

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Principal Planner, Senior Planner,
Planner I, Planner II, &
Planning Technician

NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA

EXECUTIVE
RECRUITMENT
PROVIDED BY



THE COMMUNITY

Tucked into Florida's northeast corner and hugging the Atlantic Ocean along Interstate 95 north of Jacksonville, Nassau County's 726 square miles form the eastern gateway to the Sunshine State.

From pristine beaches and natural preserves to historic landmarks and first-class amenities, the community of over 101,500 residents is among the fastest-growing counties in the country — and it's no surprise. Through land use planning, zoning regulations, and conservation efforts, the county balances growth with environmental stewardship, creating livable communities and enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

Nassau County is a nature lover's paradise, offering 13 miles of pristine beaches, numerous nature trails, and multi-use paths. The county also boasts hundreds of miles of rivers, including the St. Marys, Amelia, and Nassau and their related tributaries. Visitors can explore the historic downtown Fernandina Beach and enjoy award-winning golf courses. Residents have easy access to several state parks — Fort Clinch, Amelia Island, Four Creeks, Ralph E. Simmons, Big Talbot Island, and Little Talbot Island — and landmarks like American Beach, Huguenot Memorial Park, and Cary State Forest. The community has also prioritized creating and preserving green spaces; in 2023 alone, acquisition and development agreements for over 550 acres of public parks were approved.

As one of the oldest counties in Florida, Nassau's rich history stretches back to 1824. Numerous archaeological sites in the county record evidence of prehistoric communities — and Nassau was the site of early European contact, dating to 1562 with the arrival of the French on present-day Amelia Island. The County has seen occupation by the French, English, Spanish, and Americans, as well as action during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and local history buffs will enjoy visits to the Amelia Island Museum of History, Amelia Island Lighthouse, and Timucuan Ecological and Historical Preserve.

There are plenty of modern-day pleasures, too. Downtown Fernandina, St. Johns Town Center, San Marco Historic District, and the Shoppes of Avondale offer a mix of big-name brands and local boutiques and standout dining destinations like The Salty Pelican, Espana, The Patio at 5th and Ash, Beech Street Grill, Coast, David's Restaurant, and Salt serve up delicious food and great ambiance. The community also loves getting together to celebrate; popular events include the Annual Shrimp Festival, Amelia Concours d'Elegance, Railroad Days, the Dickens on Center Victorian-inspired holiday festival, and the Northeast Florida Fair.

Proximity to Jacksonville, St. Augustine, and Orlando to the south and Savannah and Charleston to the north provides fantastic cultural opportunities, from zoos, museums, and arboretums to historic churches, professional sports venues, performing arts centers, and airports. Home to just three incorporated municipalities — Fernandina Beach, Hilliard, and Callahan — the needs of the majority of the community's unincorporated areas are the focus for Nassau County.

Area families are well served by the A-rated Nassau County School District, providing K-12 instruction to over 12,600 students across 16 campuses, and private educational options include Amelia Island Montessori School, Faith Christian Academy, Fernandina Beach Christian Academy, St. Michael Academy, The Ogburn School, and Lighthouse Christian School. Nearby higher educational facilities include Florida State College at Jacksonville, University of North Florida, Jacksonville University, Southeastern University, Edward Waters College, Columbia College, Barry University, Keiser University, Chamberlain University, and Webster University.

Medical care is provided by Baptist Medical Center Nassau, which offers a full spectrum of in- and out-patient services and 24-hour emergency care to coastal communities in Northeast Florida and Southeast Georgia, as well as UF Health at Wildlight, with additional facilities on the way.

Nassau's median household income is \$90,838, and housing options run from a median-priced mobile home for \$213,500 to a single-family home at \$450,000 or a condo at \$623,000



GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

A non-charter county with a commission-manager form of government, Nassau County's governing authority is the five-member Nassau County Board of Commissioners. The County is divided into five districts, and elections are held every two years, with commissioners elected at large and serving four-year staggered terms. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board are elected by the Board annually.

The Board employs a staff of 485 and appoints a County Attorney and County Manager. Other elected officials include the Property Appraiser, Supervisor of Elections, Sheriff, Tax Collector, and Clerk of Courts.

County Manager Taco Pope was appointed in 2020, having previously served Nassau County for almost 15 years in various posts, including Assistant County Manager, Planning & Economic Opportunity Director, Planning Director, and Community Planner. He recruited Marshall Eyerman in the spring of 2021 as Assistant County Manager and Robert Companion, P.E., in the spring of 2022 as Deputy County Manager.

The County's annual budget of approximately \$479 million is supported by an ad valorem millage tax rate of 9.2927, excluding special taxing districts. The organization's employees provide an array of municipal services, with approximately two-thirds of the workforce covered by collective bargaining agreements in the Fire-Rescue and various labor positions.

Eastern Gateway to the Sunshine State

NASSAU COUNTY MISSION

Nassau County will foster the highest quality of life possible for its citizens through a responsive and open government. It will provide services that are effective, in an economical and efficient manner, that not only meet but exceed the expectations of the people of Nassau County.

TOP EMPLOYERS

Nassau County School District

The Omni Amelia Island

Nassau County Government

The Ritz Carlton Amelia Island

West Rock

Baptist Medical Center Nassau

Federal Aviation Administration

Rayonier Advanced Materials

City of Fernandina Beach

White Oak Conservation



VISION 2050

Nassau County is in the midst of an 18-month process to bring together county leaders, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to help define the community's future. The effort seeks to:

- *Boost community pride* by identifying and celebrating the unique history and culture of Nassau County, preserving historic landmarks and sites, and promoting arts, culture, and traditions.
- *Enhance resiliency* by protecting the community's rich supply of natural resources and county assets and developing a comprehensive approach to growth management.
- *Improve accessibility and mobility* throughout the county by evaluating roadway safety and needs, envisioning future networks, and enhancing multimodal access for residents and visitors.
- *Foster community building* by planning for growth that enhances quality of life and community character while supporting prosperity and economic advancement.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

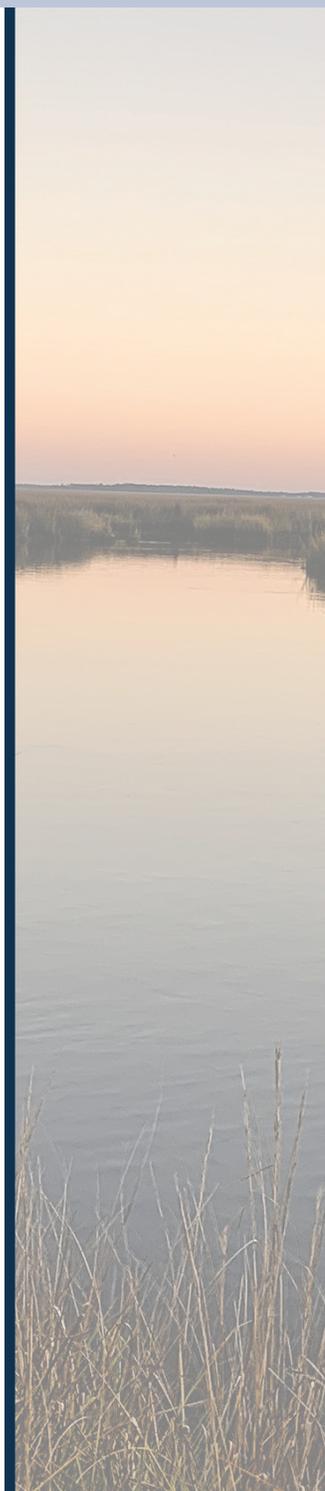
With a team of 10 employees and an annual budget of approximately \$1.4 million, the Planning Department provides technical planning support to the Board of County Commissioners, County Manager, and other County departments; performs the daily operations associated with the implementation of the Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan and serves as the point of entry for site plan review and other applications for development orders; and encourages the provision of capital infrastructure required to accommodate new growth.

The Planning Department is led by Elizabeth Backe, AICP. Director Backe combines servant leadership qualities, with a strong technical skill set that has been sharpened through her experience working in Hillsborough County (Tampa), Gaithersburg, Maryland, and most recently as the Director of Planning and Transportation at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission where she provided professional planning leadership for 18 counties. Director Backe has the passion, drive and knowledge to inspire experienced planners, challenge the technically savvy, and nurture young planners to be the next cohort of strong professional planners that take leadership positions in the County.

Department staff also maintain a demographic profile of Nassau County; provide information on the County's development standards and procedures to developers, investors, and the general public; and liaise with advisory boards, governmental agencies, and the private sector to position the County to capitalize on economic development opportunities in keeping with the desired quality of life. In addition to the Board of County Commissioners, the team works closely with the Planning and Zoning Board, Conditional Use and Variance Board, Economic Development Board, Amelia Island Tree Commission, and Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

VISION 2032 STATEMENT

Nassau County is committed to managing growth and creating sustainable economic development in a way that maintains and improves the quality of life and unique character of the communities by utilizing its strengths – the people, the abundance of unspoiled natural resources, and its strategic location as the “Eastern Gateway to Florida.”



RECENT ACCOLADES

The successful candidates will join an award-winning Planning Department. Recent honors include:

State Award for 'Preservation Communications/Media' for Historic Preservation

Florida Trust for Historic Preservation-2024
Citizen's Guide to Preserving Historic Places in Nassau County

Regional Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing

Northeast Florida Regional Council-2023
Tiny Home Development Program

State 'Award of Excellence' for Best Practices

American Planning Association, Florida Chapter-2022
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

State 'Award of Merit' in Neighborhood Planning

American Planning Association, Florida Chapter-2022
Timber to Tides Initiative (SR200/A1A Corridor Master Plan)

Regional Award for 'Partner of the Year'

North Florida Land Trust-2022
Conservation Land Acquisition and Management (CLAM) Program

Regional Award for Excellence in Community Engagement

Florida Planning & Zoning Association-2022
American Beach Cultural Heritage Enhancement Plan

Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental/Natural Resources

Florida Planning & Zoning Association-2022
Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Project

Regional Outstanding Public Impact Award Florida

Planning & Zoning Association-2022
Westside Regional Park

State Award for Outstanding Sustainability Project

Florida Planning & Zoning Association-2021
Timber to Tides Initiative (SR200/A1A Corridor Master Plan)

Regional Award for Excellence in Planning & Growth Management

Northeast Florida Regional Council-2021
Timber to Tides Initiative (SR200/A1A Corridor Master Plan)

Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship

Northeast Florida Regional Council-2020
Conservation Land Acquisition & Management Program

Regional Award for Excellence in Planning & Growth Management

Northeast Florida Regional Council-2020
Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Project (WNHP)

Regional Award for Excellence in Community Engagement

Florida Planning & Zoning Association-2019
Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Project (WNHP)

State 'Award of Merit' for Best Practices in Community Planning

American Planning Association, Florida Chapter-2018
William Burgess Mixed Use Activity District (WBD)



ABOUT THE POSITIONS

The Planning Department is looking to hire five positions that will assist with complex projects and development reviews — with various levels of responsibility — in a fast-growing County that prides itself on innovative planning practices.

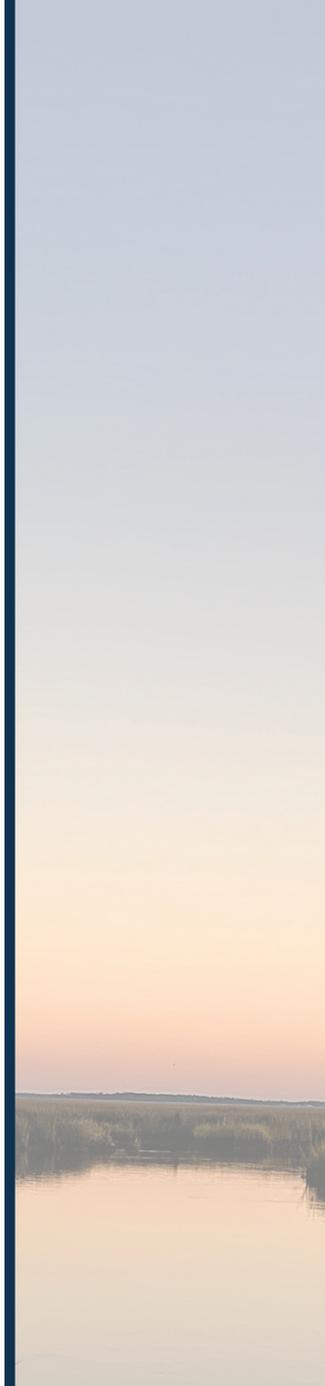
General responsibilities include reviewing development applications in master-planned areas, performing site development reviews, evaluating and formulating land use and transportation strategies, conducting policy research, analyzing elements of the Comprehensive Plan, and preparing written analyses and presentations of development applications and proposals.

These roles will also prepare draft ordinances and amendments to ordinances and work closely with a variety of stakeholders, including colleagues across the County, engineers, contractors, consultants, architects, elected and appointed leaders, community/civic organizations, and the general public.

The Principal Planner is often a team lead on planning projects, while the Senior Planner, Planner II, Planner I, and the Planning Technician staff offer additional support. Nassau County expects to hire up to five candidates in a combination of these positions. A sampling of their essential functions includes:

Principal Planner

- Provides direction and support to other departments, the development community, and the general public regarding development requirements and land use projects.
- Supervises, directs, coordinates, assigns, and implements department work plans and assignments.
- Oversees staffing support to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.
- Reviews, develops, and prepares updates to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code to ensure updates meet County goals and follow state and federal regulations.
- Oversees special annual projects and long-range planning activities.
- Coordinates and promotes the department's work with other County departments and local, regional, and state planning agencies and organizations.
- Conducts internal and external customer service, providing feedback on applications and resolving issues.
- Prepares Evaluation and Appraisal Reviews based on amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as mandated by state law.



Senior Planner

- Evaluates, analyzes, and implements the elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Conducts and/or manages planning studies to address relevant issues and standards and advises the Planning Director on recommendations regarding updating/revising regulations and on the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Recommends new and revised policies, codes, ordinances, and regulations.
- Reviews development plans, including plats, site engineering plans, landscape plans, and other development plans and tracks PUD, DRI, and other master-planned community entitlements.
- Receives and responds to inquiries regarding zoning issues; interprets and explains codes, ordinances, and regulations to engineers, architects, contractors, property/business owners, and other interested parties.
- Assists permit applicants and the general public in understanding the County's land development policies and procedures and determines/verifies zoning status as requested.
- Coordinates the activities of other employees and consulting firms as directed.

Planner II

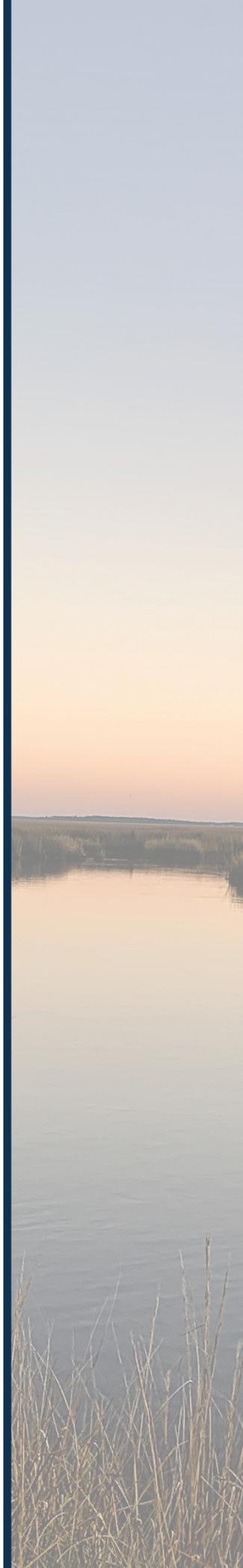
- Receives and responds to inquiries regarding planning and zoning issues and interprets and explains the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, and other applicable plans and codes to engineers, architects, contractors, property/business owners, and other interested parties.
- Assists permit applicants, determines/verifies zoning status as requested, and reviews permits where required.
- Performs general GIS data management and spatial analysis.
- Conducts field inspections of properties.

Planner I

- Reviews building permits site plans and subdivision plats for compliance with applicable codes and regulations.
- Updates County zoning atlas maps.
- Advises the Planning Director on updating/revising regulations and on the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Prepares draft ordinances and amendments to ordinances.
- Reviews Certificates of Occupancy for compliance with approved site plans.

Planning Technician

- Provides technical assistance and information to staff planners and the public in the administration of specific planning program areas or ordinances.
- Assists staff planners in public outreach initiatives and community engagement.
- Reviews building permits, zoning permits, special event permits, and other similar applications to assure compliance with local regulations.
- Prepares narrative staff reports and recommendations of limited complexity.



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The greatest challenge facing Nassau County is also the County's greatest opportunity: growth. Nassau is the 46th fastest-growing county in the country, and the Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research predicts it will be the sixth fastest-growing county in the State of Florida by 2035, with a projected population of over 148,000.

In addition, according to Lightcast's 2022 Talent Attraction Scorecard, Nassau County ranked #1 in the Nation for Net Migration and Talent Attraction for counties with a population of less than 100,000. Nassau County has worked diligently with local and regional partners as part of the Jacksonville Metro Area to position itself as an economic powerhouse of the future, and high-profile projects underway include Wildlight and its commerce park, Crawford Diamond Industrial Park, and two major medical facilities.

Leading the nation in talent attraction is a key indicator of the community's potential, and the Planning Department plays a critical role in improving Nassau's competitiveness on a national and global scale.

Other opportunities and challenges these positions will enjoy in the years ahead include:

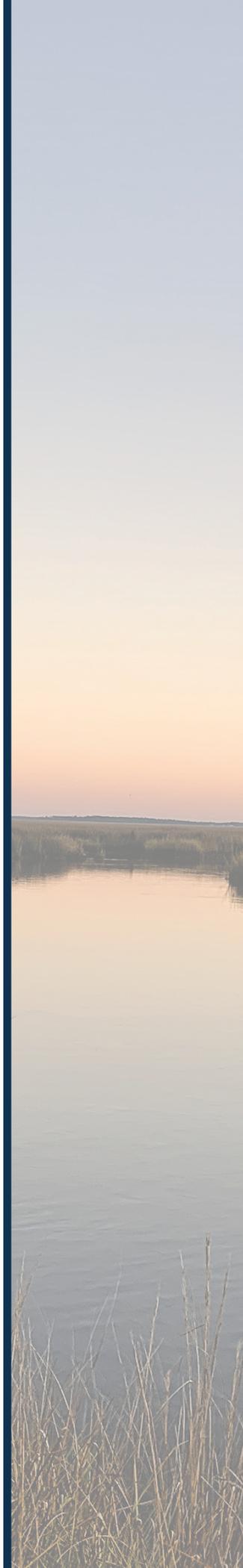
Culture of Excellence and Support of Planning: Over the past several years, Nassau County has been recognized in the Northeast Florida Region and across the State of Florida as a leader in public sector planning. Nassau County offers an energetic, high-capacity, proactive, forward-leaning urban planning professional the opportunity to engage in meaningful work. The culture of excellence is facilitated through strong support from the community, elected officials, and the County's executive management team.

Implementation of Award-Winning Plans: Since 2018, Nassau County has executed several forward-leaning planning initiatives. Incoming Planning Department staff will have the opportunity to help implement several award-winning master plans, including a 24,000-acre Florida Community Planning Act (2011) Sector Plan/Stewardship District, one of a half-dozen in the State of Florida. Plans and projects in their implementation phase include:

- Conservation Land Acquisition and Management (CLAM) Program
- Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Master Plan (PROSMP)
- Timber to Tides Initiative (SR200/A1A Corridor Master Plan)
- Countywide Mobility Plan
- American Beach Community Master Plan
- East Nassau Community Planning Area Sector Plan and Stewardship District
- William Burgess District Context and Connectivity Blueprint
- Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Project and Community Vision Plan
- The Prosper Nassau Initiative and the Nassau Prosperity Alliance
- Thomas Creek Drainage Basin Resiliency Initiative

New Planning Initiatives: While some planning professionals may shy away from the workload, the right team will be thrilled to know meaningful planning assignments have been identified beyond the day-to-day work. These initiatives will shape the community on a generational scale:

- As part of celebrating the County's bicentennial (December 1824-2024), execute a new countywide visioning exercise with a planning horizon of 2050.
- After adopting the Vision 2050 plan, rewrite/amend the County's Comprehensive Plan to reflect the 2050 planning horizon and update applicable regulatory documents.



IDEAL CANDIDATE

Nassau County is seeking up to five exceptional professionals to join its Planning Department. Candidates can look forward to working with a diverse community of stakeholders on various high-profile projects — and charting the future of one of the fastest-growing counties in the country through thoughtful codes, regulations, and master plans paired with a commitment to customer service.

While the specific responsibilities of the Planning Department staff vary, the departmental culture is one of creativity, adaptability, and innovation. The right professionals for these roles are hard workers with a passion for public service and forward-thinkers who appreciate the role of Planning in maintaining and enhancing the safety, quality of life, and environmental stewardship that Nassau County offers its residents.

Attention to detail and a thorough understanding of planning-related laws, ordinances, standards, regulations, and best practices will be valuable, as will a solid grounding in urban planning disciplines, including demographics, land use development, economics, economic development, zoning, and the codes and regulations overseeing permitting activities. Experience managing projects, leading community engagement efforts, and supporting elected and appointed leaders will be especially valuable.

The ideal candidates for these roles take a collaborative approach to their work, excel in organizing and prioritizing their work activities, and continually learn and apply new skills to enhance their performance and efficiency. They are also adept communicators and relationship builders who will work well with colleagues throughout the organization, area property owners and builders, planning professionals, and the public.

Ultimately, the County's future is shaped by the staff's collective efforts; these critical positions will help foster a collaborative, people-focused, and community-driven approach to governance that prioritizes quality of life, fiscal and economic resilience, and long-term sustainability.





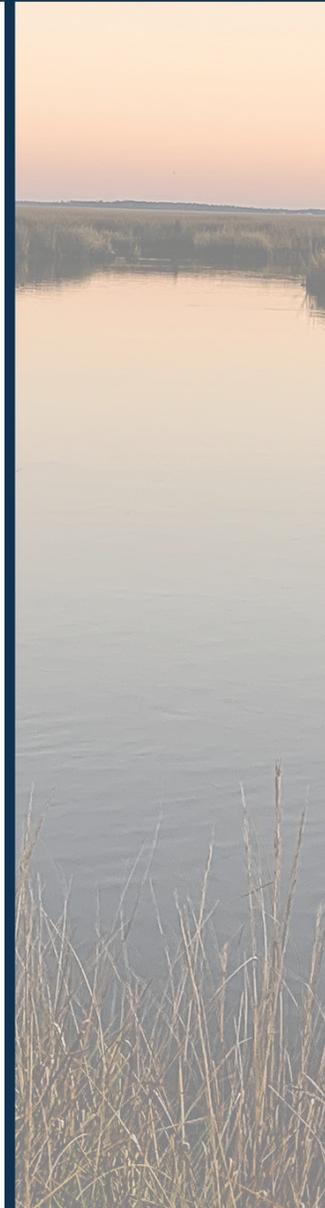
NASSAU COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

John F. Martin	Chairman	DISTRICT 1
A.M. Huppmann	Vice-Chairman	DISTRICT 2
Jeff Gray		DISTRICT 3
Alyson R. McCullough		DISTRICT 4
Klynn A. Farmer		DISTRICT 5

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

Requirements vary according to the position being pursued. American Institute of Certified Planners credentials would be valuable for any of these roles, and department leaders are willing to train the right candidates.

- **Principal Planner:** Master's degree in urban planning, landscape architecture, or a related field, and six years of experience in urban/municipal planning and design, OR an equivalent combination of training and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities. AICP certification will be required within 24 months of hire.
- **Senior Planner:** Master's degree in urban planning, geography, public administration, or a related field, and two years of experience in a professional planning position, OR a bachelor's degree in urban planning or a related field with three years of professional experience.
- **Planner II:** Master's degree in urban planning, geography, geographic information systems, public administration, or a related field and at least six months of experience in urban/municipal planning, OR a bachelor's degree in urban planning or a related field with at least one year of professional experience. Knowledge of ESRI's ArcGIS platforms must be acquired within a year of hire.
- **Planner I:** Bachelor's degree in Urban Planning, Geography, Public Administration, or a related field, supplemented by six months to one year of experience in urban/municipal planning, OR an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities. Must possess a valid State Driver's License.
- **Planning Technician:** Associate's degree in urban and regional planning, architecture, geography, construction management, social sciences, or a related field, supplemented by three to six months of relevant work experience and/or academic concentration, OR an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities. Must possess a valid State Driver's License.



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Nassau County is offering various salary ranges for the planning positions available, and titles and salaries will be dependent upon qualifications and experience:

- Principal Planner: \$68,801-\$104,689
- Senior Planner: \$62,547-\$95,172
- Planner II: \$56,860-\$86,520
- Planner I: \$51,691.48 - 78,655.06
- Planning Technician: \$22.59 - \$34.37/hr

The organization's comprehensive benefits package includes medical, dental, vision, basic life, and short- and long-term disability insurance plans with health benefits (employee only) paid at 100% by the County. The organization also offers a 60% subsidy for health care to cover family or dependents, and full-time employees enjoy 13 paid holidays and 180 hours of paid time off annually.

Nassau County participates in the Florida Retirement System, featuring a 3% employee contribution, and an optional 457 deferred compensation plan.

APPLICATION PROCESS

[Please apply online](#)

For more information on this position, contact:

David Tuan, Senior Vice President

DavidTuan@GovernmentResource.com

701-570-3519



Nassau County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for these positions will be subject to a comprehensive background check. The successful candidates must secure valid Florida driver's licenses within a reasonable period following appointment. Pursuant to the Florida Public Records Act, all applications are subject to public disclosure upon receipt of a public records request; however, public record requests regarding candidates are not expected for these positions during the recruitment process.

Nassau County is a drug-free workplace. Nassau County values the service veterans and their family members have given to our country, and the County supports the hiring of returning service members, military spouses, and their family members. As such, these positions are eligible for Veterans' Preference in accordance with applicable laws.

RESOURCES

Nassau County
nassaucountyfl.com

Nassau County Planning Department
nassaucountyfl.com/107/Planning-Department

Interim Strategic Plan
nassaucountyfl.com/1282/Strategic-Plan

Nassau County Economic Development Board
nassauflorida.com

**Amelia Island Tourist
Development Council**
ameliaislandtdc.com

**Nassau County
Chamber of Commerce**
islandchamber.com

