



Director, Office of Economic & Workforce Development Durham, NC

The City of Durham, NC is seeking a strategic leader to lead their Department of Economic and Workforce Development.

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Durham, North Carolina has a highly diverse population of approximately 332,000 persons and a labor force of approximately 182,000 persons. It is located in what is referred to as the “Triangle” area of the state and sits halfway between the Blue Ridge Mountains and the pristine North Carolina beaches, including the Outer Banks. Durham is home to the world-renowned Research Triangle Park (RTP), home of more than 170 high-tech companies, as well as a thriving entrepreneurial community. The top employment sectors include life sciences and health care; professional, scientific and technical services; retail; and manufacturing.

Durham is the home of outstanding institutions of higher education, which all have excellent collaborative relationships with the City of Durham Government. Located in Durham are:

Duke University – Enrollment: Approximately 18,000. Duke University is consistently ranked as one of the nation’s top education and research institutions offering undergraduate and graduate degrees. Signature programs include Biomedical Engineering and Business Administration, along with a highly regarded Medical School and Law School.

North Carolina Central University (NCCU) – Enrollment: Approximately 8,000. NCCU was the nation’s first public liberal arts institution founded for African Americans and remains one of the nation’s top Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). NCCU offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs, including the NCCU School of Law. Signature programs include Biomanufacturing and Pharmaceutical Research and Criminal Justice.

Durham Technical Community College (Durham Tech) – Across seven (7) locations, Durham Tech serves approximately 18,000 students, offering more than 100 distinct associate’s degrees. Durham Tech plays a major role in developing a talent pipeline for Durham’s economy.

THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The primary goal of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) is Shared Economic Prosperity. In this realm, OEWD seeks to enable an environment wherein public-private strategic alliances create transformative projects that contribute to Durham's thriving economy by expanding business and employment opportunities for all of Durham's residents. OEWD also houses the Durham Workforce Development Board, and they are charged with developing and executing the City of Durham's workforce development strategy together with the economic development strategy. The workforce development strategy is focused on leveraging federal, state, and local funds to ensure the alignment of Durham's talent pipeline with the needs of the region's industry sector. The economic development strategy and programs are centered on growing and driving economic prosperity in Durham.

With a FY24-25 budget of \$8.8M, the Office's priorities are predicated on generating opportunities that increase the commercial tax base, create jobs, build the capacity of the talent pool, and maximize private-sector investment, which in turn contribute to a strong, diverse, and inclusive economy in support of the citywide Strategic Plan.

Under the City's strategic goal of Shared Economic Prosperity, the Office's strategic objectives include:

- Implementing OEWD's Small Business Work Plan
- Building a Talented, Competitive Workforce
- Growing a Civic Infrastructure
- Building Strong and Collaborative Relationships with Durham's Growing and Emerging Corporate Community

The adoption of the Shared Economic Prosperity Goal has enabled the Department to implement a programmatic framework focused on servicing local small, minority, and women-owned businesses and residents with barriers to employment. Over the past four years, OEWD has focused on the critically important aim of creating an ecosystem with strategic and civic partners in support of the community, all viewed through the lens of equity and inclusion.

OEWD continues to respond to the needs of local small businesses and their employees impacted by business closures and disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic has had a significant impact on employment and job training services. While Durham County's unemployment rate has rebounded to 3.5% as of June 2022, the employment picture remains challenging, albeit optimistic for employers. Employers in sectors like hospitality continue to struggle to find candidates for their posted job openings. Structural changes continue to force the reevaluation of how business is conducted while recovering from the impact of the pandemic. Potential employees are seeking higher wages, safer work environments and childcare services. These phenomena require a more comprehensive approach to support sustainable employment. The Office continues to be proactive in adapting to strategies that will yield organizational and citywide success.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Director, Office of Economic and Workforce Development is responsible for leading and marketing programs and initiatives for the City's redevelopment plans, and leading major projects to attract, retain, and expand business. The Director's responsibilities also include leading programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Director must work collaboratively with strategic partners at the local, state and national level to bring job growth to Durham and manage the incentive programs offered by the City. A partial list of other responsibilities includes:

- Revitalizing distressed business corridors,
- Targeting development in redevelopment areas,
- Overseeing outreach programs for small business and federally funded job placements,
- Expanding the tax base expansion, and
- Creating jobs through public and private real estate partnerships.

The Director will serve as the principal point of contact for external and internal constituencies on public-private partnerships for economic development through commercial real estate activities as well as for negotiating, developing and monitoring agreements and other forms of economic and business development incentives. The midpoint salary for this position is \$174,554. The final offer will be commensurate with experience.

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will possess a bachelor's degree in business administration, urban planning, economics, public administration, or a related field. An appropriate advanced degree is desirable. The ideal candidate should possess a minimum of nine (9) years of progressively responsible experience in the field of economic development, including participating in and/or negotiating public/private projects and demonstrated experience in leading redevelopment projects of a significant size. Additionally, the ideal candidate will have at least seven (7) years supervisory experience, preferably within a municipal government. A Certified Economic Development Director (CEcD) certificate from the International Economic Development Council or successful completion of IEDC core courses is preferred.

TO APPLY

The City of Durham is partnering with PoliHire to identify their next Director of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development. If you are interested in this opportunity [click here](#) to submit a cover letter detailing your interest and your resume.