



CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH

# Public Works Director





## The Position

The City of Manhattan Beach is actively seeking a visionary and results-oriented Public Works Director (Director). Reporting directly to the City Manager, the Director will promote ethical leadership, responsive public service, and innovative approaches to service delivery, while playing a key role on the City's Executive Management Team. This role oversees the planning, management, and evaluation of a broad range of administrative, engineering, and maintenance functions. Key areas of responsibility include engineering, utilities, streets, buildings, facilities, fleet, solid waste, and environmental programs.

As the head of the Public Works Department (PWD), the Director leads all aspects of department operations, programs, policies, and standards, including engineering and utility operations, design, construction, project management, and the full spectrum of installation, repair, and maintenance services. This essential leadership provides direct supervision to the City Engineer, Field Operations (Maintenance) Manager, Utilities Manager, and a team of administrative, professional, and technical staff. A key responsibility is setting and prioritizing goals and objectives for Engineering, Maintenance Operations, and the City's Capital Improvement Program.

In addition to operational leadership, the Director offers strategic guidance—oversight of major engineering contracts, addressing critical planning and policy issues, and advising the City Manager and City Council on legislation and constituent concerns. The role includes assessing staffing and contracting needs, providing guidance to managers on projects and work plans, and overseeing the selection, development, and evaluation of departmental personnel. The Director also prepares and presents reports and recommendations, while managing operating and capital improvement budgets with a focus on effectiveness and fiscal accountability.

The Director plays a collaborative role regionally, coordinating resource management efforts and working with officials from other jurisdictions and agencies to ensure compliance with federal, State, and County environmental and safety regulations. Internally, the Director partners with division managers to evaluate and recommend the award of professional engineering, architectural, and construction contracts. As a key member of the City's Executive Management Team, the Director contributes significantly to strategic planning and the long-term success of the organization.

## Priorities

- Foster a positive and engaged work environment by implementing strategies that align and motivate staff around common departmental goals.
- Strengthen collaborative relationships with regional, state, and federal agencies to ensure regulatory compliance and effective resource management.
- Cultivate a collaborative and cohesive team culture that fosters positivity, encourages motivation, and supports constructive accountability.
- Serve as a proactive and valuable member of the City's Executive Management Team, offering strategic insights and fostering cross-departmental collaboration.
- Empower and align division managers to effectively lead their teams and meet departmental goals.
- Strategically oversee and ensure the successful implementation of the City's \$188,686,564.00 FY2026 - 2030 Capital Improvement Program.
- Ensure all PWD activities consistently prioritize outstanding customer service and respond effectively to the needs of residents and businesses.

## The Successful Candidate

Manhattan Beach will be more than just an experienced administrator; they will be a trusted leader and advocate for their team. The Director will be an individual who leads with honesty, integrity, and humility, someone who listens with empathy, communicates with clarity, and leads with fairness and respect. Consistency in decision-making and a commitment to transparency are essential, along with the ability to foster an inclusive, accountable, and supportive workplace culture. The Director will be an approachable, highly competent, and collaborative leader who inspires learning and accountability across all levels of the department. This professional will possess a deep understanding of public works administration, capital improvement projects, and the intricacies of applying relevant federal, state, and local regulations, including Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and other workplace safety standards, to diverse municipal needs. As an exceptional communicator, this individual can translate complex technical concepts with clarity and brevity, enabling effective presentations to the City Council and community groups. Strategically minded and highly organized, this leader skillfully manages multiple projects while driving team performance across daily operations and future-focused initiatives.

A successful candidate will bring deep experience in Public Works, including a thorough understanding of both professional and technical operations. The next leader will not only understand the nature of the work but also value and respect the people doing it, while building camaraderie across teams and bringing out the best in a diverse workforce. The Director will skillfully plan, organize, and direct complex public works construction and maintenance activities, including major capital improvement projects, private development review, water utility oversight, environmental programs, and solid waste services.

A collaborative leadership style is essential, as the Director will be responsible for cultivating and sustaining effective working relationships with City employees, consultants, contractors, developers, and public agency partners. Success in this role also requires the ability to foster strong inter-departmental and cross-departmental collaboration, particularly with teams and departments where close coordination is essential to advancing shared goals.

The Director will demonstrate effective organizational leadership in navigating shifting priorities and deadlines while fostering an environment that encourages ethical decision-making and continuous improvement. The successful candidate will excel under pressure, demonstrating decisive leadership and the ability to analyze complex problems and exercise sound judgment in complex and evolving issues, while demonstrating consideration for the impact of decisions on the team.

The Director will bring energy, fresh perspective, and visionary thinking—someone open-minded, flexible, and aware of both big-picture goals and on-the-ground realities. The ideal candidate will clearly articulate objectives and the reasoning behind key decisions, ensuring the team understands the direction and feels engaged in the process. Leading by example, offering mentorship, and advocating for staff needs are all essential to building trust and moving the department forward together.





## Qualifications

Minimum requirements include any combination of education and experience equivalent to a bachelor's degree in civil engineering or a related field and eight years of professional, administrative, and managerial experience involving public works construction and administration, and project management work.

## Inside The Government

As a General Law City, Manhattan Beach operates under a council-manager form of government. Its five-member City Council serves as the legislative body, and is notable for its structured mayoral rotation, wherein each council member serves a distinct nine-and-a-half-month term as Mayor within their four-year tenure.

The City employs 354 FTEs. General Fund expenditures totaled \$105.6 million. **For Fiscal Year 2026, the approved overall operating budget is \$151.2 million.**

While Los Angeles County delivers regional services, including the public library and beach and harbor maintenance, the City of Manhattan Beach independently operates its own essential municipal operations—including full-service Police and Fire Departments, as well as providing water, sewer, and storm drain maintenance services.

## Inside The Public Works Department

The PWD is supported by 77 dedicated full-time employees, along with additional part-time staff, and operates with a budget of \$76.6 million. It is organized into four divisions: Administration, Engineering, Field Operations, and Utilities.

The Department is central to realizing the City of Manhattan Beach's mission to provide excellent municipal services, preserve our small beach town character, and enhance the quality of life for our residents, businesses, and visitors. As one of the City's largest and most indispensable departments, Public Works plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of life within the Manhattan Beach community. Its wide-ranging responsibilities encompass the meticulous operation and maintenance of all public infrastructure located both within the public and on City-owned properties. Operating with a commitment to the department's core values of Safety, Integrity, Proactivity, Teamwork, and Creativity, the PWD strives to deliver high-quality, efficient, and sustainable services that enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

## The Community

Manhattan Beach, gracing the picturesque coastline of the Pacific Ocean, offers an idyllic blend of serene coastal living and dynamic metropolitan convenience. Nestled in the southwestern corner of Los Angeles County, its prime location provides residents with stunning ocean views, a temperate year-round climate, and seamless access to the vast opportunities of Southern California. Just a short drive from downtown Los Angeles, LAX, and bustling tech hubs like Silicon Beach, Manhattan Beach perfectly blends tranquil beach life with urban sophistication. Home to a vibrant community of over 35,000 residents, Manhattan Beach takes immense pride in its exceptional public school system, consistently ranked among California's elite. The Manhattan Beach Unified School District (MBUSD) is renowned for its academic excellence, innovative programs, and robust parent involvement, extending beyond core subjects to emphasize arts, athletics, and community service.

Outdoor recreation is not just an activity; it's the very heart of the Manhattan Beach lifestyle. Residents enjoy an abundance of opportunities to connect with nature and stay active. From the iconic Manhattan Beach Pier to the expansive Polliwog Park with its relaxing pond and amphitheater, the City provides ample spaces for picnics, sports, and play. The City has also received numerous [awards](#) for its community services and infrastructure projects, including the 2024 ACEC Commendation Award for the Polliwog Park Lower Playground Replacement Project, the 2024 APWA Award for the Fire Station No. 2 Reconstruction Project, and the 2024 ASCE Award for the Peck Reservoir Replacement Project. The vibrant, coastal-inspired culture and arts scene thrives, anchored by the Art Center's local exhibitions and workshops. Live music, galleries, and theater productions enrich the community, and annual events like the renowned Manhattan Beach Open, Hometown Fair, and Holiday Fireworks draw in crowds, fostering a strong sense of shared celebration.

The local economy is as robust as its ocean waves, propelled by a dynamic blend of retail, hospitality, professional services, and an expansive presence of technology and creative industries. The City's vibrant downtown district, a cherished destination featuring an array of boutique shops and acclaimed restaurants, serves as a magnet for both visitors and residents. Consistently celebrated as one of the most desirable places to live in the United States, the City of Manhattan Beach is lauded for its exceptional schools, remarkably low crime rates, clean natural environment, and unparalleled quality of life. Numerous prestigious publications and real estate analyses frequently position it at the pinnacle of "best places to live" lists, especially for families and individuals seeking an active, upscale coastal lifestyle. The community itself is deeply engaged, boasting vibrant resident groups and a robust volunteer culture that truly reflects a profound sense of civic pride and shared commitment. Manhattan Beach is eager to share all that makes it the very best of Southern California coastal living.





## Compensation

The expected hiring range is \$189,804 - \$247,356 depending on qualifications, with an excellent benefits package. Learn more about options and employee-based benefits [here](#).



## To Be Considered

Applications will be accepted electronically by Raftelis at [jobs.crelate.com](https://jobs.crelate.com). Applicants complete a brief online form and are prompted to provide a cover letter and resume. The position will be open until filled with a first review of applications beginning **September 15, 2025**.



## Questions

Please direct questions to Serena Wright-Black at [swrightblack@raftelis.com](mailto:swrightblack@raftelis.com) and Niayla Hairston at [nhairston@raftelis.com](mailto:nhairston@raftelis.com).