



**CITY MANAGER POSITION AVAILABLE**  
Apply by March 29, 2019

## Welcome to Vero Beach, Florida!

2019 marks the centennial of the founding of one of Florida's most iconic cities: Vero Beach. While it is often referred to as "The Hidden Jewel of the Treasure Coast," it is hardly unknown. In fact, Disney chose it to be its first resort beyond its park when it developed its Vero Beach resort.

It is simply an idyllic community on Florida's East Coast. Those who know Florida and its coastal cities widely acclaim it for its beauty, warmth and activities while incorporating a slower pace of life. A haven of history, architecture, and culture, Vero Beach's citizens have worked hard to protect its character, livability, and sense of community. It is truly a special place for both visitors and residents.

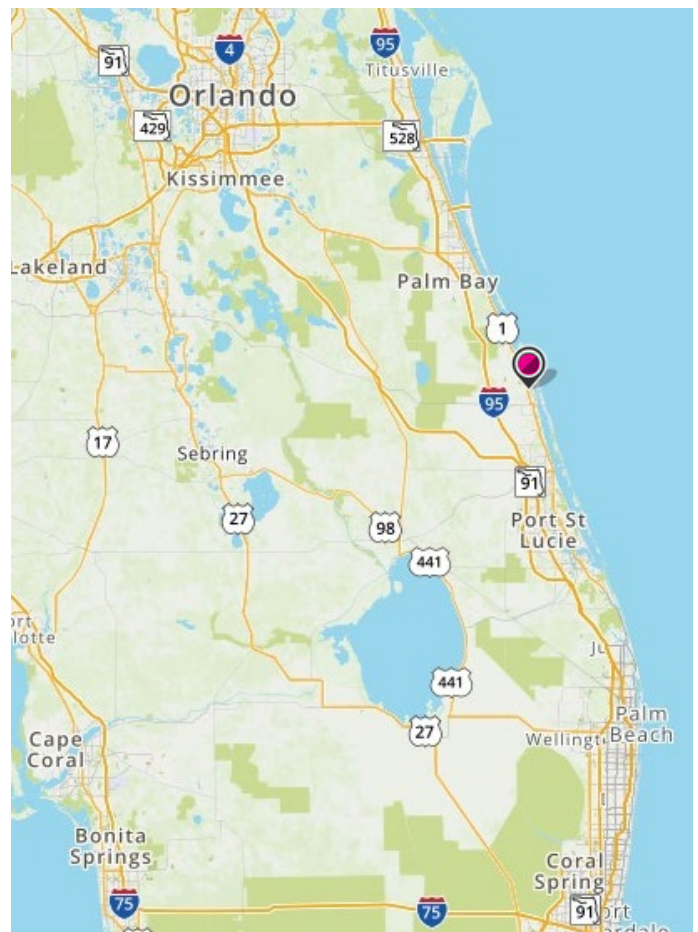


While the entire Treasure Coast (running from Martin to Indian River Counties) is picturesque, Vero Beach's horizons will take your breath away. Its three main public beaches are South Beach, Humiston Park, and Jaycee Park, though the Sexton Plaza Beach is also a must-see. They are all peaceful, clean, and gorgeous, while stretching for miles. Each is well-equipped with comforts and indulgences, including covered picnic areas, boardwalks, restaurants, shopping and parking.

Those who love to walk or run will find many trails with beach access, such as Sea Grape and Turtle Trails.

For those who enjoy being on the water, the adjacent Atlantic Ocean offers many opportunities for boating, fishing, water skiing, diving, and kayaking. Another important feature running through Vero Beach is the Indian River Lagoon. Stretching for miles, it is a nature lovers paradise which includes five state parks, four federal wildlife refuges, and a national seashore.

Vero Beach may be a small town but there is nothing sleepy about it. In fact, it is a cultural mecca, and has something for everyone. Its arts district is a well-known destination. With many fine restaurants, it is anchored by the Museum of Art. Theater is popular here and highlighted by the Riverside Theater. Vero Beach High School offers wonderful musical performances. In fact, its orchestra recently spent two weeks on a European tour starting in Vienna, and, by the time you read this, will have participated in the National Orchestra Cup at the Alice Tully Hall at the Lincoln Center. The high school band just got back from London where it played in the New Year's Day Parade 2019. A group is now exploring the possibility



of starting a ballet. In other words, the city offers virtually everything you can find in New York City—just not as much of it. The really good news is you do not have to share it with nearly as many people.

What truly makes Vero Beach special, however, are its residents. They are not caught up in the South Florida bling—you will find them to be largely unpretentious, friendly, welcoming, and cooperative. It is an active, altruistic community that is supportive of charity. They value the city's small town feel and hospitality, and will fight to protect it.

History plays a large role in Vero Beach, and residents celebrate it. In fact, as noted previously, the city is currently





celebrating its centennial. Residents are paying homage to the city's roots with musical celebrations, dancing, crafting, and an art show. There is even a treasure hunt planned! It actually began New Year's Day when the city lit up the waterways with a centennial boat parade, filled with gleaming lights and beautiful sights. Events will continue through late October.

Other historic sites include Dodgertown (the former training facility for the Major League Baseball's Los Angeles Dodgers), the County Courthouse, the McKee Jungle Gardens, the Old Palmetto Hotel, the Pueblo and Royal Park Arcades, the Vero Beach Diesel Power Plant (now a popular microbrewery and restaurant), the Vero Theatre, and the Vero Railroad Station. Each of them offers an authentic look into Vero Beach's past and helps explain what brought it to where it is today—a thriving community of culture and activity.

The Historic Downtown Vero Beach has been recently revitalized, and offers not just the architecture, but also shopping, dining, antique stores, and art galleries. The Indian River Mall and the Vero Beach Outlets lie nearby, as well as the small specialty shops along Ocean Drive on the barrier island and in the "Miracle Mile." A trip to the latter is well worth the drive, as the boulevard is known as "one of South Florida's most sought-after shopping destinations" with its restaurants, shops, boutiques, and galleries.

Housing and the cost of living are both very reasonable here. The median price of homes is \$214,000, and many nice homes are listed under \$200,000. For those seeking the luxurious, there are homes with sprawling yards and waterfront views beginning at \$500,000. Of course, you can spend a great deal more. Crime is not an issue here and residents love their police officers. The biggest problem is theft from unlocked vehicles. The city is served by a variety of public and private schools, many of which have excellent ratings. Needless to say, the children in Vero Beach have access to an enriching, engaging educational environment wherever they look.

Vero Beach is home to the Mueller Campus for the Indian River State College, which was named one of the top ten best community colleges in the United States by the Aspen Institute in 2014. Other institutions nearby are the Palm Beach State College in Lake Worth, the University of Central Florida in Orlando (which is in the top 109 universities in the 2014 Academic Ranking of World Universities), and the Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. Nearby specialty schools include Florida Institute of Technology and the Aviator College of Aeronautical Science and Technology.

Travel in Vero Beach is convenient, as it is served by GoLine bus routes and the Florida East Coast Railway. The Vero Beach Regional Airport is a public airport northwest of Vero Beach that offers limited commercial jet service. The city is also convenient to some of Florida's larger airports. Orlando International Airport is 90 minutes northwest and Palm Beach International Airport is about 90 minutes south. Both offer numerous carriers with plenty of travel deals for the air savvy. For those who like to cruise, Port

Canaveral is 90 minutes north and is the world's second largest cruise port.

Needless to say, Vero Beach has everything anyone could ever want. It is a very easy place to fall in love with so, if you are an outstanding city manager, dust off your resume and apply.

## HISTORY

The Vero Beach area was first settled in the 1880s. These early pioneers focused on fishing and growing citrus and vegetables. The arrival of the Florida East Coast Railway in 1893 brought the means to ship produce quickly to northern markets and signaled the beginning of serious growth.

The city of Vero Beach was then incorporated in 1919. Soon after, in 1925, the citizens successfully lobbied in Tallahassee for the creation of Indian River County, with the city as the county seat.

Vero Beach's development, much like the rest of Florida, followed the rise and fall of Florida's numerous land booms and busts. During World War II, the United States Military established a Naval Air station northeast of town. In 1947, the Brooklyn Dodgers selected the former Vero Beach Naval Air Station as their permanent Spring Training facility. Vero Beach also became the base of administrative and manufacturing operations for Piper Aircraft in 1961; Piper Aircraft has since become the largest private employer in the county.

The city itself developed gradually over time to its present population of just under 17,000. Not only has it become a popular tourist and winter home destination, it is also home to many retirees.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Vero Beach Demographics

Estimated Population: 16,919			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	92.2%	0 to 15	10.4%
Black	3.8%	15 to 25	8.8%
Asian	0.9%	25 to 45	18.4%
Native American/ Pacific Islander	0.8%	45 to 65	34.9%
Two or More Races	2.3%	65 to 85	22.3%
Total	100%	Over 85	4.9%
Hispanic (all races)	9.4%		

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	95.5%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	34.4%

Other Statistics	
Median Age–Vero Beach	53.9
Median Age–U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	4.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## CLIMATE

The City of Vero Beach has a humid, subtropical climate, with an average annual temperature of 72.7°F. Most rainfall

tends to occur during the summer months and also is typically relatively short in duration. The seasons are not markedly different in temperature, with highs of around 74 °F degrees in the winter and 90 °F in the summer. The lows range from around 53 °F degrees in the winter to the mid-70’s in the summer. Temperatures below freezing are extremely rare.

Hurricanes strike the area from time to time, although their impact is generally limited. For example, if you are more than 50 miles from the storm’s center, it will probably not materially affect you. It should also be noted that a Category I hurricane produces winds from 75 to 95 miles per hour—not much faster than we routinely drive our cars.

## GEOGRAPHY

The City of Vero Beach consists of 13.34 square miles, of which 11.44 is land. It is located on Florida’s east coast, about 190 miles south of Jacksonville and 135 miles north of Miami. Its average elevation is 13 feet above sea level.

## COMMERCE

Vero Beach is the base of operations for the aviation manufacturer Piper Aircraft, which is the largest private employer in Indian River County. Aside from Piper Aircraft, much of the city’s success has centered around the tourism, citrus, and service industries. The largest tourist draw is The Disney Resort in Vero. See next page for the city's principal employers.

Table 2: Principal Employers

Employer	Industry	Employees
School District of Indian River County	Education	2,073
Indian River Medical Center	Healthcare	1,753
Publix Supermarkets	Retail	1,250
New Piper Aircraft, Inc	Manufacturing	904
Indian River County	Government	860
Walmart	Retail	693
Sebastian River Medical Center	Healthcare	595
John’s Island	Leisure	584
Medical Data Systems	Healthcare	500
Visiting Nurse Association	Healthcare	395

Source: Source: City of Vero Beach, FL, 2017 CAFR

THE GOVERNMENT

The City of Vero Beach operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The five members of the City Council serve two-year overlapping terms. All are elected at-large and the top two or three vote getters (depending on the number of seats to be considered) become members of the City Council. The Mayor is then selected by and from among the members of the body. Elections are held in November of each year. Due to a snafu, the November 2018 election was repeated in late February 2019. It had no impact on the outcome as the top three vote getters in November were also the top three in February.

Council Members are collegial and get along well, in spite of some philosophical differences. Once they have made a decision, they move on to the next issue. Nothing gets personal. They have a high regard for staff and generally do not attempt to interfere in the city’s day-to-day operations.

The Council appoints the City Manager along with the City Attorney, and the City Clerk.

The city provides all typical functions as well as the following services: the city marina, municipal airport, and water and sewer. In February of this year, it sold its electric utility to Florida Power and Light. The general fund expenditure budget is \$23,814,773 and the total budget is \$75,865,137. The city now has 209 FTEs in the

General Fund and another 105 in its enterprise funds. The employees are widely recognized as talented, competent, and dedicated. The City has four unions: the Teamsters Blue Collar, the Teamsters CT, the IUPA, and the PBA.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While not immediate, the biggest challenge facing the new manager will be to help the city maintain its small-town character. As the only city in Indian River County with a true downtown and beaches, future development will only increase the pressure on the city. By way of reference, the nearby city of Fellsmere (57.7 square miles) is the 13th largest city in Florida by land area, yet currently only has a population of a little under 6,000. Parking is already an issue due to the many, many available activities. A second issue is what to do with the site's of the city’s power plant and wastewater treatment plant. The former has been decommissioned, and the city has discussed moving

the latter to the airport property. Both sites are on the Intracoastal Waterway and thought to be very valuable. Thoughts for future use vary, but both are subject to a charter requirement that voters give their approval before the properties can be “leased, traded, or given away.” The third challenge is financial. The utility provided a not insignificant amount of revenue to the city’s general fund and that will need to be made up. The \$58 million received from the utility’s sales means the issue will not impact the city for a dozen years. Still it is something to be aware of. The fourth issue is protecting the Indian River Lagoon (part of the Intracoastal Waterway). It is a natural wonder that is a large part of the city’s ambiance.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City is looking for an experienced, highly motivated manager and leader—not a bureaucrat. The individual will be an expert in every aspect of local government management. He/she will be energetic, resilient, resourceful, reliable, and relentlessly positive with a “can do” attitude. The ideal candidate will keep all the elected officials well informed and present them with a recommendation as well as options. He/she will be a trusted and valued advisor. The individual will be comfortable speaking truth to power and definitely not a “yes” man or woman. Understanding and navigating politics, without becoming involved, will be very important. The best candidate will be visionary yet down to earth and practical.

The next manager will have excellent communication skills. Vero Beach is a diverse community and the manager will need to be comfortable communicating with people from every economic strata. The Council expects the manager to

be a face of the community without overshadowing it. The best candidate will be someone who can make everyone feel their views are being heard—while Vero Beach is a small community, it is also a complicated community with many different interests.

Customer service will not be just a catchy phrase with the next manager but rather, along with integrity, will be a core principle and a way of life. He/She will be someone who works with the Council, the community, local businesses and regional partners to find solutions to problems as opposed to someone who tends to find reasons to say no. He/she will be approachable, in the community and part of the community, always listening and always looking for ways to make the government more responsive.

The City Manager will be respectful of others, delegate, and definitely not be a micromanager. The individual will recognize talent, mentor that talent, and then be confident enough to step back and let the staff member do his/her job. The manager will understand the importance of intergovernmental relations and be good at working with other governments. Vero Beach is the county seat, and as such, the manager will need to be able to work closely with his/her counterparts.

The ideal candidate will give assignments and set broad performance parameters, but will also expect results and hold employees accountable. The individual will believe in transparency. He/she will also be very open and approachable. The ability to anticipate/resolve issues before they become problems is important as is a good sense of humor. Excellent judgment and common sense are essential.



Vero Beach is a lean government so the best candidate will be someone who is very knowledgeable and comfortable in a number of roles. It is also not a government where the manager sits behind a desk and directs traffic. Expect to be busy and to pitch in when necessary. Experience in a coastal community is desirable but it is more important that the individual be an outstanding manager and leader. The best candidate will have a bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, public policy or related field and at least ten years of experience as overseeing a city or county government.

The selected candidate will be expected to make a commitment to Vero Beach. This position should not be viewed as a stepping stone but as a gem in its own right.

## COMPENSATION

The compensation range is \$125,000 to \$175,000 and the salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The City Manager's pension will be a percentage of salary, provided through the ICMA-RC, and agreed upon through the employment agreement negotiations.

## THE MOST RECENT CITY MANAGER

The current City Manager is retiring effective March 15th after eight years of service as





Vero Beach's Manager and over 40 years in municipal management. To the end, he was highly regarded for his knowledge and common sense.

## RESIDENCY

Under the city charter, the City Manager is not required to live within the city's boundaries. As a practical matter, who would want to live anywhere else?

## HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to Colin Baenziger and Associates at [Recruit27@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit27@cb-asso.com) by March 29th. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or David Collier at (772) 220-4320.

## INTERNAL CANDIDATES

The City is committed to a fair and open process. The playing field is truly level. That said, there may be one or more internal candidates.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Florida Public Records Act, all applicants are subject to disclosure upon receipt. As a practical matter, we do not expect extensive media coverage until after semi-finalists are named.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The fact that Vero Beach is looking for a City Manager and a City Attorney is entirely coincidental. The city is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women and minorities to apply. A veteran's preference will be awarded per Florida law. For additional information about the city, visit:

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

<http://verobeach100.com>

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