

TOWN OF
Herndon
VIRGINIA

TOWN OF HERNDON

Director of Public Works/Utilities





The Community

The Town of Herndon, Virginia, is the third largest town in the Commonwealth, blending small-town charm with the energy of a 21st-century business hub. Situated in the northwest quadrant of Fairfax County, approximately 23 miles west of Washington, D.C., and just two miles east of Washington Dulles International Airport, Herndon is part of the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area, accessible via Metrorail's Silver Line. Incorporated in 1879, the town has grown from a rural dairy outpost to a thriving community of 24,167 residents (2022 U.S. Census estimate), with a comprehensive master plan projecting a population of 28,200 by 2030.

Amidst Northern Virginia's high-rise and industrial landscape, Herndon retains its historic character and "sense of place." The town is distinct with its historic downtown, complete with an authentic train depot and caboose, and a municipal center complex that includes a library and Town Green. Events held on the Town Green and throughout the downtown include concerts, children's programs, a spring/summer concert series that attracts thousands each week, a 4th of July celebration, and "Herndon's Hometown Holiday" events. The 45-mile Washington and Old Dominion Trail runs through the heart of downtown, and the Herndon Community Center, managed by the town's four-time Gold Medal-winning Parks & Recreation Department, offers facilities for virtually every type of athletic pursuit. The Herndon Centennial Golf Course, operated as a town enterprise fund, is consistently ranked among Golf Digest's "Places to Play." Additionally, the town boasts 11 parks, which have contributed to Herndon earning the "Tree City USA" designation for 32 consecutive years.

The town is distinctive in the vast array of cultures represented among its residents. A full 37 percent of residents identify as Hispanic (July 2021 U.S. Census report), and sixteen percent are of Asian descent. A myriad of other countries and cultures from around the globe are represented in Herndon. This diversity is evident in the town's businesses as well, with restaurants, shops and other commercial enterprises specializing in specific cultural experiences.

Businesses are drawn to Herndon for its highly qualified workforce, proximity to key transit hubs, and strategic location within the region's high-tech corridor, creating a unique synergy that supports enterprises of all sizes. Herndon's prime location in the Dulles Technology Corridor has resulted in a significant corporate presence that includes regional headquarters and businesses specializing in information technology, aerospace and defense, and cyber/software. The opening of the second phase of the Metrorail's Silver Line in 2022, which includes a station stop in Herndon, has spurred strong redevelopment interest in the town. Planned redevelopment of existing commercial buildings at the town's Metro stop, along with strategic planning for adjacent transit-related growth, envisions a vibrant commercial and residential hub that complements Herndon's historic downtown area.

The Organization

Herndon is organized under the council/manager form of government. The Town Council, in its role as a governing body, formulates policies for the proper administration of the town. The mayor and six members of the Council are elected simultaneously for two-year terms. The Town Manager, appointed by the Town Council, serves as chief administrative officer and is charged with directing all business affairs of the town.

Vision Statement

“Herndon is an integrated, sustainable, safe and equitable town built on accessible development and an engaged community.”

Core Values



The Department

The Director of Public Works/Utilities reports to the Town Manager. The department serves as a critical service provider to a growing, diverse community. The department encompasses a wide array of functional areas, including fleet operations, operations integration, stormwater management, public works administration, engineering, program and project management, building inspections, building maintenance, sewer systems, water supply, refuse and recycling services, traffic engineering, and right of way maintenance. A hallmark of the department is its responsibility for the town's water and sewer utility operations, ensuring the delivery of safe, reliable, and sustainable resources to all stakeholders. Due to the nature of a government providing essential public services, this position requires an onsite presence to fulfill all duties at the designated worksite in the town, and remote work is not available.

Responsibilities include developing and maintaining the annual operating and capital budgets and exercising rigorous oversight of expenditures to ensure maximum return on investment. The Director leads a dedicated team of approximately 100 employees and manages a \$14.7 million Public Works budget alongside a \$29.5 million Water and Sewer budget. Additionally, the fiscal year 2027 budget includes \$11.6 million for the Town's six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

The water utility maintains approximately 84.7 miles of water main and three water towers. Updated rates for the next fiscal year are part of a multi-year plan to adjust rates to meet increases in sewer treatment costs, wholesale water costs, and a need for a significant capital repair and improvement program to replace aging water and sewer pipes and support expanded capacity. The age of the system, combined with the need for additional capacity to support future demand, is driving the need for a major capital project plan over the next few years. The cost of major capital projects for the town's water and sewer systems is estimated at \$146 million over the next five years.

The Position

The Director leads the town's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and project management for all public works initiatives, ensuring timely completion, strict contract compliance, and effective contractor oversight. As the department's primary representative, the Director participates in Town Council work sessions and public hearings, coordinates major road design and construction with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and regional partners, and resolves complex resident concerns with a diplomatic, service-oriented approach.

This position offers a direct impact on the community by overseeing the essential infrastructure that sustains daily life in Herndon, from providing clean water to maintaining roads and managing solid waste. A significant aspect of the role involves guiding large-scale capital projects from initial blueprints to completed facilities. Emphasizing strategic planning and innovation, the Director develops long-term master plans that anticipate future community needs while balancing immediate operational priorities. To optimize service delivery, this leader explores new technologies, champions organizational advancements, and fosters a high-performance culture across the department.

As a highly visible leader, the Director builds strong, collaborative relationships with the Town Manager, Town Council, regional partners, and residents to advance Herndon's public works objectives. The role also demands dynamic problem-solving skills, particularly when leading incident management during emergency events like major storms, snow operations, and utility system failures. Successfully navigating these high-stakes environments requires rapid, independent judgment and the ability to stabilize critical situations efficiently.



Leadership Opportunities

Building a High-Performance Culture: The Director embodies the town's values and cultivates a high-performance culture by mentoring staff, fostering professional development, and promoting high employee morale. Through purposeful engagement and regular communication, the Director creates a collaborative environment where staff are empowered to find purposeful solutions to daily challenges.

Capital Program and Project Oversight: Managing the town's infrastructure investments requires rigorous oversight of the CIP. The Director leads the project management function, ensuring that all public works projects are completed on time and within budget. This includes holding contractors accountable, reviewing and approving site plans, and maintaining strict compliance with the town's procurement policy.

Utility and Infrastructure Stewardship: The Director provides expert oversight of the town's water, sewer, and stormwater utilities. They are responsible for methods, practices, and the overall work product of the department, continuously improving processes to assign and allocate resources effectively. The Director also plans and monitors emergency operations, ensuring the resilience and reliability of essential services during adverse weather events or other emergencies.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement: The Director serves as the face of the department, receiving, responding to, and resolving inquiries from residents, businesses, outside vendors, and developers. They attend and participate in Town Council work sessions and public hearings, demonstrating the ability to balance conflicting feedback while clearly communicating technical concepts to diverse audiences.

Strategic Planning and Innovation: Balancing immediate operational needs with future growth, the Director provides a long-term strategic vision for public works, transportation, and asset management. As the Town embarks on a years-long process to draft its new Comprehensive Plan and two small area plans, the Director will provide critical public works and utilities insights while simultaneously driving the execution of the existing paving and utility master plan. The Director will expand and strengthen the organization's project management approach to successfully deliver complex capital initiatives, such as a major energy project to replace mechanical systems across all primary town buildings. Representing the town in complex agreement negotiations, the Director actively seeks modern best practices to enhance the sustainability and efficiency of municipal operations.

Desired Capabilities

The ideal candidate is an emotionally intelligent and intellectually motivated leader capable of dealing with complex concepts. They are a strategic thinker who can envision and anticipate future challenges while making decisions that ensure long term success. The successful candidate combines technical proficiency with a collaborative, decisive approach to build rapport across the organization and the community.

The successful candidate possesses a clear, long-term strategic vision for public works practices, maintenance, and asset management that addresses both immediate needs and future planning. By applying deep technical knowledge, the Director expertly reviews site plans, manages complex utility operations, and coordinates major infrastructure projects with regional partners. This technical foundation pairs with strict fiscal and operational accountability, as the Director demonstrates rigorous oversight of budgets and procurements to ensure the efficient allocation of resources and the successful execution of capital projects.

As an effective team builder, the incoming leader creates strong morale, fosters open dialogue, and actively mentors staff to achieve high performance. They excel in clear written and verbal communication, effortlessly translating complex engineering and operational details into accessible information for all audiences. Furthermore, the Director relates well with the governing body, employees, vendors, and the public, using diplomacy and tact to defuse high-tension situations and build constructive relationships. Through it all, the Director remains calm, focused, and adaptable, ready to respond flexibly to emergency operations, severe weather events, and the dynamic needs of a growing community.



Education and Experience

Candidates must possess a bachelor's degree in engineering or a closely related field, while a master's degree is preferred. This position requires at least 10 years of extensive experience in engineering, operations, and public works management, supported by a proven history of progressive leadership roles. Experience in managing utilities, specifically water, sewer, and stormwater, is strongly preferred. A Professional Engineer (PE) license is required. If the PE license is not issued in Virginia, the successful candidate must have the ability to transfer or earn a Virginia PE license within 12 months of employment. A valid driver's license with an acceptable record is also necessary.



Compensation and Benefits

The salary range is \$180,000 - \$230,000. Consistent with the town's Total Compensation Philosophy, Herndon offers annual and sick leave; 12 holidays; and group health insurance through Anthem which includes dental and vision coverage. Regular, full-time employees must participate in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and pay the statutory member contribution on a pre-tax salary reduction basis. Short and long-term disability insurance is also funded by the town. In addition, recreation benefits include free golf, swimming, discounted classes, and more. Relocation expenses are negotiable



Application Process

Qualified candidates please submit your cover letter and resume online at raftelis.com/opportunities. This position is open until filled; however, applications will be reviewed upon receipt. For more information, please contact Anne Lewis at alewis@raftelis.com and Kelsey Batt at kbatt@raftelis.com.

For more information about the Town of Herndon, visit www.herndon-va.gov.

The Town of Herndon, Virginia, is an Equal Opportunity Employer. In compliance with the ADA, the Town will provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with this employer.