

# The City of Carlisle, Iowa

Invites Qualified Candidates to Apply For

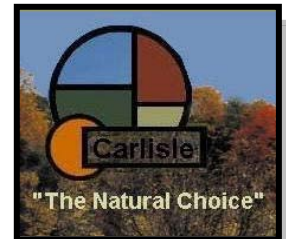
## City Administrator



**ABOUT CARLISLE** – With a population of just under 4,000, Carlisle, Iowa, is part of the thriving Des Moines metropolitan area with a population of 572,000. As such, Carlisle offers the advantages of small-town living with the amenities provided by a metropolitan area. Carlisle’s population grew by 11 percent in the last decade and similar continued growth is forecasted.

The City strives to be both development and environmentally-friendly. As such the City encourages development which reinvigorates the natural ecosystem through features such as reduced impervious surfaces, an emphasis on natural habitat, and use of rain gardens which soak up rain water runoff from buildings, patios, and driveways. This type of development is sometimes referred to as a “conservation community” where storm water is absorbed on-site through larger amounts of open space and reduced building setbacks. The aforementioned has been reinforced by Carlisle’s branding effort several years ago that resulted in selecting “Carlisle—The Natural Choice” as its tag line and “Constantly Creating Opportunity to be the Natural Choice” as its theme line.

Carlisle takes pride in being a family-oriented community. As substantiation of the family-friendly nature of the metropolitan area, Parenting Magazine ranked Des Moines #5 for families among U.S. cities in 2011.



### *ECONOMY*

The Des Moines metropolitan area remained largely unscathed by the Great Recession. For example, the Brookings Institute evaluation of 100 metro areas throughout the country revealed the Des Moines area was in the top 20 in terms of its overall economic recovery from the recession. The metropolitan area currently has a non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 5.5 percent compared to the U.S. non-seasonally adjusted rate of 8.1 percent.



Iowa has long been known for the quality of its workforce and the “Iowa Work Ethic”. An analysis of 2010 U.S. census data is very favorable for Carlisle as shown by the table on page 2. In particular Carlisle’s greater family income and lower housing prices provide the community with a competitive economic advantage compared to other U.S. communities.

**CARLISLE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

	CARLISLE	U.S. AVERAGE	DIFFERENCE
MEDIAN AGE	35.9 years	37.2 years	3% younger
OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSES	79%	65%	22% more
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME	\$73,400	\$60,600	21% more
MEDIAN OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSE VALUE	\$136,500	\$179,900	24% less

Major private sector companies in Carlisle are shown below.

EMPLOYER	TYPE OF BUSINESS	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Carlisle Center for Wellness and Rehab	Nursing Home	121
General Mills	Food Manufacturing	90
Wyckoff Industries	Heating and Cooling	73
Equifax	Data Entry	66
Subway	Restaurant	22
Green Tech Products	Tire Recycling for Playground Turf	16
Heartland Co-op	Grain Elevator	15

**TRANSPORTATION**

Carlisle is located on the four-lane Iowa Highway 5 at its intersection with US Highway 65 near the community’s western border. According to the Iowa Department of Transportation, approximately 54,520 vehicles pass through Carlisle each day. The community is also served by the Union Pacific Railroad’s Class I main line which connects Minneapolis to Houston via Kansas City. Carlisle has same-day ground transportation access to an eight-state market with 850,000 businesses and 35 million people.

Carlisle is only 15 minutes from the Des Moines International airport, 20 minutes from downtown Des Moines, 25 minutes from the intersection of Interstates 35/80, and 25 minutes from Iowa’s premier retail area, the Jordan Creek Town Center.



## EDUCATION

The Carlisle School District is a pre-K-12 district with 2050 students. Approximately half of the students reside in Carlisle and the other half reside in southeast Des Moines and nearby Hartford and unincorporated areas.

The District has four school facilities three of which are in Carlisle (pre-K-3 elementary school, 6-8 middle school, and 9-12 high school) and a 4-5 middle school in Hartford. The District's students consistently outperform state and national averages in both college entrance exam scores and graduation rates. Also, class sizes consistently rank below state and national averages. Finally, the District's school-to-work program provides students hands-on job experience before they graduate. Carlisle Schools are large enough to offer a broad range of activities but small enough that everyone can participate--the District has a no-cut policy regarding student participation in sports, music, drama and all other extra-curricular activities.

All of the aforementioned attributes have made Carlisle Schools a destination district. During open enrollment there are three times as many students who enroll in the Carlisle District as those who live in the District who enroll elsewhere. For more information about the District, please see their website at <http://www.carlisle.k12.ia.us/>

There are many post-secondary education opportunities available in close proximity to Carlisle including Iowa State University, Drake University, Grand View College, Simpson College, Central College, and the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC).

## RECREATION

The following are the parks and recreation attractions in the community.

- North Park, a 26-acre urban park featuring a Veteran's Memorial Honor Roll, a restored log cabin, community gardens, and access to the North River
- Lindhardt Park, a 12-acre athletic complex home to youth baseball and softball
- State-of-the-art Family Aquatic Center featuring heated pool, one-meter diving board, drop slide, eleven-foot deep diving area, swim lanes, super sidewinder slide, water cascade umbrella, frog slide, bubbling beach, water's edge snack bar, umbrellas, and shade structures
- Summerset National Scenic Recreational Trail, a 11.5-mile paved trail that passes through prairie, wetlands, woodlands, and along the Middle River southwest of Carlisle
- Scotch Ridge Nature Park, a 47-acre park along the North River at the Highway 5 gateway to Carlisle that is currently being developed to include a rare transect of several distinct soil-based ecosystems including riparian wetlands, riparian woodlands, mesic prairie, upland prairie, and oak savannah all within walking distance of each other. A 3.2-mile trail to connect Scotch Ridge to the Summerset Trail is currently in the final stages of design and permitting with construction planned for 2013-14.

In addition the following special events are held in the community: July 4th celebration; Pumpkin Fest; Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony; Light Up Carlisle Christmas celebration; and the Heartland Challenge, a ten-hour ATV endurance race.

Additional information about Carlisle is available at <http://www.carlisle-ia.gov>

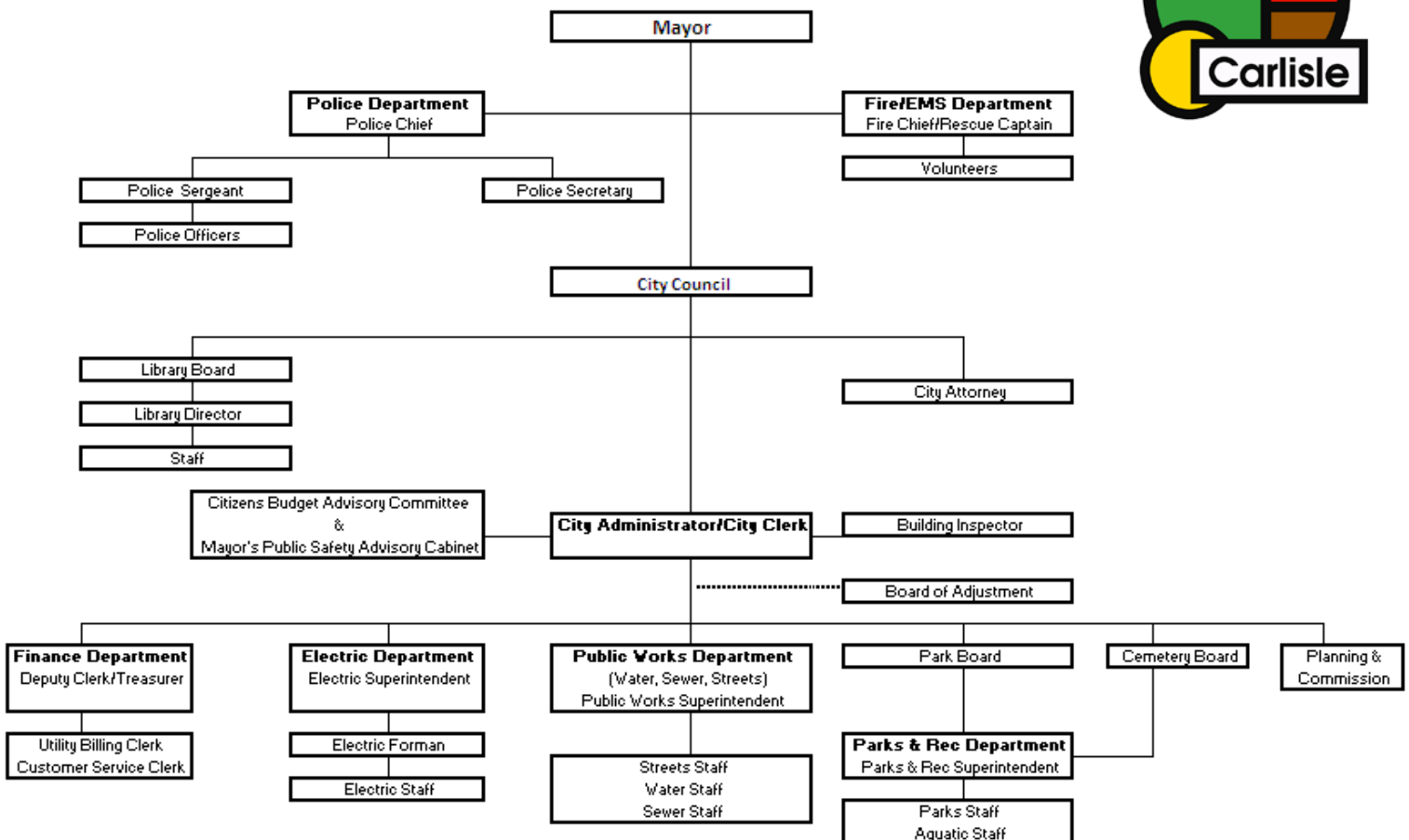


**CITY GOVERNMENT** – The City of Carlisle which was incorporated in 1851 operates under Iowa Code as a mayor-council government with an appointed Administrator. The City Council consists of five members who are elected at-large on a nonpartisan basis to staggered four-year terms. The Mayor who possesses veto power but no voting authority is also elected at-large for a four-year term on a nonpartisan basis. There are no term limits.

The City Administrator is appointed by a Council majority. However it requires a vote of four of the five Council Members to remove the City Administrator from office. The current City Administrator who is Carlisle’s first City Administrator has been in that position since 1996.

The City Administrator oversees the activities of all City departments (see organizational chart below). Under Iowa law the Library is governed by a Library Board appointed by the City Council. Also, under Carlisle’s form of government, state statutes dictate that the Mayor is responsible for the Police and Fire Departments. However, the Mayor being a part-time position relies heavily on the City Administrator to oversee these two departments. The City Administrator directly supervises the City departments other than Library, Police, and Fire with department director appointments and terminations subject to City Council confirmation based on the City Administrator’s recommendation.

The City Administrator is responsible for preparing and administering the annual City budget and also has the responsibilities of the City Clerk position consisting of financial management, taking minutes at public meetings, and preparing various annual reports. There is a full-time Deputy City Clerk and well as two other full-time support staff that share in the aforementioned duties.





*FINANCIAL INFORMATION*

The City of Carlisle is a full-service organization that includes Electric, Water, and Wastewater utilities. The City has an annual operating budget of \$8 million, a 2013-17 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget of \$20 million, and 22 FTE's.

The City has established a policy of keeping a General Fund balance of 25-33 percent of annual expenditures. Currently the General Fund balance is approximately 33 percent of annual expenditures. The City chooses not to have its bonds rated by one of the bond rating agencies, and its bonds sell equivalent to bonds with an A1 rating.

During the Great Recession the City did not have to lay off any employees and annual salary increases have been given every year. The City has had collective bargaining since 1989 and reports relatively good relationships with its two bargaining units: 1) Public Works and Electric field employee represented by AFSCME; and 2) Police Officers represented by the Teamsters.

**CORE VALUES OF CARLISLE CITY GOVERNMENT**

- Unfailing honesty and integrity
- Respect and compassion for all persons
- First and foremost priority is serving the public
- Responsiveness and accountability to those we serve
- Pursuing excellence in all endeavors undertaken

**CARLISLE VISION STATEMENT**

Carlisle aspires to be the City of choice by being sensitive to its environmental resources, by embracing its hometown atmosphere, and by providing excellent service and a safe environment for its citizens.

Carlisle will achieve its vision of sustainable growth and opportunity for enrichment by providing extensive recreation and culture, high quality schools, active citizen involvement, strong businesses, and a vibrant downtown.

Carlisle will demand innovative and accessible governance that is supported by fair and accountable funding.



**ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES** – The following is a summary of the issues and opportunities to be managed by Carlisle’s next City Administrator.



### Economic Development

The City Council and community are looking for the City Administrator to aggressively pursue economic development opportunities as summarized below.

- *Commercial development*— Carlisle is predominantly a residential bedroom suburb due to its close proximity to the Des Moines metro area and other central Iowa job centers. Several new commercial developments have been built in recent years, and the community would like more retailers and jobs to be located in Carlisle. This would also increase the commercial property tax base and lessen the relative burden on residential taxpayers. The two areas of the community that have the greatest potential for more commercial development are the community’s entryway and downtown. The City would like to attract higher quality commercial development at these two focal points which may involve enhancing the City’s development standards and modifying City zoning to allow more flexibility especially downtown where there is a mix of retail and industrial uses.
- *Residential development*—there is a desire to have more housing options available in the community especially in the \$160-220K range.
- *Infrastructure expansion*—the City has recently expanded its sanitary sewer infrastructure to the US 65 entryway area. Expansion of water infrastructure to this area would facilitate its development.
- *Business community involvement*—there is an interest in having the City work more closely with the Carlisle business community and Chamber of Commerce in its economic development efforts.
- *Financial incentives*—the City offers both commercial and residential property tax abatement and has used tax increment financing (TIF) for three economic development projects. There may be opportunities for the City to more aggressively use financial incentives to spur development. In addition, several Iowa communities have used downtown façade improvement incentives and the Dangerous and Dilapidated (D & D) Buildings Program to demolish abandoned and/or seriously deteriorated structures. There is some community interest in both of these programs. While Carlisle has adopted the D & D Program it has not implemented it yet.

### Intergovernmental Relations

The City of Carlisle is interested in having a greater presence in working with the other Des Moines metropolitan area municipalities on regional matters. The City is a member of various regional organizations including the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Bravo (an arts and cultural promotional organization), and the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Agency (DART). In addition, since Carlisle is located in both Polk (Des Moines) and Warren Counties, the City also participates in intergovernmental relations activities in Warren County. For example, the City of Carlisle which has no economic development staff is a member of the Warren County Economic Development Corporation which has three full-time staff.

### Financial Management

The City has a stellar track record of using limited amounts of City funds to leverage federal, state, and other funding sources to accomplish major CIP projects including street and sanitary sewer construction, trail development, and the Family Aquatic Center. In the last ten years the City has constructed nearly \$14 million of CIP projects using only 27 percent City funding. The non-City funding sources include federal transportation grants, Iowa Department of Transportation grants, State Vision Iowa grants, United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development grants, Federal Community Development Block Grants, Iowa Department of Natural Resources Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) grants, special assessments, and community fundraising.

The City’s 2013-2017 CIP contains \$20 million of projects including a new Library, Public Safety Facility, street improvement and rehabilitation, and water distribution system improvements including a new water tower. The

CIP is not fully funded and the City Administrator will be expected to secure a combination of City and outside funds to accomplish these projects.

From an operating budget standpoint the City is in good financial condition as previously noted. However, as with most local governments, the City has unmet needs in areas such as recreation programming, street maintenance, EMS service, and transit service. Like other Iowa cities, Carlisle is heavily reliant on property tax revenue to fund its operating budget. The City Administrator will be expected to identify alternative revenue sources the City could use to meet its operational needs especially in light of the possibility of State property tax reform.

The City's budget document does not contain a budget message or any other narrative information about proposed expenditure and revenue changes and budget priorities. That type of narrative information would be very helpful to the Council in making budget decisions and would also make the budget more transparent to community stakeholders and the general public.

### Promoting the Community

The City is to be commended for its strategic planning efforts that have resulted in creation of a vision, values, and brand. Local governments do not always conduct this type of in-depth planning especially in cities of Carlisle's size. However the City does not have a well-known image or identity in the Des Moines metropolitan area. Improving the timeliness and content of the information on the City's website including the use of social media as well as becoming more involved in metro area intergovernmental and community activities will make Carlisle better known and help the community grow and prosper.

### Staff Reports

The staff reports included in City Council meeting packets do not provide staff recommendations and alternatives. This often results in Council meetings lasting longer than typically needed. Also, City Administrators often prepare and disseminate a Weekly Report dealing with project updates, future plans, and matters of general interest to the Council and community. The aforementioned would increase the City's transparency with its stakeholders and the general public.

### Recreation Programs

The City has a vibrant array of special events which are enjoyed by residents. However, as previously mentioned one of the unmet community needs is for additional recreational programming. Carlisle residents often travel to other communities to attend recreation programs. The City and the School District have many facilities that are not fully utilized and would likely be available for recreational programming. The City Administrator will be expected to identify cost-effective ways of increasing recreational programming. One possibility would be to form a partnership with the School District and the YMCA of Greater Des Moines whereby the YMCA would offer recreational programs in City and School facilities.

### Staff Meetings

City staff meetings where the City Administrator meets with all department directors occur on a sporadic, unscheduled basis. Holding regular staff meetings would keep department directors informed about each other's activities and would assist the City Administrator in obtaining consensus about internal matters that impact the City workforce.

### Human Resource Management

There is interest in improving the City's human resource (HR) management practices in the areas of consistent City-wide application of HR regulations, use of progressive discipline when needed including better written documentation of disciplinary actions, and conducting employee performance evaluations in a timely manner.



**JOB REQUIREMENTS** – The minimum job requirements are: 1) graduation from four-year college or university with degree in public administration or related field; and 2) four years of local government professional or administrative experience with master’s degree substituting for one year of experience; or any equivalent combination of education and experience.

**Desired Professional and Personal Attributes**

The following are the desired professional and personal attributes for Carlisle’s next City Administrator.

- Energetic, visionary, progressive leader who understands community’s potential and enjoys working with stakeholder groups to improve community
- Demonstrated track record of aggressive leadership role in economic development successes
- Provides best professional recommendation and alternatives to City Council both in writing and verbally at Council meetings
- Good financial management skills with successful track record of obtaining grants and other outside funding
- Experience with use of City financial incentives for economic development
- Strong intergovernmental relations skills with ability to gain respect and work effectively with other area municipalities and state and federal governments
- Accessible and visible in community and City workforce
- Approachable, personable, and enthusiastic with a “can-do” attitude
- Provides prompt, congenial, and helpful customer service and ensures the same from City staff
- Someone with good listening skills who communicates effectively with all stakeholders
- Marketing-savvy with ability to promote community and work with Council, community leaders, and staff to do the same
- Creative, innovative, and open to new ideas
- Motivates and inspires staff to higher levels of performance
- Collaborates with department directors to establish their performance goals--ensures accountability of City departments without micro-managing them
- Knowledge of effective HR principles and practices
- Technologically savvy
- Believes in transparent, open city government
- Knowledge of societal trends impacting city government
- Honesty and integrity beyond reproach
- Organizational skills



**Compensation**

The compensation for the City Administrator job is competitive with the starting salary dependent on the selected individual's qualifications and match with the desired attributes being sought by the City. The City will pay reasonable and customary moving expenses for the next City Administrator who is required by City code to live in Carlisle.

**To Apply:**

The position will remain open until filled with the first review of resumes occurring on May 13, 2013. For additional information about this job, please contact:

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**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY RECRUITER/EMPLOYER**

