

City of Gastonia

Municipal Government Citizens' Academy

Applicant Packet - 2024 - Cohort 06





City of Gastonia
Municipal Government Citizens' Academy
2024 Session
ACADEMY APPLICATION

APPLICANT INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read the introductory page and tentative program agenda.
2. Complete and return the participant application and questionnaire.
3. (**OPTIONAL** for Police Ride Along) Complete the background screening waiver, sign, and have notarized.
4. (**OPTIONAL**) Complete the Gastonia Police Department Ride-Along Waiver, sign, and have notarized.
5. Return all documents to the City of Gastonia, PO Box 1748, Gastonia, NC 28053, to the attention of the Tyler Davis or deliver in person to City of Gastonia, Garland Center, 150 S. York St. Applications are due by Thursday, November 30, 2023.
6. Contact Tyler Davis, Neighborhood Program Administrator at 704.866.6907 (tyler.davis@gastonianc.gov) or Assistant City Manager, Quentin McPhatter at 704.866.6013 (quentin.mcphatter@gastonianc.gov) with any questions concerning the program.
7. You will be contacted when your application has been processed.

Applications are due by Thursday, November 30, 2023



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The City of Gastonia will host a Municipal Government Citizens' Academy beginning in January 2024. Participants will meet two Mondays per month from January through June with each meeting beginning at 6:00 PM. Sessions will be held at a variety of City of Gastonia facilities including City Hall. The start date for the upcoming 2024 Academy is Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

The Municipal Government Citizens' Academy is an important component of the City's "Citizens First" philosophy. Its purpose is to provide a forum where participants develop a basic understanding of municipal government, learn the duties of the various City departments, and meet the people behind the scenes that make Gastonia a great place to live, work, and play.

During the ten sessions of the Academy, various personnel within City government, along with special guests, will cover a variety of subjects ranging from the municipal election process to the inter-workings of the City's public safety component. Through this experience, participants will gain valuable knowledge of the operation of the City and the importance of their involvement in the governmental process.

Each two-hour Academy session will include informative lectures, hands-on activities, group discussion, financial information, essential services and facility tours. Academy participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and interact with the City's leaders and staff.

(OPTIONAL) An integral part of the public safety component of the Academy is the participation in a police patrol ride-along. This event will be scheduled to take place outside of the scheduled session times at mutually convenient times for staff and participants. An additional three-hour time slot will be scheduled for the participant to ride and accompany the patrol officer on service calls. This experience is important in creating a true understanding of what an officer's job is like and contributes to an exciting and interactive learning experience of the role of the community's law enforcement as well as the City's geography.

Upon successful completion of the Academy, each participant, and their loved ones, will be invited to attend the Academy Graduation Ceremony held during a City Council Meeting.

Academy enrollment is limited to no more than 20 participants. Applications are available throughout the year and must be submitted by end of November to be considered for the upcoming Academy session. In the weeks prior to the Academy start date, the Academy Coordinator will contact you to confirm your selection to participate in the next Academy.

Potential candidates must:

- Be at least 18 years of age; and
- Live within the City of Gastonia; or
- Business Owner within the City of Gastonia; and
- Attend 8 of the 10 Academy sessions.

Any requirement may be waived or modified upon review and approval by the Asst. City Manager and/or Academy Program Administrator. There is no participant fee associated with the Academy. Recognized Community members through the City's Alliance for Community Enrichment (A.C.E.) program have priority in participation in the Academy.



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Please print or type clearly.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| *Applicant's Full Name | | *Date of Birth | |
| *Race | *Sex | *Ward #: | |
| *Home Address | *City | *State | |
| * Primary Contact Number | | Secondary Contact Number | |
| Do you have e-mail access? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | If yes, list e-mail address | |
| Employer | Work Number | | |
| Education | <input type="checkbox"/> GED <input type="checkbox"/> HS <input type="checkbox"/> Some College <input type="checkbox"/> College Degree | Shirt Size | <input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> XXL <input type="checkbox"/> XXXL |

***Required fields for participation. Please note that pursuant to NC General Statutes Chapter 132, Public Records, applications submitted are public records and may be subject to public disclosure.**

Applicant Certification: (Please read before signing the application)

I hereby certify that there are no willful misrepresentations, omissions, or falsifications in the forgoing information that I have provided. I understand that any omissions or false statements found to have been made on this application shall be sufficient cause for the application to be denied or for dismissal from the City of Gastonia's Municipal Government Citizens' Academy. I understand that participation in the program is not to train citizens to be employees of the City but rather the goal and purpose of the program is to educate citizens regarding the purpose, rationale, and context of local government procedures. I acknowledge that as part of the acceptance to this program, I will be required to attend a minimum of eight (8) of the ten (10) course sessions. I understand that failure to attend the required number of courses may result in dismissal from the program. I agree that as part of acceptance to the program I will abide by all rules and regulations for the program established by the City of Gastonia, their officers and agents. I understand that I must provide my own transportation to and from course sessions and at other times when required. By accepting admission into the Academy I agree for my likeness (still photos, video, and audio recordings) to be used to further the purpose of the Academy through advertisement, presentations, and other literature.

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness' Signature: _____ Date: _____



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Applicant Questionnaire

1. Can you commit to attend ALL course sessions for the duration of the Academy? Yes No
Please note that participants missing more than two (2) course session may be dismissed from the program. If you have numerous other commitments at this time, please consider applying for admission to the Academy at a later time.
2. The City of Gastonia does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the City's services, programs, activities or facilities. The City of Gastonia is committed to providing access to our Citizens Academy for individuals with disabilities. To make the necessary arrangements to accommodate you please inform us of any limitations you may have.

3. Briefly explain why you are interested in participating in the Citizens Academy:

4. How do you think you will benefit from participating in the Citizens Academy?

5. Please share any previous experiences working with the City of Gastonia (serving on a Board, Commission, volunteering, etc.):

6. How did you hear about the Citizen's Academy?

7. If you are not selected for the upcoming Academy or are unable to attend this session of the Academy would you be interested in attending the next scheduled Academy session? Yes No
8. Do you live in a formally Recognized Community through the City's A.C.E. program? Yes No Not Sure



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2024 Municipal Government Citizens Academy Course Schedule

Session Locations are subject to change, and notice of any changes will be made to participants.

| | | | |
|---|---------|--|---|
| Tuesday, January 2, 2024 Meeting at City Hall 181 S. South St. | 5:00 PM | Welcome | Mayor |
| | | Group Introductions | Michael Peoples, City Manager |
| | 5:30 PM | Program Overview | Quentin McPhatter, Asst. City Manager |
| | 5:50 PM | City Council Introductions | Mayor |
| | 6:00 PM | City Council Meeting | Mayor and Council |
| Monday, January 22, 2024 Meeting at City Hall 181 S. South St. | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| | 6:05 PM | Election Process | Ash Smith, City Attorney |
| | 6:25 PM | Form of Government | |
| | 6:45 PM | City Organization City Manager Duties | Michael Peoples, City Manager |
| | 7:15 PM | City Clerk Duties | Suzanne Gibbs, City Clerk |
| | 7:30 PM | History of Gastonia | TBD |
| | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |
| | | | |
| Monday, February 5, 2024 Meeting at Phillips Recreation Center 2031 Echo Lane | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| | 6:05 PM | Human Resources | Judy Smith, Human Resources Director |
| | 6:40 PM | Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion | Cherie Jzar, DEI Coordinator |
| | 7:20 PM | Technology Services | Chris Koltyk, Chief Information Officer |
| | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |
| Monday, February 19, 2024 Meeting at CaroMont Health Park 800 W. Franklin Blvd. | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| | 6:05 PM | Communications and Marketing | Mary Elliott, Director of Communications and Marketing |
| | 6:35 PM | Development 101 - Development Services, Planning, and Economic Development | Rusty Bost, Director of Development Services Jason Thompson, Planning Director Kristy Crisp, Director of Economic Dev. |
| | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |
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|------------------------------|---------|------------------------------|---|
| Monday, March 4, 2024 | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| Gastonia Municipal Airport | 6:05 PM | Airport/Fleet Services | Cindi Forrester Staff and FBO Personnel |
| 1126 Gaston Day School Road | 7:00 PM | Housing and Comm. Engagement | Danette Dye, Director of Housing & Community Engagement and Staff |
| | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |

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|--|---------|---------------------------|--|
| Monday, March 18, 2024 | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| Meeting at | 6:05 PM | Financial Services | Crystal Certain, Director of Financial Services |
| The Schiele Museum 1500 E. Garrison Blvd. | 7:05 PM | Schiele Museum and Tour | Dr. V. Ann Tippitt, Executive Director Schiele Museum |
| | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |

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|---|---------|---------------------------|---|
| Monday, April 1, 2024 | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| Meeting at Municipal Operations Center | 6:05 PM | Public Works Department | Dale Denton, Director of Public Works and Staff |
| 1300 North Broad St. | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |

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|---|---------|---------------------------|---|
| Monday, April 15, 2024 | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| Meeting at Municipal Operations Center | 6:05 PM | Public Utilities | Brian Potocki, Director of Public Utilities |
| 1300 North Broad St. | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |

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|-------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------|--|
| Monday, April 29, 2024 | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| Meeting at Rankin Lake Clubhouse | 6:05 PM | Recreation Department | Tripp White, Director of Parks and Rec. Parks and Recreation and Christine Ingle (EVENT PLANNING) |
| 1750 Rankin Lake Road | 7:00 PM | Skeet and Trap Range | |
| | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |



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|-------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---|
| Monday, May 13, 2024 | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| Meeting at Police Department | 6:05 PM | Police Services | Trent Conard, Chief of Police and Staff |
| 200 East Long Ave. | 7:05 PM | Police Department Tour | Staff |
| | 8:00 PM | Questions and Answers | All |
| <hr/> | | | |
| Monday, May 20, 2024 | 6:00 PM | Welcome and Introductions | Staff |
| Meeting at Fire Station 1 | 6:05 PM | Fire Services | Phil Welch, Fire Chief and Staff |
| 260 North Myrtle School Rd. | 6:45 PM | Training Facility Tours | |
| | 8:30 PM | Questions and Answers | All |
| <hr/> | | | |
| Tuesday, June 18, 2024 | 5:00 PM | Graduation Reception | Michael C. Peoples, City Manager |
| Meeting at Gaston County Courthouse | 6:00 PM | Graduation/Council Meeting | City of Gastonia Mayor and Council |
| 325 Dr. M.L.K. Jr. Way | | | |

Additional Academy Time Commitments:

- Attend a minimum of one (1) in-person Gastonia City Council meeting (Excluding Introduction and Graduation Sessions)
- Attend a minimum of one (1) City-Sponsored Board, Commission, or Committee meeting
- OPTIONAL: Participate in a Gastonia Police Ride Along (Criminal Background Check Required)



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FORM TO BE COMPLETED SHOULD PARTICIPANT DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE IN POLICE RIDE-ALONG

**Authorization for Release of Personal Information
for Municipal Government Citizens Academy Participation Purposes**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an applicant for a participant with the City of Gastonia Municipal Government Citizens' Academy. In order to determine my eligibility for the Academy, I understand that the Gastonia Police Department, Gastonia, NC must make a thorough investigation of my personal background. It is in the public's interest that all relevant information concerning my personal criminal history be disclosed to the Gastonia Police Department.

Therefore, I, _____, DOB _____,
NC Operator's License Number _____, do hereby request and authorize any governmental agency, criminal and civil courts, certification/licensing commission, military organization, and/or any other individual agency to produce and provide copies of any and all criminal information regarding me whether of a privileged or confidential nature to the authorized agent(s) of the Gastonia Police Department, Gastonia, NC.

Moreover, I hereby release the Gastonia Police Department, Gastonia, NC, from any civil or criminal liability whatsoever for seeking such requested information and for evaluating such information as it relates to my potential participation with the Academy. And, I hereby release the issuing agency and its agents and employees, both individually and collectively, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind, which may at any time result because of compliance with the authorization and request. I further waive all right to inspect or review any information compiled in reference to my application for appointment as allowed by law.

I hereby acknowledge that this authorization is valid for six (6) months or until the investigative process has been completed, whichever is later and that a copy of this document is considered valid, just as the original.

I have read and fully understand the above statements.

| | |
|--|------------------|
| STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA | COUNTY OF GASTON |
| Subscribed and sworn to before me this the | |
| _____ day of _____, _____. | |
| _____ | |
| Notary Public's Signature/Seal | |
| _____ | |
| My Commission Expires | |

Applicant's Signature

Applicant's Printed Name



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FORM TO BE COMPLETED SHOULD PARTICIPANT DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE IN POLICE RIDE-ALONG

NORTH CAROLINA

RELEASE

GASTON COUNTY

In consideration of the City of Gastonia allowing the undersigned to accompany a City of Gastonia Police Officer on patrol in a police vehicle owned by the City of Gastonia, the undersigned hereby assumes all risk of personal injury, death, or property damage or loss from whatever cause arising from or in any way connected to accompanying an on-duty police officer of the City.

The undersigned releases the City of Gastonia, its officers, employees, agents, or servants from any liability therefore and will indemnify and save harmless the City of Gastonia, its officers, employees, agents, or servants from any such liability.

Except as herein before provided, the undersigned hereby reserves and does not in any manner waive any rights or causes of action against anyone else except the City of Gastonia, its officers, employees, agents, or servants.

In witness whereof the undersigned has hereto set his hand,

this the _____ day of _____, _____.

Signature of Participant

NORTH CAROLINA

GASTON COUNTY

I, _____, a Notary Public for said County and State, do hereby certify that _____, personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the forgoing instrument.

Witness my hand and notarial seal, this the _____ day of _____, _____.

My Commission Expires

Signature of Notary Public