

TOWN OF  
**LADY LAKE**  
FLORIDA

— POSITION AVAILABLE —

**TOWN MANAGER** | Apply by December 18, 2020

## Welcome to the Town of Lady Lake

Located in central Florida approximately 40 miles northwest of Orlando and 70 miles northeast of Tampa, Lady Lake is known as the “Home of Lakes and Sunshine.” It offers an outstanding quality of life and many amenities. Opportunities for recreation and shopping are plentiful. The schools are very good, crime is low, and its residents are friendly. It is simply a great place to live, work and play!

Lady Lake is a place of contrasts. On the one hand, it is a bustling community. U.S. Highway 27/441 runs diagonally through the Town and the corridor is home to a myriad of commercial establishments—small business, chain stores, restaurants, and professional offices. Over 100,000 people lie within a ten-mile radius meaning Lady Lake has much more than you would expect for a community its size. On the other hand, a block off the main highway lie numerous quiet, peaceful residential neighborhoods set among the rolling countryside and large oak trees replete with Spanish moss. Lady Lake has two, large, age-restricted communities—Water Oak Country Club Estates and a portion of The Villages where approximately 74% of the Town’s population resides. To the immediate east of the Town (and to a lesser degree, the south and southwest) lies pasture, large lots, and rural countryside.



The area boasts a variety of indoor and outdoor activities including bowling alleys, golf courses, a softball complex, polo clubs, and places to walk and jog. Known for its lakes, the region is a great place for fishing, boating, lake boat tours, and airboat rides. A farmer's market takes place on Tuesday mornings. About 10 miles southwest Blue Moon Ranch offers horseback riding.

To the northwest is the Ocala National Forest, the second largest nationally protected forest in Florida. It covers 607 square miles with over 600 natural lakes and ponds. Established in 1908, it offers springs, streams, and lakes for fishing, canoeing, and water skiing. Swimming and snorkeling are popular in crystal-clear water of Juniper Springs, Alexander Springs, Salt Springs, and Silver Glen Springs. There you can observe numerous fish, underwater vegetation, and cavernous springs. Sixty-seven miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail stretches through the Forest. The Paisley Woods Bike Trail is a challenging 22-mile-long bike ride.

Fifteen minutes south lies Lake Griffin State Park. It covers 620 acres and is home to a 400-year-old oak tree. There you can kayak, canoe and hike. If you are very lucky, you might spot a raccoon, bobcat, coyote, or bear. Other local natural attractions are Lake Weir (15 minutes north where you can take a sunset cruise), and the Ocklawaha Prairie Restoration Area (30 minutes north)

If you prefer nightlife, some of the local hot spots are Spanish Springs Town Square with the World of Beer, McCall's Tavern, the Corkscrew Winery, and Gator's Dockside. Arts and culture can be found at the Lady Lake Historical Society Museum, Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center, and two miles to the east, the Grand Oak Resort where you will find equestrian events and carriage rides.

Being able to live here is the best part of Lady Lake. Residents are friendly and welcoming. Crime is minimal—fully 25% under the national average. Local medical care is excellent. The schools are well regarded. Better yet, the community is affordable. Three bedroom/two bath homes routinely sell for between \$150,000 to \$400,000. Older homes and fixer-uppers can cost less.

If you like the big city lights, it is about 40 miles to Orlando and 70 miles to Tampa. Both have numerous cultural attractions, many

options for entertainment, and excellent international airports. For family fun, Disney World, Universal Studios, and Sea World are about an hour away. Lesser known but a great place for young children is Legoland in Winter Haven, two hours to the south.

All in all, you will not find a better place to be the Town Manager so if you pride yourself on excellence, please dust off your resume and apply.

## History

Lady Lake owes its existence to the railroad which began to run from Ocala to Leesburg in 1884. The Town drew its name from a lake to the east, which legend has it was named by Native Americans for an unknown white woman they found drowned there.

The railroad meant a cheap and efficient way to get produce to market and the area began to flourish. The plat of the Town was signed in 1885 and the general store/post office and three-story hotel were constructed. In 1886-1887 a concerted effort was made to beautify the Town with the planting of oak trees along many of the streets. These have grown into the majestic oaks that line many of the streets today.

During the economic depression of the 1890's, many families from the north relocated to Lady Lake with the promise of cheap land. Turpentiners came for the pine forests to collect resin from and they set up a distillery. The Town was incorporated in 1925 and was known for its orange groves and watermelon fields.

In the late 1950's, Michigan native and entrepreneur Harold Schwartz thought he could sell Florida's sun-drenched land at a profit. He started with a development of about 100 mobile homes named Orange Blossom Gardens. Over time, the project evolved into a community oriented towards those over 55 and what is now The Villages. It is now primarily single family homes and many amenities including shopping, dining, entertainment, golf, and walking/biking paths.

## Demographics

See Table 1 on top of page 3 for more information on Lady Lake Demographics.

Table 1: Lady Lake Demographics

Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	89.2%	0 to 15	9.9%
Black	3.8%	15 to 25	5.2%
Asian	2.0%	25 to 45	14.8%
Two or More Races	4.3%	45 to 65	20.2%
Total	100%	65 to 85	43.1%
Hispanic Ethnicity (all races)	8.5%	85 +	6.8%
<b>Estimated Population: 15,754</b>			

Educational Achievement (Over Age 25)	
High School or Higher	90.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	22.0%

Other Statistics	
Median Age—Lady Lake	64.8
Median Age—U.S.	37.8
Median Household Income	\$41,665
Median Household Income—U.S.	\$61,937
Poverty Rate	14.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

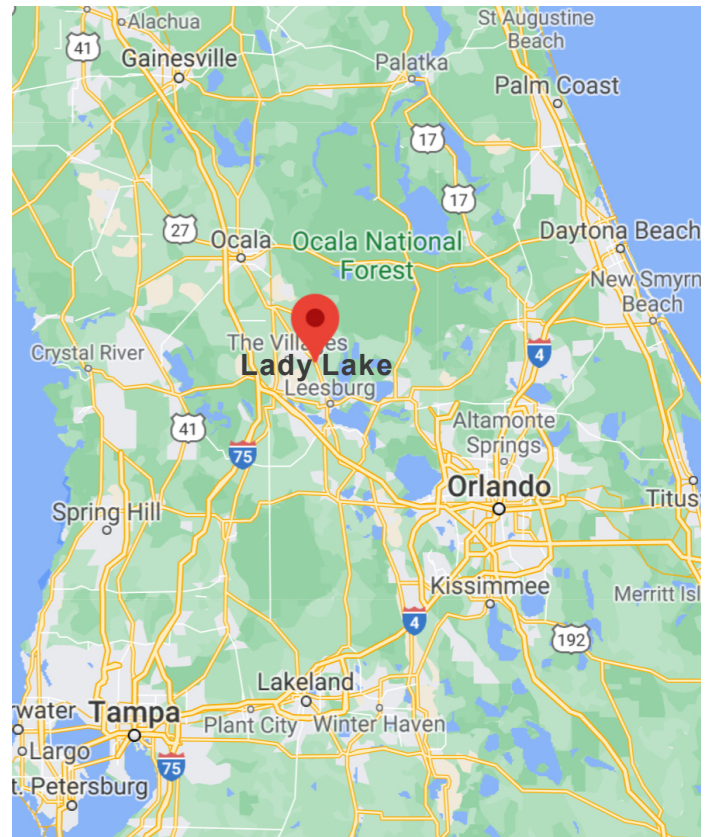
## Climate

Lady Lake's climate is characterized as humid subtropical. Winters here are mild with high temperatures around 70°F and lows around 50°F. Summertime temperatures routinely have highs in the low 90s and lows in the mid-70s.

Rainfall is common in the summer with most of the area's annual 51 inches falling at that time. The area experiences 233 sunny days per year (US average is 205). Hurricanes do strike the area from time to time but are generally diminished by the time they reach Lady Lake, and rarely cause more than foliage damage.

## Geography

Lady Lake is located in central Florida approximately 40 miles northwest of Orlando and 70 miles northeast of Tampa. It lies in the northwest corner of Lake County and covers a total area of 6.8 square miles, 6.6 square miles of which are land. The Town lies an average of 85 feet above sea level and the terrain is composed of gently rolling hills. See Figure 1 to the below for more information.



## Commerce

See Table 2 on top of page 4 for more information on principal employers of Lady Lake.

## The Government

The Town is governed by a five-member commission. Each member is elected at large but must reside in the ward he/she represents. Members serve staggered two-year terms with an election occurring every November. The Mayor is selected from the commission by its members. The Town does not have term limits. The members of the

current commission are long tenured, and have served since 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2011, respectively. The Commission Members work reasonably well together, and all are committed to the best interests of the community. They are fiscally conservative and by and large like each other and respect the staff.

The Commission appoints the Town Manager and the Town Attorney. Both are contract employees and can be removed by a simple majority vote. The Town Manager is chief executive officer and is responsible for managing the Town's day-to-day affairs. The Town Attorney provides advice on legal questions.

Table 2: Principal Employers, Lady Lake, FL

Employer	Industry	Employees
The Villages Media Group	Communications & Media	273
The Villages Rehab & Nursing Center	Healthcare	226
The Home Depot	Retail	187
Sam's Club	Retail	158
OMI, Inc	Engineering	157
Lake Lake Specialty Care	Healthcare	146
Texas Roadhouse	Food	145
Publix Super Markets	Retail	142
Kohl's Department Store	Retail	112
The Villages of Lady Lake Elementary	Education	107

Source: Lady Lake, FL 2019 CAFR

The Town provides all the typical services of a full-service community except Fire/Rescue (which is provided through the County). Overall, Lady Lake has 99.5 full time equivalent staff positions. Approximately a quarter of the employees (28 FTEs) are in Police while the other three quarters are spread relatively evenly among General Government (15.5 FTEs), Public Works (14 FTE), Utilities (13 FTEs), Parks and Recreation (14.5) along with 4.5 FTEs in Growth Management. The Town has one union, and it is for the police officers. See Figure 2 for the Town's organizational chart and staffing. Financially, the Town is in excellent condition and has no debt. The FY 2021 General Fund budget is \$12,661,661 and its Total Budget is \$18,803,656.

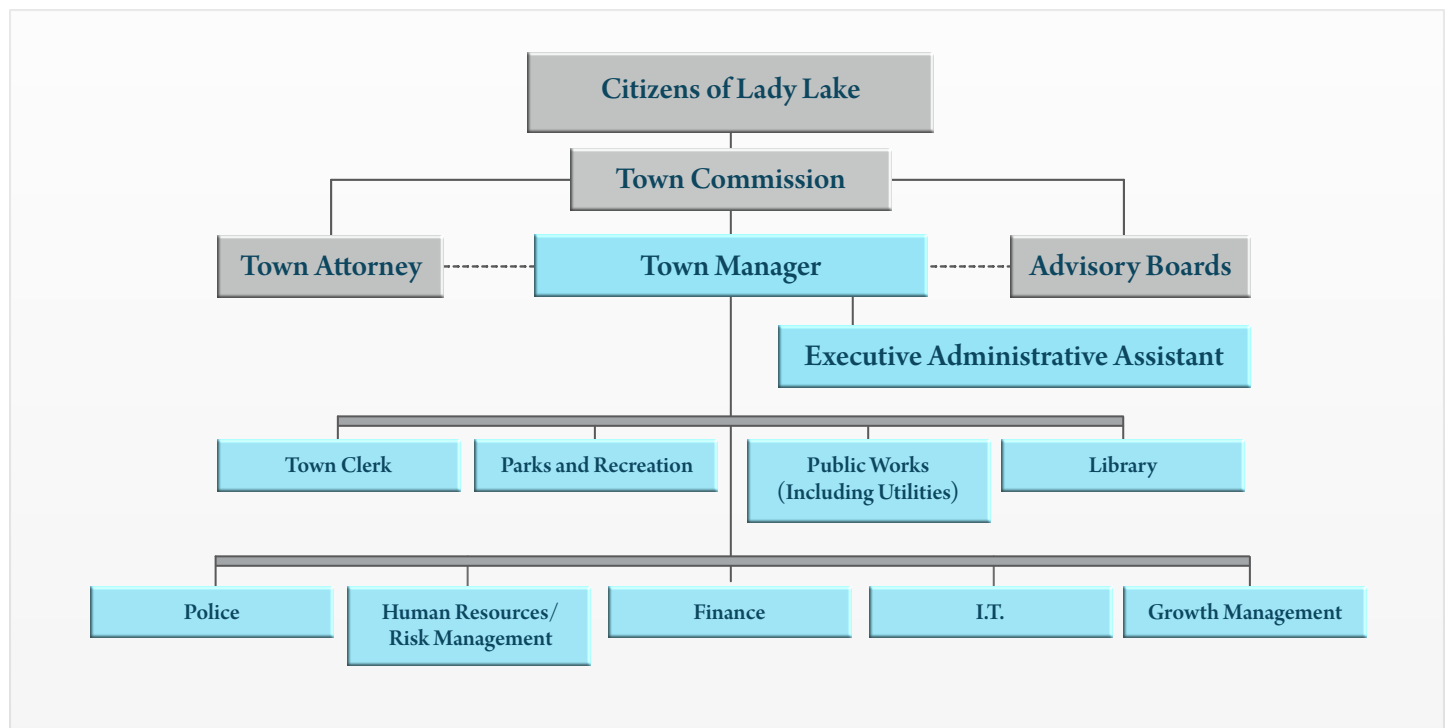


Figure 1: Lady Lake Organizational Chart



## The Challenges and Opportunities

The Town of Lady Lake is financially strong and is fortunate not to have the financial issues many communities have. That said, it is not without challenges, and the primary ones are listed below.

First, as noted the Town has no debt and is operating efficiently and effectively with a strong staff. Nonetheless, the manager will want to work with Department Managers to review how current operations are being done and ensure that processes are optimized. He/she will also want to review the current strategic plan that is in place that embodies a shared vision for the community.

The second challenge is COVID-19, and the fact that cases are rising once again. While the Town's finances have not been impacted to a significant degree, there may be other impacts. Just as when a tropical storm approaches the area, the Town will need to be prepared.

The final issue is growth. Land is available for development and the Town has supported quality development. Lady Lake also wants to maintain its pleasant, friendly, small town feel. As development comes, it will need to be balanced in a way that protects what is already here. As an aside, annexation is not something the Town actively pursues. Rather, it expands its boundaries as developers annex in to take advantage of Town services.

## The Ideal Candidate

Lady Lake is looking for a strong, professional manager with a steady hand to help guide the community. The ideal candidate will partner with the Town Commission as a supporter and a trusted advisor. The Commission does not want a "yes" person but someone who will give his/her opinion

diplomatically. The individual will be comfortable telling the Commission what it needs to hear, not what it wants to hear. The manager will understand politics but not become involved in them. The ability to anticipate/resolve issues before they become problems is critical. Good judgment and common sense are essential.

The next Town Manager will have excellent verbal and written communication skills. He/she will recognize, however, that often the most important aspect of communication is listening—truly hearing what others have to say and making everyone feel their views are understood. Being respectful, clear, and concise will be important.

The individual will strongly believe in transparency. She/he will be very open and approachable. The individual will not manage from behind a desk but be in the field and in the community. The Manager will constantly seek ways to make the government more responsive. Customer service will be a core principle and a way of life. The individual will lead by example and diligently work with businesses and citizens to resolve their issues.

The ideal candidate will be a team-builder, delegator and encourage creativity. The individual will hire great people. He/she will then mentor and give assignments, set broad performance parameters, and step back. At the same time, the Manager will expect results and hold employees accountable. An eye for detail will be important. When it is time to make a decision, the Manager will not hesitate.

Critical thinking will be important. The next manager will need to bring a fresh set of eyes to the organization. The individual will constantly ask why, and expect well-reasoned responses, not that “we have always done it this way”. The current processes may be the best way, but that will need to be demonstrated, and everyone should understand why.

Personally, the Manager will be intelligent, friendly, outgoing, organized, positive and responsive. He/she will have a “can do” attitude and a sense of humor. He/she will be practical, flexible, consistent, cheerful and values driven. Being completely honest and having the utmost integrity will be critical.

In terms of specific skills, the individual will have a demonstrated track record of achievement in management, finance, and development. Skill in intergovernmental relations will be important. Emergency management experience is required. While tropical storms tend not to have significant impact on the Town and are not frequent, Lady Lake wants to be prepared for the next one. Florida experience is a plus but not expected.

The Town hopes and expects the next manager will honor the prior manager’s commitment and stay five to ten years.

## Compensation

The salary target salary is \$120,000 but will depend on qualifications. In other words, someone with many years as a Town Manager and outstanding experience might be able to negotiate a higher salary. Benefits are very good and include a 401 and 457 pension. The Town does not participate in the Florida Retirement System.

## The Most Recent Town Manager

The most recent Town Manager retired after 25 years with the Town, the last 10 as the Manager.

## Residency

The Town Manager is not required to be a resident of Lady Lake, but it is preferred and why would he/she want to live anywhere else?

## How to Apply

E-mail your cover letter and resume to [Recruit22@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit22@cb-asso.com) by December 18, 2020. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or Rick Conner at (915) 227-7002.

## Internal Candidates

There may be an internal candidate. Call for more information if that is a consideration.

## Confidentiality

Under Florida's public records act, once an application is submitted, it is deemed a public record. As a practical matter, our searches generally do not receive any media coverage until least after the semi-finalists are named, and perhaps not even then.

## The Process

Applications will be screened between December 19th and January 13th. Finalists will be selected on January 18th. A reception and interviews will be held on January 28th and 29th with the next manager being named shortly thereafter. Precise details related to in-person events will be determined closer to the time of those events and may be impacted by the current pandemic.

## Other Important Information

The Town of Lady Lake is an Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly encourages women, minorities, and veterans to apply.

## Additional Information

For additional information about the Town visit:

<https://www.ladylake.org>



COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING