



Director of Broadband Strategy

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, as the official economic development arm of the State of Rhode Island, works to drive prosperity in the state and help Rhode Island businesses and residents thrive. A quasi-public agency, the Commerce Corporation serves as a government and community resource to help boost business expansion in, and relocation to, Rhode Island. We are a passionate, innovative, driven, and resourceful team inspired by the belief that we can expand opportunities so that more Rhode Islanders are able to succeed. We enjoy working for an administration that is truly invested in improving Rhode Island for all Rhode Islanders. People skilled at advancing strategic change in a fast-paced, dynamic environment thrive here.

Summary

This role is uniquely suited for a bold, strategic thinker with passion for broadband access and an ability to pull multiple levers to ensure that access. The ideal candidate will have a deep knowledge of broadband infrastructure and broadband policy as well as an ability to lead Rhode Island to emerge as a hub for the expanding and dynamic broadband industry. S/he will additionally have a strong focus on digital equity for both Rhode Island small businesses and our state's residents.

Rhode Island has the opportunity to leverage incoming federal funding to provide a once-in-a-generation investment in broadband and ensure Rhode Island leads the nation in next-generation connectivity and access—and that we parlay this access into economic growth, supply chain security, and digital equity for the state. The Director of Broadband Strategy will work with a State Broadband Advisory Group as well as the team within the Department of Business Regulation and RI Commerce to drive the state's broadband and digital transformation strategy. Specifically, the Director of Broadband Strategy will:

Responsibilities

Strategy and Planning

- With input from various stakeholders, create a robust and “future-proof” plan for broadband infrastructure and implementation, as well as digital equity and digital inclusion, for the state of Rhode Island.
 - Assess current laws and regulations to overcome impediments to broadband industry growth as well as broadband user adoption.
 - Monitor state-level policies and implementations as well as emerging technologies, national and industry initiatives, and trends in broadband

- Conduct research and analysis and identify best practices toward broadband infrastructure improvements, especially through a lens of business and municipal needs in state.
 - Share best-in-class policy and regulation for driving down the cost of broadband and for increasing both business and residential access to broadband—focused on macro and micro policy as well as stimulus funding use.
 - Work with partners to create and maintain accurate, detailed broadband access and speed maps.
- Leverage research and ongoing learning from local implementations to make concise, actionable, and strategic recommendations to Commerce and state leadership for strategic improvements to the broadband plan and implementations.

Growth-Industry Capacity Building

- Build a strategy to grow the broadband industry in RI with a focus on maximizing supply chain expansion and attraction
 - Monitor emerging and new technologies and business models deployed nationally for competitive broadband and serve as a knowledge nexus.
 - Represent the state regionally and nationally in broadband conversation
- Partner internally to support business development associated with broadband
- Develop new and foster emergent relationships with businesses, industry groups, and other economic development organizations to grow a pipeline of business opportunities and support business growth regarding broadband
- Assess current and future industry needs to ensure continued ahead-of-the-curve broadband access for Rhode Island businesses and prospects
- Perform consultative services including market and industry research and financial analysis in support of broadband industry recruitment and retention activities

Infrastructure Improvements

- Develop and deploy a multi-year broadband infrastructure grant program using federal funding; ensure compliance and long-term accessibility of any last-mile infrastructure projects funded through the program.
 - Lead preparation and successful application for and deployment of federal and other sources of broadband funding.
 - Identify additional valid and varied sources of revenue and funding for continued broadband engagement, including the development of new products or services—as well as the establishment of a broadband fund through state government.
- Work with targeted state agency partners to actively manage critical broadband infrastructure projects that expand access and affordability for unconnected Rhode Islanders and Rhode Island businesses. Ensure transparency and thorough reporting on the programs' progress and metrics toward increased, affordable broadband access.

Stakeholder engagement

- Strategically facilitate a State Broadband Advisory Group through preparation of critical pre-meeting content, dynamic stakeholder engagement and facilitation, and targeted follow-up communication.
 - Ensure alignment around statewide broadband strategy and deployment plan as well as policy and operating
- Work with public and private partners in state to understand and plug gaps in broadband access including:
 - Supporting local and regional stakeholders by providing consultation on specific strategies and actions for reaching local goals as well as facilitating necessary technical assistance for municipalities and other local stakeholders seeking to deploy broadband infrastructure projects.
 - Navigate the Rhode Island policy and regulatory landscape to identify areas of needed clarity or updating and work with relevant stakeholders to make necessary shifts in statute and regulation
- Work with partners to enhance and expand local digital literacy and digital equity programs, using the Director's bully pulpit, convening power, and capacity to source and acquire funding.
- Spread awareness of the benefits of broadband, gathering and disseminating information on best practice programs, and publicly demonstrating program impact and progress in communities across the state through a variety of media on a regular basis. Act as the face of Rhode Island's broadband work locally and nationally.

Key Competencies

- **Strategic skills:** Job requires the ability to determine opportunities and threats through comprehensive analysis of current and future trends. Understands the big picture and how all projects and efforts fit together.
- **Leadership:** Job requires a willingness to lead, make decisions, and point toward a strategic direction.
- **Project and program management:** Job requires the ability to juggle many concurrent programs and projects with limited staff support, ensuring smart interconnection across efforts.
- **Initiative:** Job requires a willingness to take on responsibilities and challenges and find ways over, around, or through barriers to success. A bias for action. A results-oriented "doer."
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Ability to work with various stakeholders and help groups with disparate goals and priorities get to common ground and movement forward. Strong negotiation and interpersonal skills.

Qualifications and Skills

- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in telecommunications law; public policy; or IT, cyber, or network infrastructure fields preferred.

- At least 10 years of relevant professional experience in the public policy, telecommunications, or broadband sectors or demonstrated high level of success related to strategic implementations in the government or private sector.
- Experience leading and working in cross-functional teams and across agencies to accomplish common goals.
- Ability to manage multiple competing priorities in a fast-paced work environment.
- Self-motivated, creative, organized, and deeply committed to personal and organizational success.
- Ability to communicate clearly and accurately and to interact with professionals at all levels across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.
- Strong technical, analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills with attention to detail.

Resumes will be accepted until position is filled. Please submit a cover letter along with a professional resume via email to:

Rhode Island Commerce Corporation
315 Iron Horse Way – Suite 101
Providence, RI 02908
job.opportunities@commerceri.com

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