

Sustainability Coordinator I Tompkins County

Department: Department of Planning and Sustainability

Classification: Competitive

Labor Grade: M (13)

Approved: 3/2022 by RP

By: RP, Commissioner of Personnel

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

(a) Graduation from, or current enrollment with an understanding that the degree must be obtained within 3 months of appointment in, a master's degree program at a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university in planning, natural resources, public administration, public policy, landscape architecture, ecology, environmental studies, engineering, geography, or closely related field; **OR**

(b) Graduation from, or current enrollment with an understanding that the degree must be obtained within 3 months of appointment in, a bachelor's degree program at a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university in planning, natural resources, public administration, public policy, landscape architecture, ecology, environmental studies, engineering, geography, or closely related field **AND** 1 year of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time and/or volunteer) experience working for municipal governments, community organizations, regional/state entities, or businesses to address community planning issues such as energy, sustainability, climate change, comprehensive planning, natural resources, water resources, or transportation; **OR**

(c) Any equivalent combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined in (a) and (b) above.

Tompkins County is committed to equity and inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This position is responsible for assisting in the overall execution of the "External Focus" component of the County's Energy Strategy and the pursuit of programs to achieve the energy, climate change, and sustainability principles as expressed in the County Comprehensive Plan. The position participates in preparing detailed planning reports, conducting planning studies, proposing policies, plans, and projects, and identifying the probable impacts to the physical development and management of the county that will result from proposals. This is an entry-level position focused on sustainability issues; however, the position is also responsible for participating with teams on complex studies that require the coordination of efforts by other members of the department. The position may be assigned as needed to specialty program areas within the department, including land use, housing, tourism, energy, community development, sustainability, rural development, water resources, land conservation, or the environment. The position helps to identify and lead pursuit of relevant grant funding opportunities to further sustainability goals in the community and manages some grant projects and programs. The incumbent is also responsible for providing professional assistance to advisory boards and committees. The work will be performed under the general supervision of senior professional staff with allowances for a considerable degree of independent judgment and autonomy in executing assigned tasks. Supervision is not a responsibility of this title. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Assists in leading the County's externally focused efforts to implement its Energy Strategy;
- Provides guidance and support to the County and wider community in methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and in implementing, evaluating, and improving community sustainability initiatives;

- Helps identify and administer grant-making and grant-seeking activities to support County planning-related goals and policies;
- Helps develop and manage County planning-related programs focused on sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including the Business Energy Advisors Program, which assists local commercial and industrial entities in pursuing energy efficiency and emissions reductions through energy retrofits and new building construction;
- Reviews draft laws, policy proposals, regulations, and funding opportunities from New York State, as well as federal and local governments, and provides guidance and support to the County and wider community regarding the sustainability implications from those proposals;
- Conducts research and prepares reports and memoranda, including analyses, tables etc., with emphasis on sustainable initiatives and their costs and monetary savings as well as greenhouse gas emission reductions and related environmental benefits;
- Develops recommendations regarding proposed policies, plans, and projects;
- Prepares minutes and agendas, and performs other tasks in support of advisory boards and committees;
- Makes formal and informal presentations to inform and advise citizen advisory boards, legislative bodies, and public officials on planning projects;
- Prepares complex reports and studies in conjunction with senior staff;
- Provides timely responses to requests for information from the general public, members of advisory boards and committees, and appointed and elected government officials;
- Attends external training programs as needed.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Ability to demonstrate initiative as a self-starter exercising autonomy and critical thinking to provide informed recommendations for advancing sustainability goals;
- Good written and verbal communication skills to work effectively with County staff, community members, technical consultants, and elected officials;
- Ability to build good working relationships with others to coordinate efforts and move actions forward;
- Good computer skills, including use of spreadsheet, database, desktop publishing, and word processing software, and ability to learn new software as needed;
- Ability to implement and achieve data-driven solutions that lead to measurable outcomes;
- Understanding of project management skills, strong organizational abilities, and outstanding attention to detail.
- Strong background in planning-related research methods and techniques, working knowledge of current data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods, and creative problem-solving skills.
- Working knowledge of effective methods of reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Ability to work on several projects or issues simultaneously, deal with tight deadlines, and manage competing requests;
- Ability to work independently or on teams with department staff, other County staff, representatives from other agencies, and/or interested citizens;
- Ability to attend to details while keeping big-picture goals in mind;
- Ability to prepare concise, well-constructed oral and written communications and reports that convey complex planning topics to the public;
- Knowledge of group facilitation skills to gather public comment at meetings and a commitment to inclusive and equitable public outreach and engagement;
- Ability to manage departmental and grant resources on a project or programmatic basis;
- Ability to understand complex oral and written instructions;
- 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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