Invites Your Interest in the Position of

City Manager/EDA Executive Director

Overview

The City Manager plays an integral part in helping the Home Rule Charter City realize its mission. The Council is comprised of six members elected from three wards serving four-year terms and a Mayor serving a two-year term. The Mayor and one member of Council were re-elected in November and will be joined by two new Councilmembers. The Council is seeking a progressive, innovative and seasoned professional who values effective partnership with elected officials and can help lead the City organization into the future. As such, the next City Manager will be instrumental in assisting the City continue to evolve as an anticipatory and professional organization.

Mission Statement

Promoting and preserving a community of excellence by the ethical, responsive, efficient and innovative provision of services.
West St. Paul is a mature city of 5 square miles in Dakota County immediately south of the City of Saint Paul, Minnesota. The City’s misleading name comes in part from the fact that it lies west of the predominantly north-to-south Mississippi River. A previous City of West St. Paul, incorporated in the late 19th century, was situated in what is now called St. Paul’s Lower West Side. Historical records indicate that the City was subsequently annexed by Ramsey County to become part of the City of St. Paul. This annexation was a result of negotiations to end a dispute over tolls the City of St. Paul charged to cross the Wabasha Street bridge. The current City of West St. Paul was incorporated in 1889 when it split from the City of South St. Paul.

Today, the City of West St. Paul is home to 21,205 residents (April 2019 Metropolitan Council estimate) living in a vibrant and affordable community with a rich history. West Saint Paul is known for its 2.5-mile commercial corridor along Robert Street, home to over 600 thriving businesses, offices and restaurants with an estimated traffic count of more than 26,000 vehicles daily. Through a cooperative effort between the City of West St. Paul, Dakota County and the State of Minnesota, a $45 million reconstruction of Robert Street was completed in 2017. This investment is now generating considerable commercial, retail, office and restaurant redevelopment interest.

West St. Paul is also experiencing an influx of younger families due primarily to its affordable housing, excellent educational system, and strategic geographic location. According to the 2019 U.S. Census estimate, 20.5% of West St. Paul’s population is under the age of 18. The City is committed to balancing the ongoing need to preserve and enhance its tax base while maintaining a livable community with parks, trails and open space opportunities for residents of every age. The City maintains 15 parks and an ice arena, sports dome and municipal pool. It provides an extensive recreation program responding to the interests of all segments of the community. The City is also home to the Dodge Nature Center, Southview Country Club and Thompson County Park.

West St. Paul students receive an excellent education through the West St. Paul - Mendota Heights - Eagan School District. Facilities within the City of West Saint Paul include a middle school, an elementary school and a magnet school. Henry Sibley High school located in adjacent Mendota Heights is the district’s only public high school. Private education is available at several facilities within the City.

According to the American Community Survey, the City’s largest racial/ethnic groups are White (64.2%), Hispanic (22.8%), Black (4.9%), Asian (4.2%) and multi-race or other (3.9%). In 2017, the median household income was $53,385 while the median age was 38.4 years.

The City’s major employers include: TapeMark, a medical adhesives manufacturer with approximately 175 employees; Dakota County with over 600 employees and Independent School District 197 also with approximately 300 employees. Other large employers are: Walmart, Target, Cub Foods, Lowes and Menards.
The City of West Saint Paul is a home rule charter city operating under the council/manager form of government.

The Council is comprised of a mayor elected at-large and who serves a two-year term, and six council members representing three wards with alternating four-year terms. The Mayor is the presiding officer of the Council, however, the Mayor only votes in a case of a tie vote by the Council, when considering the removal of the City Manager or City Attorney, or when filling a Council vacancy.

The City Manager is responsible for carrying out Council decisions and leading the organization to achieve its mission. The City Manager is charged with overseeing the day-to-day operation of the City’s five departments with a total of 85 FTE’s. Approximately 45 of these employees are covered by collective bargaining agreements representing police officers, police sergeants and public works employees. Each of these groups have contracts in place through 2021. Fire service is provided through the South Metro Fire Department, a joint powers entity created with the City of South St. Paul.

West St. Paul’s 2020 general fund budget is $15.1 million. The estimated 2021 budget is at $15.6 million. All funds, capital, revenue and general typically range between $33 million and $38 million. Each year the Council adopts a two-year budget and ten-year capital plan. The City maintains an excellent financial position, with a Standard and Poor’s rating of AA and an annual general fund balance of more than 50% of operating costs.

The City has a strong history of collaborating with other local governments and entities to provide the most effective and efficient city services. In addition to its partnership with the City of South St. Paul for the South Metro Fire Department, the City is part of collaborative partnerships for the ice arena, recycling, recreation programming, technology, emergency communications, emergency management, several police department collaboratives, and volunteer services.
The City of West St. Paul has endeavored to provide quality services by constantly anticipating changing needs and priorities. Examples of issues which the new City Manager will help the City Council, staff and community address include:

**REDEVELOPMENT**
Being essentially a fully-developed community, the City has focused on redevelopment opportunities in recent years. With the completion of the Robert Street upgrade, there is now growing interest by property owners and developers to revitalize this important regional commercial asset for the future. The City Manager will be responsible for guiding this redevelopment in a way that sensitively augments existing investments while expanding the tax base will be essential.

**AGING INFRASTRUCTURE**
As with many mature cities, West St. Paul has a challenge in replacing significant portions of streets and utilities. The City received State of Minnesota approval for a local sales tax, implemented in 2020, targeted toward collector roadway improvements over the next 20 years at a projected total revenue stream of $28 million. Adopted Council policy is to conduct major roadway maintenance on a pay-as-you go basis using sales tax, State Aid transfers and electric and gas franchise fees as primary revenue sources.

**CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT**
West St. Paul values an informed citizenry and business community. As the City becomes more diverse, it must be constantly looking for the best methods for ensuring the community is kept current of the City’s plans and actions and for obtaining the community’s feedback. One of the Council’s Strategic Priorities is continued improvement in inclusion of all of its citizenry.

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**
West St. Paul is committed to ensuring that it is an organization that values diversity, equity and inclusion in its hiring, work place expectations, policy formulation and service delivery. The Strategic Plan contains an initiative to identify opportunities to bolster its outreach in this important area. The City Manager will need to be a catalyst in helping the City develop effective strategies to meet this expectation.

**HOUSING**
The City has been active in efforts to maintain the quality of its current housing stock through code enforcement rental licensing and inspections, home improvement loans, a housing replacement program and an active, collaborative problem property committee. In 2020, the City expanded its housing rehab program to include a lending program for households up to 120% Area Median Income in the north east portion of the community as a pilot. The City Council has also supported efforts to establish Housing Improvement Areas to assist Condominium HOA’s in maintaining their infrastructure.

**TRAIL/WALKWAY DEVELOPMENT**
The City has entered agreements with the State of Minnesota and Dakota County for construction of a portion of the regional River to River Trail with a construction start in 2020. A part of that project includes the opportunity for creation of an environmental resource within a former golf course property owned by the City. The County and City are striving to garner third party funding to complete this important project. Additionally, Council has created a sidewalk cost center within the CIP (capital improvement plan) with funding beginning in 2021 to work toward completion of trail gaps remaining in the adopted Trail/Ped plan.

**FISCAL STRENGTH**
Over the past four years, there has been a need to focus on building financial capacity. During 2018-2019 the City Council has adopted a number of financial policies targeting growth in cash reserves and reduction in outstanding debt. Included is policy that only lift station/forcemain construction is debt eligible with all other facilities and infrastructure projects being funded on a pay-go basis. Results have shown significant forward movement toward cash reserve targets and debt mitigation/decline has begun. The City Council is fervent in continuing that approach.
THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Education and Experience

The next City Manager will possess a Bachelor’s degree or the equivalent in public or business administration or a closely related field. A Master’s degree is preferred. The successful candidate will also have at least seven years of municipal management experience as a City Manager or Administrator or as an Assistant City Manager or Administrator (or equivalent executive position).

Successful experience with tax base preservation and growth and economic revitalization in a mature, fully developed, community similar to West St. Paul is especially desirable. Experience in long-range financial planning and managing a budget with increasing service demands within limited revenue sources is also important.

The successful candidate will be someone who will assist the City Council, staff and community in developing a unified vision for the City’s future in ways that are achievable and supported. As such, the City Manager will understand their role as one of support to the City Council, being sensitive to working closely with Council in development of plans and initiatives. Within that role, they will actively represent the City, maintain an open door policy, enjoy community involvement and become well known in the community.

The City Manager will be a leader who is inspirational, has a good sense of humor, is out-going and has a sincere commitment to diversity. They will have a high degree of integrity and honesty while being an excellent communicator that listens as well as speaks and is respectful of others and their opinions and views.
Experience, Knowledge and Skills

The new City Manager will ideally have the following knowledge, skills, and abilities:

- Working knowledge of municipal finance and budgeting, long-range financial planning and grant writing.
- Excellent oral and written communication and public speaking skills.
- Working knowledge of organizational development, strategic planning, capital financing, project management and public infrastructure replacement and financing.
- Ability to be the catalyst for effective community visioning and strategic planning and the skills to design and successfully manage implementation plans.
- Management experience with an economic development authority is desirable.
- Experience working with organized labor and union negotiations.
- Experience in reorganizing government operations to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness.
- Ability to act as an information resource for citizens and the business community regarding city services and issues.
- Training and teambuilding skills.
- Demonstrated success in empowering employees without micro-management and in building and effectively supporting teamwork.
- Working knowledge of resource leveraging including experience with grants and funding from the Legislature, foundations and others.
- Expertise and demonstrated experience in intergovernmental relations.

Management Style, Abilities and Personal Traits

- Willingness to listen, to be approachable and to take time to understand needs and issues.
- Possess an open, transparent and collaborative management style that fosters trust and confidence among staff and the City Council.
- Ability to focus on leadership and management of the organization including inspiring and mentoring staff, providing needed resources, treating all staff with respect and valuing their input.
- Demonstrated self-confidence.
- Professional manner with a deep sense of customer service.
- Unquestionable ethics and high moral character.
- A commitment to diversity in the workplace.
- Ability to successfully work with other governments and all segments of the community.
- Ability to be politically savvy without being political.
- Ability to be diplomatic and a consensus builder while possessing the courage to make unpopular decisions and recommendations.
Compensation & Benefits

The 2020 salary range is $146,415 - $165,565 per annum. The starting salary for the City Manager position is negotiable, depending on qualifications and experience. The City offers an excellent fringe benefits package including employer contributions toward comprehensive health insurance benefits; 12 paid holidays; participation in the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA), a State administered defined benefit retirement program; life insurance, disability insurance and several tax deferred or tax free vehicles. The City also provides voluntary short-term disability, vision and dental insurance and a very attractive paid time off package.

The position is open until filled. Review of applications will begin on February 5, 2021.

To apply, please submit a resume and letter of application to:

Jim Miller, Senior Vice President: The Mercer Group, Inc.
612-581-9972  |  Jf_miller@outlook.com

The City of West St. Paul does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities.

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer