



**City of Kennesaw, GA**

Honoring Our Heritage - Forging Our Future



THE CITY OF KENNESAW, GEORGIA

*invites your interest in the position of*

**CITY MANAGER**

## *About the Kennesaw Community*

Positioned strategically along the vibrant Interstate 75 corridor in northern Cobb County, the City of Kennesaw, Georgia, seamlessly balances small-town authenticity with sophisticated suburban growth. Kennesaw offers a compelling quality of life rooted in historical heritage, forward-thinking urban planning, and well-planned civic infrastructure.

As part of the dynamic Greater Atlanta metro area, Kennesaw combines economic vitality and top-tier public amenities. Kennesaw families benefit directly from the renowned local Cobb County School District, consistently recognized among the premier public-school systems in the state and the nation. Students consistently rank #1 in the Metro Atlanta area on the SAT and ACT, outperforming state and national averages. Multiple district high schools rank within Georgia's top 20% by U.S. News & World Report, featuring exceptional graduation rates, robust Advanced Placement programs, and championship athletics. Kennesaw is also home to Kennesaw State University (KSU), Georgia's third-largest university. A revitalized downtown district is the city's social hub, featuring local dining, artisanal coffee shops, craft breweries, and local distilleries. Kennesaw's event calendar brings thousands together for landmark regional traditions, including the annual Pigs & Peaches BBQ Festival (attracting 60,000+ attendees), the Big Shanty Arts & Crafts Festival, the Kennesaw Concert Series at the United Bankshares Amphitheater, and the patriotic Salute to America celebration.

Kennesaw takes great pride in protecting and managing its historical and cultural resources for future generations. Attractions include the Smithsonian affiliated Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History and Smith-Gilbert Gardens. Recreational opportunities abound at Swift-Cantrell Park, a 42-acre flagship park featuring miles of paved trails, splashpad, dog parks, and a Street League-certified skate plaza, as well as at Depot Park, the center for downtown festivals and outdoor performances. Just outside the city limits is historic Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, offering almost 3,000 acres of preserved land, scenic vistas, and over 20 miles of premier hiking trails. Smith-Gilbert Gardens is the City's botanical garden, a 17-acre destination for conservation, education, horticulture, fine arts and historic preservation. The City maintains a resilient commercial landscape, from regional retail centers along the Barrett Parkway corridor to burgeoning small businesses downtown.

Moody's upgraded Kennesaw's issuer rating and general obligation unlimited tax (GOULT) rating to AA1 from AA2, reflecting the city's strong financial position and management practices. Supported by an exceptionally strong municipal tax base, robust infrastructure investments, and a business-friendly economic environment, Kennesaw is a premier destination where a transformative and visionary leader can step into the role of City Manager and have the opportunity of "placing his/her fingerprint" on the future of a great and evolving community.





## *About City Governance*

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The City of Kennesaw operates under the Council-Manager form of government. The governing body consists of a Mayor and five Council members who are elected at large to set policy, adopt ordinances, approve the annual budget, and establish the strategic vision for the city. The Mayor and Council appoints a professional City Manager to serve as the chief executive officer of the city. The City Manager oversees all daily operations, directs department heads, ensures fiscal responsibility, and implements policies approved by the Mayor and City Council. The City Manager oversees a general fund budget of \$35 million and provides leadership to 216 full-time employees through an array of service delivery departments.

## *About the Ideal Candidate and Community Expectations for Success*

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The ideal City Manager candidate for Kennesaw will be an ethical, approachable, and community-oriented leader with strong communication skills who values transparency, accountability, and strong public service. This individual needs to understand how to lead a growing community through the transition from traditional suburban development to a more complex, mature city characterized by redevelopment, mixed-use development, a downtown focus, increased density, infrastructure demands, and heightened expectations for municipal services. The ideal candidate should embrace innovative and practical solutions while respecting the traditions and character that make Kennesaw unique.

### **To be successful in this important leadership position, the new City Manager will be expected to:**

- Promote proven local government best practices tailored to the needs of a growing community and work collaboratively with elected officials, staff, business leaders, and residents to advance a shared vision for responsible growth and long-term sustainability.
- Demonstrate strong interpersonal and leadership skills, with the ability to build trust and maintain positive working relationships with the Mayor & Council, staff, citizens/stakeholders, other local government jurisdictions, and state officials.
- Project professionalism, demonstrate accessibility and responsiveness to citizen needs while balancing economic development and infrastructure demands with the fiscal stewardship required to sustain services now and in the future.

### **The new Manager's work focus will be expected to include the following:**

- Ensuring proven financial management strategies are in place that value long-range forecasting and fiscal policies that support a healthy fund balance while meeting service delivery needs. The budgeting process should be transparent to the citizens while helping the Mayor & Council understand the future consequences of today's fiscal decisions. Managing the financial impact of growth and development in ways that brings economic activity without overburdening current tax payers and can be appropriately supported by current or future planned infrastructure systems.
- Overseeing and executing Kennesaw's numerous capital improvement projects related to transportation, facility and infrastructure, downtown improvements, corridor revitalization (Sardis Street Extension), pedestrian safety and walkability projects, and stormwater improvements. Many of these projects rely substantially on SPLOST funding, others will need to have additional funding sources identified.
- Supporting an inclusive, high-performing organizational culture by building trust with employees, recognizing the expertise of existing staff, and clearly defining expectations for accountability and high performance. Emphasis will need to be placed on leadership development, succession planning, as well as recruiting and retaining a quality workforce.

## *Job Duties and Responsibilities*

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The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer and is responsible to the Council for the administration of all city affairs as required by the charter.

- Appoints department heads and is responsible for appointing, and removing other city employees.
- Manages activities of city departments by assigning priorities and objectives to department heads and professional staff; reviews/approves management reports regarding department and administrative activities.
- Oversees the preparation and administration of the annual budget; prepares and presents an annual balanced budget to the mayor and council.
- Oversees the preparation of the agenda and related documentation for meetings of the mayor and council.
- Provides leadership and direction in the development of short- and long-range plans; gathers, interprets, and prepares data for studies, financial reports, and recommendations for decision-making purposes.
- Oversees the implementation of policies as adopted by the mayor and council.
- Provides professional advice to the mayor and council; provides direction to department heads.
- Attends and represents the city at local, regional and state meetings regarding policies and issues that impact the city; serves as the city's representative on a variety of boards and authorities; represents the city to a variety of state government entities.



## *Minimum Qualifications*

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- Bachelor's Degree required in Public Administration, Political Science, Business Administration/Management, Urban Planning or related degree from an accredited university. A master's degree is preferred.
- A minimum of five (5) years of executive management experience in a local government as a city or county manager, deputy manager; or as an upper-level executive manager in an organization with similar complexity to the City of Kennesaw is expected.
- Evidence of continued professional development, such as the ICMA Credentialed Manager designation, is a positive indicator of dedication to the profession and will be noted during the candidate vetting process.
- Any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of this position.

## Compensation and Benefits

The expected starting salary range for the City Manager is **\$185,000 - \$215,000** depending on experience and qualifications. The City of Kennesaw offers a competitive benefits package including:

- Health Care Coverage with the choice of two Point of Service (POS) options and a High-Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) with a Health Savings Account (HSA); PPO dental and vision insurance with City contributions
- City-paid Basic Life and AD&D insurance, Short-Term Disability, and Long-Term Disability
- 457(b) Defined Contribution Plan with City contributions
- Vacation and Sick Leave, Paid Holidays, Annual Personal Days
- Car Allowance provided
- Relocation Expenses are negotiable



## HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates must submit by email a cover letter, resume, a list of at least five job related references (with name, email and phone numbers), as well as salary history **no later than November 20, 2026**, to [lisaward912@gmail.com](mailto:lisaward912@gmail.com)

Please direct any questions to **Lisa Ward, Senior Associate, Mercer Group Associates**, at [lisaward912@gmail.com](mailto:lisaward912@gmail.com) or 706-983-9326 or **Alan Reddish, Senior Associate, Mercer Group Associates**, at 706-614-4961.



*City of Kennesaw is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

