Internship Opportunity
Quaker Valley Council of Governments
8306 Ohio River Blvd, Pittsburgh PA 15202
Intern Supervisor: Susan Hockenberry
Project Title: Data Driven Multi-Municipal Blight Fight

Overall Goals:

This project keeps the ball rolling on our unique GIS based multi-municipal blight fight! Quaker Valley Council of Governments implemented Systematic Property Rating System, housed in ArcGIS Online in 2017. This project continues with the addition of more properties in more municipalities. Goals include building regional database, aggregating need identification for performance of code enforcement officer duties, clearly mapping areas of concern for targeted re-investment or demolition as the action of last resort. This project transforms code enforcement to a data driven, not complaint driven process. It maximizes efficiency by serving a number of municipalities -- assuring transfer of knowledge between member communities as well.

Community Impact:

The communities experience improved economic prospects because the blight is addressed proactively, attracting investment and retaining property value. Environmentally, sustaining core communities protects greenspace by reducing the sprawl that results when built-out communities have poor quality housing stock that sends homebuyers elsewhere. This benefits all of Allegheny County, not just the communities participating in the program. By performing this function multi-municipally, each community makes maximum use of the intern's time - keeping costs down for the taxpayer and eliminating "filler" work for intern serving only one town. This project also continues to build a regional data set- allowing QVCOG to develop intergovernmental solutions for common concerns.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will hone their knowledge of GIS, community relations, code enforcement, re-development. By working in a COG they will gain insight into a number of communities to learn about local government systems, governance, policy, and community sustainability. Lastly, the student will develop a knowledge of the inter-workings of intergovernmental cooperation--a necessary skill for future local government officials as budgets shrink and the demand for service remains steady.

Why Quaker Valley COG?:

Working in the QVCOG affords the successful candidate a perspective on 15 municipalities. This allows a greater understanding of local government and the opportunity to network with our municipal manager community at monthly Managers & Secretaries Committee meeting. Further, interns at QVCOG learn the workings of intergovernmental cooperation in Pennsylvania. Finally, ArcGIS is the platform being used in this project. It is truly being performed "in the cloud" so this project creates the ability of students to work in a future focused environment. Data security, knowledge transfer, visual thinking, and regional pattern identification are all abilities students will develop in our environment.

Requirements:

Fighting Blight takes a multi-disciplinary approach, as such candidates who bring a passion for community service, excellent communication skills, technological savvy, self-motivation and organization are valued above any one particular academic area. Students in undergraduate and graduate programs in public policy, regional planning, GIS, administration, engineering, architecture, construction management, or public safety are encouraged to apply.

Contact:

Susan G. Hockenberry for more information, 412.766.7458 or shockenberry@qvcog.org. Upload your resume and cover letter here. (Please use the link – no email submissions of resumes accepted).