

# PRINCIPAL PLANNER Tompkins County

**Department:** Department of Planning and Sustainability

**Classification:** Competitive

**Labor Grade:** 16

**Approved:** 0

**Revised:** 12/12

**By:** AF, Commissioner of Personnel

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: EITHER**

(a) Graduation from an American Planning Association accredited college or university with a Masters Degree in Planning **AND** four 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 supervisory responsibilities. **OR**

(b) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State college or university with a Masters Degree in planning, natural resources, public administration, public policy, landscape architecture or closely related field **AND** six 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 supervisory responsibilities. **OR**

(d) Any equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of (a) and (b) 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 at the time of appointment and maintain such license throughout the life of employment.

## **DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:**

This is a professional planning position at the supervisory level. The position conducts complex and technical planning studies, such as the preparation of comprehensive plans, advisory reviews, and special planning and management studies. The incumbent works closely with community agency directors, department heads, legislators, 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 technical expertise in one or more specialty areas such as land use, housing, tourism, energy, climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, community development/sustainability, rural development, water resources, land conservation or the environment. The incumbent is responsible for leading teams on complex 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 with allowance for a high degree of independent judgment and autonomy in executing assigned tasks. Supervision is exercised over subordinate staff including providing guidance on complex policy issues, intergovernmental relations and citizen engagement. The incumbent performs related duties as required.

## **TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:**

Develops and manages County planning-related programs, including comprehensive planning programs;

Develops proposals and recommendations for policies, plans and projects;

Develops work plans for projects involving multiple staff and oversees development of work plans for projects led by Senior Planners;

Collects, tabulates and conducts complex analyses of data on population, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, natural resources, land use, and local economic conditions for use in planning activities;

Assumes responsibilities for oversight of the department when the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Planning are not available;

Acts as project leader for diverse planning projects and programs including supervision of staff 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 supervises other

staff who manage grant funds;  
Prepares applications for grant funds for the county, the department, local governments, and interested agencies;  
Supervises subordinate planning staff, including the recruitment and evaluation of planners and student interns;  
Responds to requests for information and complaints about problems from the public, community organizations, and County government officials;  
Makes formal and informal presentations to inform and advise citizen advisory boards, legislative bodies, and public officials on planning projects;  
Prepares maps, charts and other graphic materials in support of planning activities;  
Assists in the development of the department work program and budget;  
Coordinates planning programs with community agency directors, department heads, legislators and citizen activists to strategize around specific topic areas, develop plans to address issues, and quantify measurable results;  
Prepares and supervises the preparation of a variety of planning statistics, data, plans, designs, charts, maps, records and reports;  
Develops and implements consultant contracts for implementation of planning 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 one or more specialty areas such as land use, housing, tourism, energy, climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, community development/sustainability, rural development, water resources, land conservation or environmental protection;  
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 detail and master plans for community development;  
Ability to develop work programs to accomplish complex, 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 complex 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, 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 plan and supervise the work of others;  
Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

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