



# THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Invites Your Interest in the Position of

# CITY MANAGER







## Position Closing Date: October 5, 2025

The historic and eclectic City of Asheville, nestled in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains, seeks a seasoned and strategic municipal leader to serve as its next **City Manager**. The successful candidate is action-oriented, capable of making timely decisions, and driving progress. The **City Manager** must work collaboratively with a highly active and engaged Council to seek common ground among a range of viewpoints and varied priorities. Overseeing planning, effective project implementation, and evaluation to meet the City's strategic goals are critical skills that the next manager will employ.

With a strong background in local government, the next **City Manager** will bring experience in long-term strategic planning, including multi-year budgeting, capital improvement plans, and forecasting for future needs. The successful candidate demonstrates foresight and discipline, balancing immediate action with sustainable growth. Additionally, this leader is inclusive and culturally aware, valuing openness and appreciation for all communities, and committed to fostering engagement across diverse populations.

A critical responsibility for the next **City Manager** will be leading Asheville through its continued recovery from Hurricane Helene, which significantly impacted the area a year ago. Diversifying the economy to reflect a well-rounded fiscal status from different revenue streams will be an important goal. With the community still in recovery mode, the **City Manager** must ensure that federal and state recovery funds are managed responsibly and transparently, maximizing their impact. Prior to the storm, water outages highlighted long-standing vulnerabilities in the city's aging water infrastructure, which now needs substantial reinvestment and strategic long-term planning. On the heels of still navigating Hurricane Helene recovery, an affordable housing shortage and the need for an updated strategic plan, the next **City Manager** will have a unique opportunity to help redefine and reinvent Asheville's future, particularly in how essential services are delivered and infrastructure is modernized.

While every city is unique, Asheville stands out due to its progressive political climate, its role as a popular tourist destination, and the dynamic between long-term residents and newcomers. The community and Council hold high expectations for the next **City Manager**, who must skillfully manage these complexities primarily by building strong relationships with residents from all sectors of the community. The ideal candidate will bring experience navigating diverse perspectives, demonstrating political awareness and excellent communication skills.

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## About the Organization and Position:

The City of Asheville operates under a Council-Manager form of government, under which elected City Council members are the community leaders and policy makers who establish the [vision for Asheville](#). The Council comprises a Mayor, Vice Mayor, and five council members.

Reporting to the City Council, the **City Manager** will lead and coordinate the City's daily operations through effective delegation and oversight of department heads and staff, while also serving as a public face—engaging with media and residents with professionalism, composure, and transparency, even under intense public scrutiny. The **City Manager** is responsible for preparing and managing the budget, aligning resources with Council [priorities](#), and ensuring responsible use of diverse funding sources.

The **City Manager** oversees the budget, which for [FY 2025-2026](#) is \$256M—a \$5.20/million or 2.2% increase over the FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget—and leads a team of nearly 1,400 full-time employees across 19 departments with nine direct reports: including two Assistant City Managers, and Assistant to the Manager in addition to the departments of Police, Fire, Human Resources, Finance and Management Services, Human Relations, Anti-Discrimination, and Compliance, and Community and Regional Entertainment Facilities.

## Key Position Priorities:

- Develop a clear, strategic, and actionable five-year strategic plan to guide Asheville's recovery in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene and ensure responsible management of recovery funds. While City Council will shape the vision, the **City Manager** must lead the strategy, infrastructure, and management needed to implement it effectively.
- Employ a leadership style that fosters respectful and inclusive Council/Manager/Staff relationships while facilitating consensus-building among diverse viewpoints, ensuring transparent communications and supporting a Council committed to robust dialogue.
- Address the city's ongoing housing crisis, by developing equitable, affordable housing strategies that consider rising costs, which are outpacing wage growth, and the displacement of lower-income communities of color due to gentrification.
- Demonstrate strong financial management skills, with the ability to see the big picture and ensure the wise and strategic use of resources, balancing abundant and limited funding sources.



The next **City Manager** will have a unique opportunity to help redefine and reinvent Asheville's future, particularly in how essential services are delivered and infrastructure is modernized. One example is Phase 2 of the Rehabilitation and Upgrade Project at Mills River Water Treatment Plant, a \$23.2 million project that will include new and enhanced infrastructure to make the Mills River WTP more resilient. A ground-breaking ceremony (above) for Phase 2 of the project was held in May and has a build-out term of approximately three years.



## About the Community:

The City of Asheville serves as the county seat of Buncombe County and is the most populous city in Western North Carolina. Asheville's roots trace back to Cherokee territory and early European American settlement in 1785. Officially named in 1797 after Governor Samuel Ashe, the city experienced significant growth following the arrival of the railroad in 1880. Today, Asheville is known for its strong artistic identity, progressive culture, and innovative community. The city's most iconic attraction is the [Biltmore Estate](#), the largest private home in America, drawing over a million visitors annually. Downtown and the [River Arts District](#) are cultural hubs filled with artist studios, galleries, breweries, and live music venues like the nationally recognized Orange Peel. Asheville also boasts one of the highest numbers of breweries per capita in the U.S., contributing to its title as "Beer City USA."



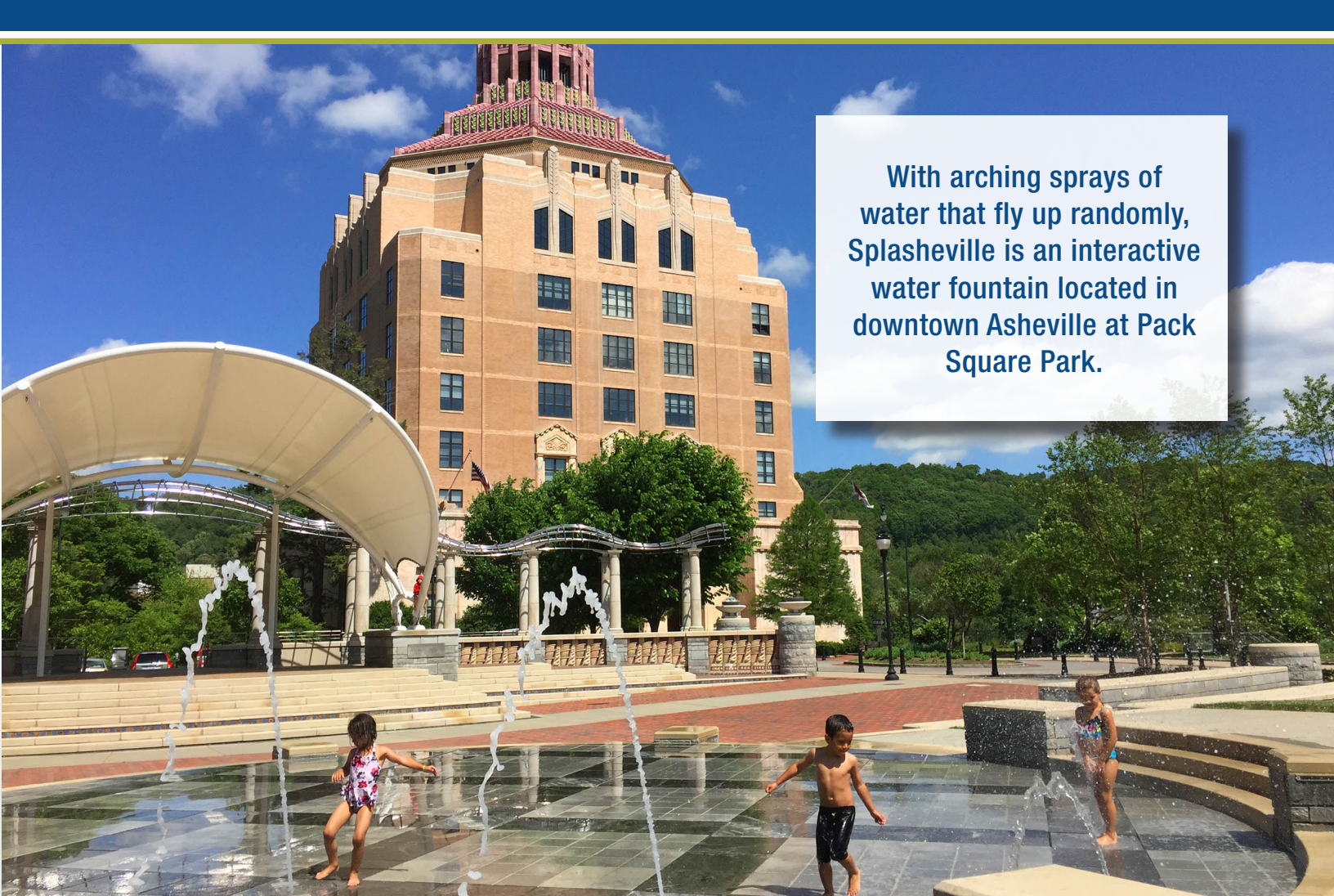
*For over 30 years, the River Arts District has been a premier destination for art lovers and collectors, where visitors can watch artists at work, engage in hands-on workshops, and purchase original artwork from the artists for their homes or workplaces. Below: Sunset over the Appalachian mountains from Caney Fork overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway, a popular drive for residents and visitors alike.*

Outdoor enthusiasts are drawn to nearby outdoor amenities, such as the [Blue Ridge Parkway](#), [Craggy Gardens](#), and [Mount Mitchell](#)—the highest peak east of the Mississippi. The City is a prime destination for hiking, biking, scenic drives, and fall foliage viewing, recently earning the title of the "most affordable fall foliage destination in the U.S." Beyond the outdoors, Asheville offers a dynamic culinary scene, from Appalachian-inspired fare to globally influenced cuisine. Wellness seekers enjoy spa experiences at places like the opulent [Omni Grove Park Inn](#), while families and visitors of all ages can find something to explore across Asheville's eclectic neighborhoods and green spaces.



***Asheville's spirit remains unbroken. The community continues to rebuild, supported by local and federal aid, and remains a testament to resilience and hope.***





With arching sprays of water that fly up randomly, Splasheville is an interactive water fountain located in downtown Asheville at Pack Square Park.

With a population of approximately 95,000 as of 2024, the City has a diverse and educated community. Over 93% of adults are high school graduates, and more than half hold a bachelor's degree or higher. Asheville is home to a dynamic mix of higher education institutions that reflect the City's creative and community-driven spirit. [UNC Asheville](#), a nationally recognized liberal arts university, offers strong academics with a focus on undergraduate research. [A-B Tech](#) provides hands-on, career-focused programs and transfer opportunities, while nearby [Western Carolina University](#) offers a variety of high-demand undergraduate and graduate degree programs, a focus on student learning and affordability through the [NC Promise](#) program, and a beautiful mountain campus environment.

Asheville is demonstrating remarkable resilience in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, which struck in September 2024. The storm brought unprecedented rainfall, with the French Broad and Swannanoa rivers surpassing historic flood levels, inundating areas like Biltmore Village and the River Arts District. The city experienced widespread power outages, infrastructure damage, and significant tree loss, leaving neighborhoods vulnerable to future climate shocks.

Despite these challenges, Asheville is steadily recovering. Some businesses are thriving with open shops, art galleries, and restaurants in [Downtown Asheville](#), which was largely undamaged by the flooding; however, other businesses are still struggling to recover. The Biltmore Estate reopened in November 2024, and the Blue Ridge Parkway remains mostly open and is a popular destination for visitors. Community efforts are evident, with over 300 volunteers participating in rebuilding initiatives, and local businesses like Highland Brewing Company contributing to recovery through fundraising efforts.

However, the road to full recovery is ongoing. The loss of over 800,000 acres of forested land has increased the region's vulnerability to floods, wildfires, and extreme heat. Nevertheless, Asheville's spirit remains unbroken. The community continues to rebuild, supported by local and federal aid, and remains a testament to resilience and hope.



## Minimum Qualifications:

- A minimum of a bachelor's degree in public administration or a related field is required.
- The successful candidate will have at least 10 years of increasingly responsible professional experience in municipal management, with at least five years as an assistant manager or manager, or as a department head from a larger community overseeing more than one area.
- A combination of education and experience sufficient to perform the essential duties of the position will be considered.
- Must have a proven track record in leading with a philosophy that ensures transparent public communication, effective intergovernmental relations, personal community engagement, cohesive and collaborative change, visionary leadership, and adeptness at leading and implementing strategic planning to meet community goals.

## Preferred Qualifications:

- A master's degree or higher is strongly preferred.
- Membership and/or professional certification from ICMA, NCCMA, and completion of the Municipal/County Administration Course from the School of Government, UNC Chapel Hill, or other leading professional bodies is desired.
- Evidence of significant economic development success, affordable housing growth, and experience working directly and effectively with a police department.



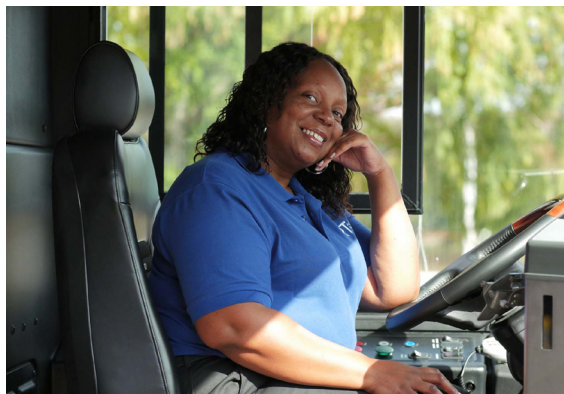
*Above: In October 2024, around a thousand people gathered at Pack Square to collectively mourn the profound loss Hurricane Helene brought to western North Carolina the previous month. They held candles and each other as elected officials and community members played music, read lines of poetry and scripture, and shared words of comfort.*

*Left: Officer Kora, a certified therapy dog with the Asheville Police Department, won the National 2024 First Responder Paws Therapy Dog Award for her pivotal role in supporting the Asheville community and first responders during relief and recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. "Kora is more than a therapy dog; she represents hope, compassion, and resilience for our community," said Officer Debbie LeCroy, Kora's handler.*



## The Successful Candidate:

- Builds and maintains strong, respectful relationships with elected officials, community leaders, and residents, using transparent, concise communication to manage expectations and enhance civic trust.
- Fosters open, inclusive communication with residents by actively listening, considering diverse perspectives, and managing expectations through frequent, transparent, and effective messaging—including during times of crisis—in a community known for high civic engagement and strong public voices.
- Ensures Asheville's core values—its connection to nature, its creative identity, and its cultural diversity—are reflected in decision-making and city priorities.
- Exhibits political acumen by making informed recommendations that reflect a deep understanding of community needs, perceptions, and the local political landscape.
- Skilled in maintaining and developing county and state-level relationships and public advocacy, while taking the lead on city operations, including managing services, budgets, and major projects.
- Actively engages with the community by attending neighborhood block parties, festivals, and public meetings—demonstrating a visible presence beyond City Hall and staying connected to residents to ensure the City is on the right track.
- Communicates openly and honestly with the council and community about what is and isn't possible, supports Council in delivering difficult truths, and maintains professionalism and empathy when navigating a charged public environment marked by frustration, activism, and occasional hostility.



The successful candidate recognizes the toll that recovery has taken on staff and works to rebuild morale by fostering a supportive, energized, and resilient workplace culture, seeking ways to attract and retain outstanding team members.



## Salary and Benefits:

The hiring range for this position is \$230,000-\$272,000. The starting salary is based on experience and qualifications. The City of Asheville offers a competitive benefits package, which can be [viewed on its website](#).

**To apply**, please visit <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/developmentalassociates>, and click on the **City Manager – City of Asheville, NC, title**.

- All applications must be submitted online via the Developmental Associates application portal (link above) – NOT the City’s employment application portal or any other external website.
- Resumes and cover letters must be uploaded with the application.
- Applicants should apply by **October 5, 2025**.
- The hiring team will invite successful semi-finalists to participate in virtual skill evaluations on **November 6-7, 2025**.
- Finalist interviews in Asheville will occur on November 13 and 14.
- Candidates are encouraged to reserve these dates should they be invited to participate.
- Direct *inquiries* to [hiring@developmentalassociates.com](mailto:hiring@developmentalassociates.com)

The City of Asheville, NC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



*Catabwa Falls near Asheville*



Developmental Associates, LLC manages the recruitment and selection process for this position. To learn more about our selection process, visit <https://developmentalassociates.com/client-openings/>, select “Client Openings,” and scroll down to “Important Information for Applicants.”