

North Carolina Local Government Service Corps

2009 Application
for Municipalities



North Carolina Local Government Service Corps

November 19, 2008

Dear Mayor:

Small towns in North Carolina have a new resource to help them initiate, manage, and carry out economic development ventures. The UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government (UNC-SOG) and Appalachian State University (ASU) have partnered with the Golden LEAF Foundation to launch the North Carolina Local Government Service Corps. Beginning in July 2009, the Service Corps will deploy four Master of Public Administration (MPA) graduates to small town governments to provide two years of hands-on economic development and capacity-building assistance.

This letter explains the NC Local Government Service Corps program, describes the community selection criteria and requirements for participation, and provides details on how and when to apply. *Applications for the Service Corps program are due on January 16, 2009.*

Program Overview

The Service Corps is an initiative to assist small towns in economically distressed areas of North Carolina by placing MPA graduates in local governments. Funding for the Service Corps is provided by a grant from the Golden LEAF Foundation. The NC Rural Economic Development Center and the NC League of Municipalities have been active in supporting the Service Corps and shaping its development.

MPA graduates selected for the Service Corps will be referred to as "Golden LEAF Management Advisors." The Service Corps will operate on a circuit-rider model in which each Management Advisor will serve two or three communities simultaneously, with time allocated among them according to an agreement reached by the communities and Service Corps program director. The universities will provide support to both the Management Advisors and the communities they serve. Prior to placement in the field, Management Advisors will receive advanced training in economic development, local government management, proposal writing, and grant administration. Public officials in the host towns will receive scholarships to attend Essentials of Economic Development workshops offered by the School of Government in partnership with ASU.

Assistance from a Management Advisor is expected to increase the capacity of small towns to respond proactively to economic development challenges and opportunities.

Town Selection Criteria

The pilot phase of the Service Corps will involve selecting up to 12 towns in North Carolina and placing Management Advisors into the service of two or three neighboring towns for a period of two years. Towns will be selected with attention to geographic diversity. Towns applying to participate in the Service Corps must meet the *threshold criteria*. Towns that meet *preferred conditions* will be considered strong candidates for the Service Corps.

Threshold Criteria

An applicant to the Service Corps must meet the following criteria:

- An incorporated municipality (or a community designated as the county seat in a county without incorporated municipalities)
- Population of fewer than 5,000 people
- Located in a rural, tobacco dependent and/or economically distressed county¹

Preferred Conditions

In addition to the threshold criteria, towns that meet one or more of the following conditions will be considered strong candidates for the Service Corps (these are NOT requirements and towns that do not meet one or more of these conditions are still encouraged to apply):

- Mayor-council form of government without full-time town manager or administrator²
- Having existing formal or informal agreements with neighboring municipalities that would facilitate sharing the Management Advisor
- Defining and describing a specific project or set of priorities for the Management Advisor in the application

Program Requirements

The Service Corps program requires that participating towns commit to each of the following:

- The Chief Elected Officer in each town must agree to supervise the Golden LEAF Management Advisor.
- Town must be willing to share the Management Advisor's time and expertise with one or two neighboring municipalities.
- Town must agree to work with the Service Corps program director to develop mutually agreeable time-sharing agreements with neighboring municipalities.
- Town must be willing to contribute toward a percentage of the Management Advisor's salary and benefits (up to, but not to exceed, 20% per year for two years beginning July 2009).³
- Local public officials from the town must commit to attend the School of Government's *Essentials of Economic Development* training course (or another similar offering) during the spring or fall of 2009.⁴

1. Towns applying to the Service Corps are not necessarily required to be located in a Tier I County (as defined by the NC Department of Commerce). While being located in a Tier I County is one way to meet this criterion, alternative indicators of economic distress will also be accepted. Towns that are not in Tier I counties will be asked to describe their specific local situation in terms of "economic distress" (such as having lower average household income or higher unemployment than the state average).

2. Towns with full-time managers or administrators are encouraged to consider partnerships with smaller neighboring municipalities without such capacity.

3. The town's total contribution to the Management Advisor's salary (20% of year-one salary plus 20% of year-two salary) will be due September 1, 2010—one year after the initial placement of a Management Advisor—in order to provide the town and Management Advisor one full year to fund the town's contribution.

4. *Essentials of Economic Development* training courses will be held in Fayetteville (March 11, 2009) and Boone (April 8, 2009). Additional offerings will be available in fall 2009. Course registration fees for public officials in towns selected for the Service Corps will be underwritten by the Golden LEAF Foundation.

Application Requirements

Applicants must complete the **application form**, an **application narrative**, and provide requested **exhibits** if available. See the enclosed application form for more details. The town's chief elected official must sign the application form.

Application Timeline and Submission Instructions

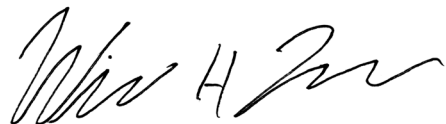
The town application deadline is **January 16, 2009**. Partnerships among neighboring municipalities to share a Management Advisor will be explored and formalized between January and March. Towns selected for participation will be announced in **March 2009**. Management advisors will be placed in-service between **July and September 2009** (depending on local circumstances). Applications will be accepted in hard copy and by e-mail until 5 p.m. on January 16, 2009, at the following address:

North Carolina Local Government Service Corps

Attn: Will Lambe, Director
School of Government
UNC-Chapel Hill
Knapp-Sanders Building
Campus Box 3330
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3330
whlambe@sog.unc.edu

If you need further information, please contact me at whlambe@sog.unc.edu or 919.966.4247. Thank you for your interest in the North Carolina Local Government Service Corps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Lambe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and a stylized "L".

Will Lambe
Director, NC Local Government Service Corps

North Carolina Local Government Service Corps Application

I. Municipality Information

Name of Municipality: _____

Town population: _____ County: _____ Tier: _____

Name/Title of Chief Elected Officer: _____

Name/Title of Chief Managerial/Administrative Official (if applicable):

Town mailing address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

II. Application Preparation

Name/Title of Person Preparing Application: _____

Relationship to Municipality (employee, consultant, etc.): _____

Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

(PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE OF APPLICATION)

III. Application Narrative (maximum 6 pages)

Please respond to each of the following issues in the application narrative:

- **Describe your town.** Where is it located? What does it look like? What are its assets? What are its challenges?
- **Describe your town's current economic situation.** How has your town been affected by economic transition and/or natural disaster? What are your town's critical needs? What economic development activity is under way? If you are not in a Tier I county, please describe your town's circumstances of "economic distress."
- **Describe your town's relationship with its neighbors.** Do you have a good working relationship with neighboring municipalities? What (if any) services or resources do you currently share with neighbors? With which neighbors would you consider sharing a Management Advisor and why? Have you spoken with neighboring municipalities about sharing a Management Advisor?
- **Describe your town's priorities (and goals) for the Service Corps.** What projects or responsibilities would you delegate to a Management Advisor? Are there any projects on the horizon that a Management Advisor could assist you with that would help you **and** your neighbors? What goals would you hope to accomplish by retaining a Management Advisor in your local government for two years?

IV. Exhibits

The following exhibits should be attached to the proposal if available:

- Strategic Plan for the Town
- Town History

Please submit completed and signed application by 5 p.m. on January 16, 2009. Applications may be submitted in hard copy or by email to:

North Carolina Local Government Service Corps

Attn: Will Lambe, Director
School of Government
UNC-Chapel Hill
Knapp-Sanders Building
Campus Box 3330
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3330
whlambe@sog.unc.edu