

# TOWN MANAGER

ALTAVISTA, VA



# TOWN OF ALTAVISTA

**The Town of Altavista** is seeking an experienced professional to serve as Town Manager, the chief administrative officer responsible for directing programs and operations of the Town government.

This recruitment profile provides background information on the community, its government operations and its aspirations. It also outlines the qualifications, experience and characteristics determined to be necessary and desirable for the position of Town Manager.

Qualified candidates are encouraged to submit a cover letter and resume, with salary expectations and professional references, to The Berkley Group via email at [kimball.payne@bgllc.net](mailto:kimball.payne@bgllc.net). While the position is open until filled, review of candidates will begin **September 30, 2021**. Inquiries relating to the Town Manager position may be directed to:

**Kimball Payne**

The Berkley Group

P.O. Box 181

Bridgewater, Virginia 22812

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# TOWN OF ALTAVISTA

***“TREASURED PAST, INNOVATIVE FUTURE”***

## COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

The Town of Altavista is a small, classic American town located near the southwest corner of Campbell County in the Piedmont Region of Virginia. The Town and surrounding areas are marked by hilly terrain and deep-cutting streams. Wooded hillsides in and around Altavista contribute to the visual character and define a clear “sense of place.” The Staunton River provides the Town’s southern border, separating Altavista from the Town of Hurt, which lies within Pittsylvania County. U.S. Route 29, a four-lane highway, forms the northern border of the town and leads to the closest cities, Lynchburg 25 miles to the north and Danville 40 miles south. Connections to Interstates 64, 81, and 85 put Altavista within a couple hours of Richmond, Raleigh, and Charlotte with major east coast cities within a day’s drive. The Lynchburg Regional Airport offering multiple daily commercial flights is nearby and freight rail service runs through Town.

Altavista is the largest incorporated town in Campbell County and offers a quality of life unmatched in the area. The people are welcoming and caring with a strong sense of community. The friendliness of the town is evident as residents come together and take care of each other, valuing new community members and engaging them quickly. Driving or biking around Town reveals all the elements of a rich small-town life – tree-lined, walkable neighborhoods, family eateries, places of worship, teens fishing in the river, soccer moms (and dads) cheering from the sidelines, and neighbors working together. At the same time, big town amenities provide the community with the feeling of a much larger place. Downtown revitalization, a new splash pad and up-river canoe launch, a top-notch industrial park, and excellent employment opportunities within Town are among the advantages supporting residents’ stability, recreation, and entertainment.

Compared to other towns in the Old Dominion, Altavista is relatively young. The idea for the creation of a town came in 1905 when three Lane brothers, contractors building 32 miles of the Virginian Railway, bought 2,000 acres of land in Campbell County. The name for the Lane’s new community came from the name of their old farm in Albemarle County. Subsequently, engineers were hired to lay out a town with streets and lots, complete with water, sewer, telephone service, and electric lines. Settlement was encouraged by the awarding of free lots. By 1912 the new Town of Altavista was incorporated. That year also saw the formation of the Lane Company, maker of the famous Lane cedar chests. From its very beginning as a box manufacturer, the Lane Company would become one of Altavista’s major employers and community contributors. The original town encompassed 1.87 square miles with residential and industrial growth occurring within the Town boundaries until around 1960, after which most new development took place outside the original boundaries. To preserve its tax base and plan for future growth, the Town annexed 3.13 square miles of Campbell County on December 31, 1977.

Today’s Altavista is a small town that feels a lot larger due to the variety and quality of the amenities that the community enjoys. Altavista’s beautiful natural setting and numerous cultural and recreational opportunities are keys to the area’s livability. The Town maintains two community and three neighborhood parks. A third community park, War Memorial Sports Complex, is maintained through a partnership with the Altavista Area YMCA. Cooperative efforts with Campbell County and other jurisdictions, support an extensive system of hiking, biking, and blue ways trails in and around Altavista. The Altavista Area YMCA is a true gem – Altavista is one of the smallest communities in the country to have a full YMCA



facility, and it is now one of the six largest independent YMCAs in Virginia. Today's YMCA consists of two facilities, the Athletic Center and Family Center, which encompass over 70,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.

While the on-going pandemic continues to impact community events, favorite events are starting to make a comeback in familiar and new formats. English Park, the Staunton River, and the Avoca Museum continue to greet residents and visitors.

The Avoca Museum, owned by the Town, is the principal architectural landmark in Town, and is one of the premier cultural attractions in Central Virginia. The museum is considered one of the best examples of American Queen Anne-style architecture on the East Coast. The house, designed by architect J.M.B. Lewis, was built in 1901. Designated a Virginia Historic Landmark and listed in the National Register of Historic Places, Avoca is the home site of Revolutionary Patriot Colonel Charles Lynch. Tours, exhibits, and events and festivals provide entertainment and education throughout the year.

Quality health care is available through Centra Health's medical and hospital system, a regional nonprofit healthcare system based in Lynchburg. Centra serves over 500,000 people as the predominant provider of critical medical services in central and southern Virginia. Lynchburg General Hospital (LGH), with 358 beds, is home to the Centra Stroobants Heart Center and Stroobants Cardiovascular Pavilion, a national benchmark facility for cardiac care. LGH is also a Level II Trauma Center, providing emergency and critical care services. LGH has a pediatric center and an outpatient surgery center and provides orthopedic, neurology, neurosurgery, diabetes, oncology and pulmonary services. Virginia Baptist Hospital, a 161-bed facility located three miles from LGH includes The Birth Center, Women's and Children's Health, and the region's neonatal intensive care unit. In addition to the two hospitals in Lynchburg, Centra Health operates a medical center in Gretna, 20 minutes south of Altavista, that provides primary, specialty, and emergency care. There are also several family physicians and general dentistry offices in Altavista, Hurt, and Gretna.

The exemplary quality of life continues with excellent local schools. Altavista students attend accredited public schools operated by Campbell County Schools. Pre-K through fifth grade students attend Altavista Elementary School and middle and high school student attend the Altavista Combined School. Academic and athletic excellence are illustrated by the multiple state championships across the spectrum – from Forensics and Journalism to Football, Basketball, and Softball. Private schools are available in Hurt, Lynchburg, and other nearby localities. The schools are a source of great community pride, and their activities and accomplishments are fully integrated in the fabric of the Town.





Higher education and technical training opportunities abound in the region as well, with easy access to Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg, 25 miles to the north, and Danville Community College, 45 miles to the south. Excellent four-year colleges and universities are less than an hour's drive and include Averett University in Danville, Liberty University, the University of Lynchburg and Randolph College in Lynchburg and Sweetbriar College in Amherst. Major state universities including the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech are within three-hours of Altavista.

Altavista's citizens, elected and appointed officials, and business and industry owners in the Town recognize the importance of a vibrant local and regional economy and are willing to invest the time and resources to enhance economic well-being and community wealth. In addition to Town Council, local and regional organizations work cooperatively to promote the economic vitality of the town and surrounding region. The synergy of their activities has resulted in a healthy local economy that has weathered well the challenges of past economic downturns.

Altavista encompasses 5.0 square miles and has a population of 3,378 (2020 census), which is approximately 63% white, 36% Black or African American, 0.8% Two+ Races and 0.5% Asian. The median household income is \$33,594 and the poverty rate is approximately 25%. Campbell County's population, which includes the residents of its towns, is 55,696 (2020 census). Regional employment is focused on manufacturing, community and professional services and education.



### DRIVING TIME TO MAJOR CITIES

ATLANTA - 6 hrs.

NEW YORK - 7 hrs.

NORFOLK - 6 hrs.

PHILADELPHIA - 6 hrs

### LARGEST EMPLOYERS IN ALTAVISTA

COMPANY	PRODUCT/SERVICE	# EMPLOYEES
Abbott	Nutrition Products	600
BGF Industries, Inc.	Fiberglass Fabric	650
Moore's Electrical & Mechanical	Contractor	520
Schrader Sentra	Industrial & Automotive Products	135
Graham Packaging	Plastic blow molding	120
Standard Insurance	Insurance Claims	75
Mid-Atlantic Printers	Commercial Printer	61

## TOWN GOVERNMENT

The Town of Altavista provides an array of municipal services complementing the more broadly delivered county services, such as schools, courts, and social services. Town services include law enforcement, parks and recreation, planning and zoning, municipal water and wastewater systems, and solid waste collection with curbside recycling. The Altavista Community Transit System (ACTS) offers a deviated fixed route bus service to residents of all ages. The Staunton River Memorial Library, built in 1986 and expanded in 2004, is a focal point of the Town. The library contains over 35,000 volumes and serves an area population of about 8,000. It is a part of the Campbell County library system, which also includes branches in Rustburg, Brookneal, and the Brookville-Timberlake area. The library also houses the Altavista visitors center providing information about Altavista and the surrounding area.

The Altavista Economic Development Authority, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, and Campbell County work together to improve the economic future of the Town. Altavista maintains several agreements with the Town of Hurt, including a Solid Waste Agreement and a MISS Utility Agreement. The Town of Altavista also sells water in bulk to the Town of Hurt and serves the Dearing Ford Business and Manufacturing Center and citizens living in the North Holly Hills and Tardy Mountain Road areas just outside of town. Altavista prides itself in providing safe and affordable water to its citizens and neighboring communities. Altavista On Track (AOT) is an independent 501 (c) (3) corporation

established in 2006 to promote businesses, attractions, and the history of downtown Altavista. The Town is an accredited community under the Virginia Main Street Program.

Altavista has approximately 68 employees and the FY2022 Adopted Budget totals \$16,284,830. Of that amount, \$6,219,310 is for the General Fund, \$1,041,770 for the Highway Fund, \$8,880,600 for the Enterprise Fund, and \$78,150 for the Cemetery Fund.

The Town of Altavista is governed by a mayor and six council members, elected to staggered terms. The Council is the legislative policy-making body for the town government. Council appoints a Town Manager who is responsible for the day-to-day administration and operations of the town government, appoints and supervises employees, implements policies, and addresses priorities adopted by the Council. In addition, the Town Manager serves as the Town Clerk and Purchasing Agent, as the Secretary to the Economic Development Authority, and represents Altavista on various local and regional boards and committees.

Town Council demonstrates a collaborative spirit and an efficient and considerate style. The members work well together and while expressing individual perspectives, they “come in as friends and leave as friends,” working together for the good of the Town. The Town is fiscally sound, and Council works to progressively improve the Town through investing the resources needed to improve services and maintain a high quality of life for residents.





## CHALLENGES, ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

An on-going challenge facing the new Town Manager will be planning and managing town operations as the community continues to cope with and recover from impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on residents, businesses and potential visitors.

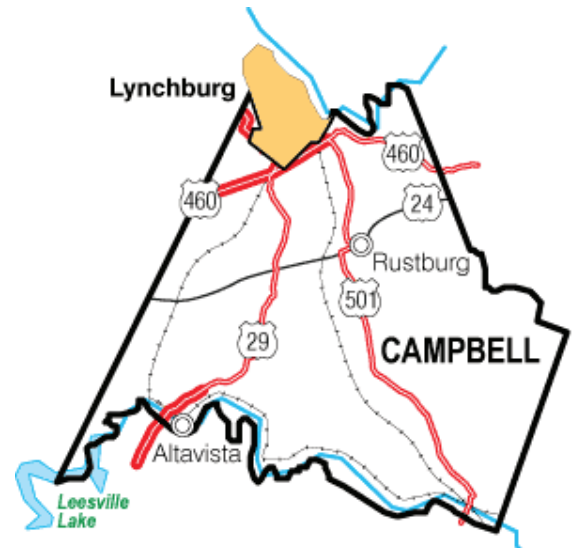
Town Council and the Planning Commission are actively working to update the Comprehensive Plan, anticipating completion in 2022. Within the context of the current Comprehensive Plan, its goals and the current environment, Council has identified the following areas of focus for the next three to five years:

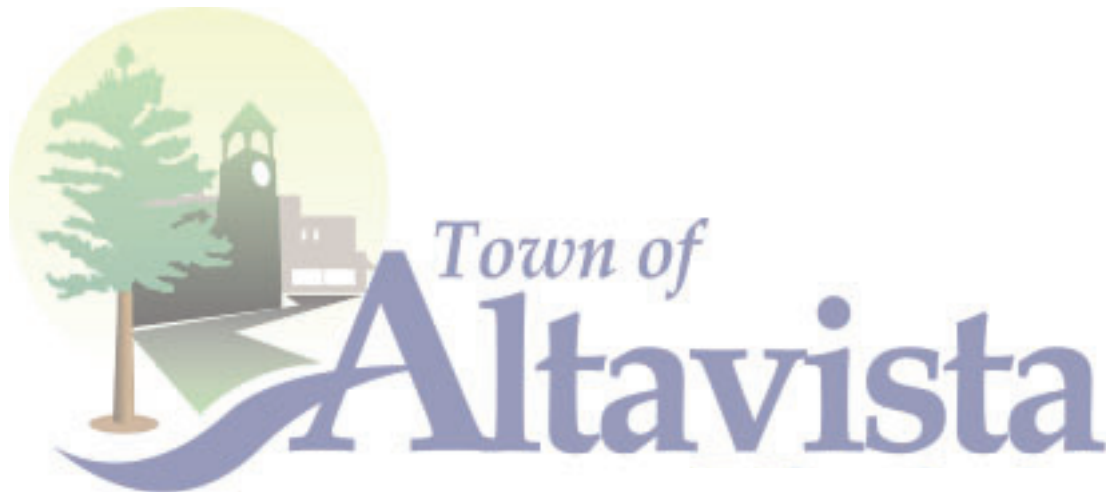
- Develop effective strategies to grow the economy through collaborative economic and community development.
- Optimize industrial park development including infrastructure improvements and full occupancy. The extension of gas service to the Dearing Ford Business and Manufacturing Center is a major project that will enhance the marketability of sites in the park.
- Address housing challenges such as blighted properties, absentee landlords, and a lack of residential diversity.

- Improve connectivity to parks and trails, supporting walkability across the whole of Town.
- Support the retention and expansion of local businesses.
- Guide current and upcoming development and redevelopment projects such as water and wastewater system improvements, enhancements to the Booker Building, the renovation and reuse of the historic Vista Theatre and the opening of the Spark Innovation Center.

In addition to the identified responsibilities, the Manager will need to focus on:

- Improving working relationships with Campbell County officials and staff.
- Immediately, addressing issues of blight and code enforcement.
- Assessing staffing needs and taking advantage of recent vacancies to rebuild a strong team.
- Supporting the comprehensive plan review and considering effective implementation strategies, taking advantage of Council's willingness to listen to new ideas and invest in community improvement.





## POSITION PROFILE

### QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

The following education and experience factors are the expected qualifications for successful performance:

- A Bachelor's degree in Public Administration, Business Management, Civil Engineering, Planning or a related field; a master's degree is preferred.
- Three to five years of successful leadership at a senior executive/manager/administrator level in an organization with comparable hands-on responsibilities; possessing a broad skill set appropriate to the breadth of Town government operations. Virginia local government experience as a manager, deputy, assistant, or department director is desirable.
- Demonstrated experience managing complex and multiple community development and capital projects simultaneously. Experience in grant writing and management is desirable.
- A demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional development through participation in organizations such as the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA); designation or progress toward designation as ICMA Credentialed Manager would be a plus.
- Any combination of education and experience that qualifies an applicant may be considered in lieu of the more specific criteria listed above.

### PERSONAL TRAITS & DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Absolute integrity, ensuring ethical, equitable, honest, fair, open and personable interactions with Council, Town employees and community members.
- Perceptive, approachable, and engaged, demonstrating a positive outlook and commitment to inclusive practices.
- Professionally competent, with confidence tempered by humility.
- Excellent communications and interpersonal skills, including the ability to listen effectively to understand and manage differing points of view.
- Strong leadership skills, in the government organization, the community, and the region; visionary, analytical, proactive, decisive and consistent; able to facilitate the blending of differing points of view into a reasonable approach for community investment.
- Knowledgeable and supportive of the principles of the council-manager form of government and respectful of the different and complementary roles of the Town Council and the Town Manager.
- A role model, coach, and mentor for town employees; dedicated to the professional development of staff; able to empower employees with a focus on performance, collaboration, and accountability.



## PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

- Short-term, immediate actions will be to engage with staff and council, review town policies and procedures, master the budget process, and get up to speed on active and upcoming projects.
- Demonstrate leadership in the region and clear willingness to support Altavista as a unique and excellent place to live, work and play.
- Active and visible participation in community activities, as a resident of the town.
- A commitment to open and transparent government; promoting a proactive, positive and interactive relationship with staff, community and business leaders and groups.
- Effective communications with all stakeholders; presenting information in a form understandable to various audiences.
- Fair and equitable treatment of Town employees and departments.

## COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

Compensation for the Manager will be competitive and dependent on qualifications and experience. The successful candidate's total compensation package will include a generous benefits package including participation in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), health insurance coverage, paid time off, group life and disability insurance, professional development support and other benefits as identified in a negotiated employment agreement.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Initial review of candidates will begin on **September 30, 2021**. Applications received after that date may be considered until the position is filled. A timely submission ensures the most advantageous review. To be considered, please submit a cover letter and resume with salary expectations and professional references to The Berkley Group, via email at [kimball.payne@bgllc.net](mailto:kimball.payne@bgllc.net). Questions may be directed to:

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For additional information visit: [altavistava.gov](http://altavistava.gov).

The Town of Altavista is an Equal Opportunity Employer.