



# Welcome to the city of **Dickinson, North Dakota**

**Deputy City Administrator Position - Open Until Filled**



*Approximate Population: 22,322*

Dickinson, North Dakota, might not be a city that has been well known in the past; however, it is a city to know now and watch! It is one of the fastest growing micropolitan cities in the USA, ranked as the Best Small Town by Livability.com (2013). It is also known as the home of Dickinson State University. Centrally located in southwestern North Dakota, it is the midpoint between Fargo, North Dakota, and Billings, Montana.

Dickinson is the gateway to Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The Badlands, which are part of the Park, start approximately 15 miles west of Dickinson, and it is only 30 minutes to the main entrance of the Park, presenting a myriad of exploring opportunities. If you want to see Mount Rushmore, travel south to Rapid City, arriving in just over 4 hours (via smaller highways). If you want to travel to Canada, the border is only 3.5 hours north.



The City is less than an hour's drive from Lake Sakakawea, the largest of the mainstream reservoirs on the Missouri river, and which has many recreation resources and wonderful fishing in the area. Due to the strategic location of the City, and the resulting regional social and economic influence, it has been known for decades as "Queen City of the Prairies"! It now is also branded by its modern nickname, 'The Western Edge' due to its strategic location at the western edge of the state.

The area has one of the nation's strongest economies due to the diverse resources of agriculture, energy (coal, ethanol, natural gas, oil, and uranium), national and international manufacturing, and tourism. Dickinson and was given the honorary position of #1 Strongest Micropolitan Economy by POLICOM Corporation in 2015.

Dickinson is a destination community for entertainment and cultural events including: Roughrider Days, the Ukrainian Ethnic Festival, Dickinson State University Campus Activities, Alive at 5 (which pulls in thousands for their summer concerts), Rodeos, Museums, Specialty Vehicle Shows, Car Races, and Concert Series, to name just a few. For those who love the outdoors, one can enjoy world class bird and big-game hunting (mountain lion, deer, elk, and rams), fishing (salmon, pike, sturgeon, bass and blue gill), camping, winter and summer sporting activities, hiking, biking and equestrian trails.

The newest jewel in the city that draws the community together, is the West River Community Center. This amazing full-service center of 132,000 square feet is filled with venues to enjoy: water recreation, gymnasiums, racquetball, a fitness center, a climbing wall, a community room, tennis courts, golf, a playground, and a track. Nearby is the West River Ice Center which has two arenas with



seating capacity up to 1,300. The arenas are used for indoor ice activities from October to March, also hosting the Dickinson Hockey Club. During the off-season, the arenas are used to host special events such as trade shows, sports shows, circuses, and more.

For more recreational enjoyment, go to the Heart River Golf Course, an 18-hole, par 72 layout that is nestled along the scenic Heart River, with numerous panoramic views of Patterson Lake. These beautiful surroundings provide golfers with just the right blend of atmosphere and relaxation. One will also enjoy the Patterson Lake Recreational Area, located three miles west and one mile south of Dickinson. The area is used for boating, fishing, swimming, water skiing, camping, picnic areas, playgrounds, disc golf, horseshoe pits, mountain biking, nature areas, and sand volleyball courts.

Plenty of restaurants will whet the appetite including casual, upscale, organic, and more – something for everyone. Ethnic foods are a local favorite, and we suggest you try the flavor of Dickinson's first settlers, which might include a dish from the Ukrainian culture, or the German borscht at several of the local establishments.

Also around town, you'll enjoy the Dickinson Area Public Library, which was originally a Carnegie Library. It has been recently restored and expanded preserving the look and feel of the original structure. The library also offers Bookmobile services to Stark, Billings and Slope Counties.

Another popular place to visit is The Dickinson Dinosaur Museum. Visitors will also find a complete Triceratops skull, discovered just west of Dickinson. Fourteen other full-scale dinosaurs will be a highlight of any day-trip or extended vacation to the area. This 13,400 sq. ft. showcase also has an outstanding collection of minerals from around the world.

Many come to visit to Dickinson and recreate. The truest pleasure, however, is living here! Through all its growth, Dickinson has retained its small town feeling. The people are very friendly and welcoming. It recognizes the value of family and social life, with a large base of support for community projects that have resulted in development of

facilities and events that keep life exciting and interesting. It's not only a fun place to live, it was awarded the 3rd Happiest Place in North Dakota according to Zippia.com (2016)! North Dakota continues to be consistently ranked as the happiest state in the U.S.! Crime is very low and the schools are wonderful. You can choose from excellent public, Catholic or non-denominational Christian schools. A nice home can be purchased between \$250,000 - \$285,000.

So now you know what makes Dickinson so special: the people, incredible relationship between a healthy, thriving economy and its amazing quality of place and life! We invite you to join us in making Dickinson a world class city! Our ceiling is only as high as we want to make it.

## HISTORY

In 1880, Pleasant Valley Siding was the small area where the Northern Pacific Railroad reached a wide valley on the Heart River, halfway between the Missouri River and the Montana Territory border. As construction crews for the railroad pushed westward, Pleasant Valley Siding was set up along the tracks to serve as a way station.

Wells S. Dickinson was in charge of land grants for the North Pacific Railroad, and one of Pleasant Valley's first visitors in the fall of 1881. Later that fall, his cousin, H.L. Dickinson, also visited the prairie outpost. Both realized the great opportunities available, and after making their stakes, the town claimed their name. On October 6th, the first post office was established in Dickinson, North Dakota.

Development and growth came quickly to the small town. By the end of 1882, there were almost 100 different buildings of all sizes, shapes and colors spread out along the railroad tracks. Buffalo hunters used the rail depot to ship out bales of hides, and merchants came with their provisions. On May 30, the area was formally organized into the Stark County of the Dakota Territory. Dickinson became an established city that year. The building that housed the newspaper was used as the first courthouse until a new one was built in 1886.



The Dickinson area experienced agricultural as well as business growth throughout the 1880's. Records show that about 1,219 carloads of beef were sent via rail to the Chicago market, which represented about 26,818 head of cattle. This beef was sold for \$1,206,710, and raising stock became recognized as a viable and sound investment in southwest North Dakota.

Dickinson became the main trade center for a 100 mile radius. The large cattle outfits came for all their supplies, and shipped all of their stock out of the City. At this same time, those in farming realized the potential for hard wheat, and more and more immigrants arrived to take on the challenge of raising grain for a living.

Statehood was achieved for North and South Dakota in 1889. From this time onward immigrants arrived from every part of Europe. The new settlers gathered in communities of their own, providing a variety of cultural influences, with most coming to farm the land. By the end of 1910, Dickinson was the center of a golden circle of grain crops. Dairy farms, and raising of livestock also continued to grow. The Dickinson Horse Sales Company was one of the largest and best equipped in the country, selling thousands of horses a year, with buyers coming from every state. Dickinson had also become a center for the brick and pottery industry, as well as a shipping point for lignite coal.

By the time Dickinson was 30 years old, it had changed from a shanty town along the railroad tracks to a strong, healthy, bustling City. It had two flour mills, bottling warehouses, hotels and business places. It was a growing metropolis of the plains, and well deserved its title as "Queen City of the Prairies".

From that point forward, growth was steady until, in the early 2000's, when it became feasible to tap the shale oil in the Bakken Formation through oil fracking. Dickinson then found a new industry as it became a center for the oil industry. From 2010 to 2014 the U.S. Census estimates the City's population jumped from 17,787 to 22,322, a 25% increase. Available housing and public services were somewhat strained. The recent decline in oil prices has provided the area with the opportunity to regroup. It has

not dramatically impacted Dickinson, as the community also has a significant agricultural and manufacturing base.

## CLIMATE

Dickinson has a humid continental climate, with large seasonal temperature differences. The area has warm to hot (and often humid) summers, and cold (sometimes extreme) days during the winter season.

The daily average temperature for January, the coldest month, is 24°F for the high, and 6°F for the low. In July, the hottest month, the daily average is 84°F for the high, and 58°F for the low. On average, during the year temperatures reach 100°F for two days, 90°F for 22 days, and drop below 0°F for 32 days.

The average window for freezing temperatures is September 22 thru May 16, and for measurable snow (less than 0.1 inches), October 26 thru April 19. Due to the area being semi-arid, 24-hour snowfall is more than 3 inches only two or three days a year.

## GEOGRAPHY

Dickinson is the county seat of Stark County, and is the principal city of the Dickinson Micropolitan Statistical Area which covers Billings and Stark counties. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 10 square miles. Dickinson's municipal water supplies come from the nearby Lake Sacajawea to the southwest.

Close destinations to Dickinson include the North Dakota/Montana Border which is within an hour as you drive due west on I-94. As you continue traveling west, you will be in Billings, MT in 4.5 hours. Traveling east on I-94 for an hour and a half, you will reach Bismarck. Travel another 2.5 hours eastward and you'll be in Fargo, ND.

The Dickinson Theodore Roosevelt Regional Airport is served by United Airlines, offering convenient connections and daily departures to Denver, which then offers worldwide destinations. You can also catch a flight at the Bismarck Municipal Airport, which has five commercial airlines and provides direct service to seven destinations.

Table 1: Dickinson Demographics

2014 Estimated Population: 22,322			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
Caucasian	94.2%	0 to 15	19.2%
African American	1.0%	15 to 25	15.6%
Asian	1.5%	25 to 45	27.9%
Some Other Race	2.1%	45 to 65	23.6%
Total	100%	65 to 85	10.3%
Hispanic (all races)	2.1%	85 and Older	3.3%

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	90.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	25.2%

Other Statistics	
Median Age-Dickinson	34.7
Median Age-U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	12.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Delta, United, Frontier, American and Allegiant all fly from Bismarck to locations such as Minneapolis, Denver, Las Vegas, Phoenix/Mesa, and Orlando. The four major airlines also provide connections to both domestic and international destinations.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

See Table 1 above for Dickinson Demographics.

## COMMERCE

Very few places in the United States have experienced the up and down economics of western North Dakota over the past few years. The rapid flow of money into the region due to the Bakken Formation Shale Oil caused housing prices to jump and investors kept spending, well past the point

at which many locals pulled in the reins. The collapse of the shale oil industry was serious but caused more anxiety elsewhere than in Dickinson/Stark County. Over the years the area has watched grain and cattle prices rise and fall. As a result, they have been better prepared than some others. Further, the abundance of inexpensive equipment has led some oil companies with resources and foresight to continue drilling wells and capping them so they will be ready for the expected mini-boom in 2017. Local wells are among the best in the nation once oil returns to \$60/barrel.

Fortunately, the local economy is fairly diversified. As the Stark Development Corporation puts it, "Given our natural surroundings and our mid-continent location, economists are surprised to find successful manufacturers here of wood products (no forests here), baked and par-baked foods (no flour or egg suppliers nearby), water treatment machines (this is one of the driest parts of the US), and steel fabrication (not a foundry in sight)." Other companies make everything from aerospace components to pre-school curriculum kits.

Key local companies are TMI Cabinetry, Bakers Boys and Steffes. TMI started in 1969 to provide laminated casework products across the United States. Its campus now includes 150,000 square feet of production space and 30,000 of office space. Its sales topped \$50,000,000 annually in 2008. It has dealers in all 50 states.

Baker Boy started in 1979 in a 3,000 square foot facility producing 40 cases weekly of frozen dough products. It now operates a 135,000 square foot complex that produces over 70,000 cases of baked goods every week. Its output is high quality bakery items that go to restaurants, school and college meal programs, healthcare operations, in-store bakeries and retail bakeries.

Steffes began in the 1940s as a small manufacturing operation. From 1965 to 1985, it grew into a steel fabrication business, manufacturing replacement snowmobile skis, hopper-bottom storage bins, furniture frames, and a variety of custom designed equipment. Its people were known for their creativity and in the mid-1980's, Steffes produced the first American made electric thermal storage (ETS) heating unit. In 2007, Steffes Corporation entered the oil and gas



industry, and is now nationally recognized and provides manufactured products and technical services in areas such as: flare systems, automation and control systems, treater and separator systems, steel berms, walkways, stair cases, cattle guards, berm walkovers, and various other accessories.

New additions to the economy include retail, wholesale and business services which have arrived with the growing population. Health care expansions have included a new \$120 million hospital and a new super clinic. These have increased the diversity and have created a host of good paying jobs.

St. Joseph's Health is the regional medical center for Southwest North Dakota, as it is a Critical Access Hospital with a Level IV Trauma Center. Sanford Health Dickinson Clinic is a comprehensive clinic, uniting several Dickinson clinics under one roof, offering care in a variety of different specialties including Family Practice, Internal Medicine, Podiatry, General Surgery and Pediatric Care.

## THE GOVERNMENT

Dickinson follows the Commission / Manager form of government. The City Commission is nonpartisan and composed of five members. The Commission President and the four Commissioners are elected at-large and serve staggered, four year terms. Elections are held on the second Tuesday in June of even numbered years and members begin their terms on the fourth Tuesday. The Commission President and two Commissioners will run for office this June. All five Commission Members have one vote and the Commission President does not have veto power.

All the Commission Members care about their community and have the best interests of the City at heart. They have a high regard for the



city staff. The other elected official is the Municipal Judge. The position is part-time and has jurisdiction over traffic fines, infractions, administrative/non-criminal offenses, parking violations, and Class B Misdemeanors written on City codes.

The Commission appoints a City Administrator. He works for the City Commission to insure their plans and priorities are carried out by City staff. The City Administrator provides effective municipal services through the coordination and direction of all City finance and personnel activities. The City Administrator oversees the day to day functions of the city and coordinates the City departments including Police, Fire, Engineering, Finance, Assessing, Public Works (including streets, solid waste, stormwater, water and sewer), Library, and Museum. Other departments which have indirect involvement of the city administrator include: Airport, Public Transit and Municipal Court.

The City's General Fund budget for FY 2015-16 is approximately \$15 million and its total operating budget is \$36 million. The Capital Improvement Budget has averaged over \$100 million over the past four years. Overall, the City has about 200 employees. The largest single group is the Police Department with approximately 60 employees. The staff is very strong and works well together. The departments do not operate in silos as they do in so many cities.

As a result of the community's growth, city services and facilities needed to be expanded. These include, among others, a new 90,000 square foot public works facility, a new 45,000 square foot public safety facility and a new wastewater treatment plant. No doubt about it. Dickinson is on the move!

## THE POSITION

The Deputy City Administrator for Finance will oversee the Finance Department, Property Tax Assessment, Information Technology, the Library and the Museum. The individual will serve as its de factor finance director and be responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining a comprehensive financial management system for the City including centralized accounting, financial and budgetary

reporting. He/she will oversee accounts payable, budgetary preparation and compliance, cash and debt management, grants and fixed asset administration, payroll processing, and utility billing. The City uses Great Plains software as its financial system and QUESTICA for budgeting. In all, the position oversees the activities of approximately 35 staff members. It should also be noted that the City Administrator spends approximately 50% of his time away from the office on lobbying and other city activities. During these times, the Deputy City Administrator will serve as Acting City Administrator.

## OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The City of Dickinson is in a good place and its challenges are manageable. First, is the impact of growth. Prior to the boom, the City had no debt. With the additional demand for services, increased and improved facilities became a necessity. Now it has approximately \$100 million in debt. That debt is supportable but needs to be watched and managed carefully. Second, many staff members are new and energetic but need training and better role definition. The new Deputy City Administrator will need to make improvements in these areas. Third, the City has an amazing track record for finding grants and other sources of outside funding. For every dollar it spends on capital projects of its own money, it receives three dollars of other people's money. With that money, frequently come requirements that need to be tracked and satisfied. Overseeing grant management will be a large part of this job. Finally, the City wants to be certain every tax dollar is spent wisely and is accounted for. Consequently, the next Deputy will need to encourage the continuous analysis and improvement of city processes.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City is looking for a talented leader and manager with a track record of achievement. As a key member of the City's management team, the individual is expected to play a key role in taking the City to the next level. The next Deputy City Administrator will be action-oriented and progressive, someone who will partner with the City Administrator and staff to help Dickinson reach its goals. The individual will have a strong work ethic and be someone who can be



counted on to deliver. The individual will be honest and have great integrity, be energetic while being down to earth, a team player who is respectful and trustworthy. The City Administrator wants total transparency, expects complete information, and does not want any surprises. He tends to be a big picture thinker and depends on the Deputy to handle many of the details.

The best candidate will be an excellent communicator – both orally and in writing – and have excellent people skills. The individual will be someone who is open-minded and does not have preconceived ideas concerning the outcome. Rather, he/she will listen carefully, evaluate the options and make recommendations and take action based on the facts. The ideal candidate will address all situations in a tactful manner, but get them resolved. Customer service both within and outside the organization will be a top priority for the ideal candidate. He/she will show utmost respect for everyone including the citizens, employees, and high-level officials.

The best candidate will set realistic goals for his/her staff, provide the necessary resources and then allow them to see the project through. The individual will expect to be kept informed of targets to be achieved but not micromanage. Accountability will be important. The new Deputy City Administrator will be a mentor and someone who uses inspiration instead of intimidation. He/she will encourage employees to produce a first class work product. The individual will have a sense of humor and create an enjoyable work environment. He/she will encourage everyone around to find the joy in their work as well. Dickinson is a happy place!

The City is looking for someone who has good analytical skills, someone who will look at processes and ask not just why but also why not. “We have always done it this way,” will not be a satisfactory answer. Doing it that way may be the best way but everyone will need to know and understand why. Being technologically savvy is important. The City wants to take use of all the current tools to maximize productivity and disseminate information to the public.

As the individual will oversee finance, he/she will realize getting the numbers right every time is critical! That is what

the public expects and nothing will undermine the City’s credibility faster than inaccurate reports. The numbers also need to be understandable. When he/she produces reports, they must be explained – such as using explanatory text, tables, charts and footnotes, which would make sense to even those without financial background. Presentations must be clear and concise. The result should be that the public will realize tax money is being spent wisely.

The ideal candidate will have a strong background and proven track record in finance. A Bachelor’s Degree in accounting is preferred. Degrees in finance, business administration, or public administration will be considered. A Master’s Degree is preferred. Certification as a CPA or Certified Government Financial Officer is a plus. The ideal candidate should have knowledge of municipal finance administration and accounting principles & practices; investment fund management; municipal debt administration; risk management and insurance administration; budgeting; Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP); Experience producing budgets and certified annual financial reports is important. The ideal candidate will also have five to seven years of experience as a senior level finance official in government.

The selected candidate should plan to spend at least five years with the City. This position should not be viewed as a stepping stone but as a gem in its own right.

## COMPENSATION

The hiring salary range is \$101,500 to \$130,100 while the top of the range is actually \$158,700. Salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The City offers a combined contribution retirement program where the City and the employee both contribute 5% of the employees salary.

## THE MOST RECENT DEPUTY CITY ADMINISTRATOR

The current Deputy City Administrator has accepted another position closer to family.





## RESIDENCY

The Deputy City Administrator does not need to live in the City but must reside within a 30 minute drive of City Hall. As a practical matter, Dickinson is where the majority of the housing is located.

## HOW TO APPLY

Open until filled, screening resumes as they arrive. E-mail your resume to [Recruit22@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit22@cb-asso.com). Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or Lynelle Klein at (425) 658-7025.

## THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between June 4th and 17th. Finalists will be selected on June 13th. Interviews will be held and a selection made shortly thereafter.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The City of Dickinson is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information, see:

<http://www.dickinsongov.com/>

<http://www.starkdev.com/about-us/>

<http://www.dickinsonnd.com/>

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING