

THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH, MINNESOTA SEEKS AN EXPERIENCED LEADER AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR TO BE ITS NEXT CITY ADMINISTRATOR



ABOUT NORTH BRANCH

North Branch, Minnesota, is the largest city in Chisago County with a 2015 estimated population of 10,215 and an area of 36 square miles. It is named for the north branch of the Sunrise River, which flows through the city. Located at the junction of Interstate 35 and Minnesota State Highway 95, the city is 45 miles north of Minneapolis and St. Paul and 120 miles south of Duluth.

North Branch became a township in 1861 and incorporated as a village in 1881. However, in 1901, North Branch split into a village covering the more densely populated downtown area and a township covering the rest of the former village. The township later incorporated as the village of Branch in 1961. The two cities talked about a potential merger for years, beginning in the late 1970s. The first public referendum on the issue was held in 1984, and it failed. A second referendum passed in 1994 and the two cities officially merged that same year.

Rapid residential and retail growth occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s; and water and wastewater utilities were expanded to meet anticipated growth. The 2008 recession dramatically curbed development, but put the city in a good position to attract future light manufacturing, commercial, and residential development. With the 250-acre shovel-ready Interstate Business Park, the largest in the state, the City is attracting commercial and industrial growth, creating jobs, and welcoming new manufacturing companies such as TransWorld and Premier Marine.

North Branch takes pride in its small town ambience and its family-friendly community. The Chicago-Isanti County Heartland Express provides transit service within the two-county area. North Branch Area Public Schools (ISD 138) provides a full-range of education services including early childhood programming, one elementary school (Sunrise River School), a middle school (North Branch Area Middle School), high school (North Branch Area High School), and alternative programs such as the Chisago County Schools' Life Work Center, School Age Care, Distance Learning, Area Learning Center, and more. Post-secondary training is available at the nearby Pine Technical and Community College located in Pine City and at universities and colleges in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, including the University of Minnesota.

ABOUT NORTH BRANCH

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The city of North Branch has over 232 acres of parkland at 19 sites for outdoor recreational enjoyment. In addition, residents and visitors can utilize four North Branch Area School District 138 sites, a 9-hole North Branch Golf Course, Checkerboard County Park, and the Janet Johnson Wildlife Management Area. The city also has 30 miles and sidewalks and is home to head of the Sunrise Prairie Trail that connects with the Hardwood Creek Trail in Washington County.

Health care services are provided by clinics operated by Fairview and Allina. Ten hospitals are located within an easy drive of North Branch.

THE ORGANIZATION

The City of North Branch is organized as a Plan A statutory city and operates with a weak mayor-council. The City Council has five members, including four Council members elected at large to four-year overlapping terms and the Mayor elected to a two-year term. City elections coincide with state general elections. The City Council is responsible for adopting ordinances and city policies, adopting an annual budget, setting the tax levy, and appointing the city administrator. The City Council annually appoints members to serve on standing committees and to serve as liaisons on a variety of community boards and commissions.

The city provides a full range of services to residents, including planning and zoning, public works, police and fire services. Many residents receive water and electric services provided by North Branch Municipal Power and Light. In addition, portions of the city receive power from Xcel Energy and East Central Energy. Rural areas of the city are on well and septic.



THE POSITION

The City Administrator reports to the City Council and serves at its pleasure. The position functions as the city's chief administrative official responsible for the overall management and administration of all city operations, in accordance with policies adopted by the City Council. The City Administrator is responsible for a budget of \$13.4 million and a staff that includes 32 full-time and six part-time employees and 28 volunteer firefighters. Positions reporting to the City Administrator include the Finance Director, Community Development Director, Public Works Director, Police Chief, and the Deputy City Clerk/IT Coordinator.

Major responsibilities performed by the City Administrator include:

- Lead and direct the City's management team to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of municipal services and implementation of ordinances and Council policies.
- Coordinate activities of the City Council and keep Council members informed; prepare agendas and supporting materials for Council meetings and attends Council meetings.
- Advise the Council of financial conditions and current and future City needs.
- Prepare, present and administer the annual budget and capital improvement plan.



THE POSITION (*CONTINUED...*)

- Oversee contracts with service providers to ensure proper services are provided and recommend changes as appropriate.
- Oversee economic development programs and participate in the negotiation of development agreements.
- Administer all personnel policies and actions; maintain and recommend modifications to the City's compensation and benefit program; recommend employee hiring and disciplinary actions; and direct the evaluation of employee performance.
- Represent or provide for the representation of the Council in negotiations with the City's recognized collective bargaining units; oversees contract administration.
- Interpret and enforce local, state or federal laws, ordinances, policies and rules related to local government; coordinate the preparation of ordinances, resolutions, and policies for Council consideration.
- Respond to questions or concerns from the general public regarding City related issues.
- Represent the City in intergovernmental matters involving cities, townships, the county, state and federal governments; attend community meetings and official functions on the City's behalf.



POSITION PROFILE

Qualities desired in the City Administrator include:

- Brings a fresh perspective; provides the City Council with timely and factual reports and well-reasoned options and recommendations
- Outgoing, has excellent people skills and is comfortable meeting people and being the face of the city
- Appreciates and is comfortable with the city's small town and rural qualities
- Honest and transparent; earns the respect and trust of the City Council and staff
- Understands and upholds the respective roles of the City Council and the City Administrator
- Sees the big picture and helps the City Council and staff recognize the impact one issue can have on others
- Works effectively through department heads; gives clear direction and holds employees accountable
- Demonstrates a firm understanding of local government financing and debt management; has experience implementing a financial plan
- Well-organized, effectively sets priorities and manages multiple priorities
- Comfortable with technology and its application to streamlining municipal services
- Listens to all sides of an issue; works collaboratively to solve problems and identify the best solution
- Explains complex information in a manner that is straightforward and understandable
- Self-confident, has a strong backbone and the ability to tell people no
- Adaptable and resilient
- Calm under pressure; not easily rattled
- Communicates in a manner that is firm yet diplomatic, is adept at navigating conflict
- Willing to make a long term commitment to the community

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for leadership include:

- **Establishing trust.** The City Administrator will take office after a new City Council is seated. Establishing trust and credibility with the City Council and staff, listening and communicating information, and managing expectations will be important activities for the City Administrator. Building trust will enable the City Administrator to help everyone see the big picture and establish shared goals.
- **Building relationships.** The City of North Branch wants to establish and maintain effective working relationships within City Hall but also with Chisago County, other units of local government, and state agencies. The City Administrator will build new connections, represent the City's interests, and look for opportunities to build partnerships.
- **Streamlining municipal processes.** The City of North Branch is interested in streamlining City processes to promote efficiency and continuous improvement. The City Administrator will review and assess city processes ensuring that they reflect best practices and conform with state law and make recommendations on areas where processes can be improved.
- **Fiscal health.** North Branch has been following a multi-year financial plan to pay down its debt and rebuild its reserves. It will be critical for the City Administrator to work closely with the Finance Director to continue this course and to begin planning for future capital improvements to municipal infrastructure and facilities.
- **Attracting employers and jobs.** North Branch has improved property available for commercial, industrial, and residential development. The City Administrator will work collaboratively with government partners and community leaders to present North Branch as a community that welcomes business and to attract new employers and new jobs to the City. The City Administrator will also get to know employers and businesses in North Branch and be attentive to retention and expansion needs.
- **Housing.** Life-cycle housing is a vital component of a successful economic development program. The City Administrator will assist the City Council in exploring housing needs and providing housing options for people of all ages.
- **Staffing plan.** During the recession, the City reduced staffing levels to live within its means. As its financial health improves, a review of staffing levels is needed to ensure that resources are allocated to provide quality services. The City Administrator will work with department heads to assess staffing needs and consider alternative means to providing services. The City Administrator will report findings and recommendations to the City Council.



EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or related field and five or more years of progressively responsible management/administrative experience in local government or comparable setting; Master's degree preferred. Equivalent combination of education and experience will be considered. Experience in local government finance, economic development, human resources, and labor relations required.

Candidates must demonstrate knowledge of local government processes and familiarity with statutes applicable to municipal operations and governance. The ideal candidate will be a strong leader, an effective communicator, a critical thinker, and a positive force for economic growth.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salary is \$91,057 - \$120,126 depending on qualifications. Benefits package available.



APPLICATION PROCESS

Qualified candidates please submit your cover letter and resume online by visiting our website at <https://waters-company.recruitmenthome.com/>. This position is open until filled; however, interested applicants are strongly encouraged to apply no later than November 28, 2016. Following this date, applications will be screened against criteria outlined in this brochure. On-site interviews will be offered to those candidates named as finalists, with reference checks, background records checks, including credit history, and academic and employment verifications conducted after receiving candidates' consent. For more information, please contact Sharon Klumpp at sklumpp@waters-company.com or by calling 651.223.3053 (office) or 651.270.6856 (mobile).



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