

# COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR





**Roanoke County** is seeking an experienced professional to serve as County Administrator, the chief administrative officer responsible for directing programs and operations of the County government. The new Administrator will succeed the incumbent manager who is retiring February 1st, 2022.

This recruitment profile provides background information on the community, its government operations, and its aspirations. It also outlines the qualifications, experience and characteristics determined to be necessary and desirable for successful performance as County Administrator.

Qualified candidates are encouraged to submit a cover letter and resume, with salary expectations and professional references, to The Berkley Group via email at [kimball.payne@bglc.net](mailto:kimball.payne@bglc.net). While the position is open until filled, the formal review of applicants will begin **October 22, 2021**. Inquiries relating to the County Administrator position may be directed to:

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## COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The County of Roanoke is the suburban hub of the Roanoke Valley, one of the nation's best locations for business and living. Within its 252 square mile geographical boundaries lie the independent cities of Roanoke and Salem, as well as the Town of Vinton. The Roanoke MSA, which also includes Botetourt, Franklin, and Craig counties, with a population of nearly 325,000, is the fourth largest MSA in Virginia and the largest west of Richmond.

## LOCATION

Located in the midst of the Blue Ridge and Alleghany Mountains, Roanoke County is strategically accessible to both the East Coast and Mid-West markets with an integrated interstate highway, rail, and air transportation network. Interstate 81 passes through the county, Interstate 64 is directly north, and Interstate 77 is nearby to the south. CSX and Norfolk Southern provide freight rail service across the nation. Three major airlines serve the Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport providing nonstop service to eight major cities. The County is 189 miles west of the state capital of Richmond, 234 miles southwest of Washington, D.C., and 240 miles west of the ports of Hampton Roads.

## HISTORY

The Roanoke County of today is the product of a long and varied history. The land itself was carved out of an ancient mountain range which left a great basin of fertile ground at the foot of Appalachia. In time, the region attracted herds of game and with them, the valley's first residents. The Native Americans who settled what was to become the Roanoke Valley created an agriculture-based society along a winding river. These early settlers created a currency, 'rawrenoc', smoothed shells from which the word Roanoke is likely derived.

The first European settlers ventured into the valley around 1740; they were primarily Scotch-Irish immigrants, a hearty lot who pushed the boundaries of the western frontier and often clashed with both the natives and English settlers who journeyed up the James and Roanoke River basins from Tidewater and claimed the land as their own.

The population of Western Virginia, especially Botetourt County, continued to grow in the years following the American Revolution, burgeoned by an influx of German immigrants who followed the Great Road west. In 1802, the Town of Salem was founded along this road. Sustained at first by westward travelers, the town was officially incorporated by the General Assembly in 1836. Two years

later, in 1838, Roanoke County was carved out of portions of Botetourt and Montgomery Counties; Salem became the county seat.

The arrival of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad in 1852, the decision to locate Norfolk and Western Railroad's headquarters in the valley, and the accompanying birth of Roanoke City and the Town of Vinton in 1884 gradually changed the character of Roanoke County from rural and agrarian to suburban, industrial, and commercial.

The latter half of the 20th century saw the effects of that transition – population growth, residential and corporate expansion, and with it, a demand for increased services which expanded the scope and mission of county government. To meet the demands of a changing community, Roanoke County was granted a charter by the Virginia General Assembly in 1986, effectively giving the county much of the legal flexibility generally afforded to city governments.

Today, Roanoke County remains dedicated to promoting a high quality of life and ample opportunity for over 90,000 residents. Maintaining excellent schools, ensuring effective public safety, and promoting competitive economic development remain top priorities for the county with adaptive administration, regional cooperation, and public-private partnerships leading the way.



## ECONOMY

The Roanoke Valley is the cultural and business hub of Western Virginia, home to several large regional banking offices, headquarters of the Fortune 500 retailer Advance Auto, and home to advanced manufacturing operations including those owned by General Electric, Exelis, Dynax America, and Optical Cable Corporation. The U.S. headquarters of Toshiba Mitsubishi-Electric Industrial Systems Corporation (TMEIC), a global leader in the production of industrial electric and automotive systems, is in the County. Roanoke County is also the home to nearly 200 establishments in the health and life sciences sector and its robust fiber broadband network and educational opportunities in the STEM field makes it a growing location for innovation with a flourishing community of technology and engineering professionals. The retail center of southwest Virginia, the Roanoke Valley offers shopping malls, specialty boutiques, art galleries, furniture warehouses, antique shops and much more. Visitors and residents alike can enjoy both familiar national chain stores and original stores unique to the Roanoke Valley. Downtown Roanoke has over 190 shops centered around the Farmers' Market, the oldest, continuously running market in the state.



Ranked as one of US News & World Report's *Healthiest Communities* for 2021 by USnews.com.

The Town of Vinton (#51) and the Hollins area of the County (#58) are among the 2021 Places with the *Lowest Cost of Living in Virginia* by Niche.com.

Ranked #3 in the *Best Counties to Retire to in Virginia* by Staker.com.

Roanoke's Blue Ridge was voted a *Top Adventure Town* in the 2020 Top Adventure Towns contest, hosted by Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine.

On the 2019 list of the *Top 100 Best Places to Live in America* by Livability.com.

One of the few counties to ever receive the designation as an *All America City*.

## TOURISM & RECREATION

The Roanoke Valley and Blue Ridge Mountains offer many opportunities for residents and visitors enjoy the outdoors and many historic, cultural, sports, shopping, and dining venues (<https://www.visitroanokeva.com/>). With over 1,000 miles of trails, including blueways and water trails, the region provides unmatched outdoor recreation activities. It is the first destination on the East Coast to be named a Silver-Level Ride Center by the International Mountain Bicycling Association. Those so inclined, can quench their thirst with local beverages along the Virginia's Blue Ridge Cheers Trail. The region's unique railroad heritage is explored and celebrated at the Virginia Museum of Transportation, housing an incredible collection of locomotives.

Roanoke County's Explore Park, at Milepost 115 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, with hundreds of acres of rolling hills and pristine woodlands, offers camping and cabins, trails for hiking and mountain biking, river access for tubing and paddling, and an aerial adventure course. There is also a brewpub and visitors' center with a gift shop featuring artisan crafts. During the holiday season it hosts "Illuminights," bringing over 40,000 visitors to view the lights throughout the park.



## HEALTH CARE

The Roanoke Valley is the medical center of Southwest Virginia, serving over a million people. The area offers state-of-the-art cardiac and cancer diagnosis and care, as well as a Level I Trauma Center and more. Included in the health care system of the Roanoke Valley are three major hospitals, a Veterans Administration medical facility and numerous satellite and treatment centers. The abundance and affordability of health care in the Roanoke Valley contributes to the low cost of living in the region.

Carilion Clinic is a healthcare organization with more than 600 physicians in a multi-specialty group practice and eight not-for-profit hospitals. Carilion Clinic specializes in patient-centered care, medical education, and clinical research, with a goal of providing the best possible health outcome and healthcare experience for each patient. Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital, with 703 beds and an additional 60-bed neonatal intensive care unit, is the area's largest hospital.

As a 521-bed tertiary facility, LewisGale Medical Center has provided state-of-the art medical care for residents of the Roanoke Valley and Southwest Virginia for more than 100 years. The medical center maintains a national reputation for its cardiac, cancer, maternity care, and behavioral and rehabilitation services. Since 1934, the Salem Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) and secondary diagnostic and therapeutic health care to veterans living in a 26-county area of southwestern Virginia.

In Roanoke County, the Carilion Children's Tanglewood Center is planned to open in the Fall of 2021. Housed in the former J.C. Penney location at Tanglewood Mall, the center will be home to Carilion Children's outpatient specialty practices. It will feature more than 77,000 square feet on two floors with 14 pediatric specialties offering world-class care.

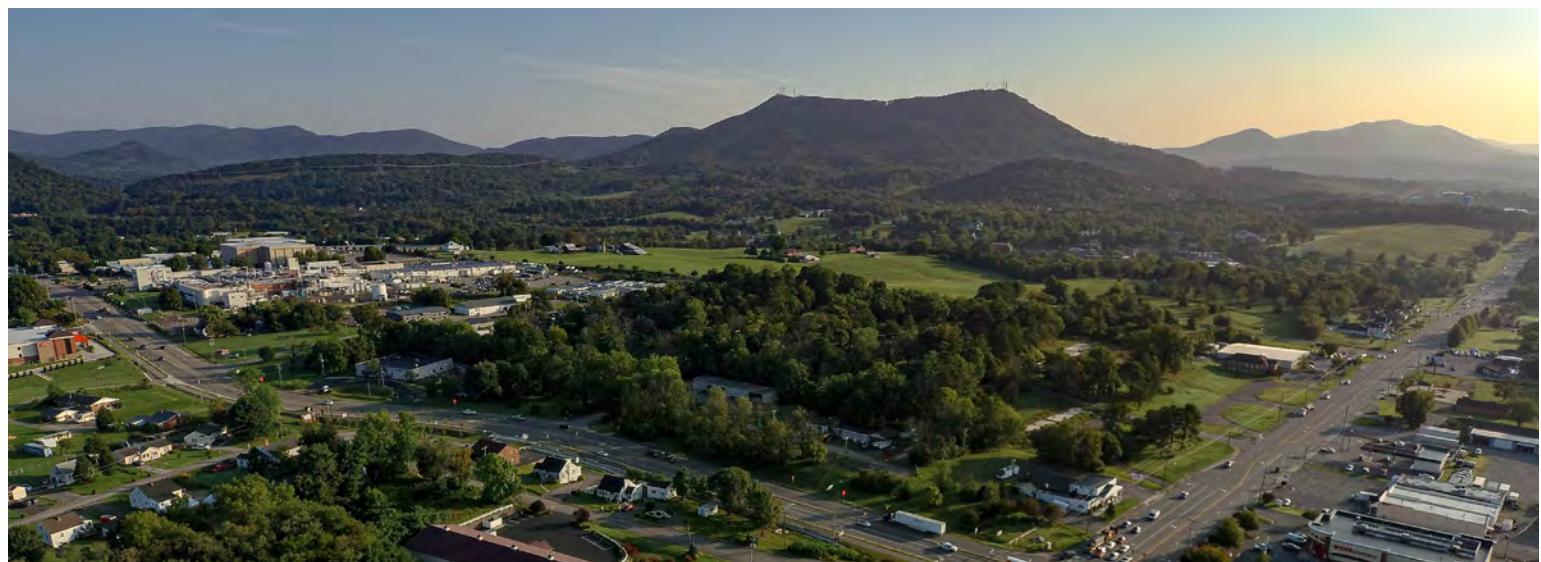


## EDUCATION

Roanoke County Public Schools is the 17th largest of 132 school systems in the Commonwealth of Virginia and ranks among the best for student achievement and other measures of success. It is governed by an elected School Board of five members and provides a broad spectrum of general, special, gifted, career and technical education opportunities for nearly 14,000 students. Its 27 schools, all of which are fully accredited, include 16 elementary, five middle, and five high schools. The Burton Center for Arts and Technology is an extension of the five county high schools that provides extensive high-tech training for both students and adults looking to further education or begin a new career. The Roanoke County Governor's STEM Academy, located at the Burton Center, provides rigorous content within its career and technical education (CTE) instruction concentrating on three career paths: Engineering and Technology, Journalism and Broadcasting, and Facility and Mobile Equipment Maintenance. Roanoke County students also have access to five magnet schools operated by Roanoke City Public Schools and to the Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology, a collaboration of seven area school systems. Higher education opportunities include Virginia Western Community College which offers a wide range of education programs and career training, and within an hour's drive, Roanoke College, Hollins University, Virginia Tech, and Radford University.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Roanoke County's population of 96,929 (2020 census) grew by almost five percent (5%) in the last decade. It is 83.3% white, 5.9% African American, 5.3% multiracial, 3.9% Asian and 3.6% Hispanic or Latino. The 2019 Median Household Income was \$68,948, with a median value of owner-occupied housing of \$199,800, and a poverty rate of 6.5%.



# COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND SERVICES

Roanoke County provides a wide range of municipal services to the citizens and businesses of including public safety, animal control, social services, community planning, building and environmental inspections, emergency management and mitigation, library services, parks and recreation facilities and programs, stormwater management, and solid waste collection. Other services are provided by regional authorities. County roads are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

The County is governed by a Board of Supervisors and with an appointed County Administrator as established by its charter. Members of the Board, one from each of five magisterial districts, are elected to four-year terms, with elections staggered at two-year intervals. Board members annually select a Chair and Vice-Chair to serve a one-year term. The Board is the legislative policy making body for the County government. It enacts ordinances, adopts the annual budget, and appropriates funds, sets tax rates, establishes policies, and adopts plans for County growth and development.

Five constitutionally mandated officers, funded by state and local resources, are elected by, and serve County residents. They are not accountable to the Board of Supervisors but work closely with the Board and County Administrator. The Roanoke County Sheriff provides corrections, court security and civil process services. The other constitutional officers are the Commonwealth's Attorney, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Commissioner of the Revenue, and Treasurer. The latter two provide property assessment and tax collection and financial management, respectively.

Crime prevention and law enforcement services are provided by the Roanoke County Police Department. Nationally accredited since 1992, the department utilizes 140 sworn officers across nine (9) districts in the County. The Roanoke County Fire and Rescue Department, with over 200 career and 200 volunteer personnel, staffs 15 stations in 12 county districts. Emergency response is provided by the Roanoke County Emergency Communication Center (ECC), the public safety answering point for 911 calls, which dispatches the appropriate equipment and personnel to handle the emergency. The ECC also receives non-emergency calls requesting assistance and information. The ECC is an accredited first responder agency and its communications officers maintain CPR and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) certification

The Roanoke County Public Library consists of a headquarters library, three major branches, and two neighborhood branches. Conveniently located and service oriented, Roanoke County libraries have an extensive collection of books, magazines, videos, eBooks, DVDs,





audiobooks, CDs, and more. The system also provides a full spectrum of library services, from reference assistance, consumer information, and story times for children, to the latest in electronic information, Internet access, computer labs, and public technology instruction. The system is also part of a larger consortium of public libraries that includes Botetourt County and the cities of Roanoke and Salem.

The Roanoke County Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department manages over 2000 acres of parkland, and multiple recreational facilities, fields, courts, and trails. It offers year-round programs to citizens of all ages. The Green Ridge Recreation Center, the Roanoke Valley's first multi-generational recreation center, is a 76,000 square foot facility with a wellness center, indoor walking track, gymnasium, indoor pool, childcare and activity rooms, and meeting space. Located adjacent to the center is Splash Valley, an outdoor aquatic facility featuring two 34-foot-high slides, a current river, and a children's spray ground. Brambleton Center is the home to many of Roanoke County's recreation programs. The 32,000 square foot center houses a pottery studio, ceramics studio, a fully equipped kitchen and nine community rooms. Explore Park, mentioned above, is managed by this department.

Family and protective services, benefits programs, and other assistance are delivered through the Roanoke County Department of Social Services which is a department of county government under the County Administrator. The department administers federal, state, and local public financial assistance and social work service programs. The Board of Supervisors appoints a Social Services Advisory Board to review and report on department activities.

The County provides weekly curbside trash collection to residents and many businesses. Bulk and brush are collected on a bi-weekly basis. Solid waste disposal is provided by the Roanoke Valley Resource Authority, a regional organization serving Roanoke County, the cities of Roanoke and Salem and the Town of Vinton (<https://www.rvra.net/>). The authority operates a transfer station, rail line, and landfill serving the region. The County Administrator serves as one of nine members on the Roanoke Valley Resource Authority Board of Directors.

Public water and wastewater services are provided by the Western Virginia Water Authority (<https://www.westernvwwater.org/home>) which also serves the City of Roanoke and the counties of Franklin and Botetourt. The County Administrator serves on its Board of Directors.

The County also participates in the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission, the owner and operator of the Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport (<https://www.flyroa.com/>). The Commission's five Board members are each appointed a four-year term by both the Roanoke City Council and the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors.

Roanoke County has approximately 1040 employees, including those of the constitutional officers, and a FY22 budget of approximately \$474 million, including \$232 million for General Government, \$199 million for School Operations, \$18.5 million for Debt Service, and \$8.8 million for Capital Projects. The County has a comprehensive financial policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors and is financially sound with a healthy fund balance and a AA+ bond rating.

In 2016, the Board of Supervisors adopted the first-ever Community Strategic Plan for Roanoke County. The plan, developed with input from a series of citizen surveys, includes the following vision statement, *“Roanoke County is a vibrant, innovative, and scenic community that values its citizens, heritage, and quality of life,”* and focuses on seven strategic initiatives:

- Connect Roanoke County to the World
- Position Roanoke County for Future Economic Growth
- Promote Neighborhood Connections
- Ensure Citizen Safety
- Be a Caring and Inclusive Community
- Promote Lifelong Learning
- Keep Roanoke County Healthy, Clean, and Beautiful

Following the adoption of the Community Strategic Plan, county staff and the Board developed an Organizational Strategic Plan to help align county operations with the goals of the community plan. Recently, the County has commenced outreach to citizens to receive input for revision or amendment to the Community Strategic Plan.

## THE POSITION

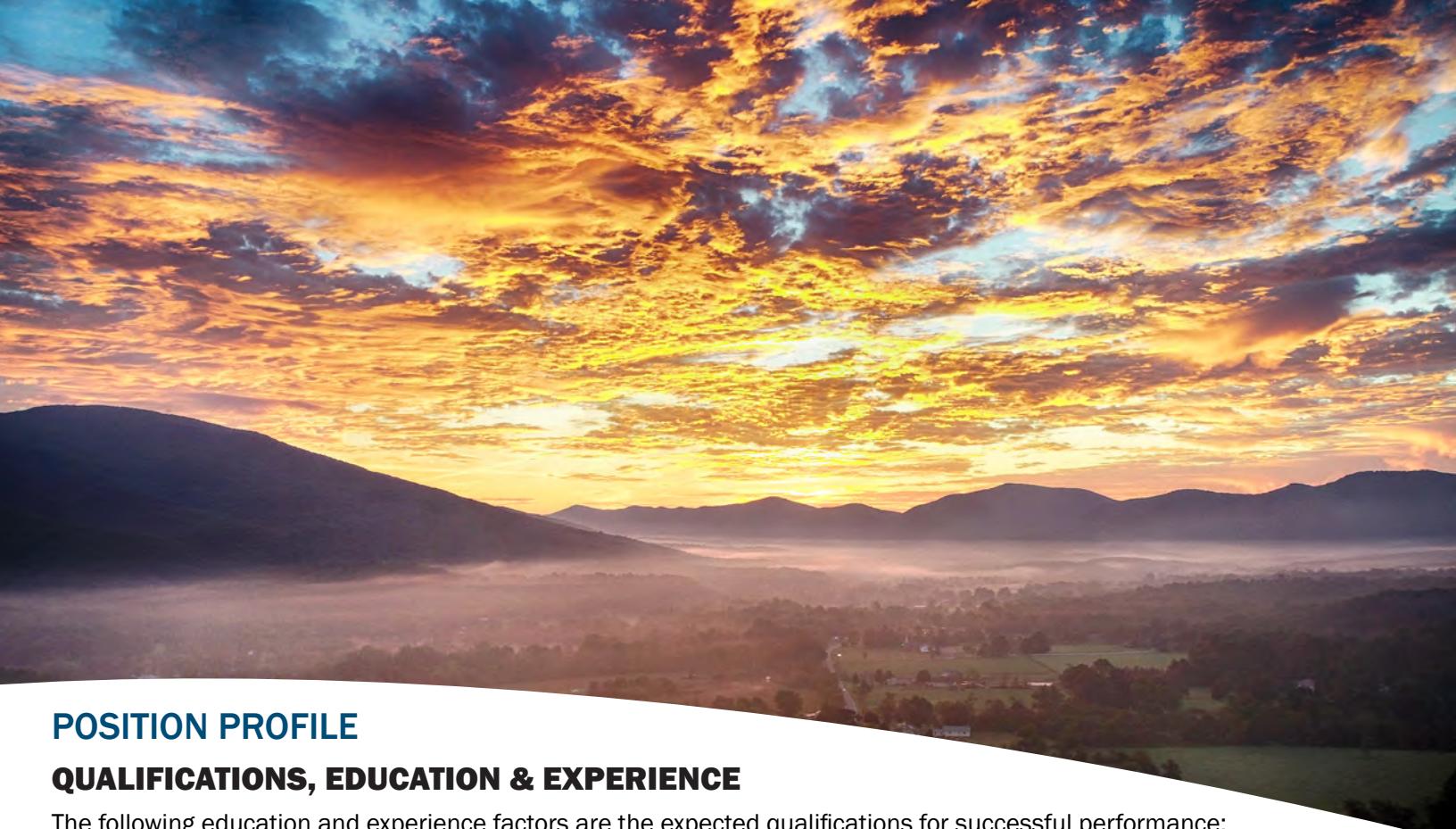
The Board appoints a County Administrator to act as administrative head of the County. The County Administrator serves at the pleasure of the Board, carries out its policies and directs business procedures. He or she is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the county government and manages and supervises all departments, agencies, and offices of the County, except for the County Attorney who reports directly to the Board. The County Administrator is responsible for developing and, upon adoption by the Board, implementing annual operating and capital budgets. He or she recommends policies and priorities for the Board's consideration and leads the County workforce in delivering services and responding to citizen issues or concerns. He or she serves as a liaison between the Board of Supervisors, the Constitutional Officers, the Judiciary, regional, state, and local agencies and authorities, and community organizations. The County Administrator also serves as the official Clerk to the Board, the Director of Emergency Services, and the Purchasing Agent, and is a member of local and regional committees, commissions, or authorities as a representative of the County.

## PRIORITIES

The Board of Supervisors has identified the following priorities that the new County Administrator can anticipate addressing within the next three to five years.

- Support the continued growth of the County through the strategic planning process; align County operations and resources to facilitate implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.
- Monitor and support the review, revision, and implementation of the Roanoke County 200 Plan, the County's comprehensive land use development and management plan.
- Engage in economic development and tourism activities and projects, specifically,
  - Further development and operation of Explore Park to make it a premier destination,
  - Completion of the Wood Haven Technology Park, in collaboration with the City of Roanoke and the City of Salem, to offer pad-ready sites on 110 acres at the intersection of Interstates 81 and 581,
  - Continued revitalization of the Route 419 corridor to promote further business development in a town center setting
  - Redevelopment, repurposing, and enhancement of the Tanglewood Mall, a high-profile regional commercial center.
- Continue to work with the Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority to extend coverage throughout the County.
- Develop financial plans for and manage the implementation of major capital projects including the renovation of the Burton Center for Arts and Technology and the construction of new fire stations.
- Focus on organizational structure, policies, and procedures, including an employee evaluation system, organizational development, and succession planning.





## POSITION PROFILE

### QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

The following education and experience factors are the expected qualifications for successful performance:

- A bachelor's degree in Public Administration, Business Management, Planning, or a related field; a master's degree would be a plus.
- At least five (5) years of successful leadership in the administration of local government as a department head, assistant, deputy, or manager; possessing a broad skill set appropriate to the breadth of County government operations. Local government experience in Virginia is desirable.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practice of public administration, local government finance, and the statutory authority and requirements of county government.
- A demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional development through participation in organizations such as the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA).
- Any combination of education and experience that qualifies an applicant may be considered in lieu of the more specific criteria listed above.

### PERSONAL TRAITS AND DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Absolute integrity, ensuring ethical, equitable, honest, fair, and open interactions with members of the Board of Supervisors, community members, and all County employees.
- Professionally competent, with confidence tempered by humility.
- A sound decision maker, open to input from stakeholders, exhibiting sound judgment, and decisive when appropriate.
- A change agent, open to different ways of thinking and new approaches while respecting the culture of the organization and the community.
- Excellent communications and interpersonal skills, including the ability to collaborate, listen effectively, and understand differing views.
- Strong democratic leadership skills in the government organization, the community, and the region; visionary, proactive, and decisive; able to integrate new ideas and facilitate the blending of differing points of view into a reasonable approach for community betterment.
- Not easily intimidated; able to diffuse tense situations and seek common ground when different perspectives create friction.
- Approachable and empathetic with a customer service mindset.
- A role model, coach, and mentor for County employees; dedicated to the professional development of staff; able to empower employees with a focus on performance, collaboration, and accountability; able to build a competent staff team and to delegate responsibility.

## PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Short-term, immediate actions will be to engage with staff, the Board of Supervisors, community leaders, and residents; review the County budget, structure, policies, and procedures, and get up to speed on active projects.
- Responsive to citizen concerns and issues; listening, understanding, and providing timely follow-up.
- A commitment to open and transparent government; promoting a positive and interactive relationship with citizens and stakeholders; encouraging citizen engagement and inclusion.
- Effective communications with all stakeholders; presenting information in a form understandable to various audiences; strong, consistent, and equal communications with the Board of Supervisors; provide a weekly report on significant activities to the Board.
- A focus on promoting communication, cooperation, and collaboration with community stakeholders, the Constitutional Officers, Roanoke County Public Schools, non-profit agencies, the private sector, and the region.
- A leader in regional activities, building effective relationships and promoting collaborative efforts consistent with County priorities.
- An effective liaison with representatives and agencies of the State and Federal governments.
- Fair and equitable investment in and support of County employees and departments, with a priority of improving competency and accountability. Not a micromanager; able to empower and entrust employees in fulfilling their responsibilities.
- An active and visible resident of Roanoke County, building relationships with citizens, business owners, and other county and regional stakeholders.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Compensation for the County Administrator will be competitive with an expected starting range of \$190,000 to \$205,000, depending on qualifications and experience. The successful candidate will be offered a generous benefits package including participation in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), health insurance coverage, paid time off, deferred compensation, professional development support and other benefits as identified in a negotiated employment agreement.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

**A formal review of applications will begin on October 22, 2021**, and those candidates considered to most closely match the qualifications contained in this profile will be contacted for initial interviews. Applications received after that date may be considered until the position is filled, however, timely submittal will ensure the most advantageous review. To be considered, please submit a cover letter and resume, with salary expectations and professional references, to The Berkley Group, via email at [kimball.payne@bglc.net](mailto:kimball.payne@bglc.net). Questions may be directed to:

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For Additional Information Visit: <https://www.roanokecountyva.gov/>

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