

PRINCIPAL PLANNER (PLANNING)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: Under general supervision, an incumbent in this class plans, coordinates and directs technical planning, research and evaluative studies for major program areas in the Department of Planning, promoting the orderly physical growth of the County in a manner that will maintain and improve the quality of life and the physical environment in Westchester. This position must exercise a considerable amount of independent judgment in applying departmental policy and procedure. Responsibilities include providing timely technical assistance and advice on planning and zoning issues to all Westchester municipalities, County Departments, federal, state and local agencies. This class differs from the Associate Planner in that the Principal Planner is also expected to organize, direct and supervise the work of a number of technical and professional positions, consultants and contract employees; providing assistance in conducting surveys, preparing reports and responding to inquiries and requests. Supervision is exercised over professional planning and administrative support staff. Does related work as required.

EXAMPLES OF WORK: (Illustrative Only)

Coordinates the formulation, assignment and scheduling of planning studies related to the policy of physical development of the County and its municipalities to minimize the potential negative County, State and/or intermunicipal impact;

Conducts and provides project leadership for planning studies; reviews work to ensure that all environmental, zoning and land use factors are considered and addressed;

Reviews and provides advisory recommendations to municipalities on local planning and zoning issues that are referred pursuant to state, County and local laws, regulations and ordinances;

Develops and implements new and innovative planning studies, research techniques, data analyses and presentation media to address municipal planning issues and problems;

Organizes, plans and conducts educational programs and informational seminars to increase public awareness of departmental services and to provide advisory and technical assistance to local officials to facilitate the implementation of various recommendations, programs and ordinances;

Performs computer-based analyses of land use, economic, demographic, geographic, social, and cartographic information and develops reports for use in the planning process;

Coordinates the formulation, assignment and scheduling of planning studies and performance audits to measure program and/or service performance; prepares reports on findings and provides recommendations for improvements or changes in policy and procedure;

Uses computer applications or other automated systems such as spreadsheets, word processing, calendar, e-mail and database software in performing work assignments;

May perform other incidental tasks, as needed.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND ATTRIBUTES: Thorough knowledge of the general principles and techniques used in County, municipal, regional and land use planning; thorough knowledge of the practices and techniques used in the formulation and conduct of planning and research studies; good knowledge of zoning and subdivision principles and practices; ability to analyze and interpret physical planning data; ability to apply technical skill in analyzing and preparing physical and site planning data; ability to use automated office systems as applicable to a planning environment; ability to coordinate and supervise the work of others; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and related computer applications; ability to effectively use computer applications such as spreadsheets, word processing, calendar, email and database software; ability to read, write, speak, understand and communicate in English sufficiently to perform the essential functions of the position; tact; resourcefulness; good judgment; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE: Either: (a) a Bachelor's Degree* and six years of experience where the primary function of the position was in Regional, County, or Municipal planning activities, three years of which must have been in a supervisory capacity in the field of land use and physical planning**; or (b) a Bachelor's Degree* in City, Urban or Regional Planning, Landscape Architecture, Architecture, Civil Engineering or a related area of Planning and five years of experience as defined in (a), including the three years of supervisory experience; or (c) a satisfactory combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of (a) and (b).

SUBSTITUTIONS: Satisfactory completion of a Master's Degree* in City, Urban or Regional Planning may be substituted for two years of the specified experience. Satisfactory completion of 30 credits* towards a Master's Degree* in Landscape Architecture, Architecture or a related area of Planning may be substituted on a year for year basis for up to two years of the specified experience. Satisfactory completion of a five-year Bachelor's Degree* in Landscape Architecture may be substituted for one year of the specified experience. Candidates must possess the supervisory experience.

**DEFINITION: Land use and physical planning is defined as the reading and writing of zoning ordinances text and translating that information into how to design the use of a piece of land to meet the requirements set forth in the text. As such, work would include the review of site plans and construction plans to envision the project.

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, only experience gained after attaining the minimum education level indicated in the minimum qualifications will be considered in evaluating experience.

*SPECIAL NOTE: Education beyond the secondary level must be from an institution recognized or accredited by the Board of Regents of the New York State Department of Education as a post-secondary, degree-granting institution.