



DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

CITY OF LEXINGTON, VA





CITY OF LEXINGTON VIRGINIA

The City of Lexington, Virginia, is seeking an experienced and accomplished professional to serve as its next Director of Public Works. Reporting directly to the City Manager, the Director will be a member of the City's leadership team and will oversee the services, programs, and daily operations of the Public Works Department.

The Director will provide strategic direction, leadership, and supervision to department staff; develop and administer the departmental budget; and ensure the effective delivery of essential public services. This position plays a highly visible and important role in the City's government and offers an opportunity to help shape the future of Lexington's infrastructure, services, and quality of life.

This recruitment profile provides prospective candidates with an overview of the City of Lexington, highlights the City's priorities, and outlines the key issues, challenges, and opportunities that the new Director will encounter. The profile also describes the City's 'ideal' candidate in terms of qualifications, leadership style and desired characteristics determined to be necessary and desirable for the position.

Qualified candidates are encouraged to submit a cover letter, resume, and professional references to the Berkley Group via email to jennifer.whistleman@bgllc.net. While the position is open until filled, review of candidates will begin on or around October 14, 2026; however, highly qualified candidates may be invited for interview at any time. Inquiries relating to the Director of Public Works position may be directed to:

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Berkley Group, LLC
P.O. Box 181
Bridgewater, Virginia 22812
Email: jennifer.whistleman@bgllc.net
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COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

The City of Lexington is an independent city in Rockbridge County, nestled between the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains. Lexington offers a distinctive blend of small-town charm and vibrant college-town culture. Residents enjoy an exceptional quality of life, with historic architecture and educational sites, access to university events and talent, a strong sense of community, and the stunning natural beauty of the surrounding area. Smithsonian Magazine recognized Lexington as one of "The 20 Best Small Towns to Visit," highlighting its exceptional cultural offerings, history, and hospitality.

Welcoming and connected, Lexington is a place where people find it easy to live, work, and engage with their community. Its walkable neighborhoods, low traffic, vibrant downtown, and active community life create an inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors alike. Lexington embraces a thoughtful, well-rounded way of life—one that respects its rich history while welcoming new ideas, innovation, and opportunities for the future.

Interstate 81 (I-81) was constructed through the heart of the Shenandoah Valley in the early 1960s. Interstate 64 (I-64), which carries traffic from I-81 near Lexington westward to Charleston, West Virginia, was completed in 1978. Today, Lexington is conveniently located at the junction of two major interstate highways, providing travelers with easy north-south and east-west access.

Lexington serves as the retail, cultural, and historic center of Rockbridge County, as well as the seat of local government and the courts. The City's carefully preserved downtown is listed on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places. Its vibrant collection of shops, restaurants, and businesses is housed in beautifully restored buildings accented by brick sidewalks and traditional lantern-style streetlights, attracting visitors and tourists throughout the year.

Known for its distinctive character and wealth of historic attractions, Lexington has developed tourism into one of its leading industries, alongside education. The City is recognized for its outstanding architecture,

commitment to historic preservation, welcoming community, and reputation for civility, cleanliness, and low crime. Together, these qualities make Lexington a truly unique and special place.

Lexington offers something for everyone—from history enthusiasts and outdoor adventurers to food lovers. Just a few miles north of the city, visitors can even enjoy a drive-in theater that harkens back to a simpler time. Historic sites such as the Stonewall Jackson House, Lee Chapel, the George C. Marshall Museum, and McCormick Farm offer opportunities to explore and better understand the history of the nation and the region.

Outdoor attractions are equally abundant. The Blue Ridge Parkway and Appalachian Trail are easily accessible from Lexington, while nearby Natural Bridge—a limestone formation rising 215 feet above a stream-carved valley—stands as one of Virginia’s most remarkable natural landmarks. The Woods Creek Trail follows the length of Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute, while the seven-mile Chessie Trail connects Lexington and Buena Vista along the Maury River, winding past scenic limestone formations and peaceful countryside.

The nearby Virginia Horse Center is a world-class equestrian facility that hosts regional, national, and international competitions and events. With its combination of history, natural beauty, outdoor recreation, cultural attractions, and small-town charm, Lexington offers visitors an experience that is both distinctive and memorable.

Farm-to-table cuisine, regional specialties, and locally crafted beverages are at the heart of Lexington’s vibrant dining scene. Here, chefs are approachable and often found chatting with guests about their meals and the ingredients behind them. Expect Southern-inspired fare served with genuine Southern hospitality, with menus shaped by what is local, fresh, and in season.

From thoughtfully crafted cocktails and locally inspired entrées to made-from-scratch desserts, Lexington’s restaurants offer food that is authentic, creative, and rooted in the region. Whether you’re looking for a casual meal or a memorable dining experience, you’ll find plenty of homegrown flavor and original culinary character throughout the city.

Lexington’s population is nearly 8,000 (2026 data) with a median household income of \$84,517 (2024 data).

Lexington is home to Carilion Rockbridge Community Hospital, a 25-bed critical access hospital providing a comprehensive range of inpatient and outpatient services, with specialized care in imaging, surgery, and rehabilitation therapies. Additional Carilion healthcare facilities are located approximately an hour away in Roanoke, while hospitals in Harrisonburg, Fishersville, and Charlottesville are within a 1.5-hour drive. Together, these facilities provide Lexington residents and visitors with access to a broad range of medical services and specialty care.



EDUCATION

Lexington City Schools serve approximately 655 students. Rockbridge County High School, operated by Rockbridge County, is located in Lexington and serves as the City's high school. Capital costs of the high school are shared between the county and the City.

Five public schools in the district serve approximately 2400 students, across elementary, middle, and high schools. The district's average testing ranking is 10/10, which is in the top 1% of public schools in the nation. The schools maintain a favorable 14:1 student-to-teacher ratio. City schools include two elementary schools, one middle school and one high school.

Lexington is additionally home to other educational opportunities and institutions.

- Seven (7) private schools from the level of pre-school to 12th grade.
- Two (2) colleges are located in Lexington:
 - ◊ Washington and Lee University (W&L). W&L is rated within the top 7% of four-year colleges nationally and earns a CollegeSimply grade of 10 out of 10.
 - ◊ The Virginia Military Institute (VMI) is a public senior military college established in 1839. VMI is one of six military colleges in the U.S.
- Additionally, there are 19, two-and four-year colleges and universities within 50 miles of the City.



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department is the City's largest operational department. Services managed by Public Works include street maintenance and construction (approximately 50 miles of paved streets and roads in the City); stormwater management; solid waste; utilities (ongoing maintenance and replacement of all water and sewer lines inside the City limits); facilities maintenance; parks, playgrounds and cemetery maintenance and safety, and planning/project management and engineering.

Lexington purchases wholesale water from the Maury Service Authority and is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and replacement of all water and sewer lines inside the City limits. The department meters water consumption and uses this information to oversee utility billing. The Director of Public Works is responsible for the management of all water and utility services.

The Public Works Department has approximately 40 employees and the Director has six direct reports and shares supervisory responsibility for 5 additional supervisors and the Facilities Management program with the Deputy Director of Public Works/Director of Operations. The department has an annual budget of approximately \$7.5M.



The Director of Public Works reports to the City Manager and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the department, supervision of employees, development of work schedules/programs/policies and procedures. The position ensures compliance with safety, state and federal regulations, and coordinates projects, plans and operations with associated government agencies, including the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Maury Service Authority and the local planning district commission.

The Director is responsible for developing the annual department budget recommendation to the City Manager and administers the approved budget. The Director also develops the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), currently with a 5-year budget of \$36.5M. The Director is responsible for managing personnel issues in the department, along with filling staff vacancies. The Director may represent the City with local and regional associations, as needed.

Lexington has several initiatives aimed at enhancing community engagement and urban growth. These initiatives are part of the broader goals introduced by Strong Towns Lexington (the local chapter of a national organization that focuses on 'strengthening the civic health of local communities') and the City's planning department.

Urban Development Projects include:

- Jordan's Point Park Master Plan – a project focused on the development and enhancement of park facilities to improve recreational opportunities.
- Lexington Bike/Pedestrian Plan – an initiative aimed at improving infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, promoting sustainable transportation.
- AM-Liner Providence Hill Area Sewer Lining – the project includes lining of approximately 6,000 linear feet of 6-inch diameter and 1500 linear feet of 8-inch diameter sewer mains and the rehab of manholes.

OPPORTUNITIES, ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- The City's aging infrastructure requires that facilities, water/sewer lines and so forth be upgraded in a consistent and methodical manner.
- Consideration of any needed equipment replacement.
- Management of the Lime Kiln Bridge project (VDOT grants and funding) and the sidewalk replacement along Waddell Street by Maury River Middle School.
- Management of the Moore's Creek Dam, including monitoring grant funding from the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).
- Continued management of the Stormwater Fund (enterprise fund) which includes an interfund loan from Utilities of \$160K.
- Effective communication with contractors, architects, and engineers, when utilized for maintenance and special projects.



QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION, AND EXPERIENCE

The following education and experience factors outline the qualifications for successful performance:

- Seven to ten years of progressive, related leadership in an organization with comparable size/scope of responsibility, possessing a broad skill set appropriate to the breadth of the City's public works operations.
- An undergraduate degree with coursework in civil engineering, public administration, planning, or a related field desired, but not mandatory.
- Registration as Professional Engineer (PE) in the Commonwealth of Virginia, preferred.
- Any combination of education and experience that qualifies a candidate may be considered in lieu of the criteria listed above.

PERSONAL TRAITS AND DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Absolute integrity, ensuring ethical, equitable, honest, fair, open, and personable interactions with City employees and community members.
- Practical problem solver and decision maker who is engaging and collaborative, setting a departmental vision to implement effective processes and schedules.
- Effective and efficient manager, sharing the workload while maintaining departmental leadership, motivating employees and supporting teamwork across other departments.
- A role model, coach, and mentor for department employees; dedicated to the professional development of staff; able to empower employees with a focus on performance, collaboration, and accountability.
- Professionally competent, with confidence tempered by humility.
- Excellent communications and interpersonal skills, including the ability to listen effectively and understand differing views.
- Must be approachable by field staff as well as members of the community.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Compensation for the Director of Public Works is dependent upon qualifications and experience within a hiring range of \$94,000 to \$132,000 annually. The successful candidate will be provided the City's benefits package including participation in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), health/dental/vision insurance, paid vacation/sick leave (or paid time off/PTO), paid holiday leave (12), professional development, life insurance, and other benefits provided for all City employees. Access/use of a City vehicle will be provided.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Initial review of candidates will begin on or around October 14, 2026. Applications received after that date may be considered until the position is filled. Timely submittal will ensure the most advantageous review. Highly qualified candidates may be invited to interview at any time. To be considered, please submit a cover letter, resume, and professional references to Berkley Group, via e-mail to jennifer.whistleman@bgllc.net. Questions may be directed to:

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For Additional Information, visit: <https://www.lexingtonva.gov/>

The City of Lexington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.