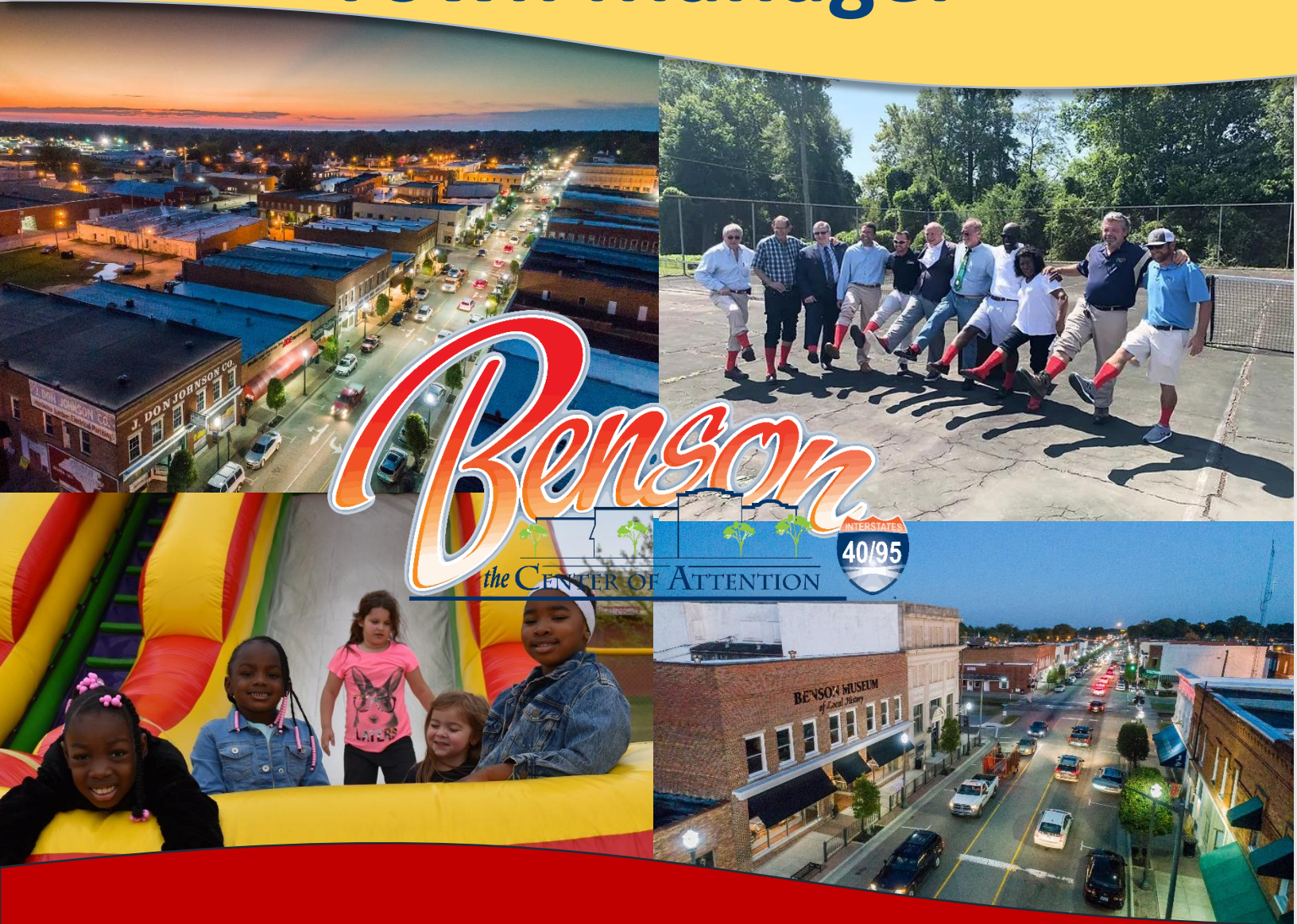


# Inviting Applications for Town Manager



## Town of Benson, NC



# About the Community



This is an exciting opportunity to provide leadership and management to a growing, agriculturally based community with an excellent quality of life. The Town of Benson has a population of 4100+ which is a 25% increase since the 2010 census. It is a community that values its small-town environment and family orientation. Located in Johnston County, this growing town is 22 miles south-southeast of Raleigh, situated at the intersection of I-95 and I-40, within a two-hour drive of the Atlantic Coast and three hours from the Blue Ridge Mountains.



Benson's family-centered way of life makes it a special place to live, work and raise a family. The mild four-season climate allows outdoor recreation to be a huge part of the lifestyle in Benson. The outstanding Parks and Recreation Department keeps the community alive with a full slate of team sports, senior programs, and passive recreation opportunities. Tennis and golf can be enjoyed year-round and the surrounding area has bountiful opportunities for fishing, hunting, boating, camping and hiking.



The citizens in Benson love a good get-together. Benson Mule Days, the largest event in Johnson County, began as a harvest festival to honor the surrounding farm community with its beast of burden, the Mule. Today an estimated 50,000 people attend the annual three-day celebration in September featuring: arts and crafts, barbecue, beauty queens, bluegrass, music, parades, rodeos and street dances.



There are several schools in Benson to meet the educational needs of its citizens including; Benson Elementary, Meadow Elementary, Benson Middle School and South Johnston High School.

# About the Government

The Town of Benson is governed under a Council-Manager form of government with the governing authority consisting of a mayor, three district commissioners and three at large commissioners. A Town Manager is hired by the Mayor and Commission to be responsible for the day-to-day operations of all service departments and for recommending policies and programs to the Commission for consideration and approval.

The Town employs 64 full-time and 48 part-time employees, as well as 37 volunteer Firefighters, who provide a full range of services including electricity, water, sewer, police, fire, parks and recreation, cultural arts, planning/zoning, code enforcement, and public works.

The approved Fiscal Year 2022 general fund budget is \$5.6 million, water and sewer fund \$3.9 million and electric utility fund \$5.4 million.

Although agriculture remains an important part of the local economy, Benson has experienced the recent economic diversification of eastern North Carolina particularly in manufacturing and biotechnology. Benson finds itself at the heart of this robust new economic activity due to its location at the crossroads of I-95 & I-40.

While Benson has been successful in recent years with its economic development efforts; elected leadership, the business community, and other stakeholders are seeking ways to better position the town to take advantage of new opportunities for growth that are coming to the region. Recently, the town has worked with North Carolina State University to develop and establish an economic development strategic plan to help address economic development concerns of the community.



# ABOUT THE POSITION

The Town Manager of the Town of Benson is responsible to the Mayor and Commission for the proper administration of all Town affairs assigned by the Charter. Duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Supervising and directing the work of all non-elected officers and employees of the town, including hiring, disciplining, and terminating employees when necessary.
- Reviewing all proposed contracts for services for the town. Ensuring that all Board of Commissioner ordinances are implemented.
- Attending all Commission meetings. Preparing agendas for Commission meetings. Identifying policy options and their impact on the town. Keeping Commissioners informed and updated about the status of current projects, activities and matters related to operation of the town.
- Overseeing the preparation of an annual budget for Commission review, deliberation, modification and approval. Implementation of all adopted budgets.
- Ensuring fiscal viability of Town through long range financial forecasting and planning, sound financial policies, investment portfolio management, and capital improvement programming.
- Seeking to identify new and innovative ways of delivering services. Reviewing existing operations to identify opportunities to improve efficiencies, eliminating unnecessary expenses, and reducing cost while maintaining and/or improving service delivery.
- Interfacing with other local, state and federal government officials. Identifying and recommending appropriate opportunities for joint ventures and cooperative efforts between these entities.
- Responding to and resolving citizen inquiries and complaints related to services provided and transparency of actions of the Town. Representing the Town at public activities and functions, as appropriate.

## Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university with a major in Public Administration, Business Administration, or related field; Master's degree preferred;
- Four years of progressively responsible management experience is required; prior experience as a city manager, assistant city manager or substantial department head experience is preferred. Local government experience in a similar-sized community would be a plus, as would experience managing economic development activities.
- ICMA Credentialed Manager certification is an indication of continued professional development and will be noted during the vetting process.



# THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate for the Benson Town Manager position will be a personable, openminded, progressive team player that embraces change while implementing local government best practices that have proven to be effective in communities similar to Benson. He/She must demonstrate the ability to work with the Mayor and Commission to articulate and implement a community supported vision that protects the rural values of the Town while promoting quality grow. The successful candidate must project confidence, demonstrate an appropriate energy level for the job, and engage citizens in a manner that builds trust and credibility for the Town government. The professional Town Manager Benson seeks should have knowledge, skills and experience to assist the Mayor and Commission in addressing issues as noted below:

- Benson's location at the intersection of I-95 & I-40 positions it for significant growth in the immediate future. Residential growth pressures are beginning to emerge and 400+ lots have been approved for residential construction. Requests for additional housing development is anticipated. Community planning will be an important focus of the new Manager so experience in land use issues will be noted in the selection process.
- Commercial and industrial growth potential is significant but must be promoted and managed in a manner that protects community values and provides quality job opportunities for Benson citizens. A candidate with economic development experience may have an advantage over other candidates for the Manager position.
- Benson has several infrastructure projects in various stages of planning and construction. A new wastewater facility is in the planning stage with approximately \$25 million secured for the project but additional funding is needed. Benson purchases its water from the county and surrounding municipalities. Anticipated population and industrial growth will require that these service agreements be reviewed to ensure they can support the new growth. Benson also has several street paving and traffic improvement projects currently under construction and anticipates more in the future. The ideal candidate should have project management skills to provide leadership to the infrastructure projects noted above, as well as future projected related to updating facilities for the Town's administrative functions (Town Hall), recreation services, and police department needs.
- The ideal candidate should be experienced in dealing with recruiting and retaining a quality workforce. The new Town Manager will be expected to evaluate the skillsets of current employees, provide opportunities for additional professional development, implement succession planning, and develop a working relationship with all employees which respects their abilities while holding them accountable. Special attention will need to be given to filling key electric utility and public works positions. The Manager will need to evaluate Benson's current pay structure and provide recommendations for future improvements to ensure Benson is competitive in its recruitment and retention efforts. The new Town Manger will be proactive in developing a workforce that values diversity and is reflective of the Benson community.
- The ideal candidate will be an active listener with strong communication skills that engage the business community, citizens of all backgrounds, staff, and outside stakeholders in a positive manner to build trust and transparency for the Town of Benson. A major communication skill of the successful candidate will be regular, concise, and informative communication with the Mayor and Commission focusing on creating trust, transparency and a positive working relationship.

# Compensation & Benefits

The expected starting salary range for the Town Manager, depending on the experience and qualifications of the selected individual, will be \$100,000 - \$120,000. In addition, the town provides an excellent benefit package including:

- Health, dental and vision insurance
- Life insurance, long-term disability, and accidental death and dismemberment
- Local Government Retirement System (part of State of NC retirement plan-one of the best funded pension plans in the nation) employee contribution 6%; employer contribution 12.%.
- 401K with automatic City 5% contribution
- Paid vacation, sick leave, holidays, and personal time
- Car allowance and relocation assistance negotiable

## HOW TO APPLY:

Interested candidates must submit by email a cover letter, resume, at least five job related references (with email and phone numbers), as well as salary history **no later than close of business on August 31, 2022 to [lisaward912@gmail.com](mailto:lisaward912@gmail.com)**. Any questions please call Lisa Ward, Senior Associate, Mercer Group Associates at 706-983-9326. Interviews are expected to be conducted in early October 2022.

***The Town of Benson is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Minority and Female Candidates are Encouraged to Apply.***



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