

TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION

Inclusion Through Diversity



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office
125 E. Court Street
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-5526

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply

TITLE: Associate Planner

EXAM NO: 61332

SALARY: \$30.07 per hour - 2019 Hire Rate

EXAM DATE: 06/01/19

ISSUE DATE: 04/10/19

THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS: 04/25/19

DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING: 06/02/19

RESIDENCY WAIVED

THE USE OF A QUIET HAND HELD CALCULATOR WILL BE ALLOWED FOR THIS EXAMINATION.

LOCATION OF POSITION:

There are currently two vacancies in the title of Associate Planner, located at the Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability. The eligible list resulting from this open competitive examination may be used to fill any full-time, part-time or temporary vacancies that may occur during the life of the eligible list. A promotional examination is being held in conjunction with this open competitive examination. Preference in appointment may be given to eligible promotional candidates.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- (a) Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree in planning **AND** two years of professional experience in municipal, community or regional planning; **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** four years of professional experience in municipal, community or regional planning; **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** six years of professional experience in municipal, community or regional planning; **OR**
- (d) Any equivalent combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that defined in (a), (b), and (c) above.

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 multiple complex projects and programs. The position exercises significant independence and decision making in preparing detailed planning reports and studies, including maintaining project budgets and administering grant programs. The position proposes policies, plans and projects, and identifies the probable impacts to the physical development and management of the County that will result from proposals. The position manages long-range plans and short-term studies that require a high degree of coordination within and across County departments and external agencies. The position requires a high level of expertise in intergovernmental relations and public engagement. This senior position is expected to demonstrate knowledge of, and extensive technical expertise in, several complicated planning program areas from broad topics such as sustainability, land use, housing, tourism, energy, climate change, community development, rural development, water resources, land conservation and the environment. The position is responsible for providing professional planning assistance to boards and committees and leading teams on complex studies that require the coordination of efforts by other members of the Department, community agency directors, department heads, legislators and other elected officials, and citizen activists to strategize around specific topic areas, develop plans to address issues, and quantify measurable results. The position prepares grant applications and manages highly intricate grant projects and programs. An example of this type of planning coordination is the Community Housing Development Fund, conceived and developed to help achieve the vision outlined in the County Comprehensive Plan to assist developers in building affordable housing, with its \$600,000 annual budget and two formal advisory committees composed of legislators, senior Cornell staff, city of Ithaca elected officials and department heads. Other examples are the Capital Reserve Fund for Natural, Scenic and Recreational Resource Protection, and the Stream Corridor Restoration and Flood Hazard Mitigation Program. The work will be performed under the general supervision of senior staff with allowances for a high degree of independent judgment and autonomy in executing assigned tasks. The position is responsible for supervising County-hired Research Assistants and volunteers, as well as guiding and coordinating the work of support staff on a project or programmatic basis. The incumbent will perform all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Develops and manages County planning-related programs, such as sustainability, land use, housing, transportation, tourism, energy, climate change, community development, rural development, water resources, land conservation or environmental protection;
- Provides vision and leadership in the conception and development of policies, plans, projects and programs that fulfill the objectives of the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan;
- Acts as project leader for specific topic area related planning projects and programs including supervision and direction of county-hired Research Assistants and volunteers and management of contractors and consultants and coordination with State and Federal agencies, municipalities, community organizations and businesses;
- Keeps informed about best practices related to assigned topic areas; develops proposals and recommendations for policies, plans and projects; conveys these to boards, committees, and the County Legislature; and works with partner agencies to implement the recommendations;
- Plans, coordinates and leads the writing of outside grants to support related initiatives in the community on behalf of the Department, local governments and interested agencies;
- Conducts complex analytical reports and planning studies related to specific topic areas as well as comprehensive planning;
- Provides professional support to advisory boards and committees, as well as the County Legislature, and participates in community planning studies and other activities;
- Manages grant funds, including compliance with all reporting requirements, from Federal and State agencies and/or local sources often involving selection and oversight of professional consultants, multiple community partners and substantial budgets;
- Coordinates, administers and manages significant housing, natural resource and other programs and projects to further the goals of the County Comprehensive Plan, including obtaining funding, managing program budgets, contracting for work with outside agencies, and coordinating the efforts of community leaders and experts to effectively address specific community challenges;
- Conducts training sessions to meet the needs and interests of advisory boards and local communities;
- Develops and assists with a wide variety of citizen education programs for public input and participation at the municipal and countywide levels;
- Manages, evaluates and provides recommendations on development projects consistent with local and state policies, including General Municipal Law §239-l and -m and the State Environmental Quality Review Act;

- Responds to requests for information and complaints about problems from the public, community organizations, and local government officials;
- Makes formal and informal presentations to inform and advise citizen advisory boards, legislative bodies, and public officials on planning projects;
- Writes, or assists in writing, a variety of ordinances and regulations relating to a range of community planning issues;
- Understands and provides feedback on formal planning documents including but not limited to easements, surveys, regulations and management plans;
- Prepares a variety of planning statistics, data, plans, designs, charts, maps, records, reports, and graphic materials in support of various planning activities; and
- Updates website content and employs computer skills to enhance other work activities.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge of the purpose, principles, terminology and practices employed in planning;
- Thorough knowledge of the legal, sociological, economic, environmental, infrastructure, and legislative facets of planning;
- Extensive expertise in one or more planning specialization, such as sustainability, land use, housing, transportation, tourism, energy, climate change, community development, rural development, water resources, land conservation or the environment;
- 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 governmental decision-making processes;
- Ability to prepare and supervise the preparation of complex plans for community development and resource protection;
- Ability to deal with tight deadlines and competing requests and work on several projects or issues simultaneously;
- Ability to work independently or in a team environment, as needed;
- 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 complicated planning topics to the public; Skillful application of spreadsheet, database, desktop publishing, geographic information systems, and word processing software;
- Creative problem-solving skills to gather relevant information to solve vaguely defined practical problems;
- Ability to function on and lead teams of department staff, other County staff, representatives from other agencies, and/or interested citizens;
- Excellent knowledge of group facilitation skills to gather public comment at meetings and communicate with persons representing diverse public interests;
- Ability to manage departmental and grant resources on a project or programmatic basis;
- Ability to understand and to give complex oral and written instructions;
- Initiative, resourcefulness, tact, and good judgment;
- Excellent ability to communicate and deal effectively with department heads, local officials, legislators, business-people and residents and to advise, persuade, or influence them, especially in adverse and tense conditions; and
- Good working knowledge of standard office technology and software, and the willingness and ability to learn new technology and software skills;
- 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.

Complete Scope of the examination and Expanded subtest descriptions:

1. Educating and interacting with the public

These questions test for knowledge of techniques used to interact effectively with individuals and/or community groups, to educate or inform them about topics of concern, to publicize or clarify agency programs or policies, to negotiate conflicts or resolve complaints, and to represent one's agency or program in a manner in keeping with good public relations practices.

Questions may also cover interacting with others in cooperative efforts of public outreach or service.

2. Sociological, economic, design and environmental factors involved in land use planning and community development

These questions test for knowledge of the fundamental concepts, design issues, terminology and practices utilized in the land use planning field, including how to best benefit the social, economic and environmental welfare of a community using appropriate planning principles.

3. Community and regional land use planning, including zoning and subdivision regulations

These questions test for knowledge of the concepts and accepted practices involved in community and large-area development planning, the laws and regulations governing site and subdivision planning, and typical project development and zoning issues, including related legal terminology.

4. Collection, analysis and presentation of data, including basic statistics

These questions test for knowledge of the proper procedures and methods used to gather, evaluate, organize, and utilize various types of technical data and information, and the fundamental concepts, terminology, and computations involved in statistical analysis.

5. Community development program planning, including related federal and State laws and programs

These questions test for a comprehensive knowledge of the municipal and regional planning process, and familiarity with the various federal and New York State programs related to community development and the legislative regulations that authorize and fund them.

6. Preparing written material

These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four suggestions, the best order for the sentences.

7. Supervision

These questions test for knowledge of the principles and practices employed in planning, organizing, and controlling the activities of a work unit toward predetermined objectives. The concepts covered, usually in a situational question format, include such topics as assigning and reviewing work; evaluating performance; maintaining work standards; motivating and developing subordinates; implementing procedural change; increasing efficiency; and dealing with problems of absenteeism, morale, and discipline.

The New York State Department of Civil Service has not prepared a test guide for this examination. However, candidates may find information in the publication "How to take a written test" helpful in preparing for this test. This publication is available on line at: <https://www.cs.ny.gov/testing/testguides.cfm>

FURTHER INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Falsification of any part of the "Application for Employment" will result in disqualification.

Accepted candidates will be notified when and where to appear for the examination. If you do not receive your notice to appear at least three days before the date of the written examination, call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources at 274-5526. If an application is disapproved, due notice will be sent. This department does not make formal acknowledgment of the receipt of an application or take responsibility for non-delivery or postal delay.

Applicants must answer every question on the application form and make sure that the application is complete in all respects. Incomplete applications will be disapproved.

ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS OR DISABLED VETERANS desiring to claim additional credit will request the Veterans Credits application form, at any time between the date of application for examination(s) and the date of the establishment of the resulting eligible list. You must meet the requirements set by NYS for these credits and they may be used only once. **YOU MAY NOT CLAIM ADDITIONAL CREDITS AFTER THE ELIGIBLE LIST HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. IT IS THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REQUEST THE VETERANS CREDIT APPLICATION FORMS AND TO SUBMIT THESE FORMS AND ANY SUPPORTING PAPERWORK BEFORE THE ELIGIBLE LIST IS ESTABLISHED.**

Tompkins County's written examinations are prepared and rated by the New York State Department of Civil Service in accordance with Section 23-2 of Civil Service Law. The provisions of the New York State Civil Service Rules and Regulations, which deal with the rating and review of the examinations apply.

The duration of the eligible lists may be fixed for a minimum of one and a maximum of four years and may be extended beyond four years if there has been a restriction against the filling of vacancies in that title.

The candidates must complete a separate "Application for Employment" for each open-competitive and/or promotional examination that the candidate is eligible to take.

All experience required meeting the acceptable training and experience is full-time experience. (Part-time experience will be credited on a prorated basis).

Appointment from an eligible list must be made from the top three candidates willing to accept the appointment.

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. As part of its efforts to provide employment opportunities to the physically handicapped, Tompkins County Civil Service has adopted a rule permitting the employment of qualified physically handicapped persons without competitive examination (pursuant to Section 55 of Civil Service Law). If you meet the minimum qualifications for this position and wish to know more about this rule, please contact the Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office.

Unless otherwise notified, candidates are permitted to use quiet, hand-held, and solar or battery powered calculators. Devices with Typewriter Keyboards, Spell Checkers, Personal Digital Assistants, Address Books, Language Translators, Dictionaries or any similar devices are prohibited. You may not bring books or other reference materials.

CROSS-FILING - APPLYING FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS IN MULTIPLE JURISDICTIONS WHEN EXAMINATIONS ARE SCHEDULED ON THE SAME DATE: When applying for examinations across multiple jurisdictions - all of which are scheduled on the same day - you must submit a Tompkins County Cross-Filing Form. This form must be submitted no later than 4:30 PM on the final filing date of the examination. On this form, list each examination that you are taking and then tell us where you would like to sit. The purpose is to ensure that all of the test materials for the various examinations that you are taking will be available in one location. If you do not provide the cross-filing form to us by the final filing date, we cannot ensure that we can accommodate your desire to cross-file. If any of the examinations are State level examinations, you must sit at the State test center. You will still need to complete the Tompkins County cross-filing form. If sitting at the State site, the State will notify you of when and where to report for your examination(s) and you should bring all admittance letters to the State site. If you are not taking a State examination, bring all admittance letters to your chosen testing site. If you have any question please call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Department (607) 274-5526. The Cross File form is located at <http://www.tompkins-co.org/personnel/CivilSrvForms/index.html>

FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION AND HANDICAPPED PERSONS: If special arrangements for testing are required, please indicate this on your application.

ALL CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR POSITIONS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND BOCES GOVERNED BY TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE MAY HAVE THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL REQUIREMENT. PER CHAPTER 180 OF THE LAWS OF 2000, AND BY REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, TO BE EMPLOYED IN A POSITION DESIGNATED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR BOCES AS INVOLVING DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS, A CLEARANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT FROM THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED.

In conformance with Section 85-a of the Civil Service Law, children of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duties shall be entitled to receive an additional ten points in a competitive examination for original appointment in the same municipality in which his or her parent has served. If you are qualified to participate in this examination and are a child of firefighter or police officer killed in the line of duties in this municipality, please inform this office of this matter when you submit your application for examination. A candidate claiming such credit has a minimum of two months from the application deadline to provide the necessary documentation to verify additional credit eligibility. However, no credit may be added after the eligible list has been established.â

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION: Applicants may be required to undergo a State and national criminal history background investigation, which will include a fingerprint check, to determine suitability for appointment. Failure to meet the standards for the background investigation may result in disqualification.

TOMPKINS COUNTY PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, 125 EAST COURT STREET, ITHACA, NY 14850