

Inviting Applications for

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

of Valdosta, Georgia

About the City

The City of Valdosta is a unique community, blending its historic past with a dynamic and high growth environment, coupled with a diversity to give it economic viability and strength. In 1860, Valdosta was incorporated as the new county government seat. With a population of 166 people, Valdosta thrived as the county government seat of Lowndes County and the inland capital for Sea Island cotton.

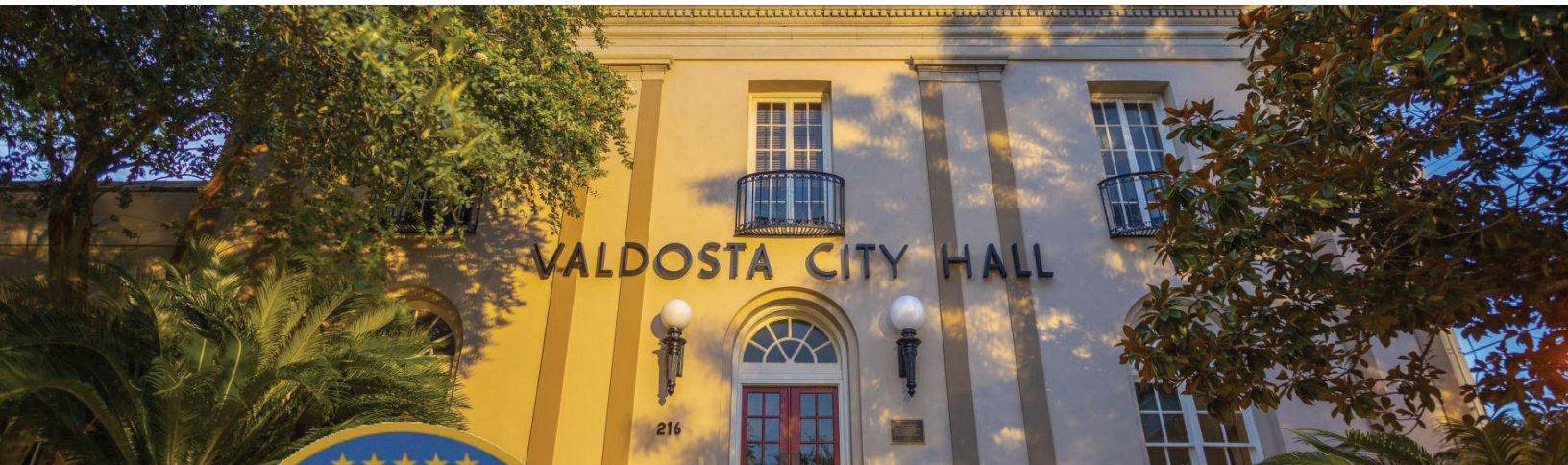
During the city's first 10 years, it grew 622 percent to a population of 1,999. Valdosta has seen explosive growth in the most recent decade and is now approaching a population of 60,000. The determination of the little town that moved to the railroad is still evident in today's city as it works toward a prosperous future. Valdosta provides a healthy, vibrant, safe environment where residents live, work, and play in a diverse community that values families and neighbors. Valdosta-Lowndes County is a thriving community with an economy balanced for growth, where wages are increasing at a healthy pace yet cost of living and business costs remain competitively low. Valdosta residents enjoy the scenic rural area of South Georgia along with a variety of urban shopping choices, dining, arts, and entertainment. Valdosta serves as the cultural, medical, and commercial hub for eleven South Georgia and north Florida counties.



About the Government

The City of Valdosta operates under a Council/Manager form of Government. The Valdosta City Council is composed of a mayor and seven council members who serve four year staggered terms. The city is divided into six single-member districts and one at-large district. The Mayor/Council is charged with setting policy, approving budgets, and other legislative duties such as adoption of ordinances.

The Mayor/Council appoints the City Manager who works at the pleasure of the Council and is responsible for the daily operations of the city with 600 employees. Department heads are selected by and report to the City Manager. The City Manager is responsible for implementing the annual operating budget (currently \$124 million) as approved by the Mayor/Council.



City Awards

- 2022 GMA Visionary Award Winner for Unity Park Amphitheater
- 2022 APWA Award for “Valdosta On-Demand Transit”
- Named one of Georgia’s first “Cities of Excellence” for being one of the state’s “best managed and most livable cities” for quality-of-life

The Ideal Candidate

The City of Valdosta seeks a visionary, strategic, and collaborative Human Resources Director who is excited by the opportunity to implement transformational initiatives, modernize the HR Department, and establish the Department as a trusted strategic partner to City leadership, employees, and the community. Most importantly, the ideal candidate will be passionate about public service and committed to making the City of Valdosta an employer of choice, one that inspires confidence within the workforce, empowers employees to achieve success, and develops leaders who are dedicated to serving the citizens of Valdosta.

The successful candidate will have exceptional leadership, communication, and change management skills, along with the emotional intelligence necessary to build credibility and strong working relationships with elected officials, city leadership, department directors, employees, and community stakeholders. To be successful in this position, the new Director will be comfortable leading through change, building high performance teams, managing multiple priorities, and creating a culture of accountability, collaboration, customer service, and innovation.

The new Human Resources Director will be an experienced leader who embraces continuous improvement and understands that Human Resources is much more than just compliance but is a catalyst for organizational success. The new Director will have experience implementing major organizational initiatives such as compensation and classification studies, performance management systems, HRIS/ payroll technologies, employee engagement strategies, policy modernization, leadership development, and workforce planning.

Challenges & Opportunities

The new Human Resources Director will be a visionary leader who can strengthen the organizational culture, promote employee engagement and quality customer service, while providing leadership to the following projects and organizational development initiatives:

- Develop and communicate a clear vision for the Human Resources Department that aligns with the City's strategic priorities, inspires a culture of innovation, promotes continuous improvement, and values collaboration, exceptional customer service and employee engagement.
- Lead the development and implementation of a comprehensive performance evaluation system that promotes accountability, recognizes excellence, supports employee development, and aligns individual performance with organizational goals. This initiative will establish a consistent performance culture across all City departments.
- Manage the implementation of the recently completed and approved citywide Classification and Compensation Study. This will require developing implementation strategies, communicating changes effectively, ensuring equitable administration, and establishing sustainable compensation practices for the future.
- Develop innovative recruitment and retention strategies that effectively promote the City of Valdosta as an employer of choice where employees are valued, respected, and invested in the organization's success.
- Partner with City departments and the implementation team to refine and optimize the recently implemented Paylocity system. Identify operational improvements, resolve workflow challenges, improve user adoption, and maximize system capabilities.
- Continue to develop, through standardize training and support, a network of departmental HR Liaisons who serve as extensions of the Human Resources Department and are charged with helping to ensure consistent application of personnel policies and HR practices throughout the organization.
- Review and update internal HR Department procedures to improve efficiency, consistency, responsiveness, and customer service. Develop standardized processes, establish performance metrics, and leverage technology to create a more effective and service-oriented HR operation.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in public or personnel administration, human resources, business management, or related field is required; master's degree preferred.
- Five (5) years of progressively responsible management experience in human resources/personnel management or an equivalent combination of education and experience is required. Local government human resources experience is desired.
- SHRM-CP, SHRM-SCP, PHR, or SPHR Certification preferred; other professionally recognized certification programs are indications of commitment to the profession and will be noted during the valuation process.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Establishes department priorities, goals and objectives; collaborates and consults with the City Manager to evaluate staffing levels and organizational structure.
- Develops and implements systems for reviewing policies, procedures, efficiency and effectiveness and ensure city compliance with human resources regulatory standards.
- Conducts research to evaluate and enhance the city's human resources functions; formulates recommendations and provides advisement for improvement.
- Prepares and manages departmental operating, capital and supplemental budgets; monitors budget activity to ensure the proper use and allocation of department funds.
- Provides leadership and guidance to the payroll and benefits functions of the city government.
- Researches, interprets, and applies federal, state and city ordinances and regulations.
- Presents personnel policy changes to the City Manager, Mayor and City Council for review and approval.
- Manages employee relations for all staff; coaches staff and management; provides recommendations to staff on how to address concerns, strategic planning, and performance issues.
- Administers and updates the city's compensation plan; determines best options in consultation with city leadership.
- Develops, implements, and administers the City's comprehensive risk management program, including identifying, evaluating, and mitigating operational, financial, safety, and liability risks to protect the City's assets and interests.



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The expected starting salary range for this position is **\$120,000-\$140,000** (depending on qualifications of the selected candidate).

A very comprehensive benefits package is offered for this position, including:

Health, dental and vision insurance; no cost Medical Clinic – Premise Health; Basic Life and AD&D – provided by the city at no cost; Long-term disability paid by the city; Employee Assistance Program – EAP; Pension benefit – employee contributes 3%, vested in 10 years; Deferred Compensation 457 offered through Empower and Paid time off (PTO) and paid holidays. Relocation expenses are negotiable.



HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates must submit by email a cover letter, resume, a list of at least five job related references (with email and phone numbers), as well as salary history **no later than August 28, 2026 to lisaward912@gmail.com.**

Please direct any questions to Lisa Ward, Senior Associate, Mercer Group Associates, at 706-983-9326; or Alan Reddish at 706-614-4961.



MERCER GROUP ASSOCIATES