



Wilson, North Carolina



Invites Your Interest in the Position of
**Downtown and Business Development
Manager**



With one of the largest downtown footprints in North Carolina, the [City of Wilson, NC](#) is primed for significant downtown and business development. The department director has overseen the downtown and business development responsibilities, but growth dictates the creation of a new role to focus on strategic alignment with goals. The *new position* of **Downtown and Business Development Manager (Manager)** will focus on creatively and strategically leading the community through a season of growth and opportunity. The City of Wilson seeks a professional who:

- has a successful track record in downtown, commercial corridor, and historic business district redevelopment and knowledge of public-private partnerships, business ecosystem development, entertainment district management, urban marketrate, workforce and affordable housing mix, adaptive reuse, urban design, special events, and revitalization in general;
- is experienced in attracting investment that drives growth and greater equity in the community, as well as creatively and strategically marketing, activating, and transforming geographic areas to serve as destinations for relocation, business opportunity, recreation, active living, and tourism;
- is highly effective in leading boards, committees, and community groups, and garnering grassroots support and involvement in redevelopment;
- is a visionary leader and seasoned manager who effectively leads and inspires talented staff with a collaborative, relationship-building mindset;
- is a seasoned collaborator known for working effectively with diverse groups – elected officials, community members, internal departments, business and property owners, nonprofit leaders, developers, contractors, etc.;
- is a skilled project and events manager who can see things through from inception to completion, track impact, and show tangible results;
- communicates thoroughly and intentionally, and is confident in advocating and conveying needs, vision, and priorities positively and constructively to city staff, downtown and business district leadership, the City Council, and community stakeholders, etc.;
- is customer-service focused and a naturally empathic person committed to utilizing effective problem-solving solutions and enhancing cohesion across stakeholders; and,
- leads with a diversity, equity, and inclusion perspective - is trained and skilled in effectively navigating implicit bias, actively listens, and helps bridge gaps between divisive perspectives to unite stakeholders around a shared common vision.

As a result of restructuring within the city's Planning and Community Revitalization department, this new position will enhance the groundwork laid by the department's Planning and Community Revitalization Director and work collaboratively to execute strategic initiatives for Historic Downtown Wilson and key commercial corridors and historic business districts. This position supervises the downtown development and business development divisions in support of the department. The **Manager** will also serve as the downtown manager of a NC Main Street community and help support the Wilson Downtown Development Corporation and Wilson Downtown Properties nonprofit organizations, which are critical partners in the downtown revitalization effort.

About the Organization, Department, and Position:

The City of Wilson, which operates under a Council/Manager form of Government, is led by a Mayor and seven council members. The City Manager is the city's chief executive officer and manages the day-to-day operations of 15 departments and over 700 employees. The City of Wilson is well-managed and has several high-performing and award-winning departments, including accredited Police, Fire, and Parks and Recreation Departments, and the Downtown Development division. Wilson Energy, which serves 35,000 customers in a five-county region, is a Reliable Public Power Provider and is consistently recognized for first-in-class reliability.

The city's recently completed [Wilson Growing Together: The 2043 Comprehensive Plan](#) guides future development and growth within Wilson and addresses many key issues, including growing intentionally, connecting people and places, fostering vibrant neighborhoods, promoting economic prosperity, conserving green places, creating active and thriving communities, plan implementation, and community engagement. The city's [FY 24-25 proposed budget](#) is \$271.8MM. Property taxes are budgeted at a rate of \$.052 per \$100 valuation, and the downtown Municipal Service Districts 1 and 2 are budgeted at a rate of \$0.018 per \$100 valuation.

Reporting to the Planning and Community Revitalization Director, the **Downtown and Business Development Manager** will oversee a budget of approximately \$1MM and lead five employees across two divisions—downtown development and business development. These divisions have been in existence for 15 and 3 years, respectively. Wilson's downtown program is nationally accredited by Main Street America and is an active member of the North Carolina Main Street Program and the North Carolina Downtown Development Association. [Historic Downtown Wilson](#) has grown tremendously, seeing both public and private investment increase by leaps and bounds annually. With over 50 buildings in the process of redevelopment or future construction, along with the creation of a new minor league baseball stadium, adjacent hotel, and mixed-used project, Wilson's downtown area is poised for success. With plans to follow a similar model, the business development division is working to revitalize surrounding commercial corridors and historic business districts, including redeveloping the old Parkwood Mall site into a mixed-use center. This position's malleable work is for the flexible professional who can quickly adapt and change plans based on internal and external factors. This position will also work collaboratively with the Planning and Community Development Manager and the long-range planning and community development divisions, as projects and programs often are multidisciplinary.

Collaboration is vital among all departments and divisions in the city. The city's Development Services department interfaces with this position when new development is planned and permitted. This **Manager** collaborates with the planning and community development divisions on workforce and affordable housing issues and neighborhood revitalization strategies in areas where business districts and established neighborhoods meet.

The **Manager** will work closely with the Wilson Downtown Wilson Development Corporation (WDDC), a non-profit organization partnering to revitalize Historic Downtown Wilson using the Main Street 4-Point Approach. In addition, the **Manager** will work closely with WDDC's sister organization, Wilson Downtown Properties (WDP), a nonprofit organization partnering to revitalize Historic Downtown Wilson through property rehabilitation. The WDDC and the WDP are each governed by a Board of Directors comprised of downtown business owners, property owners, non-profit leaders, downtown residents, citizens, and city and county representatives.





Working in partnership with the city and county, all members of both WDDC and WDP share a passion for revitalizing the heart of the city. The **Manager** will also work closely with the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park and Museum nonprofit organization and its Board members - community leaders and city representatives dedicated to its mission. This organization owns and maintains the 30 large-scale, kinetic whirligig sculptures in the park and oversees programs and activities, including educational opportunities, events, festivals, the Farmers & Artisan Market, and the park's museum and gift shop.

Key Position Priorities:

- Enthusiastically learn the history, culture, and structure of the organization, department, and community. Demonstrate the dignity and worth of the community's diverse members through consistent visibility within the community and sustainable relationship building with all stakeholders, including potential and current investors, downtown residents, business and property owners, and those involved with the future sports complex such as the private development company, baseball team, and adjacent hotelier.
- Evaluate the community and organization's assets and opportunities, including infrastructure primed for revitalization and areas of downtown and adjoining neighborhoods for redevelopment. Advocate for updates to organizational and departmental systems, policies and procedures, and structural changes to ensure efficient and effective practices that enhance workflow and collaboration.
- Identify and solidify the responsibilities and direction of the downtown development and business development divisions. Work collaboratively to implement the strategic downtown and corridor development plans to achieve the city's vision of elevating Wilson as a community of choice and Historic Downtown Wilson and surrounding commercial areas as vibrant destination places for business development, active living, and tourism while preserving its hometown's comfort and high-quality life.
- Intentionally engage with staff and build a highly effective team that embraces a collaborative, goal-driven work environment while positioning the department for growth through cross-training, staff development, and accountability.

Qualifications:

A bachelor's degree in urban planning, economic development, business and/or public administration, planning, community development, or a similar degree level of study and/or appropriate certification **is required**. A master's degree is preferred. A minimum of five years of experience in the economic, downtown, commercial corridor, and business district development, or related fields, with a proven track record of successful plan, project, and program creation, implementation, and management, and three years of supervisory experience **are required**. An equivalent combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the duties will be considered. Residency within the city limits is preferred for this position but not required.

About the Community:

The City of Wilson was incorporated in 1849 and is located on the eastern seaboard along Interstate 95 in NC. It is the largest municipality in Wilson County and serves as the county seat. The city, once known as the World's Greatest Tobacco Market, covers nearly 33 square miles of land and is just 40 miles from the state's capital, Raleigh. Today, Wilson enjoys a diverse economy, including a healthy mix of more than 1800 private businesses in biotech, agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, commercial, and service industries. Wilson is home to several major companies, including Bridgestone Americas, Collins UTC Aerospace Systems, Truist Bank, Merck, Novartis, Fresenius Kabi, BD Medical, Purdue Pharmaceuticals, Sandoz Pharmaceuticals, Alliance One Tobacco, United Technologies, Duke-LifePoint Healthcare, and Linamar, with recent announcements of Fed-Ex and Schott Pharma.

In addition to employment, Wilson has worked hard to be a community of choice. The city's investment in state-of-the-art recreational facilities creates outstanding leisure and recreational opportunities for residents. These facilities have attracted youth baseball and soccer teams to play in national and regional tournaments. A hallmark of Wilson is Greenlight, the City's state-of-the-art, fiber-to-the-premise system that provides customers with affordable data, voice, and video services. Since its inception in 2008, Greenlight has grown to provide services to more than 13,000 customers. Greenlight was the first service provider in the state to offer Gigabit Fiber-to-the-Home service, making Wilson "North Carolina's Gigabit City," boasting some of the fastest internet speeds in the United States.

Wilson's nearly 50,000 community members love the city's friendly neighborhood culture, annual festivals, and events that connect the community, and the abundance of parks, walking trails, and lakes to explore. They appreciate Wilson's landscape and mild climate. Known for the best Eastern N.C.-style pork barbecue, Wilson's many restaurants highlight abundant offerings and are known to draw long lines and repeat customers.

Historic Downtown Wilson features excellent cuisine, craft beverages, unique treasures, custom furniture, handmade artisan goods, a vibrant art scene, a social district with lively entertainment, and a growing residential population. Wilson is also home to Barton College, a four-year, private, liberal arts college that provides nearly 1,200 undergraduate students and almost 80 graduate students with a strong academic focus and opportunities for leadership development. Wilson is also home to Wilson Community College, a two-year public institution that provides nearly 1,580 students with associate's and technical degrees and certifications.



Most notably, the Wilson City Council approved an estimated [\\$280 million development project](#) to be completed in Historic Downtown Wilson in Spring 2026. This project will feature a new downtown sports entertainment complex, which will house the Carolina Mudcats Minor League baseball team, to be renamed before their relocation to Wilson. A 100-room hotel, multi-family housing, and commercial development are also part of the plans for this significant development adjacent to the city's most renowned, award-winning, and unique destination, the [Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park](#). More information about the City can be found [here](#).



Benefits

Wilson's comprehensive benefits include but are not limited to:

- Health, dental and vision coverage
- Paid time off
- Shared leave
- Tuition assistance
- 401(k) Retirement plan with 5% employer contribution
- Employee Health and Wellness Center

For full Benefits information visit:
https://www.wilsonnc.org/residents/all-departments/human-resources/policy-manual/-folder-83#docan779_945_1070



Salary and Benefits

The salary range for this position is \$81,652.26 - \$143,242.93. Starting salary will depend on experience and qualifications. The city's comprehensive benefits package can be viewed [here](#).

To apply, please visit

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/developmentalassociates> and click on the **Downtown and Business Development Manager – City of Wilson, NC** title.

- All applications must be submitted online via the Developmental Associates application portal (link above) – NOT the city's employment application portal or any other external website.
- Resumes and cover letters must be uploaded with the application.
- Applicants should apply by **July 26, 2024**.
- Successful semi-finalists will be invited to participate in virtual interviews and skill evaluation interviews on **August 26-27, 2024**. Candidates are encouraged to reserve these dates for virtual meetings should they be invited to participate.
- Interviews with the leadership team will follow quickly at a subsequent time in person.
- Direct *inquiries* to hireing@developmentalassociates.com

The City of Wilson, NC, is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Developmental Associates, LLC manages the recruitment and selection process for this position. To learn more about our selection process, visit <https://developmentalassociates.com/client-openings/>, select "Client Openings," and scroll down to "Important Information for Applicants."

