

Principal Planner - Tourism Program Director Tompkins County

Department: Department of Planning and Sustainability

Classification: Competitive

Labor Grade: White Collar Grade 16

Approved: Reclass 06/2016

Revised: 12/17

By: AG, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree in planning **AND** three years of professional experience in developing planning studies and reports in support of new and updated plans, programs and regulations, one year of which must have involved work in managing tourism, economic development, or community development programs; **OR**

(b) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree in natural resources, public administration, public policy, landscape architecture or closely related field **AND** five years of professional experience in developing planning studies and reports in support of new and updated plans, programs and regulations, one year of which must have involved work in managing tourism, economic development, or community development programs; **OR**

(c) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in planning, natural resources, public administration, public policy, landscape architecture or closely related field **AND** seven years of professional experience in municipal, community or regional planning, one year of which must have involved work in managing tourism, economic development, or community development programs; **OR**

(d) Any equivalent combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined in (a), (b) and (c) above. Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

Candidates chosen for employment must possess a valid New York State driver's license within thirty days of appointment and maintain such license for the duration of employment.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This is a senior position responsible for the oversight and administration of the Tompkins County Tourism Program including as of 2016, 16 distinct tourism-related programs supported by the \$2.5 million annual room tax budget. The position includes responsibility for management of the solicitation, review and award process for competitive grant programs and program contracts with partner agencies. The position conducts complex and technical planning studies, such as the preparation of strategic plans, advisory reviews, and special planning, evaluation and management studies. The incumbent works closely with community agency directors, department heads, legislators, business-people, and citizen activists to strategize around specific topic areas, develop plans to address issues, and quantify measurable results. This is a high-level professional position and is expected to demonstrate knowledge in numerous planning program areas and extensive expertise in tourism and economic development. The incumbent is responsible for leading teams on studies that require a high degree of coordination of efforts among members of the Department and others. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Commissioner of Planning and Sustainability with allowance for a high degree of independent judgment and autonomy in executing assigned tasks. The incumbent performs related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Directs, develops and manages the County Tourism Program, including strategic plan development and implementation;
- Provides vision and leadership in the conception and development of programs that fulfill the objectives of the Tompkins County Tourism Program;
- Keeps informed about best practices related to this sector of economic development; develops proposals and recommendations for policies, plans and projects; conveys these to the STPB, the program committee, and the Tompkins County Legislature; and works with partner agencies to implement the marketing/program/educational/training and other

- programs as selected by the relevant parties;
- Develops work plans for projects involving multiple partners and contractors;
 - Plans and delivers trainings on tourism marketing, product development, grant writing, and event management, and provides other technical advisory services to a variety of community partners and agencies on tourism related topics;
 - Develops and coordinates implementation of the Strategic Tourism Plan and associated tourism implementation plans;
 - Conducts educational programs and training sessions, and serves as a resource to county staff, partners and contractors, on tourism-related issues;
 - Serves as “single point of contact” for all County matters pertaining to tourism;
 - Plans, coordinates and leads the writing of outside grants to support tourism-related initiatives in the community;
 - Evaluates the tourism program as a whole and the individual projects and programs that make up the Tompkins County Tourism Program;
 - Establishes and maintains working relationships with the various agencies and organizations that have a connection to the County Tourism Program;
 - Collects, tabulates and conducts complex analyses of data on tourism related sales and employment, tax revenues, associated economic development activity and other data as needed for use in tourism planning activities;
 - Acts as project leader for tourism-related planning projects and programs including supervision of interns and management of contractors, and coordination with State and Federal agencies, municipalities, community organizations and businesses;
 - Manages grant funds, including compliance with all reporting requirements, from federal and state agencies, and coordinates with other staff who manage grant funds;
 - Provides professional support to the Strategic Tourism Planning Board, its committees, and special project task forces or working groups;
 - Supervises and recruits student interns and project assistants;
 - In coordination with STPB, administers, as of 2016, \$2.5 million in Tourism Program funding and grants including contracts with outside agencies and County’s competitive tourism grant programs;
 - Responds to requests for information and complaints about problems from the public, community organizations, and County and municipal government officials;
 - Makes formal and informal presentations to inform and advise citizen advisory boards, legislative bodies, and public officials on tourism programs and projects;
 - Leads the development of the annual Tourism Program budget in consultation with the Strategic Tourism Planning Board, partner agencies, County Administration and the County Legislature;
 - Develops the annual Tourism Program work program;
 - Coordinates tourism program and planning activities with community agency directors, department heads, legislators and citizen activists to strategize around specific tourism topic areas, develop plans to address issues, and quantify measurable results;
 - Prepares a variety of planning statistics, data, plans, designs, charts, maps, records, reports, and graphic materials in support of tourism planning activities;
 - Negotiates, develops, implements, and monitors consultant and partner agency contracts for implementation of tourism projects and programs.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Comprehensive knowledge of the purpose, principles, terminology and practices employed in planning;
- Comprehensive knowledge of the legal, sociological, economic, environmental, infrastructure, and legislative facets of planning;
- Thorough knowledge of governmental decision-making processes;
- Extensive expertise in tourism program development, implementation and administration;
- Good knowledge of county budgeting process and program accounting;
- Good knowledge of current methods for collecting, analyzing and interpreting statistical data;
- Good knowledge of research methods and techniques involved in planning;
- Good knowledge of group facilitation skills to gather public comment at meetings;
- Ability to prepare and supervise the preparation of complex plans for community development;
- Ability to develop work programs to accomplish multi-faceted projects;
- Ability to deal with tight deadlines and competing requests;
- Ability to prepare concise, well-constructed oral and written communications and reports that convey planning topics to the public;
- Creative problem-solving skills to gather relevant information to solve vaguely defined practical problems;
- Skillful application of spreadsheet, database, desktop publishing, geographic information systems, and word processing software;

- Ability to function on and lead teams of department staff, other County staff, representatives from other agencies, consultants, and/or interested citizens;
- Ability to understand and to give complex oral and written instructions;
- Initiative, resourcefulness, tact, and good judgment;
- Ability to communicate and deal effectively with department heads, local officials, legislators, business-people and residents and to advise, persuade, or influence them in adverse and tense conditions;
- Ability to exercise discretion and sound judgment;
- Ability to communicate with persons representing diverse public interests;
- Ability to travel, as required to fulfill the demands of the position in Tompkins County; and
- The employee's physical and mental condition shall be commensurate with the demands of the position, either with or without reasonable accommodations.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS:

The employee must be able to sit for extended periods of time within a standard eight-hour work day. Other types of physical effort are minimal with the exception of the occasional requirement to lift boxes of office supplies and paper goods up to twenty pounds. The incumbent's visual acuity must be sufficient to enable him or her to see and accurately work with information on a computer screen. The employee's hearing must be sufficiently acute to enable him or her to hear, understand and carry out verbal instructions. The employee must have the physical ability to manipulate a computer keyboard and other types of office equipment. These fine motor skills include adequate hand/eye coordination and the full use of fingers, hands and arms to perform the essential functions of this job. Environmental factors include the ability to work closely and cooperatively in close physical proximity with others. He or she may occasionally be required to work alone. Almost all work is performed indoors in a temperature controlled environment, so excessive heat, cold, humidity, noise, etc., are not factors that are significant to this job. There may be minimal exposure to disagreeable conditions. The employee may at times be asked to drive to get to remote locations, or otherwise demonstrate the ability to meet the limited transportation requirements of this job. If an individual has limitations, the employee has the right to request reasonable accommodations in accordance with the ADA and as amended.

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