Raleigh is seeking candidates to serve as the Director of the Raleigh Planning and Development Department. The new Director will continue implementation of the consolidation of two Departments, while working with the City Council, City management, organization and community to identify and implement progressive land-use policy and ensuring excellent customer service for building and land-use functions.
During the past 30 years, growth in Raleigh, and the surrounding Research Triangle Region, has consistently and significantly outpaced the nation. Fueled by an impressive mix of education, ingenuity and collaboration, North Carolina’s capital city has become an internationally recognized leader in life science and technology innovation. It also happens to be a really nice place to live.

(source: Raleigh Office of Economic Development)
The Raleigh Community

The City of Raleigh, founded in 1792, is the second largest city in North Carolina and is situated in the heart of North Carolina’s Piedmont region, which is centered between the sandy Atlantic beaches and the Great Smoky Mountains. The City is both the county seat of Wake County and the capital of North Carolina. Raleigh covers an area of more than 146 square miles, has a planning jurisdiction of 181 square miles, and is home to a growing and diverse population. Together with Chapel Hill and Durham, Raleigh forms the Research Triangle Park, which was founded in 1959. The Raleigh-Cary metropolitan area, which encompasses Raleigh, also includes Wake, Franklin, and Johnston counties with a population of 1.24 million.

The city of Raleigh has been listed as one of the fastest growing cities for many years—the City’s current estimated population is nearly 470,000 people (U.S. Census estimate), up from 291,141 in the 2000 Census. Raleigh is known for its high quality of life for its residents. In the 2018 City-wide Citizen Satisfaction Survey, 89 percent of respondents were satisfied with Raleigh as a place to live, 37 percent higher than the national average.
Below are some recent national recognitions for the City:

- **#2 in 2020 Quality of Life Ranking**  
  - Numbeo, January 2020
- **#14 Among America's Top 150 Most Dynamic Urban Centers (Raleigh)**  
  - Point2 Homes, November 2019
- **#5 Among America's Top 10 Most Dynamic Mid-Sized Cities (Raleigh)**  
  - Point2 Homes, November 2019
- **#3 Among the Top Cities for the Best Quality of Life in the World (Raleigh)**  
  - Numbeo.com, February 2019
- **#2 Among the Most Family-Friendly Cities of 2019 (Raleigh)**  
  - Homes.com, February 2019

Managing growth and development pressure in a way that builds on the City’s character and enhances quality of life is a key priority for the City Council and the community. In a summary introduction from the City’s 2018 Citizen Satisfaction Survey, the report stated, “When asked to indicate which three issues will be most significant to Raleigh over the next five years, 68 percent selected affordable housing, 63 percent selected the pace of growth, and 60 percent selected transportation.”

This position will play a key leadership role in administering the City’s UDO and in providing expert support to the Planning Department peers and subordinates, partner department, community partners and the City Council.

The successful candidate will bring a strong vision of how to build on Raleigh’s strengths, take advantage of the opportunities associated with growth and to find forward-thinking solutions to ensure that all in Raleigh benefit from its growth and unique assets.
Raleigh Planning, Development, Zoning and Growth Management Context

Raleigh is now one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States with a growth rate of about 3.4% per year. A Forbes study in 2019 found the Raleigh metropolitan area was the fastest growing in the United States, increasing 47 percent from 2000 to 2012. It is predicted that Raleigh will remain the fastest-growing metro area through 2025.
As growth and development pressure increased, the City has worked to respond to the increased workload and project complexity with:

- Creating a consolidated customer service intake center for all development applications
- Reorganizing the development review, permitting and inspection functions
- Implementing a new software system for managing permitting and records

This position will play a critical role in identifying and implementing additional improvement opportunities.

The City’s UDO was adopted in February 2013 and new mapping of a substantial part of the City was adopted in 2015. More recently, staff work has shifted to ease both administrative and development burdens and to improve performance related to housing affordability, transit-supportive density and small-business support.

The Planning and Development Department consolidated two separate departments effective on January 1, 2020. In addition to improving the performance of the UDO, there are several key priorities for the consolidation:

- Better communication and coordination on the development and application of the UDO
- Development of a culture of collaboration and customer service
- Addressing organizational challenges including recruitment and retention, inconsistent business processes and outcomes, and ongoing investments in technology
Candidate Profile

The City is looking for an exceptional leader with 7 to 10 years of experience in an executive role with significant technical expertise, managerial strength and demonstration of a progressive vision to managing growth. A successful candidate will have a working knowledge in all areas of department services and will have demonstrated success in change-management to develop a high-performing organizational culture. Experience with form-based codes in a growth environment is preferred. Experience in states with limited authority and significant pre-emption will be helpful.

Employees were encouraged to provide feedback in an anonymous survey about the priorities that they see for a new director. By far, the highest priority for City staff was increasing communication and coordination within the department, with other departments and with community. Other key priorities for employees include developing a stronger departmental culture and vision; best practice implementation; and policy/process improvements.

The survey also allowed staff to share their open-ended perspectives about departmental challenges and opportunities and 160 responses were received. In addition to the themes above, some of the common themes that were identified included:

- Improving employee morale through collective vision and support for employees
- Understanding and prioritizing all departmental business needs and opportunities
- Addressing community and organizational needs and opportunities related to growth and increased urbanization
- Creating a culture that values collaboration, customer service and continuous improvement

Qualified candidates will clearly exemplify the City’s organizational values of responsiveness, integrity, respect, collaboration, honesty, diversity, stewardship and initiative. Advanced skills in community building and engagement and an understanding of equity principles are critical.
Department Profile

The newly consolidated department includes 220 full-time employees. The proposed FY20 Planning and Development operating budget of both previous departments was a combined $22,101,514. The Department is responsible for City-wide real-estate support; zoning administration and enforcement; land development permitting; long-range and comprehensive planning; urban design and preservation functions; building permitting and development inspections.

Some of the Department’s significant projects and workload drivers are highlighted briefly below.

Organizational Structure and Capacity Improvement Efforts

An Interim Department Director and an Executive Transition Team have worked on several key implementation elements, listed below. However, the permanent Director will be expected to continue to refine the organizational structure and develop a high-performance culture.

- Land development functions (current planning) have been consolidated with zoning and code development, including formerly separate enforcement units
- A new division focused on customer service intake and administrative duties has been developed, including a greater focus on:
  - Financial and human resource management
  - Business analytics and continuous improvement of business processes
  - Employee training and development
  - Customer service

Considerable resources have been devoted to the first phase of implementation of an Electronic Land Management system, Energov. The first phase shifted the City from a legacy, internally-built system and positions the City for future enhancements, including electronic plan review. However, work needs to continue to ensure that the current system meets the needs of customers and staff and to position the City for future enhancements.
**Major Planning Studies**

The City of Raleigh has been aggressive in resourcing area and corridor plans to inform the growth and development of the City of Raleigh. Additionally, the planning is underway to compliment the City’s investments in Dix Park and future development of Bus Rapid Transit. The City’s Urban Design Center offers internal architectural and design services to assist staff on complex planning and problem solving, both in Planning and Development and across the City organization. The most recent quarterly report summarizing work effort can be found at: http://go.boarddocs.com/nc/raleigh/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BK5QA2684C0B

**Workload Management**

Significant development in Raleigh has resulted in high demand for land-use reviews, building permits and rezoning. Not only is the volume of work high, the relative complexity of projects is also high. Mixed use and dense development on urban or other redevelopment sites is common.

The challenge of workload demands is exacerbated by staff recruitment and retention challenges due to a high number of retirements in recent years coupled with the strong economy.

**Unified Development Ordinance Reform**

A number of text changes have been authorized and additional research is ongoing to identify opportunities to improve the predictability and performance of the code. Areas of particular priority include environmental stewardship, support for small, local businesses, and encouragement of redevelopment, density and the development of affordable housing in strategic locations, particularly around transit. Both the new Director and existing staff need to work with urgency in light of development pressure and opportunities.
Compensation and Benefits

The City of Raleigh plans to offer a competitive salary commensurate with the successful candidate’s qualifications and experience. When you join the City of Raleigh’s work family, your benefits are an important part of your “total rewards.” The City provides a comprehensive benefits package as part of the total rewards program to support employees through important events in their life, to enhance their life outside work, and to help them plan and prepare for the future. The City participates in the North Carolina Local Governmental Employees’ Retirement System (NCLGERS).

Application and Selection Process

Qualified candidates should submit their cover letter and resume online by visiting our website at www.governmentjobs.com/careers/raleighnc. This position will remain open until filled; however, interested applicants are strongly encouraged to apply no later than March 29, 2020. Following this date, applications will be screened against criteria outlined in this brochure. Onsite interviews with the City of Raleigh will be offered to those candidates named as finalists, with reference checks, background checks and academic verifications conducted after receiving candidates’ consent. A pre-employment screening to include controlled substance tests will be conducted by the City.

For more information, please contact Karen Spurlin at karen.spurlin@raleighnc.gov.