 15+ years of experience in public policy, government affairs, or a related field
- Strong understanding of state, legislative, and local regulatory processes
- Experience working in one or more relevant areas (transportation, energy, land use, infrastructure, or economic development)
- Demonstrated ability to build relationships across sectors and political perspectives
- Excellent writing, communication, and strategic thinking skills
- Experience managing complex projects; team management experience preferred
- Alignment with CPEX's mission and commitment to equitable, sustainable development

Additional Details

- Location: Louisiana or Washington, DC (with regular travel to Louisiana, approximately monthly)
- This is a full-time, salaried position with a competitive benefits package
- Salary range is \$135,000 --\$190,000, commensurate with experience
- Applicants must submit a resume, cover letter, and portfolio if desired to apply@cpep.org with "VP of Policy" in the subject line. Candidates must be authorized to work in the United States. Qualified candidates will be invited for virtual or in-person interviews on an ongoing basis. The position will remain open until filled.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at CPEX

CPEX is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, and we aspire to do so intentionally, in every aspect of our work. We recognize that sustainable prosperity and community resilience cannot be realized in the absence of equity and inclusion for all Louisiana residents, and we are committed to efforts that help ensure that all Louisianans have a voice in decisions that impact their communities, region, and state. CPEX strives to integrate DEI into the fabric of our organization and our work, from our internal culture to how we partner with communities, to how we use our resources.. A successful candidate will be equally committed to these goals and values.

CPEX is a non-profit organization that coordinates urban, rural and regional planning efforts in Louisiana. We provide best-practice planning models, innovative policy ideas, and technical assistance to individual communities that wish to create and enact master plans dealing with transportation and infrastructure needs, environmental issues, and quality design for the built environment. CPEX brings community members and leaders together and provides guidance as they work toward a shared vision for future growth and development.