



# The Town of Wendell



Is seeking a  
**Human Resources Director**





The Town of Wendell, located in the rapidly growing eastern corridor of Wake County, is experiencing unprecedented growth and organizational change. With a population increase from 9,793 in 2020 to an estimated 16,845 in 2024, Wendell is transforming into a dynamic, fast-paced community. In response to this rapid growth, the Town is establishing a full-service Human Resources Department to support the evolving needs of the organization. Historically, HR functions were managed as an administrative role within the Town Manager's Office.

To lead the full-service Department and meet the Town's evolving needs, the Town has created a new **Human Resources Director** (HR Director) position, which will be vital in designing and implementing a modern, strategic HR function for the Town. The successful candidate will collaborate with the Town Manager on the ongoing rollout of the *Dare to Lead* organizational culture initiative, modernize HR systems and policies, and serve as a trusted partner to departments across the organization.

## The Community:

The Town of Wendell is located in the rapidly urbanizing eastern side of Wake County, approximately 20 miles from Raleigh, the dynamic capital city of North Carolina. The Town started in the 1850s when tobacco farmers in Granville County were hit with what came to be known as the Granville County Wilt. The tobacco crop failed, and farmers from Granville County moved into eastern Wake County, looking for fertile land to plant their crops. The town got its name from a local teacher who wanted to name it after his favorite poet, Oliver Wendell Holmes. The town's rich history is evidenced through its five listings on the National Register of Historic Places: The Dr. Thomas H. Avera House, Harmony Plantation, Riley Hill School, Sunnyside, The Hood-Anderson Farm, and the Wendell Commercial Historic District.

Wendell's culture, best reflected in its motto "Small Town, Big Charm," is attracting more and more residents. Once considered a sleepy town, Wendell is now one of the fastest-growing communities in the state. The Town has grown from less than 7,000 people in 2015 to its current estimated population of 20,000. Ten-year growth projections predict a population of over 50,000 by 2035.

The town's events, often described by the Town Manager as looking like a Norman Rockwell painting, reflect the charm and warmth of a close-knit community. Local events include the Wendell Harvest Festival, International Food and Music Festival, Wendell Wonderland, and July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks. The new [Wendell Museum](#) provides a glimpse into the town's fascinating history. Wendell's historic Main Street pays homage to its history. From the local barber shop – an iconic stop in town – to many retailers, shops, unique eateries, and free Wi-Fi provided by the town, Wendell's small-town charm is refreshing and inviting. The Town enjoys a low crime rate and an exceptional quality of life and has the unique advantage of being just 15 minutes from both downtown Raleigh and lush open spaces, such as [Robertson Millpond Preserve](#), [Sandy Pines Preserve](#), and [Turnipseed Nature Preserve](#), a 265-acre preserve offering hiking trails, scenic views, access to unique boulders and granite rock outcrops and open play areas. The Town also offers a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities in the form of parks, athletic fields, tennis and pickleball courts, and basketball courts.

As the Town of Wendell continues to grow, partnerships with key institutions like WakeMed Emergency and UNC Physicians are expanding, with both organizations establishing a stronger presence in the town. The relationship with the Wake County Public School System also remains vital in meeting the educational needs of the Town's growing population.

Wake County and its communities have received national and international rankings and accolades from publications such as *Money*, *Fortune*, and *Time* magazines.



as one of the best places to live and work. Its world-class healthcare, higher education, public school system (the largest in the state), and variety of entertainment provide ample opportunities for Wendell's residents. Four counties border Wendell, thus presenting easy access to many points of interest, including Raleigh-Durham International Airport and Research Triangle Park. The town is approximately 3 hours from the mountains of North Carolina and 2 hours from Atlantic Coast beaches.

### About the Organization:

The Town of Wendell operates under a Council/Manager form of government with a six-member Board of Commissioners. Wendell's citizen-friendly reputation, coupled with its vision of a clean, safe, vibrant, and full-service town with a diverse population, is assured by the quality of the town's facilities and professional staff who work efficiently to provide excellent customer service. The Town's [2025-2026 budget](#) of \$27,439,645 is directly guided by its [Strategic Plan](#), which is designed to shape budget priorities over a two-year cycle. The Plan organizes initiatives into two categories: Management in Progress—staff-led, ongoing work—and Strategic Initiatives—Board-prioritized actions intended to be advanced through the budget. While all initiatives hold value, the prioritization of Strategic Initiatives provides clear policy direction for allocating limited resources.

At the core of the Strategic Plan are the Town's five [policy goal areas](#), which are intentionally broad to address the most pressing community needs. These goals form the framework for developing specific action items, which are reviewed and prioritized annually. This process ensures that both financial and staffing resources are aligned with the Town's long-term vision and most critical priorities. The five goals are:

1. Downtown Vibrancy, Economic Growth, and Community Character - Promote economic vitality through the development of a vibrant Downtown, economic growth, and unique community character.
2. Public Safety and Neighborhood Improvement - Provide for a safe and secure community that nurtures livable and well-maintained neighborhoods that are family friendly.
3. Infrastructure, Transportation, and the Environment - Develop and maintain infrastructure and policies to support new growth, improve the quality of life for residents, and provide for a clean and green environment.
4. Parks, Recreation, Special Events, and Culture - Establish facilities, events, and programs that connect the community, promote healthy lifestyle opportunities, and culturally engage citizens and visitors.
5. Organization Culture and Communication - Build a professional and inclusive Town organization that is fiscally responsible, seeks innovative practices, and values the development of staff.

Learn more about the Town of Wendell [here](#).

### About the Department and Position:

The Town of Wendell's newly established full-service Human Resources Department is committed to attracting, recruiting, and retaining a diverse and talented workforce that supports the effective delivery of services to the community. The Department strives to provide a stable, inclusive work environment that fosters professional growth, equal opportunity, and continuous learning for all employees.

Reporting to an Assistant Town Manager, the **Human Resources Director** (HR Director) will oversee and manage the Human Resources Department's budget of \$1,383,790. With the assistance of one direct report, the **HR Director** will serve as the architect of the Human Resources Department, responsible for designing,







building, and implementing modern HR programs and practices. From onboarding and orientation to recruitment, compliance, and training, the **HR Director** will be responsible for building more effective and consistent systems. While tools like NeoGOV have been introduced, they are still in early use and require further implementation and staff training. In addition, the Town's Personnel Policy is currently being updated, and the Director will lead this effort to completion—developing a clear, strategic plan to ensure alignment with legal requirements and industry best practices.

Additionally, the new **HR Director** will oversee the merger and personnel integration of the private Wendell Fire Department into the Town's organization, ensuring a smooth transition of approximately 40 firefighters—roughly 40% of the Town's workforce—while putting in place HR tools and practices that can grow with the Town as it expands.

**Key Position Priorities:**

- Lead and standardize the development of policies, systems, and processes including drug screening, hiring, onboarding and policy enforcement to ensure compliance with federal and state guidelines.
- **Foster collaboration across departments** to strengthen personnel management and promote a cohesive, high-performing workplace culture.
- Ensure HR practices align with organizational goals and reflect best practices in talent management, compliance, and organizational development.
- Act as a strategic partner to leadership, providing insight and guidance on workforce planning, employee relations, and organizational effectiveness.
- Work with leadership and Employee Appreciation Committee to align organizational culture across departments and establish measurable outcomes of success.

**Qualifications:**

The ideal candidate will have 3–5 years of experience in a similar human resources leadership role, preferably in a slightly larger community. A master's degree is preferred, though a combination of relevant education and experience will also be considered. Professional HR certifications such as SHRM-CP, SHRM-SCP, PHR, or SPHR are strongly preferred and will demonstrate a commitment to best practices in the field. Experience in HR software and systems (e.g., HRIS, payroll software) to manage employee data, track evaluations, and benefits administration is also preferred.





## The Successful Candidate is:

- knowledgeable in HR best practices and trends, with significant experience in the areas of recruitment and retention, succession planning, benefits, classification, and compensation, employee training and development, diversity initiatives, and performance management;
- proactive in addressing employee burnout and fostering a workplace culture that supports well-being, engagement, and retention;
- able to revamp onboarding and orientation to ensure new employees are informed, confident, and well-integrated into the organization;
- committed to internal growth and advancement, helping employees see clear career pathways within the organization;
- adaptable and insightful, recognizing generational differences in the workforce and adjusting strategies to meet diverse needs;
- willing to invest time in learning the organization, building relationships across departments, and developing a strategic plan rooted in real organizational needs;
- an active listener and collaborator who creates a shared vision by gathering input from staff, leadership, and stakeholders;
- skilled at balancing organizational and employee interests, building trust and improving relationships to avoid an "us vs. them" culture;
- a strong and effective communicator who keeps department leaders informed, provides guidance on policy interpretation, and ensures decisions are well-documented and legally sound;
- committed to strengthening Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives by implementing fair and inclusive hiring and promotion practices, moving beyond legacy habits of "hiring who we know," and aligning HR strategies with Wendell's changing community demographics; and,
- a leader who demonstrates strong ethical judgment, resilience, and the ability to influence others—leading with integrity even under pressure, while building stakeholder relationships across employees, elected officials, and leadership.

## Salary and Benefits:

The salary range for the **Human Resources Director** is \$115,040-\$178,313, with a midpoint of \$146,677. The starting salary is based on the individual's demonstrated knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and education. The Town of Wendell provides an [excellent benefits package](#), including retirement, town-paid insurance including dental and vision, vacation and sick time, holiday leave (12 days per year), participation in the local government retirement system, and contribution to employee 401-K plans.

### Please note the following:

- All applications must be submitted online via the Developmental Associates application portal (link above) – NOT the town's employment application portal or any other external website.
- Resumes and cover letters must be uploaded with the application.
- Applicants should apply **by October 15, 2025**.
- The hiring team will invite successful semi-finalists to participate in virtual interviews and skill evaluations **on November 13-14, 2025**. Candidates are encouraged to reserve these dates for virtual meetings should they be invited to participate.
- Direct inquiries to [hiring@developmentalassociates.com](mailto:hiring@developmentalassociates.com).

The Town of Wendell is an Equal Opportunity Employer. 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."

