

City of Asheville
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
Application Form

APPLICANTS ARE STRONGLY URGED TO ATTEND SEVERAL MEETINGS OF A BOARD PRIOR TO APPLYING AND/OR APPOINTMENT TO A BOARD

Name of board or commission(s): CITY COUNCIL

Your name: LINDA S. FOWLER Home Phone #: (828) 350-9715

Street address: 451 KENILWORTH RD. City: ASHEVILLE Zip Code: 28805

Mailing address (if different): _____

Employer: PROJECT DELIVERY ASSOCIATES, INC.

Your position: PRESIDENT - OWNER Office Phone #: (828) 254-1504

Resident of City County _____ Race ANGLO * Sex F * Age 63 *

Are you a United States Citizen (circle one)? Yes or No

Residence location (check one): Central North _____ South _____ East _____ West _____

How did you become aware of the opening? _____ Webpage _____ Current Volunteer _____ eNews
_____ Government Channel Newspaper _____ Radio _____ Organization _____ Agenda _____ Other

Please indicate the area(s) of expertise that you can bring to the above board(s), and then in detail list education, experience, reasons for your interest, and other factors that support your interest in serving (use additional sheets if necessary). Expertise: _____ Legal Technical _____ Fundraising Community Contacts
 Business Management (Financial) _____ Business Management (Operational) Public Speaking

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED MATERIALS

Return to:
Maggie Burleson, City Clerk
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802-7148

E-Mail: mburleson@ashevillenc.gov
Telephone: 259-5601
Fax #: 259-5499

Signature: Linda S. Fowler

Date: 11-24-2008

E-Mail: lindafowler@bellsouth.net

Fax #: (828) 252-5301

* This information is requested for the sole purpose of assuring that a cross section of the community is appointed.

**Linda S. Fowler
451 Kenilworth Rd.
Asheville, NC 28805
(828) 350-9715; fax: (828) 252-5301**

November 25, 2008

City Council Members
Asheville, NC

Dear Council Members:

Please accept my application to fill the remaining year of the Asheville City Council term of departing Councilwoman Holly Jones.

The attached documents detail my qualifications and experience, and provide an overview of my thinking on solutions for city issues. To help make good use of your time, I am listing here some of my specific strengths relevant to both the five questions asked of respondents and the focus areas established in the Asheville City Council Strategic Plan.

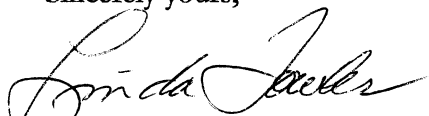
- Experienced in managing complex budgets and projects that receive wide public scrutiny
- Able to solve problems involving many diverse interest groups, as seen in my current work as ombudsman for the Grove Park Inn and the Grove Park neighbors in the current development activities
- Broad civic involvement and management experience with HOPE VI and CDBG programs and affordable housing

Through study of the Asheville city budget and the Affordable Housing Plan I have gained knowledge of the challenges and limitations facing Council and the city in coming years. As a member of the first Asheville Citizens Academy, I learned how the various city departments and agencies operate. Additionally, because I am a native of western North Carolina, I understand the history and culture of the area.

I'm a quick study and can be expected to be up to speed rapidly and contributing to Council's success.

I look forward to meeting with the Council to discuss this position.

Sincerely yours,



Linda Fowler

Linda S. Fowler

SUMMARY

Strong program management and owner representation experience in planning, design, project delivery and budget management of commercial and residential development serving both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Effective leadership qualities managing complex projects requiring a high level of organization and communication. A results-oriented self starter.

CAREER HISTORY

Project Delivery Associates, Asheville, NC

3/95 - present

Located in Denver, CO 1995 – 2003. Established in Asheville, NC 2003.

Consultant Services

Project and program management services for neighborhood relations and capital development.

The Grove Park Inn Resort and Spa, Asheville, NC

beginning April, 2006

Ombudsman services for Property Master Plan development

- Single point of contact for residents of Grove Park; mandated by Asheville City Council in the Conditional Use Permit to the Grove Park Inn for the Property Master Plan expansion.
- Problem resolution with neighbors, general contractor and the Inn for all issues arising during expansion activities.

Capital Program Director, Blue Ridge Health Care, Morganton, NC

2005-06

- Direct management of \$100M hospital expansion program involving two campuses.
- Staff supervision.
- Coordinated state and federal requirements.
- Public speaking and media interface.

Construction Manager, Neighborhood Housing Services, Asheville, NC

- Land search and procurement.
- Site development.
- Construction contract development, bidding and administration.
- Permit processing and control.

Senior Project Manager, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Headquarters Renovation, Denver, CO

- Owner Representation; Architect and General Contractor supervision and direction.
- Financial controls; disputes resolution.

Project Manager, Quantum Corp., Boulder, CO

- Design Team Director for new development center.
- General Contractor management and construction oversight.
- Financial controls.

Project Manager, Agilent Technologies, Loveland, CO

- Design Team Director for campus wide redevelopment.
- Financial controls.

Consultant, City of Denver, CO, Office of Community Development

- CDBG Program implementation assistance for non-profit grant recipients.

CMTS, Inc., Denver, CO

11/90 -2/95

Interim Director of Facility Management, Department of Housing, Detroit, MI

- Member, federal government recovery team for troubled Housing Authority.
- Departmental Manager for a staff of 185 employees, 200 buildings and department budget.
- Hope VI Program implementation.
- Successfully averted a major breakdown in the delivery of electrical services to approximately 2,000 people.

Senior Contract Administrator, Denver International Airport – Construction

- Senior construction management team member.
- Financial control and accountability for \$165M in public funds on a \$4B project.

The Compliance Company, Denver, CO

4/85 -10/90

President & CEO of general commercial construction firm.

- Denver General Hospital; Clinic Improvements
- Denver City Building: Accessibility Renovations
- Denver Federal Center: Emergency Management Agency Renovations

CREDENTIALS & HONORS

Professional Certifications and Licenses

Certifications

Project Management; Construction Contracts; Contract Administration; Project Scheduling; Environmental Evaluations; Advanced Production Management.

Licenses

General Contractor, Commercial Classification; Denver, Aurora, Lakewood, CO 1983-91

Education

American University, Washington, DC
Hartford College for Women, AA

Business Management

Honors/Awards/Affiliations:

City of Asheville Citizens Academy inaugural class, 2004
 Chamber of Commerce, Asheville, NC
 American Institute of Architects, Asheville, NC Chapter
 U.S. General Services Administration, Management Success Award 2003
 National Association of Female Executives since 1997
 Mayor's Advisory Committee, Denver, CO; Chair 1992-1994
 Denver Community Leadership Forum 1993

1. What motivates you to apply for this position?

Asheville faces significantly increased challenges over the next 4 – 10 years. The global financial crises and the national recession create system wide budgetary strain. Aging infrastructure intensifies ecosystem stresses seen in our water supply, air quality, transportation, land use and development considerations. Quality of life issues thread through these concerns, influencing the city's development guidelines. Issues of public safety, absorbing 41% of the General Fund, will continue to have major budget impact. Changes in both sources and availability of energy supply have massive implications for decisions about public transportation, roads and streets, how we structure and run city offices, staffing and the vehicle fleet.

Creativity flourishes in times of challenge. These challenges bring with them opportunities for Asheville to become a leader in sustainability. Asheville can become both the center of green thinking and development for the Southeast, and a model of sustainable, green government.

Creating change requires a vision and a plan. Council and staff have already done good work to create a foundation; more will be needed. Having spent my professional career managing larger development projects, many with publically funded budgets that impact and draw close scrutiny from the community, I am skilled at developing workable plans for wide ranging interest groups whose focus may sometimes be in conflict.

I wish to serve on City Council because I strongly believe in our personal responsibility as citizens to support our government and our neighbors. I was a part of the first Asheville Citizens Academy. I've worked with CDBG programs and for affordable housing development with Neighborhood Housing Services. I currently serve as Ombudsman for the Grove Park Inn development activities, structuring solutions to development-related problems that impact neighbors. I understand the interests of wide ranging parties on all sides of the table and know that effective solutions require consideration of everyone's vested interests.

2. Where do you fall on the conservative-liberal spectrum in terms of fiscal and social policy?

I believe financial stability and long term financial health are critical to Asheville's continued viability. I consider myself a fiscal conservative. This means closely examining how budget dollars are spent so we get the best value for the dollar. It doesn't always mean taking the cheapest route; it means spending wisely. It means using debt wisely and sparingly. The current City budget shows successful debt reduction efforts have been made and are planned to continue in the next fiscal year. In the current economy, more may be needed.

Socially, I consider myself moderate to progressive. I believe affordability is important in housing options and in the standard of living we invite through public policy. Cultural and racial minorities of every type enrich our cultural fabric. A move toward green government and sustainability fits with fiscal conservancy.

3. In your eyes, what should be the top 2 or 3 priorities our City Council should be focused on in the upcoming year and why?

Asheville currently has the lowest median income and the second highest housing costs in North Carolina. This will not sustain municipal viability.

Development guidelines/affordable housing policy. Development is a critical aspect of the financial and environmental health of the city. It supports the tax base, promotes economic viability, provides new jobs, brings in tourism and shopping taxes and attracts the variety that gives us the vibrant community we enjoy. At the same time it places demands on our infrastructure and resources as well as influencing the composition of the city budget.

Development projects are a continual source of controversy and conflict as each project is evaluated separately without benefit of overall context. Issues usually include environmental and infrastructure impact, availability of affordable housing and associated quality of life concerns. Clear development policies that can be applied across the spectrum of proposed development are needed.

The Master Plan currently pending adoption and the Affordable Housing Plan together can provide these guidelines. If the Master Plan isn't adopted, the creation of development guidelines must be a Council priority. Adequate guidelines for new projects would potentially enable the development approval process to be handled at the city staff level and thus depoliticize development.

Encouraging affordable new housing, especially downtown and in the River District, strengthens work force retention and helps retain the creative class, so important to Asheville's character.

Additionally, development guidelines must be sensitive to the preservation of the built and natural environment as a support to heritage tourism. Tourism is a major part of Asheville's economy and heritage tourism leads the list. As new development occurs, it should enhance this appeal.

Diversify the economic base. Moving beyond a tourist based economy will strengthen the tax base and improve the average standard of living. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and Advantage West, new industries must be attracted to Asheville to replace those lost over the last 10 – 15 years. Asheville can become a leader of sustainability and conservation by focusing on green technologies

and alternative energy development to build on the strengths current rising in our area. These types of new businesses and industries will attract investment and provide new jobs paying well above the service sector jobs now prevalent in our area.

4. What do you consider the most crucial problem, need or cause for the citizens of Asheville? How would you approach its resolution or champion the cause?

Creating both a sustainable culture and budget are paramount. To this end we must focus on preserving the character of Asheville's neighborhoods, especially its downtown area, as a major drawing point for our economy. Establishing clear guidelines that support new development in appropriate areas is an essential step. Creating effective public transportation will help reduce cars, car generated pollution and (usually unsightly) parking facilities. Continued redevelopment of infrastructure (such as water delivery systems) will benefit the environment and the city budget. Re-examining how we spend education money can have a major impact on our future quality of life. Sustainable culture includes awareness of and support for affordable housing.

5. 2008-09 and 2009-10 fiscal years will be financially tough for the city. What will be your top funding priorities and what would you like to see reduced to balance the budget?

Effects of the global financial crises will keep the Asheville city budget under duress for the next 5 or 6 budget cycles. Bringing the budget to a sustainable financial level will require belt tightening. Numerous smaller and some larger changes are needed. These potential changes include:

- Mandate a 3% – 5% across the board cut in all departmental budgets.
- Public safety consumes 41% of the General Fund. Evaluate gang and drug-related policing programs to enhance those that are effective and eliminate those that are not.
- Promote greater water conservation within city government and among end users. A graduated rate system that rewards conservation could be coupled with consumer education and assistance. Subsidy of rain barrels, watering days cycled by street number and promotion of more drought resistant landscaping are viable steps to consider.
- Continue reduction of debt service that now accounts for 21% of the total budget and 15% of operating revenue. The limit on general obligation debt (8% of real estate tax valuation) will be a declining sum as real estate values continue to decrease.
- Examine the cost effectiveness of extending the useful life of city owned vehicles. Less frequent replacement may be an option. Conversely, more frequent replacement may prove practical if financing incentives warrant.

Linda Fowler
City Council Vacancy Application
November 24, 2008

- Convert more vehicles to alternative fuels to reduce the reliance on oil-based products, thus reducing cost and the effect on our ecosystem.
- Personnel expenditures account for 63% of the General Fund. Reduce these costs through attrition of positions. Re-evaluate training budgets to assure cost effective training.
- Continue reductions in contracted services.
- Continue to repair or replace infrastructure to reduce operating costs such as those now being done with the water system and the Civic Center.
- Make energy efficient changes to city buildings; for example, the new lights in the Civic Center lobby.
- Require LEEDS certification for new development to help support Council's focus areas of "green" and "sustainable" and diminish the budget impact of new development projects.
- Institute a graduated permit fee structure to support and encourage the development of smaller housing units that offer sustainable and affordable construction with emphasis on green technology.