



Town Manager Recruitment Services

Recruitment Options for the Town of Oriental

Purpose

The Eastern Carolina Council (ECC) appreciates the opportunity to assist the Town of Oriental in the recruitment of its next Town Manager. Hiring a Town Manager is among the most significant responsibilities of the Board of Commissioners. The individual selected will lead the organization, implement the Board's policies, oversee municipal operations, manage public resources, and serve as the chief administrative officer for the Town.

ECC's goal is to provide a professional, transparent, and customized recruitment process that reflects the Board's priorities while attracting the highest quality candidates. To accomplish this, ECC offers two recruitment models for the Board's consideration.

Option 1 - Traditional Executive Search

Overview

The Traditional Search provides the Board of Commissioners with direct involvement throughout the recruitment process. ECC serves as the facilitator and recruitment consultant while the Board remains responsible for evaluating the candidate pool and determining who advances through the interview process.

Scope of Services

Phase 1 - Project Initiation

ECC will meet with the Board to develop the recruitment strategy by discussing:

- Desired education, certifications, and experience
- Leadership style and management philosophy
- Personal characteristics and organizational fit
- Community priorities and expectations
- Salary range and benefits
- Recruitment timeline and process

Estimated Meeting: 2–4 hours plus travel



Phase 2 - Recruitment

ECC prepares and distributes a professional recruitment brochure and vacancy announcement through* :

- International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
- North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM)
- North Carolina City & County Management Association (NCCCMA)
- South Carolina Municipal Association
- Virginia Municipal League
- Regional Council of Governments network
- Additional professional municipal recruitment outlets

() Cost of Advertising to be billed separately*

Recruitment remains open approximately **45 days**.

Phase 3 - Application Review

ECC can act as the intermediary. collecting applications or the Town can perform this function. The ECC as the intermediary enhances candidate confidentiality and reduces the opportunity of premature public disclosure. Qualified candidates may choose not to apply if they feel there is a risk of public disclosure before becoming a finalist, they do not want to unnecessarily place their current employment in jeopardy.

The ECC will screen candidates, comparing qualifications against the boards profile of preferred and minimum qualifications. The candidate pool will be stratified into four tiers:

Tier 1

- Possess the preferred qualifications of the Board's Profile
- Considered very capable of performing the responsibilities of the position

Tier 2

- Possesses the preferred qualifications of the Board's Profile
- Has one or more mitigating factors that are detractors:
 - Salary expectations
 - Recent resignation or termination
 - Limited municipal, coastal, NC experience
 - Geographic considerations



Tier 3

- Meets some of the minimum qualifications of the Board's Profile
- Not recommended for further consideration at this time

Tier 4

- Does not meet the minimum qualifications identified by the Board

Application review generally requires approximately **10 minutes per candidate**, plus preparation of candidate summaries.

Phase 4 - Preliminary Background Review

Prior to presenting candidates to the Board, ECC conducts preliminary due diligence on Tier 1 and Tier 2 candidates.

This review includes:

- Candidate disclosure questionnaire
- Salary expectations
- Residency requirements
- Initial follow-up interview
- Social media review
- Internet search
- Professional reputation review
- Development of a candidate portfolio

Estimated time:

Approximately 1.5 hours per candidate

Phase 5 - Board Candidate Review

ECC meets with the Board to review Tier 1 and Tier 2 candidates.

Discussion includes:

- Candidate strengths
- Leadership experience
- Organizational fit
- Career accomplishments
- Potential concerns
- Salary expectations
- Preliminary background findings



The Board then selects candidates for interviews.

Estimated meeting:

4–6 hours plus travel

Phase 6 - Comprehensive Background Investigation

Prior to interviews, ECC performs a comprehensive background review of selected candidates.

This includes:

- Criminal background check (third party firm~pass thru direct cost)
- Credit review (with candidate authorization)
- Employment verification
- Professional reference verification
- Education verification
- Social media review
- Candidate portfolio update
- Physical examination and drug screening coordination (if requested, maybe performed as a preemployment screening test; (third party medical firm~pass thru direct cost))

Estimated time:

Approximately 2.25 hours per candidate

Phase 7 - Board Interviews

ECC develops interview questions and evaluation forms.

ECC may also:

- Coordinate interview schedules
- Facilitate interview logistics
- Impartial Participate in interview (optional)
 - Moderate Board discussions
 - Assist with candidate evaluations
 - Assist with post interview communications between Board and Candidates

Estimated time:

Approximately 6-8 hours, plus travel



Phase 8 - Employment Negotiations (Optional)

Upon candidate selection, ECC may assist the Board with:

- Employment agreement preparation
- Salary negotiations
- Benefit discussions
- Contract revisions
- Transition planning
- Candidate acceptance and onboarding

Option 2 – Tiered Executive Search

Overview

The Tiered Executive Search is a more structured recruitment process that introduces multiple evaluation stages before candidates are presented to the Board. This approach has become increasingly common among local governments because it allows the Board to focus on a smaller group of highly qualified finalists while preserving applicant confidentiality.

Unlike the traditional process, candidates advance through a series of progressively more rigorous screening steps designed to evaluate qualifications, communication skills, leadership style, and organizational fit before Board interviews occur.

The Board retains full authority to select the Town Manager; ECC's role is to conduct a comprehensive executive search and recommend the strongest candidates.

Tier 1 - Recruitment and Application Review

ECC conducts an aggressive recruitment campaign and actively recruits qualified municipal professionals. ECC also prepares and distributes a professional recruitment brochure as well as vacancy announcement through^{*} :

- International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
- North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM)
- North Carolina City & County Management Association (NCCCMA)
- South Carolina Municipal Association
- Virginia Municipal League



- Regional Council of Governments network
- Additional professional municipal recruitment outlets

() Cost of Advertising to be billed separately*

Recruitment remains open approximately **45 days**.

Applications are evaluated based upon:

- Education
- Executive leadership experience
- Financial management
- Budget preparation
- Human resources
- Planning and development
- Community engagement
- Economic development
- Intergovernmental relations
- Organizational leadership
- Overall fit with the Board's desired profile

Tier 2 - Written Candidate Questionnaire

Candidates meeting the desired qualifications complete a structured questionnaire consisting of approximately 5–10 questions tailored to the Town of Oriental.

Topics may include:

- Leadership philosophy
- Budget management
- Personnel management
- Ethics
- Public engagement
- Economic development
- Managing Board relationships
- Handling difficult personnel or community issues
- Vision for local government leadership

This step provides insight into each candidate's communication style, problem-solving approach, and understanding of municipal management before interviews begin.



Tier 3 - Recruiter Interview

Selected candidates participate in a structured telephone or virtual interview conducted by ECC.

Interview topics include:

- Career history
- Leadership style
- Organizational accomplishments
- Reasons for seeking the position
- Salary expectations
- Availability
- Residency expectations
- Community fit

Candidates are evaluated using standardized criteria to ensure consistency.

Tier 4 - Background Investigations

Before finalists are presented to the Board, ECC conducts a rigorous background investigation that may include:

Preliminary Review – performed in advance of Board review of candidate pool

- Candidate disclosure statement
- Salary expectations
- Residency requirements
- Social media review
- Internet and professional reputation search
- Candidate portfolio development

Phase 5 - Board Candidate Review

ECC meets with the Board to review Tier 1 and Tier 2 candidates. Distributes candidate products to Board, such as questionnaire responses and interview results.

Discussion includes:

- Candidate strengths



- Leadership experience
- Organizational fit
- Career accomplishments
- Potential concerns
- Salary expectations
- Preliminary background findings

The Board then selects candidates for interviews.

Estimated meeting:

4–6 hours plus travel

Comprehensive Review

- Criminal background check (third party firm~pass thru direct cost)
- Credit review (with authorization)
- Employment verification
- Reference interviews
- Education verification
- Professional credential verification
- Physical examination and drug screening coordination (if requested; maybe performed as a preemployment screening test; (third party medical firm~pass thru direct cost)

Only candidates successfully completing this review advance to Board interviews.

Tier 6 - Board Interviews

Rather than reviewing the entire applicant pool, the Board interviews approximately three to five highly qualified finalists.

ECC provides:

- Candidate summaries
- Background reports
- Interview questions
- Evaluation forms
- Interview coordination
- Optional facilitation during interviews



Tier 7 - Final Selection and Negotiation

Following interviews, ECC may assist with:

- Employment agreement negotiations
- Salary discussions
- Contract preparation
- Transition planning
- Onboarding support

Services Included Under Either Option

Regardless of the recruitment model selected, ECC can provide:

- Development of a recruitment schedule
- Community and position profile
- Recruitment brochure
- National and regional advertising
- Active candidate recruitment
- Applicant communications
- Candidate screening and evaluation
- Interview scheduling
- Structured interview questions
- Candidate evaluation forms
- Reference and background investigations
- Employment agreement assistance
- Salary and benefit benchmarking
- Transition and onboarding support

Why ECC?

ECC understands eastern North Carolina communities.

Our organization has worked with municipalities throughout the region for decades and understands:

- Local government operations
- Council-Manager government
- North Carolina statutes



- Municipal finance
- Planning and development
- Personnel administration
- Economic development
- Regional partnerships

Because ECC is a regional organization, our goal is not simply to fill a position, we want to help ensure the Town hires a manager who will be successful for years to come. Utilizing our qualified professional, the town will be provided with excellent candidates.

Questions for Board Consideration

As you discuss these options, we encourage you to consider:

- How involved does the Board want to be during the screening process?
- Is attracting currently employed managers a priority?
- What level of confidentiality is important?
- How quickly would the Town like to complete the recruitment?
- Would the Board benefit from having ECC narrow the field before interviews?

The Eastern Carolina Council appreciates the opportunity to partner with the Town of Oriental during this important transition. Our objective is to provide a recruitment process that is professional, transparent, and tailored to your Board's preferences.

Whether you choose a traditional recruitment or a tiered executive search, the hiring decision always remains with the Town Council. Our role is to help you identify and evaluate the strongest candidates so that you can make an informed decision with confidence.

We look forward to answering any questions and discussing which approach best meets the Town's goals.

Traditional Search: \$6,800

Tiered Search: \$9,400

* Additional IN-PERSON Sessions, if requested by the Board for either Option, can be made at an additional cost per meeting.

* Printing, reproduction, delivery, mileage, and travel time are not included in the fees and will be added to each monthly invoice. Reimbursable costs are estimated as follows:

- Travel, Printing & Postage reimbursables – approximately \$1,250



- Additional In-Person Meeting(s) per session (beyond proposed) \$500
- Cost of Advertising to be billed directly

If additional time or tasks are warranted to complete the project, such services will be provided upon written authorization of the Town on an hourly rate basis in accordance with the prevailing rate schedule at time of service.

Qualified Professional:

Larry Faison Profile