

Commissioner of Planning and Sustainability Tompkins County

Department: Department of Planning and Sustainability
Classification: Non-competitive
Labor Grade: Mgt. Grade (91)
Approved: 11/13/18 NYS CSC
Revised: 08/89; 06/91; 07/01; 08/01; 11/12; 12/12; 5/17; 11/18
By: AG, Commissioner of Human Resources

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: EITHER:

- (a) Graduation from an accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's degree in Planning, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Natural Resources, or related field **AND** nine years of professional experience in municipal, community or regional planning, five years of which must have been in a supervisory or administrative capacity; **AND** demonstrated experience with planning, administration and/or management of public infrastructure projects or programs; **OR**
- (b) Graduation from an accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's degree in Planning, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Natural Resources, or related field **AND** eleven years of professional experience in municipal community or regional planning five years of which must have been in a supervisory or administrative capacity **AND** demonstrated experience with planning, administration and/or management of public infrastructure projects or programs; **OR**
- (c) Any combination of education and experience equal to or greater than that 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:

This position is considered to be a public officer. Pursuant to Article 3 of the NYS Public Officers law, the holder of this position must be a United States citizen and a resident of Tompkins County.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The Commissioner of Planning and Sustainability is a key administrative position involving the responsibility for the Department of Planning and Sustainability. The position is empowered to: prepare and update the Comprehensive Plan for the development of the County; prepare and update the Twenty Year Capital Improvement Plan for the development and maintenance of County facilities and infrastructure; provide professional planning and management oversight on all matters relating to Development, Housing, Conservation, Tourism, Climate Change, Energy and Community Sustainability; conduct research into economic and demographic conditions in the County and its municipalities; maintain databases on County population, land use, housing, environment status, human and natural resources, community facilities, energy and greenhouse gas emissions, and such other studies that may be directed by the legislature; furnish technical assistance in matters pertaining to zoning, site plan review, NYS Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), agricultural districts, other land use regulations and municipal and regional land use plans; make recommendations concerning site plans, subdivisions, special permits, variances or adoption or amendment of comprehensive plans and zoning and subdivision regulations upon referral from municipalities pursuant to the New York State General Municipal Law; prepare information and reports on capital project requests; oversee planning related map and data development using GIS and other appropriate software; develop plans, policies and programs to meet energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals of Tompkins County and as may be mandated or encouraged by State and Federal policies; develop plans, policies and programs to prepare the community for the impacts of climate change and recovery from disasters; develop plans, policies and programs to implement housing and smart growth strategies; develop plans, policies and programs to conserve the County's natural resources and protect the environment; develop plans, policies and programs to implement the County's Tourism program in association with the Strategic Tourism Planning Board; develop, update and lead implementation of a Sustainability Strategy for County government operations; oversee development and periodic updates of the Multi-jurisdictional All-Hazard Mitigation Plan for Tompkins County; contribute to programs and projects related to the enhancement of the County's infrastructure, including county-owned buildings and facilities; provide administrative assistance to the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council, Water Resources Council, Planning Advisory Board, Strategic Tourism Planning Board, and County Sustainability Team; and participate in the planning and administrative oversight of the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation

Council. The Commissioner shall report directly to the County Administrator for the implementation of policies established by the County Legislature, however, the Commissioner has full and direct accountability for final results.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Provides leadership in maintaining good and effective public relations to promote comprehensive land use planning, public infrastructure development and maintenance, housing planning, tourism development, energy planning, land and water conservation, open space planning, smart growth and community sustainability in Tompkins County;
- Oversees long-range capital planning for the construction, alteration, demolition, maintenance, and repair of all buildings, highways, bridges, airport facilities, and recycling and materials management and related facilities in the County;
- Directly supervises senior Planning and Sustainability staff, including the Tourism Program Director;
- Maintains top level contact with community leaders, state, federal, and regional governmental officials, and representatives of business and industry regarding planning, infrastructure, transportation, economic development, tourism development, energy and greenhouse gas emissions, smart growth and community sustainability objectives;
- Prepares feasibility and market studies to determine potential value of proposed projects and make decisions regarding project priorities and the extent and scope of studies;
- Oversees preparation of department budget, and capital budget, in association with the County Administrator and Finance Director in accordance with Legislature and Budget Office guidelines;
- Provides technical assistance to County legislature, other County departments, advisory boards, and committees, as requested;
- Manages and administers certain special programs including, but not limited to, County land policy, County owned forest lands management, County SEQR implementation, County office space needs analysis, energy and greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability initiatives, adaptation efforts, tourism and programs to improve water quality and reduce impact of floods;
- Develops the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program and facilitates the preparation of funding proposals for economic development and low and moderate income housing needs;
- Works with the Highway Department to develop projects for inclusion in the State's Transportation Improvement Program;
- Works with the Facilities Department to develop plans to meet county's long-term facility and office space needs;
- Works with the Recycling and Materials Management Department to implement sustainability initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Works with the County Airport to implement sustainable elements of the Airport's Green Master Plan;
- Coordinates energy efficiency planning and implementation for county government;
- Monitors and provides input on pollution prevention efforts in the community;
- Provides technical planning services to communities on matters pertaining to land use, zoning, subdivision regulations, SEQR regulations and inter-municipal cooperation agreements;
- Reviews and comments on the positive/negative impacts of development projects and plans as required under section 239-l, -m and -n of the General Municipal Law, or as requested by the Legislature;
- Administers Tompkins County's Flood Hazard Mitigation/Stream Corridor Protection Program;
- Prepares, updates and implements the County Comprehensive Plan and Long Range Capital Improvement Plan for the development of highways, public buildings, land usage, community facilities and environmental preservation;
- Analyzes and prepares reports and maps on census data, housing, demographics, land use, and the physical features of the County;
- Collects, updates and distributes planning data;
- Conducts research on the economic conditions of the County and individual municipalities;
- Interacts and provides technical assistance to County organizations functioning in economic development such as the Chamber of Commerce, Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD), Industrial Development Agency, Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Strategic Tourism Planning Board;
- Works with TCAD and others to develop long term and short term strategies for economic development that can be used by the legislature to develop policies;
- Leads in grant identification and grant writing efforts for planning, sustainability, land and water conservation, open space protection, energy, tourism and infrastructure projects;
- Serves on a variety of boards and committees often "representing" the county, examples of such groups include Tompkins County Area Development and the Ithaca/Tompkins County Transportation Council;
- Supervises consultants engaged to assist in the preparation of advanced specialized studies;
- Speaks before community groups and other gatherings to further the understanding of planning, tourism, energy, infrastructure, and community sustainability objectives;
- Engages key community stakeholders including Cornell University, Ithaca College, the Chamber of Commerce, municipal governments, citizen groups, private businesses, and State and Federal agencies and officials in collaborative

initiatives to address community sustainability, smart growth, energy and greenhouse gas emissions, conservation and open space, housing, tourism and other community issues;

- Participates in professional Planning and Sustainability organizations.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Comprehensive knowledge of the purposes, principles, terminology, and practices employed in municipal, regional or community planning and sustainability, including, but not limited to, Geographic Information Systems, planning related computer software, spreadsheet analysis, capital programs, public works and infrastructure, energy and greenhouse gas emissions, data base analysis, housing market studies and demographic and economic base analysis, land protection and resource conservation, smart growth, tourism, and sustainable community development;
- Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practices of administration including planning, budgeting, personnel methods and procedures, program reporting, communications and supervisory methods and techniques;
- Thorough knowledge of zoning and subdivision practices and local land use laws;
- Thorough knowledge of standard and innovative professional planning techniques and tools;
- Thorough knowledge of legislation, current challenges and professional literature in the fields of land use law, Planning and Sustainability;
- Thorough knowledge of climate change and energy issues, including greenhouse gas accounting, policy and legislation,
- An incumbent in this position must exercise a high degree of interpersonal skill.
- Exceptional ability to prepare and supervise complex and detailed master plans for infrastructure, and community development and preservation;
- Exceptional ability to make professional decisions requiring advanced technical knowledge and skills;
- Outstanding professional leadership ability;
- Ability to plan, organize, and coordinate complex analyses of energy and greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable development and infrastructure development programs;
- Ability to plan, organize and coordinate progressive phases of a tourism development program;
- Ability to engage private and public sector officials at the highest levels in developing policies and programs to address complex community development issues;
- Ability to develop an organizational culture that encourages diversity, provides an inclusive, welcoming work environment, develops leadership, provides opportunity for staff development at all levels, and motivates all staff to perform up to their potential;
- Initiative and resourcefulness in the solution of complex administrative problems;
- Sound professional judgment is required;
- The incumbent shall possess a physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS:

The incumbent must be able to accurately manage and manipulate information, using computer software and hardware systems, with or without reasonable accommodations. The employee's ability to communicate (verbal or written) must be sufficiently adequate to enable them to understand and carry out detailed instructions. The employee must possess the knowledge and ability needed to utilize office equipment, including computer systems, inclusive of necessary software and operating systems, with or without reasonable accommodations. In respect to the physical demands of this position, there may considerable visual effort and repetitive hand/finger movements associated with the execution of the tasks delegated with this role.

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