

Catawba County, North Carolina LGMF Demonstration of Mentorship Ability

What are some of the attainable goals that you will establish for the Fellow?

- To obtain a better understanding of the structure and operations of County Government in Catawba County specifically and in North Carolina generally.
- To provide practical work experience as it relates to various County operations.
- To impress upon the Fellow the importance of establishing excellent interpersonal relationships to be successful as a professional local government manager.
- To add value to Catawba County by asking questions and sharing new ideas on how to accomplish the work we perform.
- To prepare and develop the Fellow to progress into a position as a professional local government manager.
- To expose the Fellow to ICMA and the North Carolina City/County Manager's Association and the resources that they offer.

How do you plan to structure the Fellow's experience in general?

The Fellow's experience will be structured in four parts:

- 1) Orientation and tour of County facilities;
- 2) Educational component including attending related in-house professional development courses, seminars, conferences and meetings with community leaders;
- 3) Practical component including working on various projects in multiple departments;
- 4) Community service component including work on a community service project.

How will you ensure that the Fellow gains exposure to at least one of the following areas: human resource management, inter-generationality, or diversity, however that issue is represented in your community?

The Fellow will be exposed to two of the above noted areas. Human resource management and diversity will be addressed as part of the practical component through the completion of related projects and attendance at community leadership meetings such as the NAACP.

What do you hope the Fellow will understand about local government and public management by the end of the program?

Catawba County would like the Fellow to understand the value and rewards associated with a career as a professional local government manager. In addition, we would like to expose the Fellow to the tools needed to succeed as a manager and provide an overview in the operations associated with a county government in North Carolina.

Description of Potential Local Government Involvement by Fellow

What role do you see the Fellow fulfilling?

The Fellow would be participating in the administration and service delivery of Catawba County government. It is expected that the Fellow will commit to a year of learning about Catawba County government. In addition, the Fellow will be able to apply skills acquired through advanced study while completing work for the County. After attending the orientation and facilities tour of the program, the Fellow will begin to work on management projects in several departments, including the County Manager's Office. During the rotation of the departments, the Fellow will observe as well as be assigned projects on both an individual and group basis. Many of these projects will be molded to the interests of the Fellow. Throughout the year, the Fellow will be asked to attend meetings with local community leaders as well as attend related local government seminars and conferences as part of the Educational Component of the program. Finally, the Fellow will participate actively in a community-based project, such as the construction of a Habitat Home.

With which specific department/initiatives/projects would the Fellow be involved?

The Fellow would be involved with the following departments:

- 1) County Manager, including budget and personnel;
- 2) Human Resources
- 3) Public Safety
- 4) Public Health
- 5) Planning
- 6) Emergency Services
- 7) Tax
- 8) Budget
- 9) Finance
- 10) Technology
- 11) Cooperative Extension

Possible initiatives or projects could be as follows:

- 1) **Small Business Assistance Program development:** In cooperation with Chamber of Commerce, perform best practice research and analysis on range of small business assistance programs in existence. Propose a program (with associated budget) tailored to the needs of Catawba County businesses and, potentially, draft an implementation plan.
- 2) **Public Safety staffing analysis** – Perform comparative research with surrounding counties and compile cost-benefit analysis of hiring additional employees versus continuing to pay overtime, holiday pay, and part-time wages to existing employees within Emergency Services department.

- 3) **Libraries staffing analysis** – Work with Libraries and Budget to hone staffing projections for new branch library.
- 4) **Reinventing Departments analysis** – Gather information from NC counties on how “reinventing programs” have been structured and evaluate Catawba County approach within this context. Perform quantitative analysis of year-end spending patterns to determine if existing non-reinventing departments would be good candidates to shift to reinventing.
- 5) **Facilities Condition Assessment** – Work with Facilities department to develop comprehensive building condition assessment tool and to evaluate existing buildings using this tool. Deliver a prioritized work plan for facility renovation, retrofit, and repair.
- 6) **Farm & Food Sustainability Plan** – Assist with implementation of plan aimed at ensuring successful transition of local agricultural economy and enhancing local food self-reliance through Farm-to-Fork initiatives and other activities identified through community planning process.
- 7) **Performance Dashboard update** – Work with Budget to gather most recent statistics for use in updating existing performance dashboard.
- 8) **Budget management / analyst responsibilities** – Assume responsibility for budget development and monitoring for one or more County department operating and capital budgets.
- 9) **Cooperative Extension Cattlemen’s Association Marketing Committee** – Work with Cooperative Extension as project manager / event coordinator for cattle sales / agent source verification program that allows local farmers to export their live animals for sale.
- 10) **Participating in the County’s Book Club** that reads and discusses management related books on a quarterly basis;
- 11) **Participating in department head meetings** and the department head retreat.

Which staff would the Fellow work with and what would be their relationship?

The Fellow would be working with Department Heads and other senior administrative staff throughout the program. The Assistant County Manager will be assigned as the Fellow’s mentor who can provide career guidance and insight into management and leadership styles. The Fellow will also be working with the County Manager on several projects.

What sort of rotation would you provide to the Fellow and what added value would it offer to the Fellow’s experience?

The Fellow would have the opportunity to work with various County departments during the orientation phase and then by working on different projects with various departments.

What other resources/opportunities would you provide that would maximize the Fellow's exposure to local government and your time with the Fellow?

Catawba County has been active in the ICMA Resource City/County program. The Fellow would be exposed to the work associated with the program. Attendance at state and regional manager meetings would be permitted and encouraged. In addition, Catawba County also offers Lunch and Learn programs for its employees. The Fellow would be permitted to attend these programs and any other programs the County offers on behalf of its employees. Finally, the Fellow would be asked to attend some of the meetings of the Catawba County Commissioners. Attendance at these meetings would expose the Fellow to the governance model used in Catawba County. The Fellow will also be expected to attend all Board of Commissioners meetings as well as department head meetings and Catawba County Managers' Meetings.