



# Media Release

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Town of Fuquay-Varina Names Planning Director**

The Town of Fuquay-Varina has announced the appointment of Samantha Smith as Planning Director, following a nationwide recruitment process to fill the vacancy that will be created by the retirement of long-time Planning Director Mike Sorensen on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Smith assumes the Planning Director role on January 10th and Mr. Sorensen will continue to serve the Town and assist Ms. Smith during the transition through March 31<sup>st</sup>.

For the past five years, Smith has served in the Town's planning department and brings more than 10 years of planning experience to the position. Smith previously worked in Harnett County and the Town of Angier in various planning positions. Her strong knowledge of current and long range planning, experience in all areas of comprehensive planning, and strong understanding of local ordinances will serve the position well.

Smith received a B.S. in Urban and Regional Planning and a minor in Communications from East Carolina University and has continued to advance her education through various coursework at the UNC School of Government, FEMA and the American Management Association. Smith has played a critical leadership role in both development and the successful communication of the Town's new Land Development Ordinance, the 2035 Community Vision Land Use Plan and revision of the Town's Community Transportation Plan. Implementation of the Land Development Ordinance, which became effective on December 30, 2016, is currently ongoing.

"The role of the Planning Director is a critical one," said Fuquay-Varina Mayor John W. Byrne. "Effective planning is critical to the strategy set by our Town Board, particularly since we are a fast growing community. Samantha's familiarity with town staff and the local development community will be a valuable asset as the Town continues its positive momentum."

Town Manager Adam Mitchell said, "Samantha's strong skills and ability set her apart from every candidate we interviewed. She brings a broad range of planning experience and is excellent at communicating and engaging the public. Our town is in a transformational period. Samantha is the leader we need in the planning department to take us into the next phase."

Samantha shared her excitement about this new opportunity with the Town of Fuquay-Varina. “I’m thrilled to be chosen to lead the Town’s planning work at such a pivotal time in our history. I look forward to building on the momentum to achieve a shared vision for the future of Fuquay-Varina.” Smith lives in Fuquay-Varina with her husband, Brian and their two children.