

DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

ACCOMACK COUNTY, VIRGINIA



ACCOMACK COUNTY  *Virginia*



Deputy County Administrator of Building, Planning, Zoning, & Economic Development

Accomack County is seeking an experienced professional to serve as Deputy County Administrator, a member of the Senior Executive Leadership Team with specific responsibility for the County's comprehensive plan, building and zoning functional areas, environmental programs, and economic development strategy. The position reports to the County Administrator as one of two Deputy County Administrators.

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 Deputy 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 steve.owen@bgllc.net. While the position is open until filled, **the formal review of applicants will begin October 24, 2022.** Inquiries relating to the Deputy County Administrator position may be directed to:

Steve Owen

The Berkley Group

P.O. Box 181

Bridgewater, Virginia 22812

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Accomack County, VA

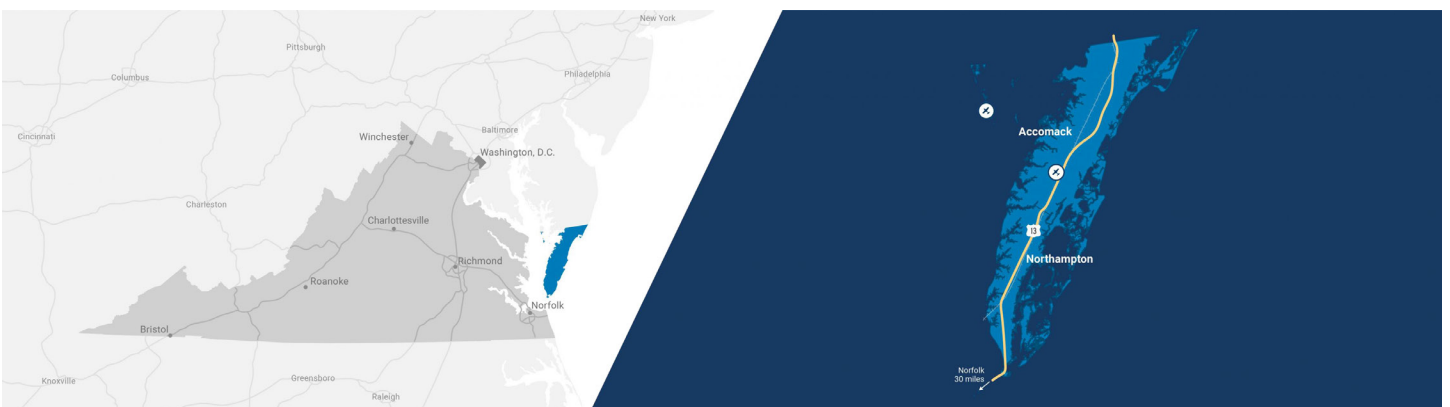
COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Accomack County, Virginia, provides a unique quality of life in a rural environment. Its picturesque small railroad towns and fishing villages offer a modern-day refuge. The terrain is very flat throughout, ranging from sea level to fifty feet above sea level, and includes many barrier islands. The County features rich farmland, undisturbed beaches, expanses of marsh and forest, and small towns rich in history and culture. The towns of Accomack and Onancock are designated State Historic Districts that feature restored Colonial architecture. Recreational opportunities attract fishers, boaters, and beach-lovers to Accomack County and its pristine barrier islands. The County is probably best known for its fresh oysters, crabs, sport fishing, Assateague and Tangier Islands, and the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge.

LOCATION & TRANSPORTATION

Located at the north end of Virginia's portion of the Delmarva Peninsula, Accomack County is bordered on the south by Northampton County, Virginia, with the state of Maryland to the north. This beautiful Eastern Shore county has a total area of 1,310 square miles, including 455 square miles on land and 855 square miles (65.25%) of water. It is the largest county in Virginia by total land and water area, with miles of shoreline on both the Chesapeake Bay on the west and the Atlantic Ocean on the east, constituting one of the largest unspoiled wetlands habitats in the world.

The County is conveniently situated within driving distance of many East Coast cities, including Richmond, the state capital (165 miles), Norfolk (80 miles), Washington, D.C. (150 miles), and Baltimore, Maryland (140





miles). Commercial air service is easily accessible at international airports near each of those cities. The Accomack County Airport is the aviation gateway to the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The Airport is located on 410 acres and is designed to serve the air transportation needs of the business community and the citizens of the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

The main highway in Accomack County is U.S. Route 13, the 70-mile long spine of the Eastern Shore. It runs north-south for 517 miles from Interstate 95 just north of Fayetteville, North Carolina, to U.S. Route 1 in Morrisville, Pennsylvania, a northeastern suburb of Philadelphia. Route 13 uses the 17-mile long Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel which connects the Delmarva Peninsula to Hampton Roads.

HISTORY

Accomack County was named for its Indigenous residents, the Accomac people, from a word meaning "the other shore." English voyagers first landed in the area in 1603, four years before the Jamestown Colony was founded. Accomac Shire was established as a Virginia colony in 1634. It was one of the eight original shires, later called counties, of Virginia. In 1642, the name of the county was changed to Northampton and in 1663, Northampton was divided into two counties. The northern county took the name Accomac, while the southern retained the name Northampton. English Royalist Edmund Scarborough, the Surveyor General of the Virginia Colony, worked to establish the boundaries of the county. He ensured that the southern boundary of Accomack County was drawn more than halfway down the peninsula towards Cape Charles. That boundary left 50% of the Eastern Shore population in Northampton County, but significantly more than half the acreage was placed in Scarborough's Accomack County. Scarborough also pushed the northern boundary into the area of the Maryland colony.

Scarborough was an elected burgess representing Accomack County in the Virginia General Assembly. He was also a controversial figure who threatened Native Americans, Quakers, and Maryland residents and ultimately had a falling out with colonial Governor William Berkeley. When threatened with arrest by the Governor, Scarborough claimed immunity due to his elected position. In 1670 Governor Berkeley eliminated Scarborough's immunity by abolishing Accomack County and his position as a burgess. Scarborough died in 1671 ending his conflict with Governor Berkeley, and the next session of the Virginia General Assembly re-created Accomack County.

In 1687, the General Assembly, responding to complaints from Northampton County about the imbalance of acreage between Accomack and Northampton counties, adjusted the boundaries so Northampton County was expanded to the north, creating the current line that runs between Occohannock Creek and the aptly named Parting Creek. In 1940, the Virginia General Assembly added a "k" to the end of the county's name.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Eastern Shore, historically known for agricultural and seafood production, is diversifying its economy by growing the manufacturing and service sectors, enhancing tourism infrastructure, and supporting the advancement of aerospace and small businesses.

Accomack County has an extensive history with agriculture including the large-scale production of poultry and crops. The last USDA Census of Agriculture (2017) ranked the County fifth in the state in the value of crops sold and fifth in the value of livestock, poultry, and products sold. This included a top ranking for



grains , including soybeans and feed corn, second place for vegetables, and fourth place for both poultry and aquaculture. The top two employers in the County, Perdue Products and Tyson Farms, process broiler chickens from over five hundred poultry houses in the County.

The County has seen and anticipates continued growth in and around the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Wallops Flight Facility (NASA WFF). With nearly 1800 employees and private sector contractors providing support services, NASA WFF is a major employer on the Eastern Shore. Tenants of the complex include NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NAVY Surface Combat Systems Center, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority.

The NASA Wallops Flight Facility is home to one of only three commercial launch facilities in the United States. It supports NASA's scientific research and provides for the development and launching of orbital and sub-orbital payloads, placing the facility at the center of NASA's space and earth science programs. Both government and commercial sectors utilize Wallops for low-cost flight and launch services. Flight assets include research aircraft, unmanned aerial systems, high-altitude balloons, and rockets. In addition to the numerous government agencies that are located at Wallops, NASA Wallops has collaborated with more than fifty established and emerging aerospace private companies involved with space and aeronautics research.

The Wallops Research Park (WRP), a joint venture between NASA, the County, and Chincoteague Bay Field Station, is located adjacent to the NASA Wallops Flight Facility and is a prime location for aerospace and aviation operations, offering more than two hundred acres specifically for unmanned aircraft systems and medium class space launch vehicles. The research park's first tenant, Rocket Lab, has constructed an integration and control facility and plans to launch its Electron rocket from Wallops Island this year, the company's first rocket launch from US soil. In addition, Accomack County was recently selected by Rocket Lab as the home for its larger Neutron rocket's first launch pad and production facility, further supporting the growth of commercial space capabilities in Accomack County. Rocket Lab expects to begin launching the medium class orbital Neutron rocket from Wallops Island beginning in 2024. The new production complex will

The NASA Wallops Flight Facility

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Eastern Shore Community College

Located on a 115-acre campus on the southern end of the Delmarva Peninsula, Eastern Shore Community College serves the region as a two-year institution of higher learning.

ESCC's Academic and Administration Building was constructed in 2021 and includes modern classrooms, laboratories, occupational trade areas, a student lounge, and library.



include a rocket production, assembly, and integration facility and will create approximately 250 new jobs.

The County has Enterprise Zone and Opportunity Zone programs to foster job creation and revenue growth. The Accomack County Building, Planning, and Economic Development Department also supports business development. Working with public and private sector partners to foster job creation and coordinate local efforts with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), county staff assists entrepreneurs, small businesses, and developers seeking approvals from the County.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority (ESVBA) was formed in 2008 by the counties of Accomack and Northampton to provide broadband services on the Eastern Shore. ESVBA is one of three providers of residential broadband services serving the area. In 2022, the ESVBA was awarded a Virginia Telecommunication Initiative grant to provide high speed internet to unserved areas of Virginia's Eastern Shore. Combined with County resources the grant provides over \$15 million for infrastructure construction and will result in over 72% of the County's addresses having access to ESVBA's fiber network.

ATTRACTIONS

The Eastern Shore, one of Virginia's fastest growing regions for tourism, boasts the longest stretch of wild coastline remaining on the entire East Coast. Tourists from all over the world enjoy visiting the car-free Tangier Island in the Chesapeake Bay, fourteen undeveloped seaside barrier islands, an award-winning winery, and historic waterfront towns like charming Onancock. Rocket launches soar over the skies not far from wild Chincoteague ponies. In and around the town of Onley, the "4 Corners" area is the largest retail and commercial hub in the County. Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital relocated to the area and numerous local businesses are located there along U.S. Route 13.

The region's thriving artisan's community and authentic coastal heritage make for a unique destination for visitors and citizens who wish to experience history, see watermen tilling tides, and visit family farms on both bayside and seaside. Numerous farm, boat, and kayak tours, farmers markets, museums, restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfasts, and community festivals are enthusiastically supported by the Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission and Accomack County.

The 9,000-acre Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is in northern Accomack County. The refuge is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which permits swimming, hiking, fishing, bird watching, and provides narrated tours. The annual penning and auctioning of wild ponies in the area is a major event for the community. Thousands of people are drawn to the area each year for the weeklong celebration and carnival associated with pony penning.

The Nature Conservancy and the state and federal governments maintain a 45-mile stretch of oceanside barrier islands in their natural state. The public can access most of these islands that are renowned for their expansive beaches, surrounding lush salt marshes, and great concentrations of shorebirds, seabirds, and migrating waterfowl.

HEALTHCARE

Accomack County is fortunate to have a modern medical facility with extensive services uncommon in a rural area. Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital opened in 2017 on a 60-acre campus near the towns of Onancock and Onley. In addition to the hospital, facilities include Riverside Shore Cancer Center, Riverside Medical Office Building, a helipad, and ample parking. The hospital offers fifty-two private inpatient rooms, of which ten are critical care and six are mother/baby. The Emergency Department offers two private triage rooms, plus thirteen private treatment rooms including a trauma room. All inpatient rooms are private with oversized windows to provide natural light and views of the outdoors. Twelve rooms offer in-room dialysis. Other services include surgery, radiology, cardiology testing, respiratory testing, Diabetes Center, MRI, 3D mammography, crisis intervention, gastroenterology, gynecology, neurology, obstetrics, orthopedics, podiatry, pulmonology, pediatrics, chemotherapy, physical therapy, sleep lab and hospice.

The Eastern Shore Rural Health System's Community Health Network provides primary care, dental, behavioral, pharmaceutical, and urgent care health services, regardless of ability to pay. Serving Virginia's Eastern Shore with four medical centers and six dental locations, it also offers programs including health education, help obtaining prescriptions for those who cannot afford them on their own, digital x-ray, lab work, travel immunizations, and a robust electronic health record system.

The Eastern Shore Health District, a component of the Virginia Department of Health, provides an array of public health services for Accomack and Northampton Counties. Several independent doctors and dentists also provide quality medical services for Eastern Shore residents.

EDUCATION

Accomack County Public Schools, governed by a nine-member elected school board, serves approximately 5,500 students with five elementary schools, two middle schools, and three fully accredited high schools. Tangier Island is served by a K-12 Combined School.

Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC), a member of the Virginia Community College System, serves the region as a two-year institution of higher learning. It occupies a 115-acre site on U.S. Route 13, south of Melfa, on the southern end of the Delmarva Peninsula. Its main building, the Academic and Administration Building, was constructed in 2021 and includes modern classrooms, laboratories, occupational trade areas, a student lounge and library. ESCC has a partnership with Old Dominion University, located in Norfolk, and



has guaranteed admission agreements with more than 25 Virginia four-year institutions. It also participates in the Virginia Career Readiness Certificate initiative, which provides a workplace skills certification that businesses can directly connect to productivity, quality, and profitability. In addition, several workforce development facilities ensure a pipeline of talent to meet prospective or expanding businesses' needs.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Accomack County has a population of 33,413 (2020 US Census). It is about 68% white, 28% Black or African American, 9.5% Hispanic or Latino, 2% multiracial, and less than 1% Native American and Asian. There are over 21,873 housing units in the County, including 13,641 households, with a median value of owner occupied housing of \$173,700. The 2020 median household income was \$46,178, with a poverty rate of 17.6%.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT & SERVICES

Accomack County provides a range of services to the citizens and businesses of the County, including public safety, animal control, social services, community planning, building permits and inspections, emergency management, parks and recreation facilities and programs, and environmental programs. County roads are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Accomack County operates under the traditional, or County Administrator/Board of Supervisors, form of government (as defined under Virginia law). The County is governed by a nine-member Board of Supervisors, each representing an election district, who are elected to four-year terms, with the term of the current Board expiring on December 31, 2023. 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, appropriates funds, sets tax rates, establishes policies, and adopts plans for County growth and development.

There are fourteen incorporated towns in Accomack County, some of which provide enhanced services, such as water and sewer, to their residents.

The County provides 24/7 emergency medical services through a combination volunteer/career system delivered from thirteen independent volunteer fire companies and one independent volunteer rescue squad. Emergency communications and dispatch are provided by the Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Commission, which serves both Accomack and Northampton Counties.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Library System serves Northampton and Accomack Counties. In addition to their collections of materials in various formats, the libraries offer business services, computers and wireless internet access, and events and programs for all age groups. A new 20,110 square foot Eastern Shore Public Library & Heritage Center is under construction in Parksley, Virginia. A separate wing of the library will be devoted to the Eastern Shore Heritage Center, a state-of-the-art, climate controlled facility housing books, photographs, genealogical records, and manuscripts. It will also contain a research room, lecture hall and makerspace.



The Accomack County Parks and Recreation Department maintains Sawmill Park and two other smaller parks located adjacent to Arcadia High and Nandua Middle schools, plus a golf driving range. The parks are used extensively for picnics, reunions, family gatherings and excursions. In addition, the department offers a variety of activities and programs for all ages throughout the year. The County, through its Public Works Department, also manages twenty-seven water access sites on the Chesapeake Bay, the Atlantic Ocean, and on small bays and creeks in between, providing easy access to the natural riches the County has to offer.



The County operates a small wastewater collection system but does not own or operate a wastewater treatment facility, relying on the Town of Onancock for that service. In 2020, the County and its towns became part of the Hampton Roads Service District (HRSD) in order to extend and operate public utilities in selected areas of the County served by a major force main along the Route 13 corridor. The County is currently in the process of transferring all County owned wastewater related infrastructure to HRSD which will operate and maintain it going forward.



Solid waste management services are provided by the County at the North Landfill and the South Transfer Station.

Accomack County has approximately 354 FTE employees, including those of the constitutional officers, and a FY23 budget of approximately \$85 million, including \$65.6 million for General Government, a \$21.4 million transfer for School Operations, \$5 million for Social Services, \$4 million for Capital Projects, and \$4 million for Debt Service. The County has manageable debt and a healthy fund balance.



ISSUES, CHALLENGES, & OPPORTUNITIES

As the individual supporting County planning and economic development activities, the Deputy County Administrator will have an important role in helping to define and achieve goals and objectives to implement the vision of the Board of Supervisors. The current vision was adopted with the 2018 amendments to the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Accomack County is a rural place, consisting of a mixture of agricultural, forestal, coastal, commercial, residential, and industrial land uses. We desire economic development that is compatible with and adds value to our rural economy. Economic growth is market appropriate for the Eastern Shore and is located along Lankford Highway (Route 13) and Chincoteague Road (Route 175) so that the undeveloped agricultural, forestal, and coastal areas of Accomack County are preserved. The areas surrounding existing towns and villages are appropriate locations for a traditional development pattern of residential and light commercial growth in a manner consistent with the existing character of each town or village.

Our history, culture, geography, location, and people define who we are and what we value.

More specific elements of that long-term vision, adapted from the County's most current strategic plan and included in the 2023 Budget document include:

- The rural character and natural beauty of the County will be preserved.
- Growth and development in the County will be well managed.
- The County will promote meaningful employment growth in sustainable agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and seafood as well as through business and industrial park development.
- The County will support education as the foundation of economic development.
- Affordable housing, cultural, and recreational

opportunities will meet the needs of families, youth, and young professionals.

- Route 13 will be an attractive travel corridor that serves the needs of residents, businesses, and tourists.
- The County will use public resources wisely and efficiently to support service needs.

Within the context of the goals and objectives to implement the Board's vision, the County Administrator has identified the following issues, challenges, and opportunities that the Deputy County Administrator can expect to help address as part of the senior executive leadership team:

- Promoting economic development, especially in the Wallops Research Park and in other areas near the NASA WFF. Building strong relationships with the leaders of the public and private sector stakeholders important to the economy of the community.
- Collaboration and coordination with the Economic Development Authority in fulfilling the County's economic development strategy.
- Seeking ways to increase the availability and affordability of housing for both current residents and new employees moving into the community.
- Designing and implementing a pilot program for derelict building removal.
- Incorporating the County's Environmental Programs under the supervision of the Deputy County Administrator of Community Development.
- Facilitating the process of review and revision of the Comprehensive Plan and the subsequent updating of development ordinances.

Position Profile | Deputy County Administrator

THE POSITION

The Deputy County Administrator is hired by, reports to, and works at the pleasure of the County Administrator. He or she is a member of the senior executive leadership team working closely with the County Administrator, the other Deputy County Administrator, and the “c-suite” positions of CFO, CHRO, and CIO to manage day-to-day County operations and to implement plans, policies, and other activities in support of County priorities.

Under minimal supervision and with considerable autonomy and discretion, the Deputy County Administrator oversees the operations of Planning, Zoning, Building, Environmental Programs, and Economic Development. The Deputy Administrator is responsible for budget development and implementation and staff supervision in those functional areas. There are five (5) direct reports and eighteen (18) FTE positions under the position. The position is responsible for ensuring compliance with County zoning, subdivision, building, and environmental regulations and designates a Zoning Administrator, Subdivision Agent, and Building Official to fulfill that duty. He or she will also have oversight of the County’s enterprise permitting and licensing software, EnerGov, and, from time to time, will interact with applicants and permit holders. The position also provides staff support to the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Wetlands Board and will make presentations to the Board of Supervisors on issues related to community development.

In addition to coordinating the various activities related to community development, the Deputy County Administrator will have other responsibilities to support overall County operations and to provide him or her with professional development opportunities. This will include project management, a role in emergency management planning, response, and mitigation, and representing Accomack County before various public bodies and community groups. In the absence of the County Administrator, the Deputy County Administrator may be designated to serve in an acting role.

PERSONAL TRAITS & DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Absolute integrity, ensuring ethical, equitable, honest, fair, and open interactions with staff, other County employees and community members.
- Initiative, discretion, sound judgment, and high personal and professional ethics in performing the duties of the position.
- Professionally competent, with confidence tempered by humility.
- A sound decision maker, open to input from stakeholders, exhibiting good judgment, and decisive when appropriate. Able to synthesize information quickly to determine anticipated outcomes with a consistent and defensible decision logic.
- Excellent communications and interpersonal skills including the ability to collaborate, listen effectively, and understand differing views. Able to interpret and communicate statutes, ordinances, regulations, policies, and procedures to staff, applicants, permit holders, and the public.
- Strong presentation skills, with the ability to develop effective reports from a variety of sources and effectively communicate facts, concepts, and recommendations to decision makers.
- Organized and dependable; consistently and effectively manages timelines, meets deadlines, and fulfills commitments.
- 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, dealing tactfully and courteously with the public and employees
- A role model, coach, and mentor, dedicated to the professional development of staff; able to empower employees with a focus on performance, collaboration, and accountability; able to build and lead a competent staff team and to delegate responsibility.

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, Political Science, or a related field; a master's degree is preferred.
- Six (6) years of progressively responsible senior level executive management experience as a chief executive/administrator, deputy executive/admprofessional management experience at the level of a deputy department director or higher in local government administration.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and practice of public administration, local government finance, public works, and economic development and practices of local government organization, economic development, planning, and code enforcement. Local government experience in Virginia is desirable. Experience with enterprise permitting and licensing software such as Energov, is a plus.
- A demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional development through participation in organizations such as the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA) and the American Planning Association (APA). AICP designation and progress toward or certification as an ICMA Credentialed Manager is a plus.
- Any combination of education and experience that qualifies an applicant may be considered in lieu of the criteria listed above.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Short-term, immediate actions will be to engage with staff, colleagues on the Leadership Team, the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors, and community stakeholders, to gain an understanding of Accomack County's policies, procedures, and ordinances, and to get up to speed on active projects.
- Supporting the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in the review and revision of the Comprehensive Plan, followed by appropriate ordinance amendments for implementation and consistency.
- Support the County's efforts to develop the Wallops Research Park and other County sanctioned economic development initiatives, including serving as the County's primary point of contact with prospects.
- Serve as a working manager, possessing a comprehensive overview of County goals and operations with the ability to focus on implementation, customer service, compliance, and process improvement in the functional areas of responsibility.
- Be responsive to citizen concerns and issues; listening, understanding, and providing timely follow-up.
- Be a leader in regional activities and a facilitator, building effective relationships and promoting collaborative efforts consistent with County priorities.
- Build and maintain relationships with community stakeholders including NASA, business and industry leaders, and local, state, and federal representatives.
- Foster a team environment that welcomes staff feedback, participation, and development.
- Serve on the County's Crisis Management team with defined responsibilities within the County's Continuity of Operations and Emergency Operations plans.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Compensation for the Deputy County Administrator will be competitive 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, , professional development support, relocation allowance and other benefits provided to County employees.

APPLICATION PROCESS

A formal review of applications will begin on October 24, 2022, 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 steve.owen@bgllc.net. Questions about the position or the recruitment process can be addressed to the same email address.

An offer of employment will be contingent on the satisfactory completion of a background check, a DMV records check, and a drug screening prior to employment.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For Additional Information About Accomack County Visit: <https://www.co.accomack.va.us/>

The County of Accomack is committed to an inclusive and diverse workforce.

