



# Welcome to the City of Petersburg, Virginia

Director of Finance Position Available—Apply by April 3, 2017



Formally incorporated as a city in 1748, Petersburg is rich in history and character. It was once in the forefront of industry and commercial opportunity and the second largest city in Virginia. Today it stands as a transportation hub, rich in heritage, tourism and industrial sites. The wealth of Petersburg is in its potential—innovation and opportunity have been the strength of Petersburg since the beginning, and with the right leadership, this tradition can continue.

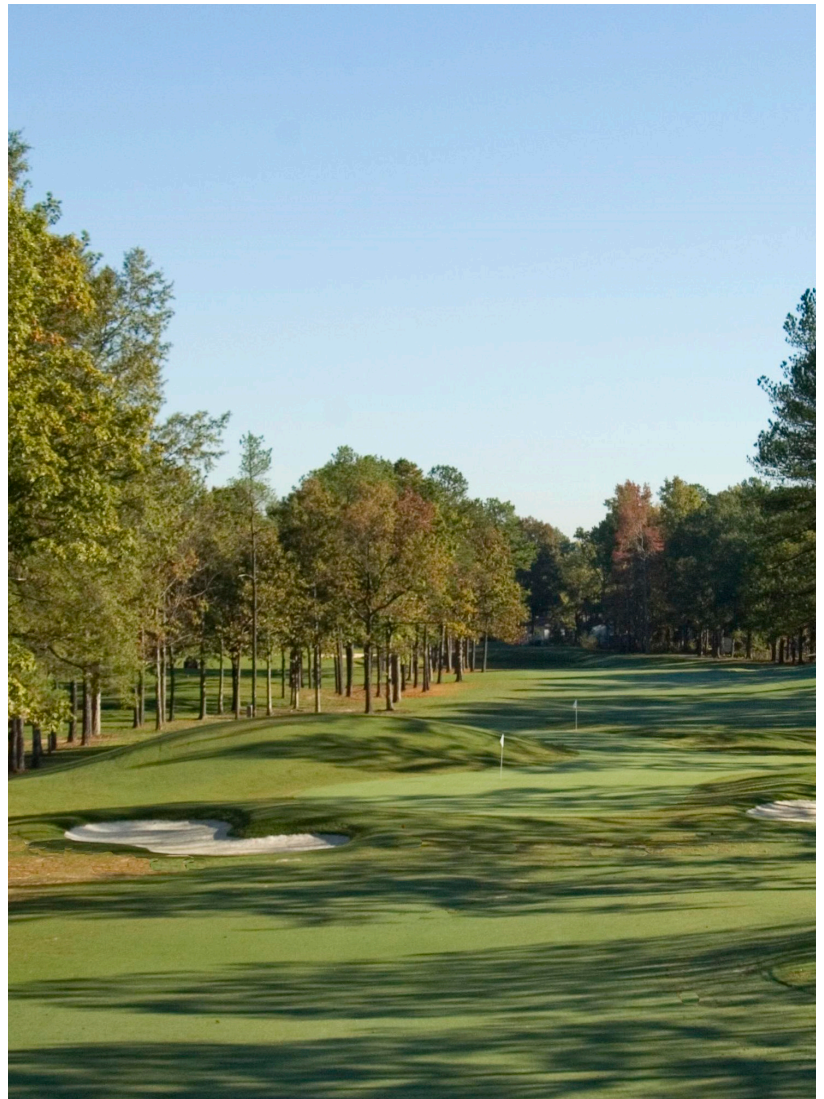
History, geography and phenomenally intact historic districts make Petersburg a community that people and businesses from all over the globe are embracing. Visible reminders of Petersburg's prominent role in the emergence of the country into a worldwide power are evident in the extensive architecture and streetscapes



that remain. The City rises from the banks of the beautiful, unspoiled Appomattox River where the City will create a Heritage Trail along its southern shore for the public to discover this rare asset. The majesty of the Appomattox continues to drive support and assistance from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the reestablishment of the City's harbor as a navigable connection to the James River, the Inter-coastal Waterway, the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Petersburg is experiencing a true Renaissance.

Petersburg's aura is a unique blend of history and artistry, heritage mixed a vibrant arts culture. The City has worked diligently to preserve the rich range of architecture and the unique character of the neighborhoods. The Petersburg Old Towne Historic District is on the National Register of Historic Places, offering architectural variety, restaurants, shops, and housing. Southern Living magazine and HGTV's What You Get for the Money both feature this area. Much of the filming for the movie, Lincoln, took place in Petersburg. As location manager Colleen Gibbons, put it "one thing that attracted the filmmakers to the city was the 180-degree vista of historic structures" which is "very rare".

Historical sites range from battlefields to old houses. A myriad of options include the Petersburg National Battlefield Park (which preserves the sites of the Civil Wars' Siege of Petersburg and the Battle of Crater), Pamplin Historical Park, Blandford Church and Cemetery, National Museum of the Civil War, Centre Hill Mansion, and the Siege Museum. One of the most architecturally refined



properties is the Battersea, a Palladian-style house from the 1700s along the Appomattox River.

But it is not all about history. The city's downtown includes Old Towne and that area is thriving. Many of the old warehouses have been converted into lofts and mixed-use developments. There are numerous restaurants and shopping options located in Old Towne and South Crater Road. Two new restaurants opened last month and more are coming. The reason is it can be hard to get a table on Friday night. The Petersburg Area Art League (PAAL) and the performing arts center, Sycamore Rouge, feature shows, live music and cabaret performances. On the second Friday of each month, the city celebrates a "Friday for the Arts!" which fills the city with local artwork and live music. For those who prefer outdoor activities, the area offers plenty to explore. The city offers approximately a dozen parks and recreational facilities including Wilcox Lake. Not far away are the mountains, the beach, and the nation's capital are all within a 2-hour drive.

Petersburg is a transportation hub with immediate access to Interstates 85, 95, and 295, and U.S. highways 1, 301, and 460. The City is an attractive tourism and business location. It has a number of public and private industrial parks, several located within Enterprise Zones. The City collaborates with State and regional economic development organizations to offer businesses assistance with site selection, permitting and workplace training.

Less than a half hour north is Richmond, and two hours north is Washington, D.C. Both cities are similarly prominent in history and art, offering multiple museums, theaters, and a long tradition of literature. Edgar Allan Poe has roots in Richmond, and a museum there is dedicated to his life and works. Washington, D.C., a national center for the arts, offers the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Ford's Theater, the National Gallery of Art, The Smithsonian Institution, and the National Mall.

People are friendly in Petersburg and proud of their neighborhoods. Housing is very affordable. Neighborhood Scout lists the median home value at \$112,825, with higher-end homes between \$200,000 and \$300,000. The average monthly rent is under \$1,000 a month. While the housing market has some variety, it leans more toward single-family homes (over apartments or complexes). Another nice aspect of the city is the lack of traffic.

Both public and private schools are offered in Petersburg, and the superintendent of the public school system, Marcus J. Newsome, came to Petersburg City Public Schools in July 2016. He is nationally recognized for high-performance, award-winning schools that raise scores and graduation rates. He has acted as a consultant to members of Congress, state and local officials, and won multiple awards for his leadership. The private schools of Petersburg offer small classes, personalized learning, and excellent education. With Virginia State University, the Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Richmond, and twenty different colleges and universities in Washington, D.C., the opportunities are limitless.

The largest airport nearby is the Richmond International Airport, merely a half hour away. Newport News and Norfolk are viable alternatives although a bit further way.

True to its history, Petersburg is rife with opportunity and an innovative, industrial spirit. The heart of Petersburg lies in an appreciation and celebration of its rich history while continually pushing into the future. With the right leadership leading the way, the city can continue this strong tradition.

## HISTORY

Petersburg's modern history began with English colonists who settled along the Appomattox River. The establishment of Fort Henry marked the beginning of U.S.'s

westward expansion and exploration. When the fort commander opened a trading post at Peter's Point, Petersburg saw its beginning as a commercial center.

After distinguishing itself in the American Revolution during the Siege of Fort Mifflin, Petersburg's influence continued to increase. With the proximity of the Appomattox River, the Port of Petersburg became renowned as a processing center for cotton, tobacco, and metal, marking Petersburg as an industrial center in a state that was largely agricultural. The railroad center established in the 19th century not only helped continue the city's tradition as a substantial business community, it strengthened it. Flour mills and banking were added to tobacco and cotton as Petersburg's successes. Due to the availability of jobs, many free people of color migrated to the city. The railroads that passed through the city made it a shipping center and a lifeline to Richmond during the Civil War.

After the Civil War, Petersburg saw an influx of churches, businesses, and institutions. The city continued to prosper but so did segregation in Virginia. In the 1960s, Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker served as the pastor of Petersburg's Gillfield Baptist Church. While in graduate school, he met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and was one of the founders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. According to him and other close associates of Dr. King, Petersburg had played an important role, a blueprint for the national civil rights movement.

Until the 1980s, commerce and industry flourished. As an independent city, Petersburg was limited geographically. Then, as happened



Table 1: Petersburg Demographics

2015 Estimated Population: 32,123			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
Caucasian	18.1%	0 to 15	17.5%
African American	77.1%	15 to 25	14.1%
Asian	1.3%	25 to 45	24.4%
Native American	0.1%	45 to 65	28.8%
Two or More Races	3.4%	65 to 85	12.6%
Total	100%	Over 85	2.6%

Other Statistics		Median Age	
Hispanic (all races)	4.2%	Petersburg	39.5
Poverty Rate	28%	U.S.	37.4

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	77.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	15.9%

Source: U.S. Census

in numerous older industrial cities in the region, manufacturing jobs were lost to the growth of industries outside the U.S., and Petersburg's core began to decline. The expansion of the economy in the Richmond metro area in fields of financial and retail services also took some of Petersburg's population. Suburbs grew around the city and many of the downtown merchants moved to the Southpark Mall. Additionally, in 1993, a major tornado severely damaged Petersburg's downtown.

As Petersburg's economy weakened in the 20th century, its population declined. As upper and middle classes fled to the suburbs, the city was left with a high percentage of low income residents. The increase in demand for public services seriously strained limited financial resources.

In 2007, Petersburg's rebirth began with new businesses moving into Old Towne, the historic downtown area, and the Army's recent expansion of activities at nearby Fort Lee. All in all, Petersburg has a bright future with its historical flair and its tradition of innovation and industry.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

See Table 1 for Petersburg Demographics.

## CLIMATE

Petersburg's climate is humid and subtropical, with hot summers and mild to cool winters. The average in July reaches a high of 89° Fahrenheit, with the average low being 69°. The winter months average a high of 48°, whereas low temperatures are closer to 27°. The city gets an average of 46 inches of rain per year. Average snowfall is 6 inches—far less than the national average of 26 inches.

## GEOGRAPHY

Petersburg is located in South Central Virginia, twenty four miles south of the City of Richmond, 132 miles south of Washington D.C. and seventy three miles west of the Chesapeake Bay. Petersburg is situated at the Falls of the Appomattox, on the boundary between the Tidewater and the Piedmont, between the Chesapeake and Albemarle basins. It is situated at the juncture of Interstates 95 and 85 with easy access to Interstate 295, US Route 460, 301 and 1. It covers 23.1 square miles in size and it is one of 13 jurisdictions that comprise the Richmond Petersburg Metropolitan Statistical Area. Colonial Heights is a neighbor as well as Chesterfield, Dinwiddie and Prince George Counties.

Table 2: Petersburg Principle Employers

Employer	Industry	Employees
Southside Regional Medical Center	Healthcare	1,000+
Amsted Rail Company, Inc.	Construction	200-300
Horizon Mental Health Management, Inc.	Healthcare	200-300
Walmart	Retail	200-300
Good Neighbor Homes, Inc.	Healthcare	100-200
Beverly Home Care	Healthcare	100-200
District 19 Mental Health and Retardation Services	Healthcare	100-200
Virginia Linen	Retail	100-200
Rehabilitation Hospital, Inc.	Healthcare	100-200
Quality Plus Service	Retail	100-200

Source: City of Petersburg, VA 2015 CAFR

## COMMERCE

Petersburg has a long history as an industrial center for the state, being home to many tobacco companies, pharmaceutical companies, and early distribution centers for companies like Walmart and Amazon.

Of the prominent manufacturing companies that once operated in Petersburg, only Titmus Optical and Amsted Rail-Brenco Bearings operate in Petersburg.

Today, Petersburg has a thriving healthcare economy, which provides over 10% of the jobs in Petersburg. Southside Regional Medical Center stands at the forefront as a hospital with consistently high grades by Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades, earning primarily B grades over the last four years. (See Table 2 above for Principal Employers).

## THE GOVERNMENT

Petersburg is an independent city (meaning it is independent of any county and operates as if it were a county) and utilizes the council-manager form of government. The

Council has seven members, each representing a ward (or geographic portion of the city). They must reside in their wards. Members serve staggered four year terms with elections being held in even numbered years.

The mayor is selected from among the council members. Of the seven council members, one has served as mayor and one is currently serving as mayor. Two council members were elected three months ago, three are in their third

year, and two members have served over six years. The Council hires a city manager to oversee the City’s day-to-day operations.

The city’s amended 2016-2017 operating budget is \$87,209,430. Budget expense categories of over \$1,000,000 include: Utilities (\$10,200,142), Social Services (\$8,108,111), Police (\$7,066,251), Fire (\$4,922,393), Children’s Services Act (\$2,976,259—a pool of state funds to purchase services for at-risk youth and their families), Facilities Maintenance (\$2,118,335), Stormwater (\$1,156,715), the Commonwealth Attorney (\$1,085,247), Risk Management (\$1,638,601), Debt Service (\$5,025,993) and Non-Department (\$4,867,222).

The budget also includes the Petersburg Schools (\$8,474,762). The General Fund Budget covers 511 employees. Of these, 125 are in Police, 104 in Social Services, and 84 in Fire. The All Funds Budget funds 643.5 positions. The city does not have any unions and has good relationship with other governmental agencies in the area.

## THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance Department is responsible for the City's finances. It provides a variety of financial services to City Council and City staff including accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, grants management, payroll, accounts payable, special financial analysis, risk management and purchasing. It is also responsible for the financial management system. On the Enterprise Fund side, the Chief Finance Officer oversees utilities, transit, stormwater and golf. The department has seven employees and a budget of \$548,000.

## THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The principal challenge for the Finance Director is financial. The city has been running a structural deficit since 2009. Revenues were consistently overestimated and spending underestimated. The result was, among other things, a negative fund balance of over \$6 million. By the time the City's elected officials became aware of the problem in 2016, drastic measures were required. The FY 2016-2017 budget was reduced from \$102,312,073 to \$87,209,430. The cuts included a 10% across the board pay cut (which resulted in the loss of quite a few police officers) and a reduction in staff overall of about 150 positions. In December, 2016, Wells Fargo extended a \$6.5 million loan repayable by October 2017 to help it get through the financial crisis. While the situation has stabilized, more needs to be done. The current management has presented a balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

A second, related challenge is infrastructure maintenance. Approximately \$90 million is needed to catch up and that has led to the city investigate selling its utility. No decisions have been made as yet.

The third challenge is Petersburg is in a small media market and the city's finances have been a large story. He/

she should also expect to have some contact with the press and be able to handle inquiries with integrity, diplomacy and transparency.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City is looking for a Finance Director who is both a manager and a leader while also having strong accounting and technical skills. He/she will be a partner and trusted advisor. The individual will be knowledgeable and confident and not afraid to speak truth to power—to tell those he/she reports to what they need to hear as opposed to what they want to hear.

The ideal candidate will be someone who leads by example and demonstrates honesty, integrity, and diplomacy. He/she will be someone who encourages teamwork and is comfortable rolling up their sleeves to get the job done. This department is not one where the Director can sit behind a desk and direct traffic. The ideal candidate will be a motivator and have demonstrated experience gaining consensus and buy-in.

The Finance Director will believe in transparency and have the ability to cultivate trust and confidence with a variety of stakeholders, including the Mayor and City Council, public, members of the business community, and employees.

The best candidate will be someone who works diligently with the staff and directors of other city departments to provide them with the information and support they need. He/she will believe strongly in customer service. The individual will realize that although the customers (whether staff or residents) may not always be right, they do deserve to have their problems heard and addressed.

Technical skills will be essential. The individual will serve as the City's Controller and need to provide accurate and

timely information to establish credibility. That said, if a mistake is made, he/she will take on ownership and rectify it as appropriate. The ideal candidate needs to be strong, yet flexible—resolved in his/her commitment that only excellence will suffice, but also recognize her/his ideas are not the only ideas that can achieve that excellence.

The individual will also oversee the day-to-day operations of the Department. As such, he/she must have outstanding people skills. The individual will need to establish goals, set expectations and hold the staff accountable for results. At the same time, it will be important for the Finance Director to mentor and support the staff. He/she will need to be personable and friendly with a good sense of humor.

The ideal candidate must have outstanding communication skills, both oral and written. While the individual will be responsible for maintaining the City’s financial data, he/she will also need to be able to present information to the elected officials and the public clearly and concisely. The numbers must be accurate but they must also be explained.

Strong analytical skills will be important as will be a questioning attitude. As noted, resources are extremely tight and the City is looking forward to a fresh set of eyes, someone who is not afraid to ask, “Why are we doing it this way?”

Finally, on a practical level, the next Director needs to be competent. The candidate will have had high level, relevant management and leadership experience in progressively more responsible positions. He/she will have a track





record of achievement and excellence in operating in the municipal government framework. As such, the ideal candidate will have at least five years' experience as a Finance Director / Assistant Finance Director / Controller.

The individual is expected to have at least a Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business administration, public administration, or a related field. A CPA is highly desirable. CGFO certification is a plus. An in depth understanding of financial accounting is required and expertise in the application of technology to the financial function preferred. Experience in Virginia is a plus.

## COMPENSATION

The pay range is \$85,453 to \$140,741 and the actual salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The Chief Finance Officer will participate in the Virginia Retirement System.

## RESIDENCY

Residency is not required for this position.

## HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your resume to [Recruit27@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit27@cb-asso.com) by April 3rd. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or David Collier at (772) 260-1858.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Under Virginia law, the recruitment process may be kept confidential. As such, if a candidate requests, the City will keep the individual's application confidential. No candidate names will be released without the candidate's permission.

## THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between April 4th and May 8th. Finalists will be selected on May 9th. Interviews will be held on May 19th. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The City of Petersburg is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the city visit:

<http://www.petersburgva.gov/>

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