



# TOWN MANAGER

TOWN OF BUCHANAN , VA





The Town of Buchanan is seeking an experienced professional to serve as Town Manager, the chief administrative officer responsible for directing programs and operations of the Town government.

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 Town Manager.

Qualified candidates are encouraged to submit a cover letter and resume, with salary expectations and professional references, to The Berkley Group via email [doug.walker@bgllc.net](mailto:doug.walker@bgllc.net). While the position is open until filled, **the formal review of applicants will begin June 14th, 2024**. Inquiries relating to the Town Manager position may be directed to:

Doug Walker

Executive Manager

Berkley Group

Email: [doug.walker@bgllc.net](mailto:doug.walker@bgllc.net)

Mobile: (540) 325-0684



## COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

A community in the Appalachian Mountains of Southwest Virginia, the Town of Buchanan is in Botetourt County. It is a community of over 1,200 with abundant outdoor opportunities, friendly citizens, rich history and beautiful natural environment. With its small-town atmosphere, Buchanan fosters a positive climate for citizens, entrepreneurs, and business. Nestled between the Shenandoah Valley and the Roanoke Valley, it offers a wonderful opportunity to lead and manage the Town government operations within a scenic community that embraces quality of life and work principles for its citizens. It is a community where residents can live, work, and grow. The Town encourages growth, development, and re-development while maintaining a high regard for the rich history of the community. The Town provides infrastructure and services that are managed in an efficient and sound manner providing a quality of life that is attractive to citizens and visitors. As a walkable community with a vibrant Main Street and safe neighborhoods, Buchanan is truly small-town America at its best.





## LOCATION & TRANSPORTATION

The Town of Buchanan has an area of 2.21 square miles and is located just off I-81 between Exits 162 and 167, in Botetourt County in Virginia. U.S. Route 11 is the Main Street of the community. State Route 43 crosses the James River in town and provides access to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Buchanan is located 43 miles north of Roanoke and 25 miles south of Lexington. The town has access to several major interstates, which brings larger metropolitan markets within easy reach. Interstate 77 is within a 2-hour drive, Interstate 64W is ½ hours north; and Interstate 64E is 1 1/2 hours north. Buchanan is approximately 40 miles from the Roanoke Blacksburg Regional Airport.

## HISTORY

Early transportation routes were a primary influence on the development of Buchanan as colonial America began to move west. The Great Valley Road crossed the James River at the site of the town. Early development centered around services for the traveler. This included taverns, stables, wagon makers, teamsters, and other services. The town is named for John Buchanan who operated a ferry on the James. The original town was laid out in 1811 on the south side of the James River. By 1851 Buchanan became the western terminus for the James River and Kanawha Canal linking Richmond in the east. The development of the railroad ended the reliance on the canal.

Severe flooding in 1985 led to property neglect in the flood-prone area and subsequent property maintenance issues. By the 1990's revitalization efforts were well underway, leading to physical improvements to homes, businesses, and the Town Park. The renewed sense of community pride in the rich history of the town and the new focus on recreation, artisan industry, and commerce have pointed the community toward its future.







## EDUCATION

The Town of Buchanan is served by Botetourt County School system. Buchanan Elementary School is one of seven elementary schools operated by the county system. Botetourt County has two middle schools and two high schools. The town is served by Central Academy Middle School and James River High School. Botetourt Technical Education Center also serves the town. All schools are fully accredited with a total student population of 4,488.

The town is within easy access to over 25 colleges and universities. Washington and Lee University (24 miles), Virginia Tech (56 miles), Hollins University (20 miles), Ferrum College (60 miles), Radford University (61 miles), Jefferson College of Health Sciences (30 miles), Liberty University (44 miles), VMI (30 miles), and Roanoke College (28 miles) are some of the major colleges serving the area. Virginia Western Community College is 30 miles from town.

## HEALTH CARE

Carilion Clinic Buchanan offers primary care services during the week in town. Hospitals in the area include Lewis Gale (Salem and Blacksburg), Carilion (Roanoke and Lexington), Centra (Lynchburg and Bedford). All are within an hour's drive of town. Other family doctors and specialists are also conveniently located near the town.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The Town of Buchanan has, as of 2024, a population of 1,226 based on the latest US Census estimates. The town's racial makeup is 91.9% White, 3.1% Black, and 5.0% other races. 1.8% of the town is Hispanic or Latino. There are 34,100 citizens in Botetourt County. The median value of owner-occupied housing is \$264,200. The median household income is \$77,600 and the poverty rate is 7%.



## ECONOMY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Town of Buchanan offers a beautiful setting and historic buildings suitable for small businesses. Quality education, interstate access, and abundant natural attractions make Buchanan a great place for businesses to grow and prosper. Botetourt County is a member of the Roanoke Regional Partnership and is home to several major industrial facilities. Among them are Altec Industries and Munters. Buchanan is conveniently located between Roanoke and Lexington with many top employers.

Buchanan is on the James River and within 4 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Outdoor recreation is a growing and vital part of the community. Canoeing and kayaking on the river, hiking in the surrounding mountains, and services for the growing tourism economy are a major part of the town's current and future development plans.

## CURRENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Updating and completing the inventory of cultural and historic resources was completed in 2015. A total of 368 structures and 2 archeological sites were identified. These are either included or eligible for nomination to the Virginia Landmarks Registry and National Register of Historic Places. Many of these are eligible for further measures of preservation.

The award-winning James River Water Trail runs through the heart of the Town and is accessed from the Town Park. The town is four miles from the Blue Ridge Parkway, Appalachian Trail, and Glenwood Horse Trail. The area surrounding the town offers opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, and outdoor recreation. The Town is very active in making improvements to the Town Park by expanding the land along the river, developing the playground, upgrading the stage, and improving the sidewalk system to connect with the Swinging Bridge. Outdoor recreation is considered a key to future development in the Town.

The Town has made efforts to maintain the downtown historic district. Currently a Main Street Affiliate, efforts are underway to further explore involvement in this Program. Zoning, Historic Tax Credits, recognition programs, and other incentives are being used or considered to assist with business development.

The Town is the recipient of a federal Recreation Economy for Rural Communities grant. The report on this is completed and available on the Town website. Implementation of the goals outlined in this report will be an important objective of the Town over the next five years. Critical infrastructure including parks, trails, signage, and necessary links will be critical. Marketing the plan, continued downtown revitalization, and support for existing and new business will be vitally important.

The Town continues efforts to support development and adaptive reuse of structures. Currently an old button factory building is being converted into 22 new market rate apartments and a brewery that has recently opened.







Photo from StarCity SkyCams

## TOWN GOVERNMENT AND SERVICES

The Town provides a range of services to its citizens, including water and wastewater, parks and recreation; and financial and administrative services. The town operates under the Council-Manager form of government (as defined by Charter). The Town is governed by a five-member Town Council, elected at large for two-year terms. Elections are held every year with terms staggered. The Mayor presides over meetings of the Council and has a vote. The Town Council is the legislative, policy-making body for the town government. It enacts ordinances, adopts the annual budget, appropriates funds, sets tax rates, establishes policies, and adopts plans for town growth and development.

The Town Council appoints the Town Manager as the administrative head of the Town. The Town has 6 full time employees including the Town Manager, Town Treasurer, and Town Clerk. Both the water and wastewater plants are operated by a private contractor. Water is provided by a series of wells. Trash collection is provided by the Town. Property maintenance, water and wastewater, and garbage collection report to the Town Manager. The Director of Public Works position is vacant and will be evaluated by the new Town Manager.

The Town of Buchanan provides law enforcement through the Botetourt County Sheriff's Department. The Town contracts for an additional 40 hours per week of coverage. Fire protection is provided by the Buchanan Volunteer Fire Department and is part of the Botetourt County Fire and EMS system. Botetourt County also provides Library services and has a branch location on Main Street.

The Town of Buchanan has a balanced budget of \$1,269,175 for FY24 excluding utilities. The Water and Sewer budget totals an additional \$365,700.



## THE POSITION

The Town Council appoints the Town Manager to act as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town. The Town Manager serves at the pleasure of the Council, carries out its policies, and directs business procedures. This person is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the town government and manages and supervises all departments, agencies, and offices of the town, except the Town Attorney, who reports directly to the Council. The Town Council also appoints the Town Clerk who reports to the Town Manager. The Town Manager is responsible for developing, and upon adoption by the Council, implementing the annual operating and capital budgets. The Town Manager recommends policies and priorities for the Council's consideration and leads the Town workforce in delivering services and responding to citizen issues or concerns. The Town Manager serves officially as the Director of Planning and Zoning, Zoning Administrator, Subdivision Agent and Floodplain Manager. The Town Manager also serves as liaison between the Town Council, regional, state, and local agencies and authorities, and community organizations.

## ISSUES, CHALLENGES, & OPPORTUNITIES

1. A top issue for the Town is implementation of the Recreation Economies for Rural Communities (RERC) study. The Town sees development of tourism and its assets as key to its future economic health. This may include improvements to the Town Park, linkage to the Appalachian Trail, National Forest, and Blue Ridge Parkway.
2. Town utilities are operated by a private company. The Town wastewater infrastructure requires significant attention. Upgrading the Town wastewater treatment plant will be essential in the near future. Study will need to be completed on this upgrade and funding sources explored. In addition, the Town will need to review the private contracts and determine future management structure and staffing.
3. The Town is currently a Main Street Affiliate community. Working with the business community, the Town is exploring how to take full advantage of this status and how to move towards full Main Street status.
4. The Town Council currently serves two-year staggered terms and believes moving to four-year staggered terms would benefit the town by increasing stability on the Council. This would require a Charter change. In addition, several vague or conflicting Charter sections should be reviewed and recommended Charter changes developed.
5. The Comprehensive Plan and Town Code will need to be reviewed and updated. In addition, the Town will need to modernize its technical capabilities. Many Town records are not adequately organized and maintained. This would include the need to purge old records per Virginia Library standards.
6. Staffing is a critically important need of the town. Hiring and retaining qualified employees is a key goal of the Council. The new Town Manager will need to review and develop a new Pay Plan as well as fill several positions.





## QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION, & EXPERIENCE

- A combination of education and experience equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration, Master's degree preferred.
- Three (3) years of managerial and administrative experience in municipal government, including experience in a senior management (department head) position is highly preferred.
- Good financial and/or risk management skills and grant expertise, a preference for budgeting experience and leadership is desired.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the principals and practices of public administration, local government finance, public works, and economic development. An understanding of the statutory authority and requirements of municipalities. Local government experience in Virginia is desirable.
- Ability to analyze problems and make sound recommendations; speak and write effectively; establish and maintain effective working relationships with Council, employees, the public, other governments, contractors, and the media.
- Ability to interpret federal, state, and local ordinances, rules, and regulations.
- Ability to multi-task; address strategic priorities of Council; and make oral and written presentation.
- Skilled in general office environment, including use of computers.

## PERSONALITY TRAITS AND DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Leadership style demonstrating ability to work for and with Town Council.
- Demonstration of good communication skills, both oral and written.
- Ability to be an example and lead the community while delegating as appropriate.
- Skilled in project management, grant writing and administration.
- Strong critical thinking skill with the ability to be a self-starter while being able to do things right the first time.
- Absolute integrity, ensuring ethical, equitable, honest, fair and open interaction.
- Be present at Town activities and events; meet with individuals and groups as needed with a desire and ability to bring people together.
- Professionally competent: approachable, compassionate, empathetic, fair, and with a good sense of humor.
- A role model and mentor for Town employees; able to empower and support employees with a focus on performance and accountability while building a competent staff team.







## PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Immediate ability to engage with staff, Town Council, community leaders, and residents; review Town budget, structure, policies and procedures, and to get up to speed on active projects.
- Evaluate and prioritize infrastructure needs and projects within water and wastewater, including timelines, funding sources, and contracts.
- Evaluate and prioritize RERC study and projects, including timelines and funding sources.
- Review and evaluate needs for changes to Comprehensive Plan and Town Code.
- Work with Town Council to review Town Charter, including time frame for submittal to state legislator.
- Be available and responsive to citizen concerns and issues; encourage citizen engagement and inclusion.
- Maintain strong, consistent, and equal communications with the Town Council.
- Conduct effective communications with all stakeholders presenting information in understandable form with a commitment to open and transparent government.
- Be an active and visible representative of the Town, building relationships with citizens and businesses and by being present at public events.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Consideration of compensation will be dependent on qualifications and experience. The successful candidate will be offered a generous benefit package including participation in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), health insurance coverage, paid time off, professional development costs, and other benefits as identified in a negotiated employment agreement. The salary range is \$85,000-\$110,000.





## APPLICATION PROCESS

**A formal review of applications will begin June 14th, 2024** 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 e-mail at [doug.walker@bgllc.net](mailto:doug.walker@bgllc.net). Questions may be directed to:

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For Additional Information, please visit [www.buchanan-va.gov](http://www.buchanan-va.gov)

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