



CITY OF EUGENE

# Executive Director, Public Works



## The Position

The City of Eugene is seeking a visionary, collaborative, and forward-thinking Executive Director, Public Works, to lead its largest and most diverse portfolio of services. Reporting to the Assistant City Manager for Community Sustainability, the Executive Director plans, directs, and oversees the operations, services, and strategic initiatives of one of the City's largest and most complex departments. This position is responsible for the overall leadership and administration of the Public Works portfolio, including the Administrative, Airport, Engineering, Maintenance, Parks and Open Spaces, and Wastewater divisions. The position ensures the effective delivery of essential public infrastructure and services that support Eugene's safety, livability, environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and long-term community goals.

As a member of the City's leadership team, the Executive Director develops and implements departmental goals, policies, programs, and service strategies while ensuring alignment with City Council priorities and organizational objectives. The Executive Director provides leadership for departmental operations, capital improvement initiatives, asset management, budget development, workforce planning, organizational effectiveness, and service delivery. The position works closely with the City leadership, City Council, community stakeholders, regulatory agencies, regional partners, and other departments to advance strategic initiatives, negotiate intergovernmental agreements, and address complex community and infrastructure challenges.

The Executive Director, Public Works leads and develops a high-performing team, fostering a culture of accountability, collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement. The position oversees a significant operating and capital budget, directs long-range planning, evaluates organizational performance, and establishes standards to ensure efficient, effective public works services. As the department's chief representative, the Executive Director regularly presents to the City Council, boards, commissions, community organizations, and partner agencies, and serves as a trusted advisor on public infrastructure, operational, and policy matters.

## Priorities

As a key member of the City's leadership team, the Executive Director, Public Works, will help shape the future of one of Eugene's most visible and impactful departments. Building on a strong foundation of service, technical expertise, and innovation, the next Executive Director will focus on the following strategic priorities:

- Build trust, strengthen relationships, and foster organizational alignment across Public Works, the leadership team, labor partners, community stakeholders, and elected officials. Advance a "One Eugene" mindset that promotes collaboration, shared accountability, and effective cross-departmental and cross-divisional partnerships.
- Lead the execution of the department's [strategic plan](#) while aligning priorities with City Council goals, community expectations, and long-term organizational objectives. Maintain momentum on key initiatives while thoughtfully positioning the department for future opportunities and challenges.
- Serve as a strategic partner on complex community and organizational priorities, collaborating across departments and with external stakeholders to advance homelessness response efforts, housing and economic development, transportation safety, climate resilience, public space management, and other citywide initiatives. Effectively align Public Works resources and expertise to support shared outcomes while balancing operational responsibilities and long-term strategic objectives.
- Evaluate and enhance organizational effectiveness by assessing service delivery models, organizational structure, decision-making processes, and operational practices. Create greater clarity, efficiency, accountability, and collaboration while continuing to build a cohesive, high-performing department.
- Develop and empower the workforce through leadership development, succession planning, supervisory training, and employee engagement. Foster a culture that values continuous learning, innovation, accountability, and professional growth while ensuring staff feel supported, valued, and connected to the department's mission.
- Champion long-term infrastructure stewardship and financial sustainability by advancing asset management practices, advocating for critical infrastructure investments, and developing sustainable funding strategies to address aging infrastructure, facility needs, and future service demands.
- Advance data-informed decision-making and operational excellence by leveraging performance measures, service reviews, technology investments, and process improvements to enhance service delivery, improve organizational performance, and support informed resource allocation decisions.
- Elevate the Public Works story by strengthening communication and community engagement, building an understanding of the department's services and infrastructure needs, celebrating accomplishments, and fostering confidence in the essential role Public Works plays in supporting Eugene's quality of life.

## The Successful Candidate

The Executive Director, Public Works, is a visionary and people-centered leader who understands how to balance today's operational demands with tomorrow's opportunities. They bring a systems-thinking mindset and a citywide perspective, recognizing the interconnected nature of infrastructure, service delivery, organizational priorities, and community expectations. The successful candidate establishes a clear direction for the department, aligns resources to achieve long-term goals, and helps others understand how their work contributes to broader organizational outcomes. They are energized by the opportunity to lead complex initiatives, improve processes, and position the Public Works portfolio to meet the evolving needs of the community.

An authentic leader, the Executive Director builds trust across all levels of the organization and cultivates strong partnerships with employees, colleagues, executive leadership, elected officials, community members, and external stakeholders. They are approachable, collaborative, and genuinely interested in understanding diverse perspectives. They listen to understand, communicate with clarity and transparency, and create an environment where people feel valued, heard, and connected to a shared purpose. The successful candidate also understands that trust is built through consistency, follow-through, and a commitment to doing what is right for the organization as a whole.

The successful candidate is a skilled people and change leader who creates the conditions for both employees and the organization to thrive. They are committed to developing talent, mentoring emerging leaders, and fostering a culture of accountability, learning, and continuous improvement. Rather than solving every problem themselves, they empower staff to think critically, develop solutions, and grow through experience. Comfortable navigating ambiguity and organizational change, they build understanding, ownership, and momentum while helping teams adapt to new challenges and opportunities. Through their leadership, divisions work more cohesively, and employees are united around a common vision and shared goals.

A confident and decisive executive, they approach challenges with curiosity, sound judgment, and a solutions-oriented mindset. The Executive Director leverages data, best practices, and organizational insight to make informed decisions while thoughtfully evaluating risks, trade-offs, and long-term impacts. Politically astute and strategically aware, the successful candidate understands the importance of engaging stakeholders early, anticipating issues, and representing Public Works effectively in citywide discussions. They are equally comfortable discussing infrastructure investments, funding strategies, community concerns, and citywide priorities, translating complexity into actionable and understandable information.

The Executive Director, Public Works, combines strategic leadership with humility, emotional intelligence, and a deep commitment to public service. They foster a culture where innovation is encouraged, constructive dialogue is welcomed, and employees feel supported to do their best work. By fostering alignment, encouraging continuous improvement, and maintaining a steadfast focus on service to the community, the Executive Director strengthens Public Works' reputation as a trusted and forward-thinking organization while preparing it for future opportunities and challenges.



## Qualifications

At least eight years of public agency leadership experience, including at least five years managing professional, senior-level staff, are required. Experience leading in a large, complex, and multi-disciplinary organization is essential. Demonstrated success leading organizational change, process improvement initiatives, and strategic planning efforts is required. Strong financial acumen, including budget development, long-range financial planning, capital planning, asset management, and funding strategy development, is essential. A broad understanding of public infrastructure systems and service delivery, including experience with one or more of the following areas: transportation, water, wastewater, stormwater, airport operations, parks and open spaces, engineering, maintenance, or other public works-related services, is ideal.

A bachelor's degree in engineering, public administration, business administration, or a related field is required. A master's degree is highly desired. Any combination of experience and training that is likely to provide the required knowledge and abilities qualifies.

The City of Eugene is committed to a respectful work environment. We value the cultural, educational, and life experiences of each employee. We believe that a diverse workforce enables us to deliver culturally responsive services to all members of our community. As part of our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we desire to welcome, respect, and create a sense of belonging for a wide range of identities and experiences in our workforce. Women, people with disabilities, and persons of color are strongly encouraged to apply.

**Residency Requirement:** The City charter requires the Executive Director, Public Works, to live within the Eugene city limits during their employment.



## Inside The City of Eugene

The City of Eugene is a home rule charter City with a council-manager form of government. The Mayor serves as the City's political head and chair of the eight-member Council. The City Manager runs the day-to-day operations of Eugene's government, oversees City departments, manages the City's budget, and implements City Council policies.

The 2025-2027 adopted budget of \$1.9 billion reflects the City's strategic priorities, fiscal stewardship, and responsiveness to community needs. With over 1600 full-time equivalent employees, Eugene provides a wide range of services through six departments: Central Services; Fire and Emergency Medical Services; Library, Recreation and Cultural Services; Planning and Development; Police; and Public Works. The City's work is guided by the following vision and values:

- We are all Eugene.
- We value all people, encouraging respect and appreciation for diversity, equity, justice, accessibility, and well-being. We recognize and appreciate our differences and embrace our common humanity as a source of our strength.
- We are responsible stewards of our physical assets and natural resources. We will sustain our clean air and water, beautiful parks and open spaces, livable and safe neighborhoods, and foster a thriving downtown, including stable and accessible infrastructure.
- We encourage a strong, safe, sustainable, and vibrant economy, fully utilizing our educational and cultural assets.
- We listen to, serve, and include all who live, work, and play here; seeking ways to foster unity and stronger connections across Eugene. We respond and take actions so that every person has an opportunity to thrive in Eugene.



## The Public Works Portfolio

Accredited by the American Public Works Association, the Public Works Department plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of life for Eugene’s residents, businesses, and visitors. Guided by its mission to improve the safety, welfare, and livability of the community, the department plans, operates, maintains, and invests in the critical infrastructure and services that support daily life. Its broad portfolio includes the airport, transportation systems, parks and open spaces, engineering services, and stormwater and wastewater infrastructure, all of which contribute to a thriving, sustainable, and connected community.

With an adopted 2025–2027 all-funds budget of \$292.9 million and 516.8 full-time equivalent employees, Public Works is one of the City’s largest and most visible departments. Six divisions, including Administration, Airport, Engineering, Maintenance, Parks and Open Spaces, and Wastewater, report to the Executive Director and work collaboratively to deliver essential services, steward public assets, and advance citywide priorities. The department is supported by a highly capable and dedicated workforce known for its professionalism, innovation, and commitment to public service. Staff take great pride in serving the community and continually seek opportunities to improve service delivery, strengthen organizational effectiveness, and prepare infrastructure systems to meet the needs of a growing and evolving Eugene.

## The Community

Nestled in the southern Willamette Valley, Eugene is Oregon’s second-largest city and a vibrant community known for its natural beauty, innovation, and exceptional quality of life. Home to just over 176,000 residents, Eugene offers the amenities of a larger metropolitan area while maintaining a strong sense of community and connection. Residents enjoy easy access to rivers, parks, forests, and outdoor recreation, with the Pacific Coast, Cascade Mountains, and Oregon wine country all within a short drive.

Eugene is widely recognized as a center for education, culture, and innovation. Home to the University of Oregon, the City benefits from a dynamic university community that contributes to a thriving arts, research, entrepreneurship, and innovation ecosystem. The community is also known for its vibrant arts and performing arts scene, diverse cultural offerings, and a strong spirit of creativity that helps define Eugene’s unique identity. The City’s economy is supported by a diverse mix of industries, including education, healthcare, technology, manufacturing, sports product design, and sustainable business development.

Known nationally as “TrackTown USA,” Eugene has a rich tradition of athletic excellence and community engagement. Residents embrace an active lifestyle supported by an extensive network of parks, trails, riverfront amenities, natural areas, and multimodal transportation systems. The community places a high value on environmental stewardship, sustainability, climate action, and thoughtful community planning, creating a culture that is engaged, forward-thinking, and committed to preserving Eugene’s unique character while preparing for the future.

Eugene is a community that values collaboration, civic participation, and meaningful public dialogue. Residents are passionate about local issues and actively engaged in shaping the City’s future, creating an environment where innovation, partnership, and public service can thrive. For leaders who enjoy building relationships, navigating complex challenges, and making a lasting impact, Eugene offers a unique opportunity to serve a community that is deeply connected to its values and committed to creating a vibrant, resilient, and sustainable future for generations to come.



## Compensation

The salary range for the Executive Director, Public Works is \$179,296 - \$216,590. The City of Eugene is committed to supporting employee well-being through a holistic approach that recognizes the connection between work, home, and community life. Because well-being extends beyond the workplace, the City offers a variety of programs, resources, and benefits designed to support employees both professionally and personally. For more information about benefits, visit: [Benefits at a Glance](#).



## How to Apply

Applications will be accepted electronically by Raftelis at [raftelis.com](https://raftelis.com). Applicants complete a brief online form and are prompted to provide a cover letter and resume. The position is open until filled. For full consideration, please apply by **July 26, 2026**.



## Questions

For more information or questions regarding the City of Eugene or the Executive Director, Public Works position, please contact Heather Gantz at [hgantz@raftelis.com](mailto:hgantz@raftelis.com).

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