

The City of Ontario, Oregon

Invites Qualified Candidates to Apply For City Manager



ABOUT ONTARIO

Ontario, with a current population of 11,415, is located in the Treasure Valley region of Eastern Oregon along the Idaho border, and is the largest city in Malheur County. Primarily an agricultural area, it also serves as the regional retail and service center for over 80,000 people. A diverse community, Ontario has large Japanese and Hispanic populations, as well as the largest Basque population outside of Europe. It is also in close proximity to natural resources providing a large variety of sporting and recreational opportunities.

HISTORY

Ontario was initially a part of the Oregon Trail. In the 1840s, married couples were able to obtain free land for their families, and began forming a community in the surrounding area. With the construction of the Oregon Short Line Railroad in 1883, Ontario became a popular stopping point for cattlemen and their herds going to market. In 1895, a bridge was built across the Snake River joining Oregon and Idaho, and Ontario's population had grown to 300. With the support of local businesses hoping to encourage growth in the area, Ontario was incorporated in 1899.

Mining and ranching became the predominate industry in the region by the early 1900s. During WWII, internment camps were located in the area, with many Japanese American families working on local farms. Several families elected to remain in the Ontario vicinity at the conclusion of the war. The City continued to grow slowly as industry related to ranching and agriculture moved into the area. Construction of dams and reservoirs in the region, built originally for irrigation and/or power generation purposes, also created a number of recreational opportunities, which brought in tourists. In 1991, the State of Oregon constructed the Snake River Correctional Institution, which houses 3000 inmates - the largest in the state - and with it came a number of new jobs and business opportunities.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Ontario presents a small-town atmosphere, and its citizens take great pride in their city and are very involved in community activities and programs. There are currently over 125 non-profit organizations in the City related to education, health, recreation, veterans, community support, and the arts. Generally, the community is conservative in its outlook, and most recently banned retail sales of marijuana in the area, despite Oregon's enactment of recreational use.

EDUCATION

Ontario is served by the Ontario School District, which oversees five grade schools, one middle school, and one high school, providing education to approximately 2,800 students within the district. There are also three privately run schools within Ontario. Recently, both Ontario High School and Ontario Middle School underwent renovations and additions, which included a new science building, gymnasium, and baseball field, among other improvements.



Ontario is also home to Treasure Valley Community College, a two-year junior college, annually providing secondary educational opportunities to more than 12,000 annual full- and part-time students. TVCC also works in partnership with four-year institutions, such as Eastern Oregon University and Oregon State University, which offer both bachelor and master degree programs. Special technical and health service programs have also been established at the college. Other colleges and universities within a 60-mile radius include College of Western Idaho, Northwest Nazarene University, and Boise State University.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Ontario has a number of well-established to newly-constructed residential neighborhoods throughout the city, with prices ranging from below \$100,000 to over \$700,000. A newer-quality three-bedroom, two-bath home can be found for under \$200,000. There is also an inventory of approved lots for custom development. Houses for rent are also available with prices ranging from approximately \$350/month for a one-bedroom, one-bath home, to over \$1,200/month for a four-bedroom, three-bath home with garage.

LEISURE AND CULTURE

The City of Ontario and surrounding area have an abundance of recreational and cultural facilities. These include a 24-lane bowling center; tennis courts; fitness centers; and over 61 acres of parks, including 5 municipal and one state park. Numerous hiking, bicycling, hunting, skiing, and fishing opportunities exist in the surrounding areas including Hells Canyon, and Owyhee, Bully Creek, Brownlee and Oxbow Reservoirs and Dams. The nearby Snake, Malheur, Owyhee, and Payette Rivers also offer numerous water, hunting, and fishing opportunities.



The Ontario Aquatic Center is currently closed; however, a community-based committee is reviewing options for improvements and funding, and suggestions for an upgraded facility will be recommended to the City Council. Anticipated ground-breaking is set for spring, 2016.

Ontario is also home to the Four River Cultural Center and Museum, which celebrates the diverse ethnic history of the area, including the Japanese Americans, Hispanics, Basques, Northern Paiute, and Europeans who settled the in and around the region. Named after the four converging rivers the Snake, Malheur, Owyhee, and Payette the facility includes a Japanese Garden in memory of the Japanese American interned in the area during WWII, and those who fought in the war for America. It also includes a 645-seat performing arts theater and an 18,000-square foot conference center. A capital campaign is underway for constructing improvements and upgrades to the facilities with a 2017 anticipated completion date.

TRANSPORTATION

Ontario is located at the center of four major highways: Interstate 84, U.S. Highway 95, U.S. Highway 20-26, and U.S. Highway 201. The highways provide access to Nevada and California to the south; Idaho to the east; Washington to the north; and Oregon's coast to the west. Boise Airport is a one hour drive to the southeast. The Ontario Municipal Airport is a general aviation airport with a 5,000-foot runway. Greyhound provides bus service, and there is an independent bus service, Snake River Transit, which provides transportation in Ontario and the surrounding communities

HEALTHCARE

Ontario is served by Saint Alphonsus Medical Center, a 49-bed acute care hospital that is part of the Trinity Care system. The hospital has undergone recent improvements increasing the medical services available to the region, and provides numerous community-outreach programs promoting the community's well-being. Numerous doctor's offices and clinics provide a full range of medical services. Also, Ontario is fortunate to be home to a regional Life Flight operation that provides emergency transportation to trauma centers in Boise.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Because Oregon has no sales tax, and Ontario is a border town, retailers serve not only local Oregon residents, but also a large section of western Idaho. There are over 1,000 retail and service businesses located here, including Home Depot and a SuperWalmart, along with other national retail outlets.

The medium/minimum security Snake River Correctional Institution is located outside Ontario's city limits, but is inside Malheur County, and employs 900 personnel. Other major employers include St. Alphonsus Medical Center, Heinz Foods, and the Ontario School District. Many other industries in the community and adjoining areas are related to the agricultural activities in the region with beef cattle, onions, and potatoes the top industries. The six largest employers in Ontario have more than 2,500 employees.

Ontario has planned for future economic growth, with almost one-half of the land in its Urban Growth and Urban Reserve Area zoned for commercial and industrial development. Further, the City is a member of the Snake River Economic Development Alliance, a non-profit organization charged with diversifying the regional economy.

THE CITY GOVERNMENT

Governance and Organizational Structure

Ontario, Oregon, is a Home Rule city operating under a City Charter last adopted in 1985 (www.ontariooregon.org). Its Mission Statement is "To Provide a Safe, Healthful and Sound Economic Environment, Progressively Enhancing Our Quality of Life."

The City's 2015-16 budget is \$27.7 million, of which \$8.7 million is in the General Fund. A total fund reserve of over \$1 million is budgeted. The City has 44 full-time employees, 32 part-time employees, and two departments each have a contracted employee.

City Council

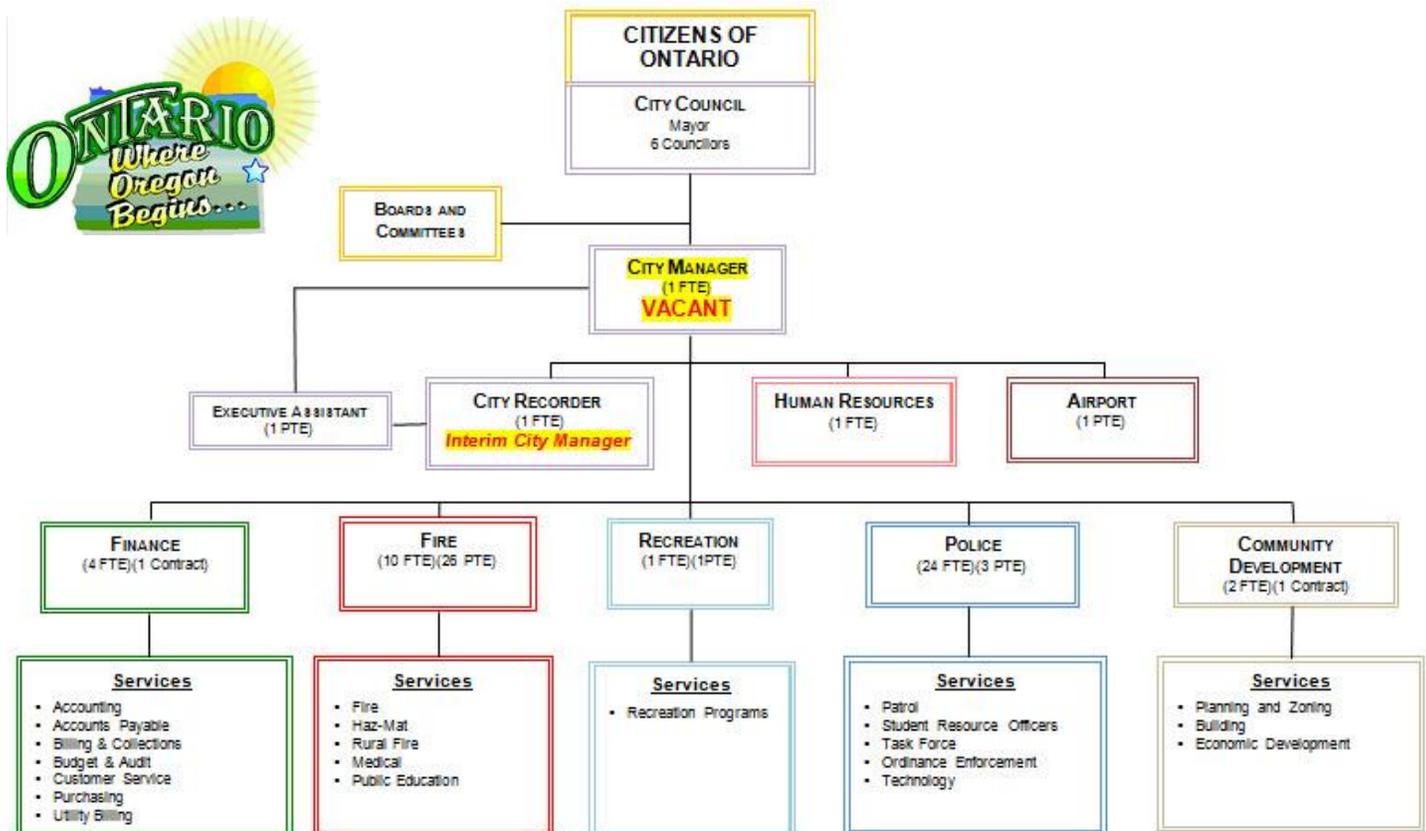
The City of Ontario is served by a six-member City Council and a separately elected Mayor, all of whom serve four-year terms. The City Council selects one of its members to serve as Council President to preside over meetings in the absence of the Mayor. Three Council Member terms end in 2016, and the other three Council Members and the Mayor have terms ending in 2018.

The Council also serves on as Liaison, or makes appointments to 11 Boards and Committees, and one Planning Commission, which provide advice to the City on many aspects of the City's services and community activities.

Administration

This Department consists of the City Council, City Manager, City Recorder, and P/T Executive Assistant. The City Manager is appointed by the City Council to serve as the Chief Administrative Officer of the City government and responsible for seeing that the City Council's goals and policies are effectively implemented. The Manager directs the operations of all City departments, coordinates departmental work plans, recommends an annual budget, and serves as the City's hiring authority. There have been three City Managers in Ontario since 2002. The City Recorder has been the Interim City Manager since April, 2014.

The City Recorder is a Department Head, and is also considered the Clerk to the Council. The position, at a minimum, is the Elections Official; is responsible for the maintenance and control of the City's ordinance and resolution docket; records maintenance and archiving; working with the cemetery Sexton for all documents for the City's two cemeteries; represents the City at Board meetings for the Chamber of Commerce and Visitors & Conventions Bureau Board; is co-administrator for City's website; responsible for all records requests; develops the annual Administration budget; and supervises the Executive Assistant to the City Manager and City Recorder.



Public Safety

Police Department

The Ontario Police Department has 24 full-time and three part-time employees. The Police Chief recently retired after having been in that position for five years, and with the department for 31 years. The Department provides patrol, code enforcement, and school resource officer services. In 2014 a "Police Operations Analysis Report" was prepared for the City by the ICMA Center for Public Safety (www.ontariooregon.org/uploads/Police_911). Some of the recommendations have been or are in the process of implementation. The 9-1-1 Dispatch Center is housed and run through the Sheriff's Office, located 18 miles away in Vale, Oregon.

Crime rates in the City have been historically low for its population. Current statistics are normal for a city of Ontario's size and composition.

Fire & Rescue Department

The Ontario Fire & Rescue Department is staffed by the Fire Chief, an Administrative Assistant, eight full-time firefighters, and is supplemented by 26 part-time, paid firefighters. The Fire Chief has served in that capacity for eight years, and is scheduled to retire in June, 2016. The Department provides fire, emergency medical, and hazardous materials services within Ontario, as well as the Rural Fire District and State Hazmat Region 14 Team. Both the Rural and Hazmat portions of the Department are provided by contract. The Department currently has 24 city and rural department mutual aid agreements, covering areas in both Oregon and Idaho. A private ambulance service provides medical transportation.

The 7-bay manned main Fire Station is located at City Hall, with a secondary unmanned satellite 10-bay Fire Station located at the Ontario Municipal Airport. Between City-owned and Haz-Mat, state-owned, there are nearly 20 emergency vehicles within the two stations. In 2014, an "Operations Analysis Report – Fire and Emergency Medical Services" was prepared for the City by the ICMA Center for Public Safety (www.ontariooregon.org/uploads/Fire). Some recommendations have been implemented, while others have budgetary implications and are under review.

Public Works

In July 2014, the City Council began a 5-year contract with CH2M Hill to provide full public works services to the City. A CH2M employee serves as the City's Public Works Director, and many former City Public Works employees were hired by CH2M. Services include water and wastewater treatment, distribution, and collection; streets, parks, and cemeteries maintenance; fleet maintenance; development review; infrastructure inspection; and city engineering, including CIP development, design, and design review.

Finance

In February 2014, the City Council contracted with Oster Professional Group to provide financial management services for the City, as well as accounting and payroll. Four full-time employees in the Finance Department provide accounts receivable, accounts payable, front desk reception, and utility billing services. With the elimination of the Finance Director position, the Finance staff is currently supervised by the Interim City Manager.

Recreation

The Recreation Department Manager is a Department Head, and the Department has one full-time employee, and one PT Administrative Assistant. The Manager has been in the position for only 18 months, but has been an employee in the Recreation Department for over 20 years. Over 30 recreation programs are provided during the year using seasonal employees with an average of 2,000 paying customers. Additional recreational facilities are available for city programs through use agreements with the school district and community college.



Community Development

Ontario has a full-time Planning & Economic Development Director, a Department Head who oversees one FT Planning Technician, and a PT contracted Building Official. The Department is responsible for all planning, zoning, building, and economic development interests of the City.

Ontario has substantial opportunities to grow, as there are currently 2,925 acres within its corporate boundaries. An additional 1,990 acres are within the City's Urban Growth Area, and 1,466 acres are in the Urban Reserve Area, allowing for future development. The future growth areas have zones designated for industrial and commercial development, as well as significant residential growth.

Recognitions

In 2015, Ontario was the recipient of three recognitions. The City received the "Award for Excellence" from the League of Oregon Cities for its partnership program with CH2M Hill in providing public works services for the City.

Ontario City Recorder Tori Barnett was selected as the “Recorder of the Year” by the Oregon Association of Municipal Recorders for her extensive involvement in numerous aspects of the City’s operations. Further, Ontario received the International Economic Development Council’s 2015 Bronze Award for Cross-border Regional Collaboration in recognition of its multi-jurisdictional approach to economic development.

THE POSITION

The next City Manager will have an opportunity to guide Ontario to a successful growth in community pride and economic development. Working with the Council, and community organizations and businesses committed to the City’s future, the City Manager has the potential for facilitating development of a strategic plan to set the path for Ontario for many years to come.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Ontario’s next City Manager will face a number of opportunities to guide the City and community into the future, such as:

- The Police Chief recently retired and the Fire Chief will retire in June, 2016. The new City Manager will be responsible for recruiting and hiring qualified individuals for the Fire Chief; the process has begun for the replacement of the Police Chief.
- Economic development activities need to be increased with the goal of attracting businesses and industries that will provide middle-class wages. It is anticipated the City Manager will work closely with the Planning & Economic Development Director in this endeavor.
- The community needs to re-image Ontario to better promote the City and attract new businesses, residents, and tourists.
- The City’s financial base needs to be improved to provide the basic services desired by its residents.
- New long- and short-term goals for the City need to be developed with Council and community involvement.
- Improved code enforcement activities are needed throughout the City.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

Education/Experience

Minimum job requirements are: 1) Bachelor’s Degree, preferably in Public or Business Administration; 2) four years of management/supervisory experience, preferably in local government; or 3) any equivalent combination of education and experience.

Desired Professional and Personable Attributes

The ideal candidate for the Ontario City Manager position should have the following demonstrated attributes:

- Strong, visionary, collaborative leader within both City organization and community;
- Proactive with a “can-do” attitude;
- Servant-leader with impeccable integrity;
- Ability to develop long-term goals and vision for City in conjunction with internal and external partners and effectively communicate them to residents;
- Innovative who looks for new ways to provide City services more efficiently and effectively;
- Personable and approachable to employees and public;
- Provides assistance to Council in policy development, while maintaining appropriate separation of policy and administrative roles;
- Knowledgeable of local government finance and budgeting and good steward of public resources;
- Promotes accountability and transparency for government activities;
- Skilled in negotiating union contracts;
- Active in community events and organizations recognizing public relations role of City Manager;

- Experience with local economic development programs and interaction with regional development organizations; and
- Experience with service contract management a plus.

COMPENSATION

The salary for the City Manager position is negotiable depending on qualifications and experience. The current salary range for the position is \$105-120K. The City Manager is eligible for the following benefits, which are negotiable:

- Oregon Public Employees Retirement System [PERS] after 6 months of employment with the employee paying 6% and the City paying the remainder;
- \$150 per month paid into a deferred compensation plan;
- A HDHP-2 medical plan with a Health Savings account (employee pays 20% of premium);
- Vision program (employee pays 20% of premium);
- Dental plan (100% paid by City);
- Life insurance of \$100,000 paid by City;
- 14.67 hours vacation leave per month for first five years;
- 16 hours sick leave per month for the first year; 8 hours a month for subsequent years; and
- 10 paid holidays per year.

The City Manager is required to live within the city limits.

To Apply:

In order to be considered for this position, please send your resume and cover letter in Word format to John E. Nowak, johnn51@msn.com. The first review of resumes for this position which will remain open until filled will occur on **January 17, 2016**. For additional information about this job, please contact:

Paul Wenbert, ICMA-CM
 Western Regional Manager
 Slavin Management Consultants
 Mesa, Arizona
 480-664-2676
pwconsulting@cox.net

John E. Nowak
 California Recruitment Manager
 Slavin Management Consultants
 Manteca, California
 209.825.1420
johnn51@msn.com



Top applicants will be asked to complete a supplemental questionnaire. Confidentiality will be maintained until selection of finalists for interviewing is made by the City Council.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY RECRUITER/EMPLOYER

