

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

CITY OF STAUNTON, VA





The City of Staunton, Virginia is seeking an experienced professional to serve as the Director of Public Works. The successful candidate will report to the City Manager and will serve as a member of the City's leadership team responsible for directing services, programs, and operations of the Public Works Department. The Director will provide guidance and supervision of employees, prepare the departmental budget, and provide leadership for a highly visible function within the City's government.

This recruitment profile describes the City of Staunton to prospective candidates, identifies City priorities, and outlines issues, challenges, and opportunities that the new Director will face. 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 Berkley Group via email to jennifer.whistleman@bgllc.net. While the position is open until filled, review of candidates will begin on or around July 17, 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:

Jennifer Whistleman
Berkley Group, LLC
P.O. Box 181
Bridgewater, Virginia 22812
Email: jennifer.whistleman@bgllc.net
Mobile: 540-435-2505



COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Known as the Queen City of the Shenandoah Valley, Staunton is consistently recognized as one of the best small towns in America by USA Today, Smithsonian, MSN, Fodor's, Southern Living, and others. In 2023, Beverley Street — the main thoroughfare in the heart of Staunton's historic downtown — was listed as one of the best main streets in the country, by Country Living magazine.

Located at the crossroads of Interstate 81 and interstate 64, Staunton offers convenient access to major employment, education, healthcare, and culture destinations throughout Virginia and the Mid-Atlantic region. Charlottesville is approximately 40 minutes away, Richmond and Roanoke are within two hours, and Washington, D.C. is accessible in approximately two and a half hours.

Staunton combines the amenities of a vibrant small city with the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities of the Shenandoah Valley. Residents enjoy a high quality of life, a walkable and historic downtown, diverse dining and shopping options, and a strong sense of community. The city's population is approximately 27,000 and continues to attract residents seeking an exceptional place to live, work, and raise a family.

Outdoor recreation is abundant, with close proximity to Shenandoah National Park, Skyline Drive, the Blue Ridge Parkway, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, and numerous hiking, cycling, fishing and paddling opportunities.

Staunton is also recognized as a regional center for arts, culture, and education. The city is home to six historic districts and the American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse, the world's only recreation of Shakespeare's indoor theatre. Additional culture assets include the Heifetz International Music Institute, the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum, the Frontier Culture Museum, and Sunspots Studios.

Special events are also a big draw to Staunton and several VA250 commemorative events are planned or in the works. The city's location in the Shenandoah Valley dictates wide-open spaces for outdoor recreation, with close proximity to Shenandoah National Park, the Skyline Drive, and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Grand Cavers, the oldest show cave in the United States is also only a short drive away.

The City is credited with creating the city manager form of government, which was formally adopted in 1908. According to the International City Management Association (ICMA), Staunton's city manager style led to the council-manager form of government that is still used by thousands of American cities.

Staunton's population is nearly 27,000 (2025 data) with a median household income of \$65,581 (2024 data).



EDUCATION

Staunton City Schools serve over 2,600 students across elementary, middle, and high schools. The district has experienced impressive academic growth, ranking as one of the most improved school divisions in the state on Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. The schools maintain a favorable 13:1 student-to-teacher ratio. City schools include one preschool, three elementary schools, one middle school and one high school.

Additionally, Staunton is home to three other educational institutions.

- Stuart Hall, a private co-ed, and boarding school for grades 6 through 12, offering a liberal arts education.
- Mary Baldwin University was founded in 1842 as a women's seminary, and is now an accredited, private, liberal arts university serving men and women with an average class size of 17 students.
- Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind is an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia, providing education for students who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/vision impaired, deafblind, and deaf or blind with other disabilities. Education is provided at no cost to the families, from birth through age 21 or until the student 'ages out' of Special Education Services. The school offers PreK-12 education with both residential and day options.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department is the City's largest operational department. Services managed by Public Works include street and sidewalk maintenance (approximately 100 miles of paved streets and roads in the City), stormwater management, traffic engineering (signals/signage/markings), refuse and recycling collection, facilities maintenance, and fleet maintenance.

Water production and distribution and sewer system collection/utility billing are also responsibilities which fall within the Public Works Department. The City owns, operates, and maintains an 8.0 million gallon per day (MGD) water treatment plant. Primary water sources include a natural underground spring and reservoirs. The Public Works Director is responsible for the management of all water and utility services.

The Public Works Director 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 Public Works Department has approximately 90 employees and the Director has four direct reports, with three of these at the level of Superintendent. The director is responsible for managing personnel issues in the department, along with filling staff vacancies.

The department has an annual General Fund budget of approximately \$8.8M. Water, Sewer, Environmental and Parking Funds are operated as enterprise funds, totaling over \$18.8M.

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) 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 is a key planner and partner in developing the City's five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The director represents the City with two regional associations, the Landfill Management Committee and the Wastewater Treatment Plant Board. Occasionally, the director represents the city on a regional solid waste committee and other boards and committees as required.



OPPORTUNITIES, ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- Public Works faces staffing challenges that are not unusual for this field; developing and implementing creative ways to recruit and maintain qualified staff is a top priority to ensure core services can be done and at the level of excellence the community is accustomed to.
- The City's aging utility infrastructure requires that facilities, such as water/sewer lines, be upgraded in a consistent and methodical manner.
- Staunton's many miles of sidewalks and streets, along with the public buildings, require planned and consistent maintenance that needs to be prioritized in an equitable manner and done within available resources.
- Become thoroughly competent in the newest technology of the department (i.e., Spiceworks tracking/response platform, etc.), its uses (including proactive uses), and customization abilities specific to Staunton.
- Allocation of resources to continue the GIS Infrastructure Mapping program, especially related to the mapping and data collection of the utility infrastructure.
- Continuation and completion of the Automated Metering Infrastructure program (water meter replacement program).
- Continue implementation of the city's initiative to "modernize" refuse service in the commercial and business districts. This was rolled out to residential customers in March 2025.
- Effective communication with contractors, architects, and engineers, when utilized for maintenance and special projects.



QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION, & EXPERIENCE

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

- Five to seven 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.
- Commercial Driver's License, preferred.
- Any combination of education and experience that qualifies an applicant 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, City staff and City Councilmembers.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Compensation for the Director of Public Works is dependent upon qualifications and experience within a hiring range of \$130,000 to \$160,000 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 time off (PTO), paid holiday leave (13), professional development, life insurance, tuition reimbursement, 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 July 17, 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.ci.staunton.va.us/>

The City of Staunton is an Equal Opportunity Employer