

# The City of Durango, Colorado

Invites your interest in the position of

# CITY MANAGER



## LIFE IN DURANGO AND LA PLATA COUNTY

Steeped in Western charm, Durango is a virtual adventure wonderland boasting outdoor recreation from skiing to dog-sledding, hiking/biking to horseback riding, historic steam train to hot springs and everything in between. Durango is the La Plata County seat and the business, education, governmental and cultural hub of southwest Colorado. Durango draws a workforce from throughout the region. The City boasts many great restaurants, good shopping and a robust downtown business district. It is the home of the Mercy Regional Medical Center, the main hospital of the area, a 4-year college, Fort Lewis College, the La Plata County seat operations, and a small manufacturing sector. Durango City covers 4.37 square miles and has a growing population of nearly 19,000. The air is clean and, though the region enjoys plentiful snowfall which blankets the ski slopes of Purgatory, the sun does shine nearly 300 days a year.

At an altitude of 6,512 feet, Durango captures the best of the Rockies. The rugged and picturesque San Juan and La Plata Mountains form a breathtaking contrast to the crystal clear blue sky. The air is clean and fresh as are the rivers - Animas, Florida, La Plata, and Los Piños - that have cut through the canyons and carved valleys in the vast mesas. Durango's climate is considered ideal thanks to moderate temperatures and beautiful seasons. In summer, temperatures seldom climb above the high eighties and spring is characterized by afternoon showers which bathe the land and stimulate

verdant growth. Fall brings the promise of "Indian Summer" and clear, dry, cool days - perfect for enjoying the outdoors. Winters are generally mild, sunny and dry with seldom a day of temperatures even close to zero.

#### DURANGO'S AVERAGE ANNUAL CLIMATE

Average Annual Precipitation: 19.1 inches

Average Snowfall: 79 inches

Mean Freeze Free Period: 99 days

Elevation Above Sea Level: 6,512 feet

Solar Index: 85% of the time in sunshine

Though set far from the bright lights of the big city, La Plata County enjoys contemporary amenities and a rich cultural history as well as the cohesiveness and caring spirit traditional in rural communities.

The County is considered "tri-ethnic," embracing Native American, Latino and Anglo cultures. With Southern Ute Tribal lands stretching across a portion of the County, residents and visitors have the opportunity to participate in annual celebrations and festivals.

With names such as Rio de las Animas, Escalante Crossing and Santa Rita Park, the region's Hispanic heritage is well-documented and the culture is celebrated with the arts and during annual festivals such as Fiesta Days and Cinco de Mayo. Fort Lewis College lends a spirit of progressiveness and youth to the fabric of the region as student involvement and enthusiasm is woven throughout the community. On campus, the growing arts facilities host the acoustically perfect Community Concert Hall, the world renowned Center for Southwest Studies and the Arts Center which showcases local as well as national artists.

One resident describes Durango as living "larger than its size, with a rich and creative community of artists, musicians, athletes, outdoors men and women, educators, and world class business leadership. From college to wilderness, from high mountains to sandstone desert, neither the people nor the environment will disappoint."

From locally roasted coffee beans and award-winning handcrafted beer to gourmet foods and farm-fresh pro-

#### DURANGO CITY COUNCIL

<b>Melissa Youssef</b>	<b>Mayor</b>
<b>Dean Brookie</b>	<b>Mayor Pro Tem</b>
<b>Kim Baxter</b>	<b>City Councilor</b>
<b>Barbara Noseworthy</b>	<b>City Councilor</b>
<b>Chris Bettin</b>	<b>City Councilor</b>

duce, cheeses and meats, great food is a given in Durango. Unique dining establishments rival those of the big city. In fact, Durango has more incredible locally owned restaurants per capita than San Francisco. In season, the bustling farmers market is not only a source for fresh, natural and organic foods, but a community reunion as well.

Durango is a mountain town with a tight-knit community. The locals tend to be highly educated and civic minded. They are friendly and highly value easygoing lifestyles of recreation (i.e. outdoor activities, events and festivals) and community engagement.

Athletic endeavors are a natural part of the lifestyle including downhill skiing and boarding activities at the Purgatory ski resort and the event that launched Durango's reputation as a cycling mecca: The Iron Horse Bicycle Classic.

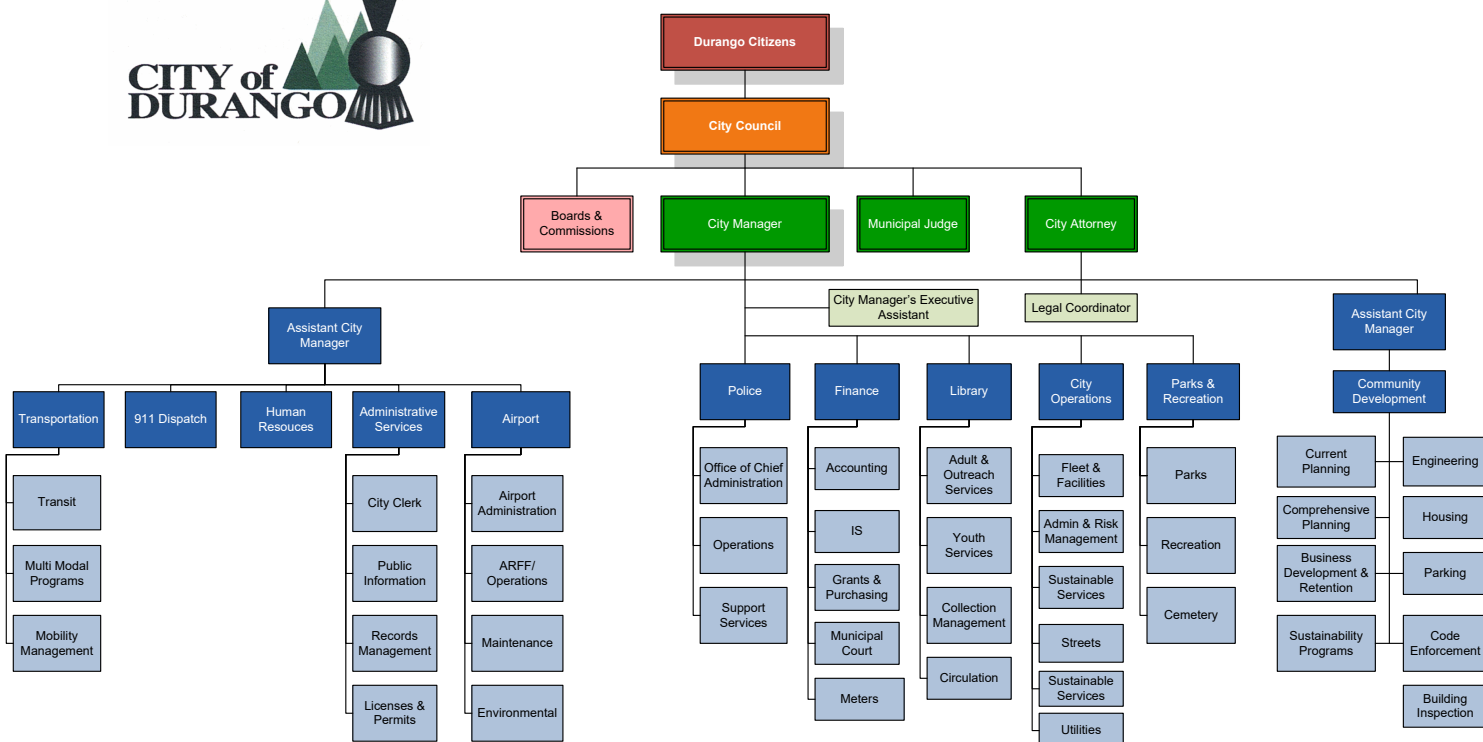
The Snowdown winter festivities, Durango Independent Film Festival, and even Bayfield's Sheep Festival are just a sampling of the activities that add sparks to life in La Plata County.

## THE DURANGO CITY GOVERNMENT

The City of Durango was incorporated in 1881 and since 1912 has been a home rule city with a council-manager form of government. The government operates under the authority of the City Charter which essentially acts as the constitution for the City. Under this form of government, the eligible electors of Durango elect five residents as members of the City Council to represent them and serve as the legislative and policy-making authority for the City. The City Council is then required by

# CITY OF DURANGO

## ORGANIZATION CHART



City Charter to appoint a City Manager to be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the City and to act as the Chief Administrative Officer. The City Manager ensures that the organization carries out the policies and goals of the City Council.

The City Manager plans, directs, manages, oversees and assumes full management responsibility for all City operations including: General Government, Streets, Engineering, Parks and Recreation, Finance, City Clerk, Human Resources, Community Development, Public Safety, Library, and General Services as well as Water, Sewer, Sustainable Services, Airport, and Transportation Services Enterprise Funds.

The City of Durango has 353 allocated full-time positions and employs approximately 800 seasonal and part-time employees. The City's Operating Fund Expenditures total \$87,57 million for FY2020.

Durango's City Manager has been a stable position. In fact, the City has had only two managers in nearly forty years.

## MAJOR CHALLENGES

- In mid-October 2019, the Acting City Manager was made aware of the possible misappropriation of funds by the Finance Director. The Finance Director immediately resigned. The Colorado Bureau of Investigations is currently conducting a criminal investigation into this matter.
- The timing of these events corresponded with the presentation of the 2020 annual budget to the Council. The Acting City Manager and the Acting Finance Director were faced with explaining the budget rationale and detail while not being fully involved with its development. Perceived and actual errors in the budget led to its delayed adoption and criticism of City operations.
- In the aftermath of the above recent and well-publicized negative events, the next City Manager will need to focus both on restoring the public's trust in the City government and on restoring staff's previously high morale.



- The Council stated that it has “a goal to enhance the public trust and the City is working diligently to ensure all City operations are conducted in a manner to maintain this trust.” An integral part of this process would be a review of the current organizational structure and staffing levels.
- Economic challenges include the need for affordable housing for all and the need for the development of good-paying jobs and business diversification.
- The organization needs to build and/or enhance functional expertise in several key areas.
- Managing the inherent growing pains of no longer being a small town and functioning as a small city.
- Build on the blessings of and manage the curses of being a remote location

### Other Challenges

- In September 2019, the Council adopted its goals for 2019-2020. Those goals represent the five major areas of Council concern and strategies for addressing those concerns.  
**See page 5 for City Council Goals.**



# CITY COUNCIL GOALS 2019-2020

## ADOPTED 9-3-19



### 1. Continue to address Durango's affordable/attainable housing, including options for homeless population, as evidenced by:

#### A. Implementing Durango's Housing Plan, with measurable outcomes and milestones:

1. Appropriate resources to ensure adequate city staff to focus on increasing affordable housing inventory through a variety of mechanisms, including land acquisition/bank, changes to code, and public/private incentives, among other activities
2. Present models for a local/regional housing authority with potential service areas
3. Explore funding options for a regional housing authority or similar model
4. Review existing implementation plan, and potential alternatives, for use of anticipated \$1 million in Fair Share funding;
5. Integrate housing plan with Urban Renewal Authority and character districts

#### B. Implementing the Strategic Plan for Homeless (developed by The Athena Group):

1. Appropriate resources identified as City contributions in the homeless strategy
2. Consider homeless strategy being part of any proposed regional housing authority

#### C. Determine if an Urban Renewal Authority (URA) supports the goals of Durango and if so:

1. Appropriate resources to create URA
2. Examine integration of Durango's Housing implementation plan with URA development and character districts



### 2. Expand Durango's unique identity as a driver of enhanced quality of life and sense of place, as evidenced by:

#### A. Determining if an Urban Renewal Authority (URA) supports the goals of Durango and if so:

1. Appropriate funding mechanisms to create URA
2. Prioritize funding for mobility/transit features that may be part of URA
3. Engage community on URA, including location boundaries
4. Develop incentives for public/private partnerships

#### B. Aligning support for a robust creative economy, parks and recreation system, and public library:

1. Explore feasibility of a creative district
2. Explore feasibility of a performing arts and convention center
3. Maintain and enhance quality of existing Parks & Recreation facilities
4. Maintain and expand soft and hard-surface trail systems
5. Improve underfunded amenities, including Durango Public Library and Creative Economy Commission

#### C. Identifying an iconic feature (physical structure or activity) that becomes symbol of Durango



### 3. Improve environmental resiliency and encourage responsible stewardship of natural resources, as evidenced by:

#### A. Implementing a crosscutting Sustainable Action Plan in which all departments have key performance indicators (KPIs):

1. Appropriate funds for departments to achieve KPIs and hold accountable for progress
2. Commit to establishing a goal of either reducing the City's carbon footprint and/or increasing its use of renewable energy
3. Focus on improving air quality, water resources, fire mitigation, transportation, land use, food systems and interactions with wildlife



### 4. Require & support effective utilization of resources to supply the following, as evidenced by:

#### A. Safety: police, fire, emergency services

1. Police: Identify possible locations, design options and funding sources for an adequate police station
2. Fire: Fire impact fee decision

#### B. Sanitation: water, sewer, stormwater, solid waste, recycling

1. Water: Progress with development of water treatment capabilities
2. Stormwater: Adopt Stormwater Management Plan
3. Waste/recycling: Review costs, needed improvements and options for providing service

#### C. Mobility: roads, transportation (airport & transit)

1. Roads: Establish an Infrastructure Committee, possibly combining with Utilities Commission, to provide oversight to 2019 ½ cent sales tax funds as well as utilities
2. Ensure effective communication channel between Infrastructure Commission and Multimodal Advisory Board to ensure efficient & effective use of resources
3. Airport: Adopt modified Airport Master Plan
4. Transit: Explore transit sustainability options with creative funding mechanisms and tie to housing & business development



### 5. Advance fiscal sustainability and resiliency, as evidenced by:

#### A. Address structural financial imbalance in the General Fund:

1. Determine appropriate reserve balances and develop initiatives to fund them

#### B. Establish Strategic Initiatives Committee to advise Council on resiliency & sustainability

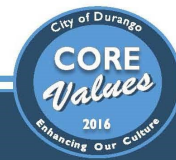
#### C. Continue to develop Financial Management Tools, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

#### D. Expand economic development opportunities in collaboration with regional stakeholders

#### E. Support an effective organization with a high-performance workforce

#### F. Foster community trust by demonstrating open & transparent governance

#### G. Create a high-quality communications program to foster awareness in the community



- The Council and community are wrestling with the desire to maintain the “small town feel” and issues regarding economic and population growth. Keys to that are (1) addressing the comparatively high cost of living, especially the cost of housing and (2) finding ways to diversify the economy.
- Current capital projects under consideration include challenges related to the Police Department operating out of a former car dealership offering a confusing and inefficient office maze and challenges around the need for a new water treatment plant.

## ABOUT THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

- The City Council is looking for an ideal City Manager candidate who is a top-quality manager skilled in performance measurement (both outcomes and outputs) and continuous performance improvement with a strategic approach to organizational structure, staffing, and transition planning.
- The ideal candidate has demonstrated highly effective communication skills which align team and individual performance with the organization’s goals and strategic plan.
- The candidate understands how to manage efficient processes while keeping all Council members well-informed with unfiltered information, readily sharing information and promoting transparency.
- The ideal candidate not only communicates well with the Council but understands how to navigate and constructively handle the diverse Council perspectives in a productive and even manner.
- The City Manager is expected to be comfortable telling the Council what they need to hear and not just what they want to hear.
- The ideal candidate leads by example to bring people together to foster a coordinated team and, where possible, consensus. The ideal candidate has a demonstrated history of providing guidance, encouragement, professional development and direction to all departments to meet organizational goals.
- The ideal candidate has demonstrated skill sets in developing a collective sense of purpose, encouraging teamwork, clearly articulating expectations, dele-

### TEAMWORK

We believe success comes from working together with colleagues, citizens and customers. Effective teamwork requires open communication and accountability.

### SERVICE

We take pride in the excellent services we provide, showing enthusiasm and dedication in all we do to make the City a better place while maintaining our high standards.

### RESPECT

We promote a respectful, safe and positive work environment, inspiring employees to meet their maximum potential and trusting in their decision-making. We embrace diversity by valuing different skills and perspectives.

### PROFESSIONALISM

We conduct ourselves in a manner that is professional and ethical with the highest degree of honesty, integrity and fairness.

### DEPENDABILITY

We demonstrate our dependability to one another and to our community by being reliable and following through on our commitments.

### INNOVATION

We accept challenges as opportunities for creativity and collaboration on new ideas and methods, which generate solutions, enhanced value and excellence in all services.

### WELL-BEING

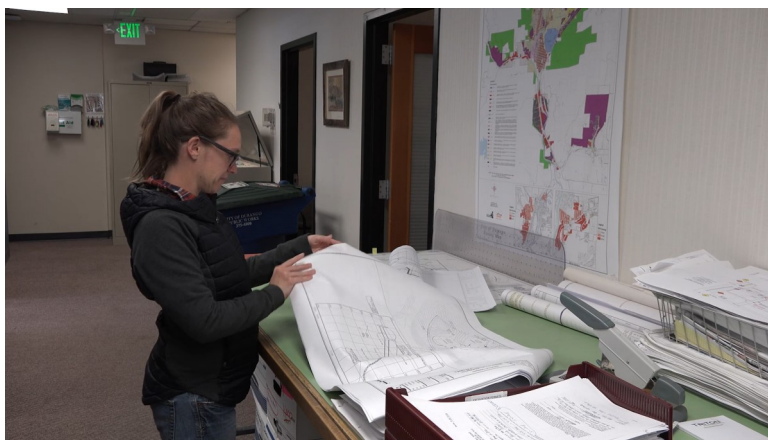
We aspire to be happy and improve our quality of life by promoting work-life balance, health and wellness, while being satisfied with and showing appreciation for a job well done.

gating responsibility, and fostering a culture of accountability without micromanaging.

- The ideal candidate is driven to continuously improve performance, utilizing both innovative and effective approaches.
- The ideal candidate understands what drives communities and has a demonstrated record of urban planning which embraces the historical character and charm of the community while respecting its diversity and traditions.
- The ideal candidate is able to build partnerships and relationships with other agencies, community groups and teams. The City Manager that reflects the community with an informal style that is personable, friendly, and possessing a sense of humor would be a good fit.
- A City Manager who is approachable by all residents regardless of economic or social status would be ideal for the position.

### Important Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Is a strong general manager and leader who will organize and prepare the City to continue its history of exemplary service provision and quality of life;
- Possesses a thorough understanding of developmental economics with appreciation of the need to work with economic development partners;
- Possesses a record of successful collaboration with other jurisdictions;
- Is a visionary and strategic thinker who sets and directs the tactical steps designed to meet the goals set by the Council;
- Earned a record of successful industrial, retail, tourism, recreation and residential development;
- Offers superior written, oral and interpersonal communication skills;
- Demonstrates an innovative and creative nature with the ability to continuously improve processes and/or final products.



### Style with the City Council:

- Is politically astute with the ability to engage without being compromised;
- Ensures that the City Council is fully informed in the most appropriate and timely manner;
- Demonstrates the ability to rely on experience and judgment to plan and accomplish measurable goals;
- Demonstrates the ability to develop and implement short-term and long-term operational and capital improvement plans, projects, and budgets along with proposed funding sources;
- Offers communication skills which include proactively reaching out to the Council and Mayor on a regular basis;
- Possesses a record of gaining value for taxpayers through improved, demonstrated efficiencies;
- Performs both publicly and privately in an apolitical manner;
- Is available and accessible to the Mayor and all Council Members;
- Has a record of consistently following Council policy;
- Demonstrates excellent oral and written communication skills to be exercised regularly with the Mayor and Council as a whole.

### Style with Staff:

- Possesses a demonstrated history of ensuring that all aspects of the organization meet the highest legal and professional standards without micromanaging the processes or staff;
- Knows employees and hears their concerns in the City's non-union environment;
- Possesses current understanding of modern management practices, conflict resolution and organizational analysis and development;
- Exhibits an innovative and creative nature, with the ability to continuously improve processes and/or final products;
- Is committed to bring stability to the organization through leading, coaching and trusting staff to perform in a professional manner;
- Fosters a customer service culture;
- Facilitates communication and service coordination among departments and individual staff;
- Is fair, evenhanded and consistent;
- Considers as part of a manager's job, coaching and mentoring while supporting individual professional development;
- Demonstrated ability to craft and function in a high-performance team-oriented environment.

### Style with the Community:

- Possesses knowledge and experience in building partnerships with other local governments, school systems and colleges, appropriate State and Federal agencies, the business community and public/private partnership;
- Engages with the community;
- Attends community events and is visible throughout the community ;
- Is a “go to” person to get things done;
- Demonstrates the ability to successfully work with other legislative bodies and elected and appointed County, State and Federal officials;
- Presents outstanding management and leadership presence;
- Possesses a record of community involvement including work with the committees, commissions and organizations supporting the City.



### Education and Experience

A Bachelor's Degree in Public or Business Administration or closely related field is required complimented by at least five years experience as a City Manager, Assistant or Deputy City Manager or municipal Department Head.

A Master's Degree in Public Administration and attainment of the ICMA Credentialed Manager designation and experience in a progressive tourism and recreation-based environment where economic development, growth management, customer service, high ethical standards and open communication exist and are valued is desired. An equivalent combination of education and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job will be considered.

### Compensation and Benefits

Beginning pay for the new City Manager will be highly competitive and will include an excellent benefit package. The City Council is prepared to pay reasonable and customary moving expenses.

### To Apply

The position will remain open until filled. A first review of resumes is scheduled for March 6, 2020. Please e-mail a detailed resume with a cover letter and current salary to:

Robert E. Slavin or David Krings  
**SLAVIN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS**  
 3040 Holcomb Bridge Road, A1  
 Norcross, Georgia 30071  
 Phone: (770) 44904656  
 Fax: (770) 4160848  
 E-mail [slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net)



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