



LANE COUNTY

Public Works Director





The Position

The Public Works Director provides leadership and direction for Lane County's Public Works Department, overseeing its people, assets, resources, programs, and services. This position reports to the County Administrator and works closely with the Administrator, the Executive Leadership Team, and the Board of County Commissioners. The Director establishes priorities, develops short- and long-range plans, and aligns Public Works with the County's broader goals and objectives. As a member of the County's executive management team, the Director also contributes to countywide policy, strategy, and organizational priorities.

The Director provides vision, high-level administrative leadership, and operational oversight across eight diverse divisions: Administrative Services, Engineering and Construction, General Services (including Animal Services and Fleet), Land Management, Lane Events Center, Parks, Road and Bridge Maintenance, and Waste Management. This executive-level role requires a person who is driven to connect across varied public works disciplines, breaks down operational silos, and cultivates cross-functional collaboration. Success requires balancing long-term priorities with day-to-day service delivery, empowering managers, developing staff, and relying on the technical expertise of a talented Public Works team.

This position also serves as a careful steward of Public Works' financial and organizational resources, overseeing the department's budget, expenditures, and allocation of resources to support effective and cost-conscious service delivery. The Director brings a forward-thinking approach to improving systems, processes, and services while remaining attentive to the department's people, resources, and long-term capacity.

The Director serves as a key liaison and spokesperson for Public Works, building effective relationships with elected officials, County leadership, other departments, community partners, governmental agencies, and the public. The position provides clear, well-informed recommendations, communicates complex issues effectively, monitors changes in the regulatory environment, and advocates for County priorities. Strong relationships, sound judgment, effective communication, and the ability to navigate differing perspectives are essential to advancing the department's work. By blending political acumen with transparent communication, data-driven storytelling, and an equity-centered approach, the Public Works Director advances resilient infrastructure, exceptional public service, and sustainable community vitality across Lane County.

Priorities

- **Strengthen the Public Works Team and Workplace Culture:** Build a positive, connected workplace across Public Works' diverse divisions and maintain strong relationships with the department's three unions. Be visible and accessible to employees and worksites, supporting engagement, development, and retention while knowing when to lean in, when to empower managers, and how to identify challenges and anticipate customer needs.
- **Strengthen Countywide Collaboration:** Build stronger connections across County departments, deepen understanding of each department and division's work, and leverage talent and expertise across the organization. As a member of the executive leadership team, contribute beyond Public Works and connect departmental priorities to broader County goals.
- **Advance Customer-Focused, Forward-Thinking Service Delivery:** Recognize Public Works' role in supporting housing, rural prosperity, and strong communities through effective infrastructure, thoughtful regulation, and a strong customer service ethic. Bring a solutions-oriented approach to compliance and a willingness to rethink policies and processes to remove barriers and achieve better outcomes for the community.
- **Modernize Public Works Through Innovation and Technology:** Advance the use of technology and other innovations that improve service delivery while thoughtfully supporting employees through change. Strengthen the systems and practices that support effective operations, including project costing, tracking, and accountability.
- **Advance Critical Community Priorities:** Work collaboratively with municipal, regional, state and community partners to advance transportation policy and funding, parks funding (including the 2027 levy renewal), and solid waste recovery efforts. Support reliable, accessible infrastructure while advancing the County's climate goals.

The Successful Candidate

Lane County is seeking a strategic, thoughtful, and politically astute leader who understands the important role Public Works plays in the success of the County and the quality of life of its communities. The Public Works Director brings a clear vision for the department and recognizes that achieving it requires sound judgment, strong relationships, and the ability to connect the dots across a complex organization. Comfortable navigating competing priorities and political dynamics, this leader provides candid, well-informed advice while remaining focused on organizational and community needs. They bring an experienced public-sector perspective and understand both the opportunities and constraints of delivering services in a complex environment.

A people-centered leader, the successful candidate prioritizes knowing and understanding the people doing the work. Visible and accessible, they spend time in each division, engaging with employees and demonstrating genuine interest in their work. They empower managers and staff by setting clear expectations, delegating appropriately, and relying on the expertise of others. At the same time, they hold staff accountable and provide the coaching, support, and resources needed to grow and develop. The Public Works Director is recognized as a leader who cares about employees' success, recognizes their contributions, and follows through on commitments.

The successful candidate is a collaborative and effective partner, building strong relationships across the County and with elected officials, community partners, and other stakeholders. They work effectively across departments and divisions with different cultures and needs, flexing their approach when greater engagement is needed, and bringing people together around shared goals. A clear and credible communicator, this leader knows when and how to communicate, adapting their message to the audience and making complex issues understandable. They identify challenges and opportunities early, approach differing perspectives with curiosity, and work with others to develop practical and creative solutions.

Ultimately, the Public Works Director is a forward-thinking public servant who wants to make a meaningful difference beyond the day-to-day operations of Public Works. They look for opportunities to improve how the County works, break down silos, leverage talent across the organization, and strengthen service to the community. A thoughtful and decisive problem solver, they balance ambition with practicality and recognize the realities of limited resources and competing demands. They bring energy and flexibility, along with a commitment to continuous improvement and the values of public service. Most importantly, this is a leader who builds organizational capacity, earns the trust of staff and colleagues, and leaves Public Works stronger for having been there.



Qualifications

Ten years of progressively responsible leadership experience in public administration with a focus on public works is required. A strong background in land management is preferred. At least six years of supervisory and management responsibilities over significant operations is required. A thorough knowledge of modern principles and practices of public works administration is essential, with demonstrated success in leading organizational change and process improvement initiatives. Strong financial acumen, including budget development, long-range financial planning, capital planning, asset management, and funding strategy development, is essential. Experience working in a unionized environment is ideal.

A bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, civil engineering, environmental services, or a closely related field is required. The County may consider an equivalent combination of knowledge, skills, education, and experience to meet minimum qualifications.



Inside Lane County

Lane County operates under the leadership of a five-member Board of County Commissioners, each elected from a specific district to serve four-year terms. The Sheriff, Tax Assessor, and District Attorney are also elected by the voters. The County Administrator is appointed by the Board and leads the overall management of the County. With over 1,900 employees and a FY 26-27 all-funds budget of \$1.2 billion, Lane County provides a wide range of services through the following departments: Assessment and Taxation, Community Justice and Rehabilitation Services, County Administration, County Counsel, District Attorney, Emergency Management, Health and Human Services, Human Resources, Public Works, Sheriff's Office, and Technology Services.

With a mission to improve lives, Lane County is a thriving community where everyone can live, work, and play. Our organization is committed to fostering a culture of belonging, access, and inclusion where every individual feels valued, supported, and empowered to contribute. Aligned with the values of connection, integrity, excellence, equity, and respect, and connected through core behaviors of a passion to serve, driven to connect, and focused on solutions, the County has four Board-approved priority areas and a [Strategic Plan](#) that guide its collective work.

- **Safe and Healthy County**
- **Vibrant Communities**
- **Robust Infrastructure**
- **Our People and Organizational Health**





Inside the Public Works Department

The Lane County Public Works Department maintains, protects, and enhances the livability and sustainability of the region's built and natural environments. With a budget of \$148.6 million and supported by a talented and dedicated workforce of 387 employees, the department delivers critical public infrastructure and community services across eight operating divisions:

- **Administrative Services:** Delivers department financial planning, budget management, procurement, executive support, recruitment, training, and labor relations liaison to advance operational efficiency across all Public Works divisions.
- **Engineering & Construction Services:** Delivers comprehensive transportation planning, surveying, design, environmental permitting, and construction management for County road and bridge capital projects while overseeing right-of-way permitting and regional traffic safety operations.
- **General Services:** Manages full-lifecycle County fleet acquisition and maintenance operations while providing rural domestic and livestock animal welfare, regulatory enforcement, pet licensing, and sheltering services through Lane County Animal Services.
- **Land Management:** Oversees rural land use planning, building safety plan review, electrical inspections, code compliance, and subsurface sanitation to balance environmental stewardship with housing development and rural economic vitality.
- **Lane Events Center:** Operates a dynamic 52-acre event campus hosting year-round community celebrations, exhibitions, athletic competitions, and the production of the annual Lane County Fair.
- **Parks:** Operates and preserves 66 recreational sites, campgrounds, boat launches, marinas, and historic covered bridges, utilizing local-option levy funding to reduce maintenance backlogs and expand accessibility.
- **Road & Bridge Maintenance:** Preserves and maintains more than 1,400 lane miles of roadways and 420 bridges through zone-based pavement preservation, bridge structural repairs, roadside vegetation management, and traffic striping.
- **Waste Management:** Directs countywide solid waste disposal, diversion, and recycling operations across the Short Mountain Landfill and 14 rural transfer sites, while advancing regional sustainability through the development of a Solid Waste Recovery Facility.

The Lane County Community

Located in the heart of the Willamette Valley, Lane County offers a dynamic mix of natural beauty, cultural richness, and community spirit. Lane County is a large geographically diverse county comprised of nearly 5,000 square miles, including 12 incorporated cities and over 385,000 residents. The bustling Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area provides a thriving urban center for residents and visitors alike, and small towns and rural communities across the County offer home-town charm and amenities away from the city lights.

Outdoor enthusiasts thrive here, with an abundance of parks, trails, and natural landscapes to explore. Whether hiking in the Cascade Mountains, biking along scenic byways, or enjoying a day on one of the many lakes, rivers, or ocean beaches, the County's recreational offerings are endless. Lane County also has a proud history, with roots in Oregon's pioneer days and many historical landmarks and museums that tell the story of its past.

Economically, Lane County boasts a diverse range of industries, with key sectors including education, health care, manufacturing, and technology. The County's economy is bolstered by the presence of global companies and a robust local business scene. It's also home to a thriving agricultural industry known for its wineries, organic farms, and sustainability initiatives. Culturally rich, Lane County is a hub for the arts. Residents enjoy a vibrant local arts scene, including museums, galleries, theaters, and live music venues. There are several annual festivals celebrating everything from local cuisine to music, film, and visual arts.

Lane County is known for its excellent schools and family-friendly neighborhoods. The University of Oregon, located in Eugene, contributes to a thriving academic and intellectual atmosphere, while the local school districts are recognized for their commitment to quality education and student achievement. In addition to the University of Oregon, Lane County is also home to several outstanding higher learning institutions, including Lane Community College, Bushnell University, and New Hope Christian College. Neighborhoods across the County range from quiet suburban areas to more rural, nature-focused communities, offering something for everyone.

Lane County consistently ranks high in livability and is recognized for its quality of life, outdoor opportunities, and welcoming communities. It's a place where residents take pride in their surroundings and support a vibrant, active lifestyle.



Compensation and Benefits

The hiring range for the Public Works Director is \$151,694 - \$207,584 and will depend on the qualifications of the successful candidate. Lane County provides a comprehensive benefits package designed to support the physical, financial, social, and mental well-being of employees and their families, including a near site wellness clinic exclusively for Lane County employees and their families. For more information about the County's options, please review the [Employee Benefits](#).



How to Apply

Applications will be accepted electronically by Raftelis at raftelis.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 **October 26, 2026**.



Questions

For more information or questions regarding Lane County or the Public Works Director position, please contact Heather Gantz at hgantz@raftelis.com.