



TOWN OF
ORIENTAL
North Carolina

**The Board of Commissioners invites your interest
in the position of**

TOWN MANAGER

The picturesque waterfront Town of Oriental, North Carolina, is seeking a strategic, multitalented, and ethical leader to serve as its next Town Manager.

This is an opportunity to lead a small municipal organization where the Town Manager has a broad, hands-on role in the community. The successful candidate will work closely with elected officials, employees, residents, businesses, and community organizations to manage day-to-day operations while planning for Oriental's future.

The next Town Manager will succeed Diane Miller, who is retiring at the end of 2026 after twelve years of service. During her tenure, the Town has undertaken strategic initiatives, developed a highly capable staff, and built a substantial fund balance to provide financial flexibility and support contingencies such as hurricane response and recovery.



About the Organization

The Town operates under a Council-Manager form of government. Although this is an election year for the Town of Oriental, Commissioners are unopposed; there is one incumbent that decided not to run for reelection, which has allowed a past Boardmember to be placed on the ballot, unopposed, suggesting the Board that will be sworn into office in December will offer continuity of purpose.

The Town's 2026–27 operating budget is \$2,178,958, including a General Fund of \$1,743,898 and a Water Fund of \$435,060. The Town retained approximately 72% of its FY2026 operating budget as fund balance.

The Town Manager oversees a small municipal organization with responsibilities that extend across administration, finance, public works and water, planning and zoning, regulations, public safety, and service to residents. The Town maintains approximately 10 miles of Town streets and operates and maintains its own municipal water plant. Sewer service is provided by Bay River Metropolitan Sewer District; the Town does not operate the sewer system.

Because of the Town's size, the position requires a leader who is comfortable moving between strategic issues and the practical details of municipal operations.



A crowd packed town hall to witness the transition to the incoming Town Board.

Town staff includes a Finance Director; two additional administrative assistants in Town Hall; a Public Works Director and three additional Public Works employees; and a Police Department consisting of a Police Chief and one police officer.

Oriental also benefits from an active network of citizen volunteers. Advisory committees include the Harbors and Waterfront Advisory Committee, Tree Board, Tourism and Economic Development Board, and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The Town also relies on a Planning Board and Board of Adjustment in carrying out its planning, development, and regulatory responsibilities.

About the Community & Region

Oriental is a quiet waterfront town of fewer than 1,000 residents situated on the Lower Neuse River Estuary. Incorporated in 1899, the community has experienced periods of economic change as industries have evolved. Its name comes from the SS Oriental, a Civil War-era transport steamship that wrecked off Cape Hatteras in 1862.

Logging, sawmills, small-scale farming, packaging, and commercial fishing were important to Oriental's earlier economy. Today, recreational sailing, kayaking, fishing, tourism, and related services are prominent. The Town has a working waterfront as well as a strong recreational and tourism economy, Oriental is the sailing capital of North Carolina, hosting monthly Regattas throughout the year.



Although the permanent population is just under 1,000, the community's population and activity increase during holidays, special events, and weekends. The Town has an exceptional quality of life and a distinct coastal identity that extends well beyond its historic core, making it an ideal location for families seeking an authentic community

connection. The town's rich maritime culture is anchored by an active annual calendar that fosters deep civic engagement and a welcoming local atmosphere. An active annual calendar includes the Croaker Festival (July) honoring the region's proud commercial fishing heritage, the Ol' Front Porch Music Festival (October), a unique cultural event where historic residential front porches transform into intimate acoustic stages showcasing premier roots, bluegrass, and Americana musicians. And the Spirit of Christmas (December), that highlights the supportive, collaborative nature of the local business and residential community.

Environmental resilience is an important part of the community's future. The Town has experienced major storms and is pursuing resiliency projects and educational resources to help mitigate future environmental impacts.



Oriental is approximately 25 miles from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, 30 miles from New Bern and the Croatan National Forest, 65 miles from Greenville and East Carolina University, and approximately 160 miles from Raleigh–Durham International Airport.

Challenges & Opportunities

The next Town Manager will have an opportunity to help Oriental address important infrastructure, financial, community, and economic priorities while preserving the character that makes the Town distinctive.

Key Priorities –

- ✓ Transparent, collaborative communication and meaningful community engagement.
- ✓ Infrastructure planning, maintenance, and long-term capital needs.
- ✓ Community and economic development that respects Oriental's character.
- ✓ Emergency preparedness and resilience.
- ✓ Parks and recreation planning and opportunities for an active lifestyle.
- ✓ Responsive public services and effective stewardship of Town resources.

Infrastructure & Current Initiatives

The Town is experiencing the infrastructure challenges common to an established coastal community. Road maintenance is increasingly constrained by the limitations of Powell Bill funding, and the Town is considering improvements to pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.

Stormwater management remains a continuing concern. The Town has worked with the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments and the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) process on stormwater information and ordinances.

A Parks and Recreation Master Plan is funded and is intended to provide a basis for a PARTF grant application. The Town also continues to seek funding for repair or replacement of Hodges Street.

The Bay River Metropolitan Sewer District is responsible for sewer services in Oriental. Most properties are connected to the system, and remaining septic systems are expected to connect as they fail.

The Town's municipal water system is currently undergoing a 5.4-million-dollar renovation that includes the replacement of 47 water valves, the addition of a booster pump station to improve pressure and modernization of the water treatment plant.

Water system work underway this morning – photo taken on Broad St:



The Opportunity

The Town is seeking an authentic municipal leader who blends strong technical and financial acumen with exceptional interpersonal intelligence. The Town Manager will need to work effectively with elected officials, employees, residents, businesses, volunteers, and community groups; communicate clearly; handle disagreement professionally; and make difficult decisions while maintaining constructive working relationships.

Because the organization is small, the position calls for a manager who is willing to be engaged in the details of municipal operations as well as long-term planning. The successful candidate will be expected to provide direction, accountability, and stability while building trust throughout the organization and community.

Ideal Candidate

The Town is looking for a practical, capable, and approachable local-government professional who can:

- Lead a small municipal organization with a hands-on, service-oriented approach.
- Build effective working relationships with elected officials, employees, residents, and community stakeholders.
- Communicate directly and respectfully, including when addressing disagreement or difficult issues.
- Manage budgets, grants, infrastructure projects, and municipal operations with sound financial judgment.
- Understand planning, zoning, development, and the opportunities and challenges facing a coastal community.
- Prepare for emergencies and coordinate response and recovery efforts.
- Preserve Oriental's distinctive character while supporting thoughtful, sustainable growth.
- Identify opportunities, establish priorities, and turn plans into results.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in coastal or urban planning, political science, business, or a related field
- 3 years or more experience in planning
- 5 years or more experience in municipal or county government or closely related field

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree in public administration, coastal or urban planning, emergency management, business, or a related field
- 3 years or more experience in economic or community development
- 2 years or more experience as an administrator or department head
- 2 years or more experience with municipal budgets, grantsmanship, and emergency management ~ FEMA: Public Assistance



Compensation and Benefits

Hiring Range: \$90,000–\$125,000, depending on qualifications and experience. The Board prefers that the next Town Manager reside within the Town's corporate limits. Recognizing the limited housing stock, the Board is willing to negotiate residence within a reasonable commuting distance of Town Hall, generally no more than 15 minutes. Residence within the agreed area is expected within twelve months of employment.

Benefits: employer-paid group health, dental, vision, and life insurance; the North Carolina statutory retirement contribution; and an available 401(k) plan for employee participation. Reasonable relocation and moving assistance, as well as a car and phone allowance, may be negotiable.

To Apply

For consideration, submit a completed PD-107 NC State Application, Resume, Cover Letter, five professional references having knowledge of your work to: *Larry Faison, Local Government Consultant, Eastern Carolina Council*, EMAIL: Lfaison@eccog.org.

The position is open until filled; The Board of Commissioners anticipates beginning its first review of candidate qualifications during the week of **November 16th, 2026**.



Direct inquiries to Larry Faison, Local Government Consultant, Eastern Carolina Council, lfaison@eccog.org. The Town of Oriental is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Eastern Carolina Council manages the recruitment and selection process for this position.

