



COUNTY MANAGER POSITION AVAILABLE
Apply by March 22, 2019

Welcome to Clay County!

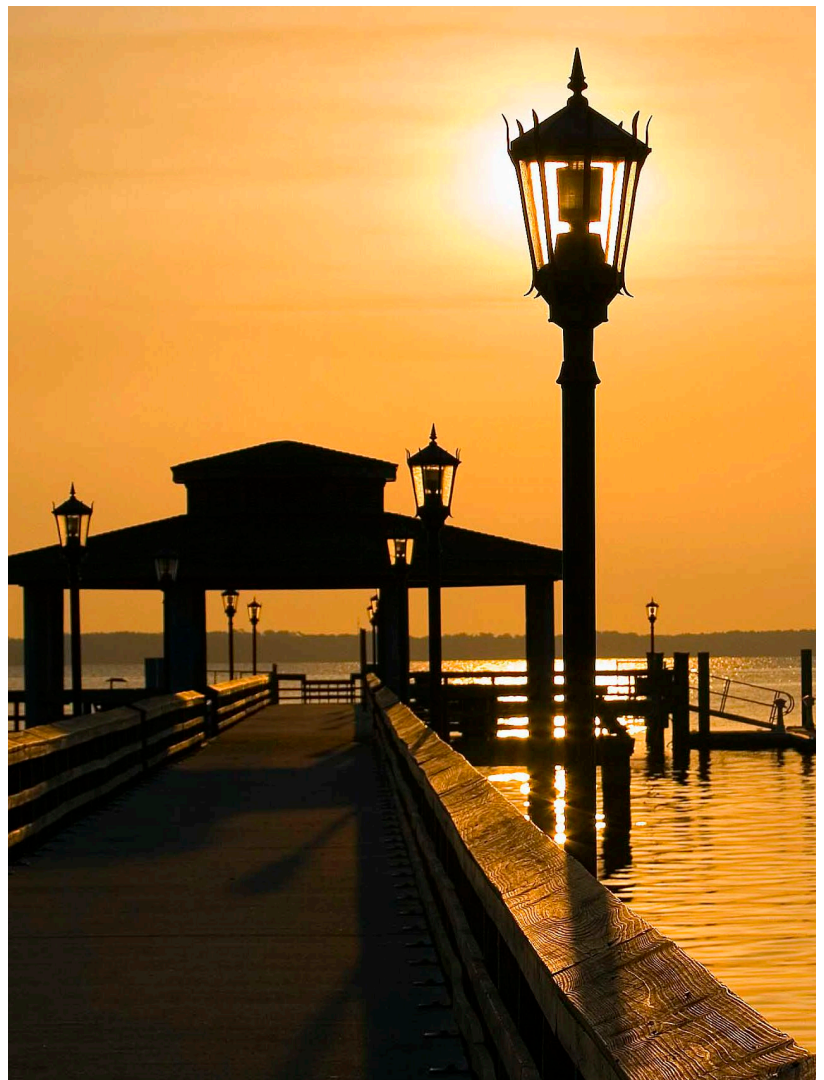
Located in Northeast Florida just south of Jacksonville, the dynamic and enticing Clay County is growing rapidly. It is in a great place now and moving towards an even brighter future! In 2000, its population was just over 140,000. Today the Census Bureau estimates it to be just over 200,000. Growth will not stop there—the excitement of anticipation is in the air! In less than ten years, an outer beltway around Jacksonville will be completed through the area. Developers are already capitalizing on the opportunity and new homes are beginning to sprout in the previously more rural south and southwestern parts of the County.

People are drawn here by the County's excellent quality of life, many amenities, and superb climate. With an average year-round temperature of 68° F, the area is a welcoming place to



live and play. The beautiful and inviting St. Johns River, forming the County's eastern boundary, is home to the world's largest manatee population and provides many magnificent waterfront vistas! In addition, the Atlantic Ocean and its beaches are only 10 miles east. Recreational opportunities abound: boating, fishing, scuba diving, water skiing, sailing, canoeing and kayaking are among some of the favorites. Clay County also thrives with some of the area's finest golf courses, walking and bicycling trails, tennis courts, and public parks.

With a stellar location, one can enjoy day trips in any direction! To the southeast lies fabled St. Augustine with its rich history. Approximately 30 miles to the northeast is downtown Jacksonville, FL, and its cultural and sporting venues. Daytona Beach (home to the "World's Most Famous Beach," NASCAR, and Bike Week) is 90 minutes southeast. Orlando with Disney World, Universal Studios, Sea World and its other attractions is two hours to the south. The city of Savannah, GA, is two and a half hours north and Atlanta is just over five hours northwest. Travel is relatively easy from Clay County. Jacksonville offers an excellent international airport while good service is also available from Daytona Beach. A bit further away are Orlando International and Sanford/Orlando International. The Port of Jacksonville offers some cruises, and Port Canaveral (2 hours south) is the world's second largest cruise port, behind Miami and ahead of Ft. Lauderdale's Port Everglades.



What makes the County special is its quality of life. In addition to the excellent recreational activities, the County's schools are very good and housing comes in many varieties. The northeastern portion of the County is suburban while the southern and western areas are rural (although, as noted, that is beginning to change). Most important, though, are the people. They are warm, friendly, low key and pleasant with strong conservative values. Neighbors help neighbors and crime is very low.

Clay County is simply a great place to raise a family, to work and to play. In fact, one of its more prominent cities, Orange Park, was named in Sperling's top 100 Best Places to Raise Your Family in 2009. The area has also been recognized as a Best for Just Plain Fun, Best for Water Sports, and Best Warm-All-Winter Places. In other words, you will not want to miss this opportunity to become our next County Manager!

HISTORY

The recorded history of Clay County begins with the Timucuan Indians. They were the early inhabitants of the region. However, in 1728, they were virtually wiped out by the British and their allies, the Lower Creek and Seminole Indians. Shortly thereafter the Spanish built a fort at a little north of what is now the county seat, Green Cove Springs. Except for a 20-year period beginning in 1763 when the British controlled Florida, the Spanish oversaw the area from 1730 to 1819. The United States then purchased Florida under the Adams-Onís Treaty.

The Second Seminole War started in 1835 and Gary's Ferry (the site of present-day Middleburg) was chosen as

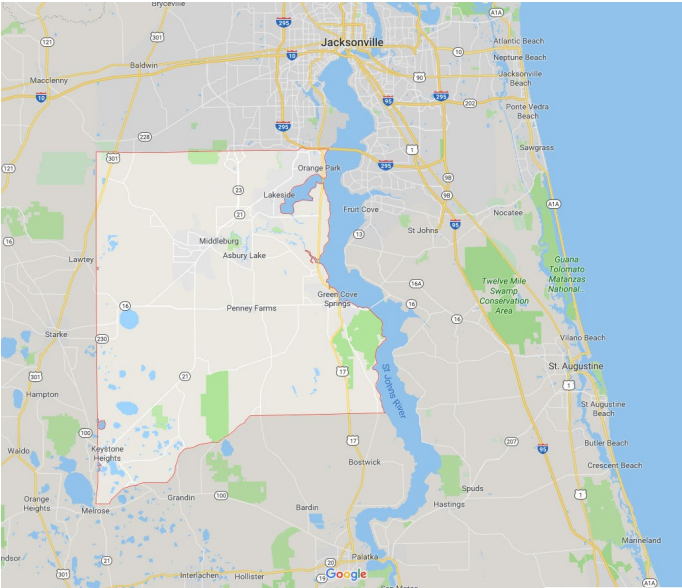
a supply depot for the U.S. Army on Florida's east coast. In 1858, Clay County was carved out of Duval County (where Jacksonville lies). In mid-1864, Union forces established a fort at Magnolia Springs on the St. Johns River where they could send troops to apply pressure to Confederate forces located within the county.

After the Civil War, tourism became a vital part of Clay County life. Northerners were drawn to its natural springs that promised healing and to the warm winter climates that offered respite from frigid northern winters. The tourists delighted in the wildlife and vegetation found along the banks of the creeks and rivers. Dozens of hotels were built to accommodate the visitors who came by steamboat. Hotels such as the St. Elmo, Magnolia Springs, Clarendon, and the Oakland invited tourists to rest and relax in the sunny climate of Florida. Families along the St. Johns River opened their plantation homes to northern visitors (including Ulysses S. Grant, President Grover Cleveland—who liked the area's spring water so much that he had it transported all the way to the White House!—Buffalo Bill and Sitting Bull). The height of tourism in Clay County spanned three decades, from the 1870's to the early 1900's. Tourism in Clay County went into decline when Henry Flagler's railroad reached Miami, and south Florida became easily accessible.

Particularly since World War II, the military has had a very strong presence in Clay County. In 1939, 28,000 acres on Kingsley Lake in central Clay County were purchased by the Florida National Guard as a new training site. In heavy use during WWII, Camp Blanding was not deemed a viable permanent post after the war. It does, however, continue as a training site for the Florida National Guard

with over 70,000 acres, and is home to the largest museum in Clay County.

GEOGRAPHY



The County covers 644 square miles and is bounded by the St. Johns River (and St. Johns County) to the east, Duval County to the north, Bradford and Baker Counties to the west and Putnam County to the south. The Atlantic Ocean lies ten miles to the east. The area is largely flat and approximately 16 feet above sea level.

CLIMATE

The climate is considered humid, subtropical with mild winters (average temperature of 52° F in January) and warm summers (average temperature of 82° F in July). Rainfall averages 52 inches per year and falls primarily during the period from June to September. While the seasons are not as dramatic as in the northern United States, the area does have climatic variation—unlike South Florida. Temperatures will drop below freezing from time

to time in the winter. Hurricanes tend to be rare in this part of Florida. The area had only received one direct hit since 1871 and that was Hurricane Dora, a category II hurricane, in 1964. In 2017, Hurricane Irma’s proximity caused heavy rainfall, storm surge along the waterways, and some flooding.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Clay County Demographics

Estimated Population: 212,230			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	80.8%	0 to 15	19.4%
Black	10.0%	15 to 25	13.1%
Asian	3.0%	25 to 45	25.1%
Native American/ Pacific Islander	0.2%	45 to 65	27.9%
Two or More Races	6.0%	65 to 85	13.3%
Total	100%	Over 85	1.2%
Hispanic (all races)	9.3%		

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	91.1%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	23.7%

Other Statistics	
Median Age–Clay County	39.4
Median Age–U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	10.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

COMMERCE

Clay County is largely residential and many of its inhabitants commute to nearby Jacksonville/Duval County for employment. The County’s five largest employers include: Clay County School District (4,000 employees), Clay County government (over 1,000 employees), Orange Park Medical Center (950 employees), HCA Patient Account Services (560) and Clay Electric Cooperative (410). The County’s principal taxpayers are listed in Table 2 below.

Table II: Principal Tax Payers

Employer		Industry
Clay Electric Cooperative		Utility
Orange Park Mall LLC		Retail
Orange Park Medical Center Hospital		Medical
Invitation Homes		Property Management
Mid-America Apartments LP		Apartments
TECO Pipeline Holdings		Utility
Walmart Stores East LP		Retail
American Homes 4 Rent		Property Management
AT&T Florida		Utility
Guidewell Group		Health Care

THE GOVERNMENT

Clay County has its own charter and is organized similarly to most other counties around the country. The Board of County Commissioners sets policy and is composed of five members who serve staggered four-year terms. The Commission Chair is selected by the Commission from among its members. Each member represents a

district and only the voters of that district can vote for that commissioner. Elections are held in November of even numbered years. No commissioner can serve more than two consecutive terms. In November 2020, one commissioner will be term limited, one will be completing his first term, two will be midway through their second terms, and the final commissioner will be halfway through his first term. Although elections are partisan, all the current Commissioners are Republican, as are a large number of the County’s voters. The County is conservative and has slightly more Republicans than the total number of independents and Democrats combined. Although they do not agree on everything, the County Commission is very collegial and its members work well together. They respect and support the staff. The County Sheriff (separately elected) provides police services. Other constitutional officers include: Clerk of the Courts, Property Appraiser, Supervisor of Elections and Tax Collector.

The Board of Commissioners appoints the County Attorney, Commission Auditor and the County Manager. The Attorney oversees the legal affairs of the County while the Manager oversees Economic Development (via a contract with the Economic Development Council), Finance and Administration, Comprehensive Planning and Zoning, Fire/Rescue, Human Services, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, Public Building Maintenance, Streets and Drainage, Solid Waste, Stormwater and Tourism. The County’s total budget is \$335.7 million and its general fund budget is \$81.6 million. The County employs a total of 614 people under the Board of County Commissioners. It has one union and two bargaining units: the International Association of Fire Fighters representing the Battalion Chiefs as well as the rank and file firefighters.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Clay County is a wonderful place but it is not without its challenges and opportunities. First and foremost is budget/finance. The County's ad valorem tax revenues have only recently returned to their 2008 high. The lag resulted in a backlog of infrastructure needs (road, bridges, and drainage, in particular) estimated by some to exceed \$500 million. A related positive is the County is debt free. The second challenge/opportunity is growth. As the coming outer beltway opens the southern and western parts of the county for development, plans need to be made to expand standard county services (parks, utilities, roads, drainage, police, fire, etc.). As embodied by our branding tag line of **SMALL TOWNS, BIG PASSIONS**, protecting the quality of life and small town feel for current residents in the face of this growth will be a challenge. Further, the needs that accompany growth will only add to the financial pressures. Economic development would be one way to relieve the pressure but the county historically has not been overly successful in this area. A third challenge/opportunity is to work with the local municipalities to move the County as a whole forward, working together to solve the overall needs of the County. The fourth challenge is the recent passage of Amendment 10 to the Florida Constitution which will require the County's Finance and Auditor roles be integrated into the Clerk of the Court's Office. While that structure is typical in Florida—the Clerk tends to act as the organization's comptroller, it will be new to Clay County. Presumably some of the Finance and Auditor staff will transition to the role of an Office of Management and Budget Department. Another challenge is, in the growing economy, county salaries have not kept pace and this will be vital for attracting new employees as well as the retention

of staff. Finally, the County would like to do more in terms of succession planning to better position itself for the upcoming opportunities.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Clay County is seeking a strong leader to partner with the Commission to take the County into the future. The individual will be an advisor yet also recognize he/she works for the Commission. He/she will be not just responsive but is on top of issues, programs, and projects. The Commissioners expect the individual will keep them fully informed and their information needs are fully met, without them having to ask. The individual will find solutions to problems and encourage others to do so. It cannot be done is not an acceptable, initial answer. If the first or suggested approach does not work, the Manager will strive diligently to find innovative methods that gets the County to same place.

The County is seeking an outstanding, professional manager who is inclusive, intelligent, upbeat, relentlessly positive, progressive, approachable, open, honest, transparent and highly ethical. He/she will be visionary and suggest ideas/options to the Commission while always deferring to its decisions. At the same time, he/she will be independent and not be afraid to speak truth to power at the right time and in the right setting. Politics will be something the individual understands but is not involved with; that is, someone who knows how to navigate the boulders just below the surface and to get the job done.

The ideal candidate will think strategically, be a consensus builder and have excellent people skills. Building effective



working relationships with individuals and bureaucracies as well as the private sector and the public will be vital. To this end, tact and excellent negotiation skills will be needed. The County Manager will also need to be in the community being accessible and serving as a face of the County.

The County Manager will have a presence and excellent communications. The individual must have outstanding people skills and will be equally comfortable speaking to elected officials as to the “man on the street”. While the County will be developing a public relations unit, the individual being comfortable with the media is a strong plus. He/she will be customer service oriented and set the tone—leadership starts at the top.

The County’s staff is strong and capable. Its directors are by and large experts in their fields. The County Manager will not need to micromanage but rather will provide general direction concerning the efforts necessary to achieve the Board’s vision, mentor and encourage initiative and creativity. In other words, the individual will not just let department directors to do their jobs but challenge them to do so. At the same time the ideal candidate will be informed and hold the staff accountable for results, for meeting targets and goals.

The County Manager will be progressive, achievement oriented, analytical and

solution-driven. The individual will be constantly, while diplomatically, challenging accepted practice to determine if there is a better way. The County seems to function relatively well overall. On the other hand, a fresh set of eyes may be able to identify the means to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Strong organizational skills will be necessary and being technologically astute is a strong plus.

The ideal candidate will see over the horizon, anticipating upcoming issues as well as the consequences of possible alternatives. He/she will be decisive and work with a sense of urgency.

The position requires a Bachelor's degree with an emphasis in Public or Business Administration or a related field. A Master's degree is preferred. Candidates should have at least seven years of senior level management experience in public or business administration, preferably within local government, as a City/County Manager or Assistant City/County Manager with agencies of similar size and complexity.

Expertise in growth management, infrastructure, transportation, and finance (ideally, being able to rub two nickels together and get a quarter) are required. Success in economic development and experience with emergency management coordination are pluses.

This job will be challenging, time consuming and, at times, frustrating. The ideal candidate will need to bring an enthusiasm and passion to the job. Hence, candidates seeking a soft place to land should look elsewhere. The County also has a strong desire to find someone who will commit for the long-term. For the right person, this job

will be very satisfying and very rewarding. The County has tremendous potential and needs the right appointed leadership to help take it forward.

RESIDENCY

Under state law, the County Manager is required to live with the County's boundaries.

THE MOST RECENT COUNTY MANAGER

The most recent County Manager left the County after seven years to join the recently elected Governor Ron DeSantis' administration as the Director of Legislative Affairs.

COMPENSATION

The salary range is between \$165,000 and \$225,000 and the starting salary will depend on qualifications. The County Manager participates in the Florida Retirement System in the Senior Management category. Other benefits associated with the position are excellent.

HOW TO APPLY

Qualified candidates should e-mail their resumes and cover letters to Recruit22@cb-asso.com (faxed or mailed resumes will not be accepted) by March 22, 2019. All questions should be addressed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or Lynelle Klein at (561) 578-2096.

RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE

Applications will be screened between March 23rd and April 29th. Finalists will be selected on April 30th. Interviews are anticipated to be conducted on May 9th and 10th with a selection made shortly thereafter.

OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES

Under Florida law, all applications become a public record upon receipt by Colin Baenziger & Associates. The County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a drug-free workplace. Veteran's preference will be awarded if applicable under Florida law.

