



DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

High Point, North Carolina

CITY OF
**high
point.**

EXECUTIVE
RECRUITMENT
PROVIDED BY



WHAT WE CREATE IN HIGH POINT CHANGES THE WORLD.

MISSION

The City will serve as the catalyst for bringing together the community's human, economic, and civic resources for the purpose of creating the single most livable, safe, and prosperous community in America.

VISION

Creating the single most livable, safe, and prosperous community in America.



THE COMMUNITY

A community that seamlessly blends rich history, cultural vibrancy, and economic opportunity, High Point is North Carolina's ninth-largest city and the only one positioned at the crossroads of four counties: Guilford, Davidson, Forsyth, and Randolph.

The city traces its name to its geography as the highest point on the North Carolina Railroad between Charlotte and Goldsboro, at its intersection with the Great Western Plank Road that ran from Fayetteville to Salem. Incorporated in 1859, it has evolved from a rural outpost to an international hub of commerce and culture, home to approximately 118,370 residents. Today, the city is an affordable and attractive option for families and professionals alike, with a median household income of \$63,930 and median home values around \$245,000.

Part of the larger Piedmont Triad metropolitan area, home to 1.6 million people, High Point offers an exceptional quality of life, enhanced by its mild climate and abundant recreational opportunities. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy Oak Hollow Lake, two public golf courses, including the nationally ranked Oak Hollow course, over a dozen tennis courts, and an ever-expanding network of hiking and biking trails. The recently upgraded City Lake Park features a state-of-the-art pool, splash pad, lazy river, and event spaces, further enriching the community's amenities — and for soccer fans, a world-class sports complex adds to the city's robust offerings.



Culture and entertainment flourish in High Point, with the High Point Theatre serving as a premier, year-round venue for performing arts featuring a 929-seat auditorium and three exhibition galleries. Residents and visitors alike also enjoy the Nido and Mariana Qubein Children's Museum, recently named Visitor Attraction of the Year by the NC Travel Industry Association, the High Point Museum and Historical Park, and the Rebecca R. Smothers Piedmont Environmental Center.

Held each Labor Day weekend on the shores of Oak Hollow Lake, the John Coltrane International Jazz and Blues Festival celebrates the legacy of High Point's native son and attracts top jazz talent from around the globe.

Jazz isn't the only thing High Point is known for, though. Its legacy as the "Home Furnishings Capital of the World" continues to thrive today, with the High Point Market — the largest international home furnishings trade show — each April and October and the "Interwoven" fabric market each May and November. Together, the markets attract more than 2,000 domestic and international manufacturers and 150,000 buyers from over 110 countries. A 2018 study found that the market generates a staggering \$6.73 billion in economic impact and supports over 42,000 jobs in the region. The community's home furnishings retailers also attract tens of thousands of shoppers year-round, bolstering the local economy and hospitality industry.

Beyond its home furnishings fame, High Point is home to industries like bus manufacturing, logistics, textiles, customer service, banking, photography, and pharmaceuticals. Major employers include Ralph Lauren Corporation, Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist, Guilford County Schools (High Point locations only), High Point University, Aetna, City of High Point, Thomas Built Buses/Daimler Trucks, Environmental Air Systems, Marsh Furniture, and Volvo Group North America.

Focused on maintaining High Point's appeal as a vibrant place to live, work, and play, the city's commitment to economic development is evident in its ongoing efforts to reduce blight, attract young professionals, and revitalize downtown through catalytic projects.

GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

High Point operates under a council-manager form of government, with a mayor and eight council members selected in nonpartisan elections to serve concurrent four-year terms. The mayor and two council members are elected at-large, while the other six are elected by the voters within their geographic wards. With elections held in odd-numbered years every four years, the next municipal election will be held in 2027. In addition to setting and directing policy, the City Council appoints the organization's City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk.

City Manager Tasha Logan Ford, who has served High Point since July 2021, oversees a professional team of 1,507 full-time and 268 part-time employees and an annual budget of about \$518.7 million, based in part on an ad valorem tax rate of \$0.6475 per \$100 in valuation.

The organization has been awarded the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for several years and enjoys strong general obligation bond ratings: AAA from Standard & Poor's, Aa1 from Moody's, and AA+ from Fitch.

In 2024, the City was once again selected to participate in the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative, the Bloomberg Center for Cities' flagship program at Harvard University. The program is a collaboration between Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard Business School, and Bloomberg Philanthropies to equip mayors and senior city officials to tackle complex challenges in their cities and improve the quality of life of their residents.

Significant projects recently completed and underway include an Enterprise Resource Planning system upgrade, a transition to Advanced Metering Infrastructure software, a new Senior Center, and a parking deck. Others include:

- RAISE Grant Urban Greenway and Complete Street project – The City was awarded a \$19.8 million federal grant to construct an urban greenway in the Southwest sector of town. With City funds, this is a \$29 million project.
- Small-Scale Manufacturing/Shared-Use Kitchen project – The City received a \$6 million federal grant to redevelop a 60,000-square-foot facility to include a small-scale manufacturing and shared-use commercial kitchen campus.
- Washington Street, Burton Avenue, and Triangle Lake reconstruction – In 2019, voters authorized a bond to upgrade these roads.



2024-2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Downtown Catalyst Project

- Complete Streets & Walkability
- Stadium renovations
- Parking
- Streamline business activation process
- Implementation of Raise Grant

World Arts & Design Capital

- Adopt a public arts policy
- Make Arts & Design a focus of our downtown aesthetic
- Enhance capacity to host Arts & Design events
- Explore Arts District
- Explore creation of an Arts & Design Museum

Manufacturing Corridor Plan

- Develop 300 Oak vision
- Revisit & align existing plans/strategies
- Phase 1 greenway design
- Benchmark industrial revitalization in other cities

Support Neighborhood Redevelopment Efforts

- Pick a neighborhood & develop implementation plan
- Involve Tree Initiative
- Dirt moving behind left field
- Zoning policies for mixed-use & density
- Follow EDC model/mindset
- Housing policies/receivership

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Planning and Development Department has a mission to shape a more livable High Point by facilitating and promoting a shared, comprehensive plan for the development of the community that advances a quality environment, both natural and built; by creating strategies that guide development in a manner that protects and enhances the community; and by administering services that implement the comprehensive plan and form a safe, sustainable and livable place.

The department includes 14 professionals and is working with a FY 2025 budget of approximately \$1.66 million.

ABOUT THE POSITION

The Director of Planning and Development is a key leadership position that provides oversight and direction to the Planning and Development Department and will help the Council shape the City's future.

This position oversees the division heads and staff carrying out departmental work programs; manages the departmental budget and expenditures; and identifies, develops, and collaborates on addressing City needs, trends, and critical issues while working closely with public officials and citizen groups.

The director is responsible for maintaining all current to long-range planning and zoning matters under the general direction of the Deputy City Manager and has three direct reports: the Planning Administrator, Development Administrator, and Administrative Coordinator. In addition to the City Council, the department supports the efforts of the Planning and Zoning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Historic Preservation Commission, Urban Forestry Commission, and Technical Review Committee.



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The next Director of Planning and Development will play a pivotal role in shaping the City's future by aligning development initiatives with community goals and preparing the department for long-term success. This position offers the chance to drive meaningful change, engage with diverse stakeholders, and lead a dynamic team in implementing forward-thinking policies and practices that will support sustainable growth and enhance quality of life. Key challenges and opportunities include:

- **Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Updates** — The director will oversee the City's implementation of the comprehensive plan, ensuring it reflects current priorities and future aspirations. Modernizing zoning rules and aligning them with the plan will be critical to facilitate balanced and innovative development.
- **Staff Development and Succession** — With anticipated retirements in the coming years, cross-training staff will be essential to maintaining continuity and expertise within the department. The new hire will need to focus on fostering a well-prepared, adaptable workforce.
- **Process Efficiency** — Streamlining departmental processes and practices to provide more timely and effective customer service is a priority. The selected candidate will lead efforts to identify bottlenecks and implement solutions that enhance responsiveness and efficiency.
- **Design Standards** — Updating design standards to align with the priorities of the 2045 Comprehensive Plan will ensure that new developments contribute to High Point's vision and character, enhancing the City's appeal and functionality.
- **Proactive Planning** — By updating small area master plans, the director will help the City anticipate and meet future needs, supporting the council's and community's goals for thoughtful development.



IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of High Point is seeking a strategic and visionary leader to serve as its next Director of Planning and Development. The right individual for this role will inspire and develop staff, transform the City's regulatory processes, and position High Point for sustainable growth over the next two decades.

A natural convener and collaborator, the ideal candidate understands the importance of fostering business and community relationships to create a thriving, livable city. With a strong ability to listen, balance diverse perspectives, and build consensus, they will guide the City in achieving a shared vision that embraces growth and redevelopment while protecting historic areas.

The new hire will bring a customer-service-oriented, solutions-minded approach to the role, ensuring that the department is both developer-friendly and aligned with the City's mission, values, and culture. Approachable, flexible, and politically astute, this leader will navigate complex issues professionally and foster a positive work environment emphasizing equity and inclusion. They will also build strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders, earning their respect and trust, and effectively engage with employees, elected officials, developers, businesses, and residents.

Recognizing the importance of team building and professional development, the next director will prioritize cross-training and mentorship within the department to prepare for anticipated retirements over the next several years. They will empower staff, foster creativity, and promote collaboration across City departments involved in planning and development, ensuring a cohesive and unified approach to addressing the community's needs.

Technically proficient, the selected candidate will possess a comprehensive knowledge of urban and regional planning principles, municipal finance, and subdivision design. They will also have general knowledge of civil engineering as it relates to planning and a thorough understanding of the latest developments in the field.

The next director will lead with integrity and a clear vision for the department's role in High Point's continued success. By fostering collaboration and embracing innovation, they will ensure that the City remains a vibrant and thriving community for decades to come.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Qualifications for this position include any combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with major work in planning or a related field, with a master's degree in planning, architecture, landscape architecture, public administration, or a related field preferred.

Candidates must have their certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners and 10 years of responsible professional experience, including management/supervisory experience and training. Experience working with historic districts, a university or other large institutions, and updating comprehensive plans and zoning codes is highly desirable, as is private sector experience in development and previous work streamlining processes and developing planning professionals.

The City prefers that the successful candidate establish residency within their first year of employment, and relocation assistance may be available. The new hire must also maintain a valid North Carolina driver's license throughout their tenure.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The starting salary for this position ranges from \$104,592-\$141,957, dependent on qualifications and experience. High Point also provides a generous benefits program, including health, vision, dental, and life insurance.

The City participates in the ORBIT – NC Retirement System with a mandatory 6% employee contribution, with an actuarially calculated city match. An optional State 401k and NC 457 plan (with employee contribution of 1% and City match of 3%) are also available.



APPLICATION PROCESS

[Please apply online](#)

For more information on this position, contact:

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The City of High Point is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

RESOURCES

City of High Point
highpointnc.gov/

Planning & Development Department
highpointnc.gov/149/Planning-Development

High Point Economic Development Corporation
highpointnc.gov/2330/Economic-Development

Business High Point Chamber of Commerce
bhpchamber.org/

Visit High Point
visithighpoint.com/

Promotional Video
youtube.com/watch?v=RVHTcwdS-Rk

High Point Social Media

