



Town Manager Position Available
Apply by March 23, 2018



Welcome to the Town of North Topsail Beach

Just off the coast of North Carolina, a 26-mile-long barrier island is home to one of the state's hidden treasures: North Topsail Beach. USA Today recently named it one of the Top 10 Family Beaches in the Country and TripAdvisor put it on its 2016 list of Must-See Small-Town Beach Destinations. The latter described Topsail Island (which includes North Topsail Beach, and parts of Surf City and Topsail Beach), as "a place to enjoy the beach in its purest, simplest form" without the "crowds or chaos" of other coastal towns. The town's motto's is, "Nature's Tranquil Beauty," and it is appropriate. It is a place where you can enjoy the water, shoreline, salt marshes and recreation in a tranquil environment. Even with more visitors coming every year and with more homes, the town remains quiet and scenic, and is an excellent place to put down roots. Simply put, the quality of life here is unmatched.



North Topsail Beach takes pride in its 11.1 miles of uncongested beach, as well as the myriad of available outdoor activities. Nature is plentiful and diverse. Here you can hike, bike, watch birds or take to the water. Boating, kayaking, and fishing are exceptional. The ocean, Intracoastal Waterway, the estuaries and salt marshes along the northwestern side of the island make the area an angler's paradise. During the spring, summer and fall, fishermen can expect to find sheepshead, spot, tarpon, red drum, Spanish mackerel, bluefish, whiting, trout, flounder, amberjack, striped bass, croaker, white marlin, blue marlin, sailfish, wahoo and dolphin. The winter offers opportunities to catch king mackerel, sea bass and tuna in the ocean and striped bass in the rivers. We should also mention the numerous shrimp, oysters, and crabs found here. The Seaview Pier stretching into the Atlantic is a wonderful place to get some bait, grab some gear if you need it and cast a line.

Residents and tourists alike treasure the loggerhead sea turtles who annually lay their eggs on the beach. The world-renown Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center is just over the Surf City bridge and nurses ailing turtles back to health. It is one of North Carolina's most popular tourist attractions.

The town itself offers many access points to the beach and number of small parks with tennis and pickle ball courts. Those who like golf will find a very nice course nearby on the mainland. Ample opportunities for hunting are close by. Those who enjoy culture will be pleasantly surprised. Between the nearby cities of Jacksonville (22 miles north) and Wilmington (45 miles southwest), you can find virtually everything you want. The latter offers Thalian

Hall (hosting 250 events annually) and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington sponsors numerous other events.

For a taste of the city, what could beat Raleigh or Charlotte, NC? The former is two hour and 30 minutes northwest and offers numerous museums, cultural venues, and the NHL's Carolina Hurricanes as well as minor league teams in soccer and baseball. The presence of North Carolina State in Raleigh adds to the city's cultural aspects as well as providing serious college athletics. A bit further away, roughly four hours from North Topsail Beach, lies Charlotte, the third-fastest growing major city in the United States and the 17th most populous. The city offers many notable attractions, the most popular including the Carolina Panthers, the Charlotte Hornets, the NASCAR All-Star Race, the NASCAR Hall of Fame, the Charlotte Ballet, Carowinds amusement park, and the U.S. National Whitewater Center. The city has museums and theaters aplenty, as well as an aquarium, making it an exciting getaway for a weekend. If that is not enough, you can fly out of Jacksonville or Wilmington, or drive a few hours to Raleigh-Durham, Greensboro or Charlotte Douglas International Airports and be anywhere in the world relatively quickly.

But back to North Topsail Beach. It is simply a great place to live, work and play. Crime is very, very low—85% lower than the national average and 90% safer than other cities in the United States. During the summer, traffic control and alcohol-related issues are what the police department spends most of its time with. Onslow County Schools provides a good public education through Dixon Elementary, Dixon Middles and Dixon High School. All



are strong and according to GreatSchools.org, Dixon High is above average compared to other high schools in the state.

Homes here vary greatly in price. While some can be found in the low to mid-\$200,000's, many are much higher (generally between \$1 and \$2 million). Do not be put off by the upper end of the scale, however. For the most part, these are huge (eight to ten bedrooms) and vacation rentals. In fact, 85% of the homes in the town are rentals and the high-end ones can cost \$12,000 to \$17,000 per week during peak season. Less expensive alternatives for permanent housing are available across the Intracoastal Waterway in Sneads Ferry and Holly Ridge.

Most important though are the people who live here. While the summer time population can grow the 20,000+, the number of permanent residents is relatively small in number—the U.S. Census estimates the 2016 population to be 1,104—and they are extremely friendly, helpful and welcoming. Neighbors truly know their neighbors and help one another.

North Topsail Beach is amidst an exciting time. Previously one of North Carolina's best-kept secrets, it's clear the word is out. It is an easy place to fall in love with—a coastal jewel and the right town manager will help shape its future at this crucial time.



HISTORY

While the area’s early history is not well known, Permuda Island (a 1.5-mile-long island in the Intracoastal Waterway and part of the town) shows evidence of occupation as early as 300 B.C. Various myths explore the origins of Topsail Island’s name. One suggests it was named for the top sails of buccaneer ships. The pirates would hide behind the island in the 1700s with lookouts stationed at the top of the masts. When they spotted a passing merchant ship, the pirates would pounce. More likely, however, it was named after the New Topsail Inlet which appeared on early navigational charts.

During the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, Topsail Island became a large producer of salt. Prior to refrigeration, it was important for preservation purposes. Later, legends had Black Beard’s treasure was buried here and that brought treasure hunters to search the maritime forests and along the shores. As local farmers began to settle on the mainland, they drove their livestock at low tide to the island to eat the wild beach grass. A few shelters (probably less than a dozen) were built for fishing and picnicking and other summer recreational purposes.

At the beginning of World War II, the U.S. Army took possession of the island and built a large, temporary anti-aircraft training base known as Camp Davis. They also built the road from the base to the sound and installed a pontoon bridge across the Intracoastal Waterway. Other training facilities and support buildings were constructed. Immediately after the war, the US Navy took possession of the island and began a joint project with Johns Hopkins University known as Operation Bumblebee which was

an early, guided-missile development program. Over 200 missiles were test fired. To photograph and collect telemetry data along the flight path of these missile tests, a series of three-story concrete towers were constructed at appropriate intervals from the south end to the north end of the island. While most were removed after the US missile program moved to Cape Canaveral, Florida in 1948, a few still stand today with some converted into oceanfront homes. The roads, bridge, and other infrastructure left behind became Surf City’s business district. In 1949, in the days of segregation, Ocean City developed in the south

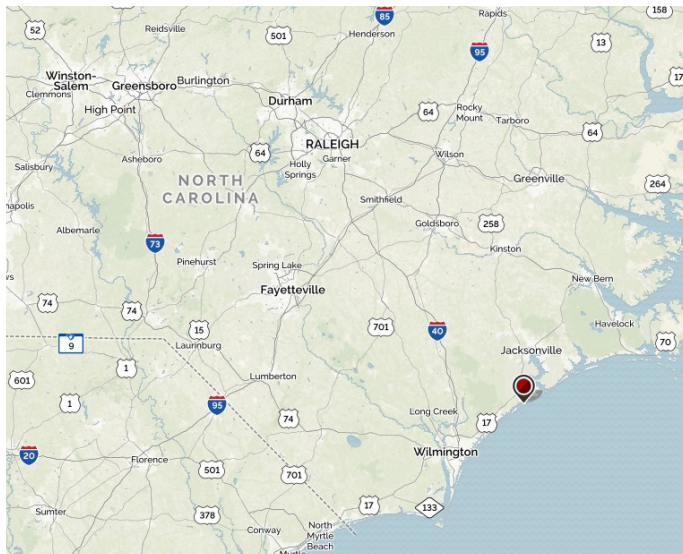
Table 1: North Topsail Beach Demographics

Estimated 2016 Population: 1,104			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
Caucasian	91.5%	0 to 15	9.4%
African American	3.4%	15 to 25	8.4%
Asian	2.4%	25 to 45	31.5%
Native American	0.0%	45 to 65	28.1%
Two or More Races	2.7%	65 to 85	21.6%
Total	100%	Over 85	1.0%
Hispanic (all races)	2.2%		

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	98.6%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	47.0%

Other Statistics	
Median Age-North Topsail Beach	46.1
Median Age-U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	9.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



end of what has become North Topsail Beach so African Americans could purchase beachfront property in North Carolina. Many of these homes remain in the hands of their heirs. In the early 1950s, developers began to arrive. The process was slowed, however, when the storm surge from Hurricane Hazel in 1954, completely flooded Topsail Island washing away most structures. Since then, homes have been built on pilings.

Over time, North Topsail Beach became a vacation destination. The town was incorporated in 1992, and it has grown slowly but steadily since.

DEMOGRAPHICS

See Table 1 on page 4, for demographics.

CLIMATE

North Topsail Beach boasts warm and temperate oceanside days, with regular precipitation. In July, the average high temperature is around 88°F and the lows average 71°F. January averages are highs in the mid-50s and lows in the low 30s. Topsail Island has sunshine 70% of the year.

GEOGRAPHY

Located in Onslow County, North Topsail Beach covers the northern 11.1 miles of Topsail Island and sits on North Carolina's Atlantic coast.

It is long and narrow (see map). Parts of the town are higher than others but overall, North Topsail Beach lies only a few feet above sea level. Earlier this decade, a number of homes had to be demolished due to beach erosion and the fact that they were no longer on dry land. Sand bags protect other homes in the vicinity.

COMMERCE

Aside from the large number of vacation rental properties, commerce in North Topsail Beach is limited. Shopping can be found at Roger's Bay Convenience Store, the Tiki Mart, a few shops in St. Regis Condominiums, and a bait and tackle shop at the Seaview fishing pier. Residents tend to travel to the mainland or next door to Surf City for most goods and services. In terms of dining out, the three options in town

are a restaurant atop of the St. Regis Condominiums, the Seaview Restaurant at the pier (although the latter is not open year round) and a small restaurant at the Rogers Bay Campground.

The area’s principal employer is Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune (with over 47,000 marines and sailors). It and other significant area employers are on the mainland and listed in Table II.

THE GOVERNMENT

The Town of North Topsail Beach prioritizes conservation and low–density development. It operates under the council-manager form of government. The Board of Aldermen is composed of the mayor and five aldermen. The mayor is elected every two years by a direct vote of the citizens. He/she runs the meetings and votes in the rare

case of a tie. Aldermen are elected to staggered four year terms with elections occurring in odd numbered years.

The current members have served a range of 2 to 10 years, and they are responsible for appointing the town manager and the town attorney. They presently operate in a collegial fashion and have a high regard for staff.

The general fund budget for FY 2017–2018 is a little over \$4.2 million. Revenues come from the state (\$1,259,000), property tax (\$2,007,000), refuse (\$451,000), the town (\$248,000), interest (\$25,000), and other sources (\$218,000). The general fund ad valorem tax rate is \$.2361 per \$100 of valuation. Of the general fund, approximately 29% is spent on police, 20% on fire (the town has two stations), 13% on public works (facilities, grounds and streets), 11% for sanitation collections, and 10% for administration (which includes finance and the town manager). The remaining

functions each account for less than 10% of the budget. North Topsail Beach’s total budget is \$16.1 million dollars. The difference between it and the general fund budget is composed of the shoreline/ capital fund (\$11.1 million) and the beach maintenance fund (\$700,000).

The town has 34 employees, seven of whom work under the Town Manager’s direct supervision. North Topsail

Table 2: Principal Employers, Onslow County, NC

Employer	Industry	Employees
USMC Base, Camp Lejeune	Military	1,000+
Department of Defense	Government	1,000+
Onslow County Board of Education	Education	1,000+
Camp Lejeune MCCA	Military	1,000+
Walmart	Retail	1,000+
Onslow County Government	Government	1,000+
Onslow Memorial Hospital	Healthcare	1,000+
Coastal Carolina Community Group	Education	500–999
Convergys Customer Mgmt Group	Market Research	500–999
Food Lion	Grocery	500–999

Source: Onslow County, NC 2016 CAFR



Beach is a full service community with the exception of solid waste (contracted out), water (provided directly to residents by the Onslow County Water and Sewer Authority), and wastewater (provided by Pluris, a private firm).

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

North Topsail Beach does not have any serious short terms issues. It is financially sound but needs to continue to manage its resources wisely.

The biggest current challenge is balancing municipal infrastructure and staff needs during periods when tourists flock to the island (increasing the population 20-fold) versus periods when essentially only the permanent residents are present.

In the longer term, the most daunting issue is ensuring future growth (almost all the available land is already subdivided and can be built upon) does not compromise the town's amazing quality of life. It will not be easy. A third issue is, although infrequent and typically not overly intense, the area is subject to hurricanes. They require preparation and recovery. That said, the last category 3 or higher storm to strike the area was Hurricane Fran (category 3) in 1996. Fourth, and particularly important, is beach erosion, the resulting need for beach renourishment, and the attendant costs. The other significant issues are coastal regulatory issues.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

North Topsail Beach is seeking an outstanding leader and manager. The individual will work in tandem with the Board of Aldermen to resolve issues and protect the town's quality of life. The manager will be someone who keeps the elected officials well informed and presents them with a recommendation as well as options. He/she will earn their trust and be a valued advisor as well as someone who is confident, polished, and professional. The manager will make his/her opinion known (in a constructive and diplomatic way) and not be a "yes" man or woman. The individual will be visionary yet down to earth and practical.

The manager will be a strategic thinker and planner. While professional, the ideal candidate will be friendly and outgoing. He/she will be comfortable with and interact extremely well with the public.

Outstanding people skills will be critical. The individual will not be someone who sits behind his/her desk all day but rather spends time in the community with residents, listening to their concerns and actively working towards finding ways to make North Topsail Beach the best it can be.

Personally, the ideal candidate will be energetic, highly motivated, someone with outstanding communications skills (both oral and written) and a "can do" attitude.

North Topsail Beach has a lean workforce so he/she should expect to wear many hats and pitch in when needed. Being able to prioritize work and manage competing projects will be essential. The individual will work collaboratively with

staff—not just providing direction and delegating but by empowering and inspiring staff. Micromanagement will not be a word in the manager's vocabulary. Instead he/she will be respectful, mentor, set priorities, provide resources, have high expectations, listen, and expect deadlines to be met. Informal feedback will be regular, ongoing and verbal throughout the year while formal written performance reviews will be conducted at least annually.

Strong analytical skills will be necessary and the next manager will be constantly seeking for ways to improve operations. The individual will be savvy technologically and realize the importance of incorporating proven, new technologies. The manager will have a sense of urgency and not accept the typical glacial pace of government internally or externally.

As a small town, North Topsail Beach must work regularly and closely with other governmental agencies. Hence the ability to build and maintain very positive relationships with external agencies in nearby cities, and at the county, state and federal levels will be critical to the next manager's success.

Particularly important will be having a sound knowledge and experience with the challenges faced by coastal communities. These include the challenges mentioned previously as well as the ability to work with contractors and to hold their feet to the fire when required.

The ideal candidate will have a Bachelor's Degree in business or public administration or another related area. The best candidates will have at least eight years' experience as a city manager or assistant and expertise in local

government planning, budget, and economic development/ redevelopment. North Carolina government experience is preferred but not mandatory. Candidates should already be coastally savvy. The Town of North Topsail Beach simply does not have time to wait for a manager to become familiar with coastal aspects of a barrier island town.

COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$90,000 to \$140,000 annually. Actual salary will depend on qualifications. The Town will pay at the top of the range for an outstanding candidate. Benefits are excellent. The town manager will be part of the North Carolina Local Government Employees' Retirement System.

THE MOST RECENT TOWN MANAGER

The most recent Town Manager resigned after almost five years of service stating it was time for a change.

RESIDENCY

While it would be preferable if the next Town Manager resided within North Topsail Beach's corporate limits, it is not expected. The town does, however, want the manager to live within a reasonable commuting distance so he/she can be there on weekends from time to time.

HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your resume and cover letter to Recruit37@cb-asso.com by March 23rd. Direct questions to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or Lynelle Klein at (425) 658-7025.

INTERNAL CANDIDATES

No internal candidates are anticipated

CONFIDENTIALITY

Under North Carolina law, all candidate names must be held in the strictest of confidence and cannot be released without the permission of the candidate(s).

THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between March 24th and April 18th. Finalists will be selected on April 19th. Interviews will be held on April 27th with a selection shortly thereafter.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

North Topsail Beach is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the town visit:

<https://www.ntbnc.org/>

<http://www.topsailchamber.org/north-topsail-beach.html>

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