A photograph of a person from behind, wearing a red jacket, light-colored shorts, and a backpack, standing on a rocky ledge at the bottom of a waterfall. The waterfall cascades down dark, mossy rocks. The scene is lush and green.

**OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE CITIZENS OF  
VALDEZ, ALASKA**

**AS THEIR NEXT**

**CITY MANAGER**



## Introduction

Slavin Management Consultants has been retained by the City Council of Valdez, Alaska to assist in the recruitment, hiring, and orientation of a new City Manager. This profile has been developed after consultation with the Mayor and City Council. The City Council is unified in its objective to hire a highly-qualified professional based on the interpersonal and professional qualities and skills desired for the position.

## The Community

The City of Valdez, population 4,103, is located in south central Alaska on Prince William Sound. It has a relatively mild climate which is attributed to the marine currents in, and weather generated by, the Pacific Ocean. Its distinguishing characteristics are the incomparable rugged beauty of its natural mountain-ringed setting, its deep water, ice free access to magnificent Prince William Sound, and its extremely high average annual snowfall of almost 30 feet, the most of any other city in the world at sea level.

Although geographically remote, Valdez is reachable year round by road. It is approximately 305 road miles east of Anchorage and 365 road miles south of Fairbanks. Valdez is the southern terminus of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System ("TAPS"). The assessed valuation of taxable property in the City as of January 1, 2014 was \$2.6 billion. As of 2014, the City derived 90 percent of its \$55.9 million of General Fund revenues from real property taxes and 90 percent of the

City's real property taxes were assessed on the portion of TAPS located in the City.

The value of the City's Permanent Fund as of December 31, 2014 was \$172.1 million (unaudited). Under the City Charter, each year 1.5 percent of the market value of the Permanent Fund is to be transferred into the General Fund for appropriation for operational and capital expenses of the City. The remaining funds and any other funds appropriated for deposit in the Permanent Fund may not be spent but are to be held perpetually in trust for the benefit of City residents.

### History

The Port of Valdez was named in 1790 by Don Salvador Fidalgo for the celebrated Spanish naval officer Antonio Valdes y Basan. A town developed in 1898 as a debarkation point for men seeking a route to the Eagle Mining District and the Klondyke Gold Rush.



dike gold fields. Valdez soon became the supply center of its own gold mining region and incorporated as a City in 1901.

The original town site of Valdez was devastated on Good Friday in 1964 by the strongest recorded earthquake ever to strike the North American continent. This was registered at that time as 9.2 on the Richter scale. In addition, tsunamis generated by the earthquake ravaged the town. A tsunami wave in the Port of Valdez was recorded at 67 meters at Shoup Bay. Thirty-three (33) people, 5 percent of the population of Valdez were killed in this disaster. As a result, the town site was condemned and the city was relocated 4 miles to the west on more stable ground.

During the 1970s, the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) was constructed for the transport of North Slope crude oil, stretching 800 miles from Alaska's North Slope to the ice free port of Valdez on Prince William Sound. As the southern terminus of the Trans Alaska oil pipeline, Valdez became the largest crude oil port in North America. The oil is stored in Valdez, and from there it is transported via ocean going supertankers to locations in the continental U.S. and internationally.

On Good Friday in 1989, the supertanker Exxon Valdez, while maneuvering to avoid an iceberg ran aground on Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound. The resulting oil spill was one of the greatest man made environmental disasters to hit the North American continent. The oil fouled hundreds of miles of Prince William Sound shoreline however, contrary to popular belief, oil neither approached nor contaminated the shores within the Port of Valdez. Still, the City of Valdez was the primary operational center for the cleanup of the massive oil spill.

As a result of the 1989 spill, a new issue, oil spill response preparedness and oversight, became a regional industry and significant economic sector in Valdez. The Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council (PWSRCAC), overseeing safety and spill response issues for oil transportation in Prince William Sound, was established as a watch-dog organization. PWSRCAC has membership representation from communities, Native Alaskans, and interested organizations of Prince William Sound. Ship Escort and Re-

sponse Vessel Service (SERVS) was also established with a fleet of modern vessels, home ported in Valdez, to escort oil tankers through Prince William Sound. These are equipped with state-of-the-art oil spill response equipment and technology and are supported by a sophisticated ready response industry for immediate response to oil spills.

## Economy

The Valdez economy is dominated by transportation, mostly related to the transportation of crude oil. As America's northernmost ice free port, Port Valdez is a deep water fjord with depths greater than 750 feet. Approximately 7% of all U.S. oil - 80% of west coast oil - is transported through Port Valdez in the deep draught oil supertankers, with hundreds of shipments annually. Port Valdez is a major seaport with a \$48 million cargo and container facility. Valdez processes cargo through one of the largest floating concrete docks in the world. The depth of the water in front of the VCT is 50 feet.

The City also has a developed tourism economy with approximately 70,000 people visiting Valdez annually, primarily in the summer months. Sport fishing and sightseeing are significant sectors of the economy. In addition commercial fishing is a significant player in the overall Valdez economy, the fish processing plants located in Valdez are among the 10 largest employers of the community.

Valdez is developing its winter tourism by promoting its winter sports as a result of its abundant snowfall and proximity to the Chugach Mountains. Heli-skiing is a fast growing sport in the Valdez area and Valdez is the birthplace of the World Extreme Skiing Championships. Abundant snowmobiling opportunities have resulted in championship competitions in Valdez.



## The Organization

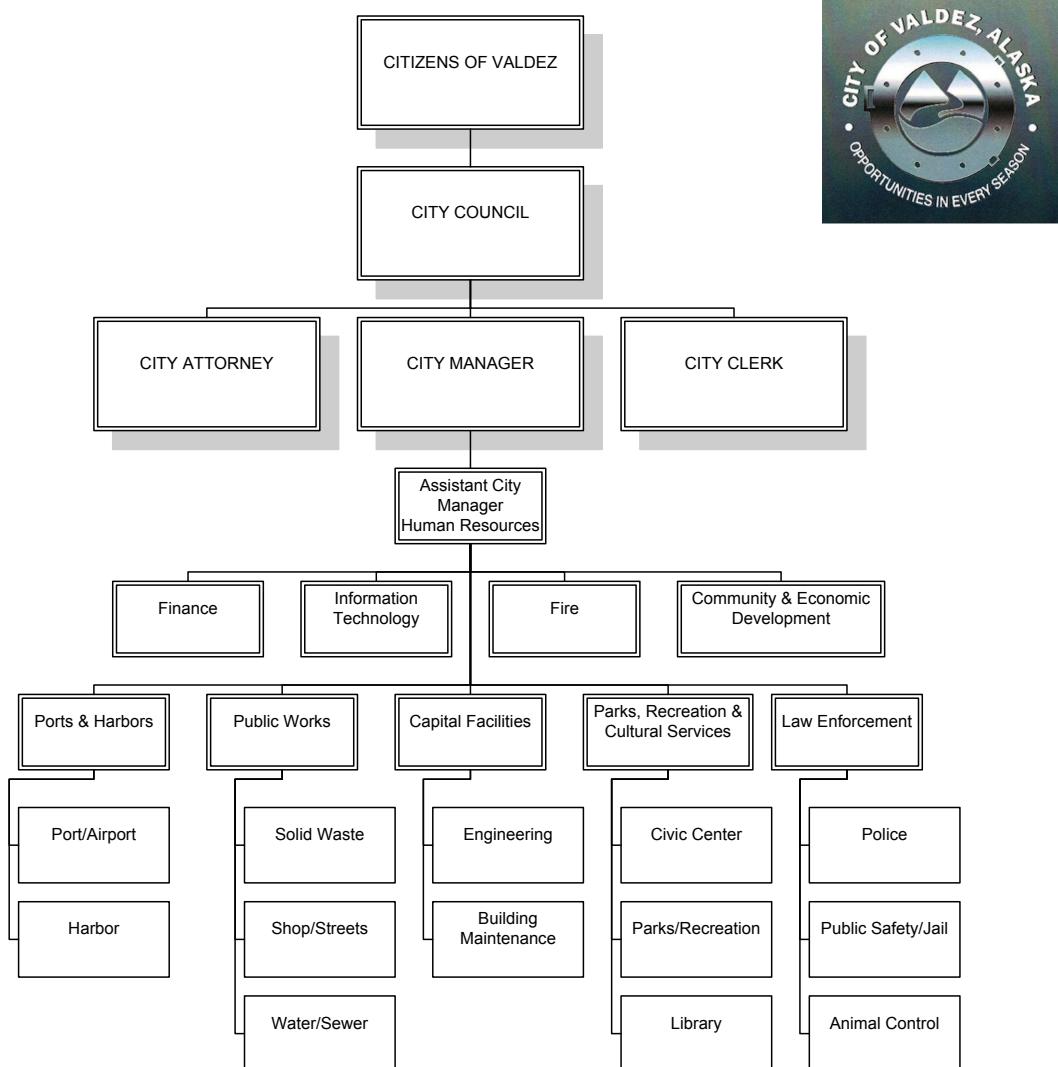
Valdez is a home rule city that operates under a Council-Manager form of government. Its home rule charter gives the City "all legislative powers not prohibited by law or charter" in accordance with the conditions, needs, and desires of the community. Policymaking and legislative authority are vested in the City Council consisting of the Mayor and six council members. Council members are elected at-large on a nonpartisan basis for two-year staggered terms with elections every year. Valdez is a full service municipality which employs approximately 110 FTEs.

## The Mayor and City Council Members

<b>Mayor Larry Weaver</b>	May, 2016
<b>Council Member Lon Needles</b>	May, 2017
<b>Council Member H. Lea Cockerham</b>	May, 2017
<b>Council Member Ryan McCune</b>	May, 2017
<b>Council Member Nate Smith</b>	May, 2016
<b>Council Member Jim Shirrell</b>	May, 2016
<b>Council Member Chris Moulton</b>	May, 2016

## City of Valdez, Alaska

Organization Chart



# Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

## (Not Prioritized)

- The City is financially well off — historically, revenues have far exceed expenditures thus allowing the City to provide an extraordinary level of municipal service.
- Valdez has essentially been a one industry town with an economy almost solely dependent on oil (95%+ of the City's tax base is pipeline driven).
- Concern about future finances — with the reduction in Alaska oil production, there is a possibility of the City's revenue and expenditure levels equalizing.
- Many see Valdez to be at a cross roads and believe that a comprehensive and effective strategic plan is needed to guide the City's future.
- Valdez is exploring ways to expand its economic base — examples include development and marketing Valdez as a world class year-round recreational/tourism destination and expansion of the City's already successful fish hatchery business.
- Municipal infrastructure is well maintained and equipment is state-of-the -art.
- Difficulty in recruiting qualified workers to the region.
- Electricity and heating utility costs are high — the City subsidizes citizens with these costs and is working to secure natural gas service for its residents.
- Water and sewer utilities are municipally owned and rates are low.
- Need to improve the quantity and quality of affordable housing.
- Completion of the new harbor.



- Completion of the current project to beautify Egan Street, the City's primary street.
- It is timely for a comprehensive assessment of how the municipal government functions to evaluate finances, efficiency, municipal procedures and policies (including human resources and contract management policies), customer satisfaction, quality of service delivery, contracting vs. in-house service delivery, etc.

## The City Manager

### *According to the Valdez City Charter:*

The council shall appoint by a majority vote of its members a city manager. He shall be chosen solely on the basis of his executive and administrative qualifications. He shall receive such compensation as the council shall determine. The city manager shall hold office at the pleasure of the council.

The city manager shall, before assuming office, furnish bond in such sum and with such sureties as the council shall require, conditioned on the faithful performance of his duties as city manager.

### *Powers and duties:*

The city manager shall be the executive and administrative officer of the city and shall assume such duties as assigned to the city manager elsewhere in this code. He shall supervise such administrative departments as may be established by ordinance for the effective control of city affairs. The city manager shall have the power to appoint and remove officers and employees of the city. The city manager may delegate to a department director or supervisor the power to appoint and remove officers and employees of his department. No member of the council shall interfere with or attempt to influence the exercise of such power.

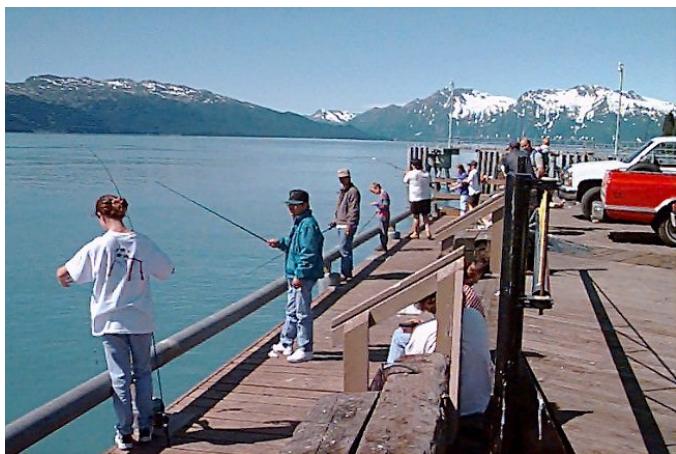
Other duties imposed upon the city manager are those necessary to furnish complete executive direction of the administrative service of the city.

### *He (or she) shall:*

Prepare and recommend to council an annual budget; Execute and enforce all ordinances, resolutions and motions of the city council and carry out all contracts entered into by the city;

Make such recommendations to the council as he may deem expedient or necessary and once a year present a detailed statement of what he has done during the year covered by the report;

Perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by council and other such duties as are set out by this code; and



Serve as ex officio member without vote of all city boards and commissions.

**Requirements Include:**

A Bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university with major course work in public administration, business administration or a related field (Master's degree preferred) combined with five to seven years of senior management experience in the field of public administration; OR an equivalent combination of education and experience.

**Required Management and Leadership Characteristics and Qualities:**

- Understands the importance of planning; has the ability to "see into the future"
- Creative and able to help Valdez create a community economic vision which goes beyond oil
- Skilled at project planning and administration
- An effective people manager — "people skills trump managerial skills" (although both are important)
- A team builder who has an inclusive style — more directive than authoritarian ("more interested in steering the boat than rowing it")
- Leadership style includes being securely in charge, earning and commanding respect, listening, being open and empowering, holding staff accountable while not being intimidating — has staff's back
- Sets clear direction and expectations, provides needed resources, delegates effectively, inspires high level of staff performance, holds staff accountable for results, champions exceptional performance and does not micro-manage
- Data and outcome driven

- Understands the value of effective intergovernmental relations particularly with the State government
- A skilled negotiator who is able to comprehend complex issues including litigation
- Strong advocate for the council/manager form of government — understands and respects the different roles of citizens, the City Council, the City Manager and staff
- Follows City Council directions and is vigilant in honoring commitments
- Advocates for public input
- Willing to make a long-term commitment to Valdez and strongly motivated to make a difference
- Honest and forthcoming
- Is not defensive or confrontational
- Has and exhibits financial discipline
- Politically astute and savvy

Valdez offers a highly competitive starting salary and excellent benefits based upon qualifications and experience. Residency is required subsequent to appointment.

**Apply by July 20, 2015 with cover letter, resume and current salary to:**

Robert E. Slavin or Paul Wenbert

**SLAVIN MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS**

3040 Holcomb Bridge Road #A-1

Norcross, GA 30071

Phone: 770/449-4656

Fax 770/416-0848

Email: [slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net)

Additional information can be found at the consultant's website: [www.slavinweb.com](http://www.slavinweb.com) and the City's website: [www.ci.valdez.ak.us](http://www.ci.valdez.ak.us).



**THE CITY OF VALDEZ IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**