



NCEDA Foundation 2026 Fellow Job Description

City of Oxford Economic Development Partnership

Location: Oxford, North Carolina

Duration: Summer 2026 (Seasonal Fellowship)

Reports To: Economic Development Director and City Manager

Fellowship Type: Professional Development Program

Position Overview

The City of Oxford seeks a motivated student Fellow to serve as an NCEDA Foundation Fellow for summer 2026 (10-12 weeks). This Fellowship offers hands-on experience in municipal economic development, comprehensive planning, and site readiness initiatives. The Fellow will support two critical strategic projects: the City's Master Plan Update and a comprehensive Site and Infrastructure Readiness Assessment. This position provides an exceptional opportunity to gain practical experience in economic development while producing deliverables that will directly impact Oxford's growth strategy.

Primary Responsibilities

Master Plan Update Support (40% of time)

- Conduct economic and demographic trend analysis to inform land use and growth projections
- Research and benchmark best practices in economic development policies from comparable North Carolina municipalities
- Assist with stakeholder interviews and surveys of business owners and employers
- Analyze commercial and industrial land availability and development patterns
- Research workforce housing needs and affordability trends
- Compile data on transportation, infrastructure, and connectivity as they relate to economic competitiveness
- Support development of economic development goals, objectives, and action items for the Master Plan
- Assist with community engagement activities and create presentation materials

Site and Infrastructure Readiness Assessment (60% of time)

Available Properties Inventory:

- Identify and catalog all available commercial and industrial properties within Oxford's jurisdiction

- Gather detailed site specifications including acreage, zoning, utilities, transportation access, topography, environmental considerations, and ownership information
- Photograph sites and create professional location maps
- Develop standardized property specification sheets suitable for marketing to business prospects
- Create a searchable database or GIS-based inventory system
- Identify priority "shovel-ready" sites for targeted marketing

Infrastructure Gap Analysis:

- Map existing infrastructure systems (water, sewer, broadband, transportation)
- Identify infrastructure deficiencies and capacity constraints
- Research broadband availability, including speed and provider information
- Assess water and wastewater capacity for current and future development
- Evaluate transportation infrastructure and connectivity gaps
- Analyze stormwater infrastructure impact on development potential
- Research infrastructure funding opportunities
- Prioritize infrastructure improvements based on economic development impact

Opportunity Zone/Investment Strategy Development:

- Map and analyze Opportunity Zone boundaries and characteristics (if applicable)
- Research successful development strategies from other North Carolina communities
- Identify potential investment-ready projects within targeted areas
- Develop marketing materials highlighting investment incentives
- Create an actionable implementation plan with timeline
- Research complementary state and local incentive programs

Key Deliverables

- Economic and demographic trends report with growth implications
- Benchmarking analysis of peer communities' economic development strategies
- Stakeholder engagement findings summary
- Draft economic development chapter content for Master Plan Update
- Comprehensive available properties database
- Professional property specification sheets (minimum 10 priority sites)
- GIS maps of available properties with key attributes
- Infrastructure gap analysis report with service area maps
- Broadband coverage assessment and recommendations
- Prioritized infrastructure investment recommendations
- Opportunity Zone strategy document with marketing materials
- Implementation action plan with timeline

Required Qualifications

- Currently enrolled in a graduate program in Economic Development, Urban Planning, Public Administration, Geography, Business Administration, or related field
- Strong research and analytical skills with ability to synthesize complex information
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Word, PowerPoint)
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to work independently and manage multiple project components

- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
 - Demonstrated interest in economic development, community planning, or local government
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Preferred Qualifications

- Familiarity with demographic and economic data sources (U.S. Census, BLS, ESRI, Placer.ai)
 - Previous internship or work experience in economic development, planning, or local government
 - Knowledge of North Carolina economic development programs and incentives
 - Experience conducting stakeholder interviews or community engagement
 - Data visualization skills
 - Research experience with infrastructure systems or real estate development
 - Knowledge of site selection processes
 - Familiarity with rural or small-town economic development challenges
 - Experience with GIS software or willingness to learn
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Skills Development Opportunities

Fellows will gain valuable experience in:

- Economic development research and market analysis
 - Spatial and infrastructure analysis using planning tools and/or GIS
 - Stakeholder engagement with government officials, business owners, and community members
 - Complex data analysis and synthesis into actionable recommendations
 - Professional report writing and presentation development for decision-makers
 - Project management across multiple components with competing deadlines
 - Understanding the intersection of comprehensive planning and economic development strategy
 - Municipal government operations and public-private partnerships
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A Day in the Life of the Fellow

Morning (9:00 AM - 12:00 PM)

- Review daily priorities and check in with Economic Development Director or City Manager
- Conduct field work: visit and photograph available properties, assess site conditions, and document infrastructure
- Attend meetings with department staff, planning consultants, or Master Plan committee members
- Conduct analysis and mapping of properties, infrastructure systems, or development patterns
- Research comparable communities' economic development strategies and best practices

Afternoon (1:00 PM - 5:00 PM)

- Analyze economic and demographic data using census tools and state databases
- Compile site specification information and create property profile sheets
- Draft sections of reports or presentations
- Conduct phone or in-person interviews with business owners and stakeholders

- Collaborate with planning consultants on Master Plan components
- Organize and update project databases and file systems
- Participate in community engagement events or public meetings (occasional evenings)

Weekly Activities

- Attend regular check-in meetings with supervisory staff for guidance and feedback
- Present progress updates on key deliverables
- Participating in regional economic development meetings or training opportunities through NCEDA network
- Balance field work, data analysis, research, and report writing based on project phase and priorities

Work Environment

- Office-based work in City of Oxford municipal facilities with regular field visits to properties and development sites throughout the community
- Collaborative environment working closely with City staff, planning consultants, and community stakeholders
- Access to City planning and GIS data systems
- Flexible schedule with occasional evening meetings for community engagement activities
- Professional dress for stakeholder meetings and community events; business casual for office and field work

Supervision and Support

The Fellow will work under direct supervision of the Economic Development Director and the City Manager, who will provide:

- Ongoing guidance, resources, and mentorship throughout the fellowship
- Regular check-ins and feedback sessions
- Access to regional and state economic development resources through the NCEDA network
- Professional development opportunities and networking with economic development practitioners
- A meaningful, hands-on learning experience designed to prepare the Fellow for a successful career in economic development

Commitment to Fellow Development

The City of Oxford and OxForward is committed to providing an enriching professional development experience. This fellowship is designed not only to produce valuable deliverables for the community but also to equip the Fellow with practical skills, professional connections, and real-world experience that will launch a successful career in economic development, planning, or local government.

The City of Oxford is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees and Fellows.