



City Manager Recruitment



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OVERVIEW – THE OPPORTUNITY

[The City of Unalaska](#) is seeking a proven executive leader to serve as its next City Manager to lead one of Alaska’s most complex, self-reliant and unique municipal governments. Operating under a Council–Manager form of government, the City provides and delivers a full suite of services to a community of global economic importance. This is a rare opportunity to manage a high-performing organization with substantial operational scope, direct engagement with elected leadership at the state and federal level, and meaningful influence on the future of a uniquely positioned community.

SNAPSHOT OF UNALASKA, ALASKA

[Unalaska](#) is a dynamic, multicultural coastal community of approximately 4,500 full-time residents located in the heart of the Aleutian Islands. Located 850 miles southwest of Anchorage, the City is home to the [International Port of Dutch Harbor](#), the nation's premier commercial fishing port by volume for over 25 years. Dutch Harbor is the northernmost year-round-ice-free-port and Unalaska is the center of the Bering Sea fishing fleet. Unalaska operates as a first-class city, providing comprehensive municipal services including public utilities, public safety, and world-class parks and recreation.

THE ORGANIZATION

Unalaska is a first-class city that operates outside of the administrative oversight of a borough. This means that Unalaska, under the direction of the City Manager, provides a comprehensive range of municipal services typically found in much larger jurisdictions. With approximately 175 full-time equivalent positions (200+ total employees) and a combined annual operating budget of more than \$85 million (\$39 million General Fund and \$46 million Proprietary Funds) Unalaska is well staffed and well-funded to provide a broad range of government services.

Municipal services that report up to the City Manager include:

- Police, Fire and EMS
- Electric generation and distribution, water, wastewater, and solid waste utilities
- Ports & Harbors, including dock operations, marine infrastructure and operation of the airport terminal
- Public Works (roads, facilities, fleet, engineering, and capital project delivery)
- Parks, Cultural enrichment, Recreation, and Library services
- Planning, Finance, and City Clerk, including tax administration

The City’s workforce is a mix of union-represented and unrepresented employees, requiring thoughtful, balanced leadership and a strong foundation in labor relations and organizational management.

UNALASKA COMMUNITY PROFILE

Unalaska is a dynamic, multicultural coastal community located in the heart of the Aleutian Islands. The land the City sits on has been inhabited since ancient times by the Unangan people. Later came Russian fur traders and in 1867 the United States purchased Alaska from Russian. With the emergence of the large-scale fishing industry in the 1950s, Unalaska began to become the City it is today.



The residents of Unalaska enjoy a safe, close-knit environment with a slower pace of life with great access to the outdoors. While the climate is more moderate than much of Alaska, it is subject to severe windstorms. The environment is famously rugged and naturally treeless, creating a dramatic tundra landscape where residents spend their time hiking, boating, fishing and beachcombing. A unique feature caused by the lack of trees is that the abundant bald eagle population often nest on the ground or low cliffs. The community is a vibrant hub of tradition, industrial grit, and breathtaking natural beauty.



As a result of its long history and as the center of the fishing industry in the Aleutians, Unalaska is one of the most diverse communities in Alaska. More than 35% of the population identifies as Asian (with a significant Filipino community), followed by White (32%), Hispanic/Latino (14%) and at roughly 5% each are African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and indigenous Unangan that are members of the [Qawalangin Tribe](#).

ECONOMY

For the last four decades Unalaska's economy has been based primarily on commercial fishing, seafood processing, fleet services, and marine transportation. Unalaska is the anchor for commercial fishing activity in the Bering Sea and the Aleutian Islands. Every year, approximately 400 vessels fish the Aleutian Islands and the Bering Sea for a wide variety of seafood. Unalaska is the home of the westernmost container terminal in the United States and is one of the most productive ports for the transshipment of cargo in Alaska. Billions of pounds of frozen seafood is shipped to domestic and export markets in North America, Europe and Asia annually, making the Port of Dutch Harbor first in the nation in the quantity of catch landed and first or second in the nation in value of the catch for more than 26 years. In addition to the five seafood processing facilities in Unalaska, the business community provides a wide range of support services, creating a vibrant maritime based economy.



WEATHER AND RECREATION

Surprisingly, to many not familiar with Unalaska, the climate is moderate maritime rather than Arctic in nature. High temperatures rarely exceed 60°F in summer, and winters stay near 30°F. The island is famous for windstorms and over 250 days of rain per year.



Unalaska offers unparalleled opportunities for outdoor exploration and cultural immersion, blending natural beauty with a profound history. The region is a premier destination for outdoor adventures, renowned for its sport fishing, kayaking and beachcombing along its rugged coasts. Hikers can explore miles of trails which reward visitors with panoramic views of the Bering Sea and surrounding volcanic landscapes. Wildlife enthusiasts will find the island to be a major hub for bald eagles alongside thriving populations of birds, ducks, whales,

sea lions, and more. Unalaska's cultural heritage, is anchored by the [Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox Cathedral](#) and many World War II sites, like the ruins of [Fort Schwatka](#).

POSITION SUMMARY

As Unalaska's chief administrative officer, the City Manager serves under the policy direction of the Mayor and City Council, and within the framework of City Code and applicable law. The City Manager is responsible for overall municipal operations; execution of City Council policies and strategic priorities; leadership of the executive management team; fiscal stewardship of City resources; and provision of professional, nonpartisan advice to elected officials. The position exercises broad authority over organizational structure, personnel management, budgeting, contracts, and intergovernmental relations.



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ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The City Manager provides executive leadership by directing and evaluating all municipal operations through department heads, establishing the organizational structures and service delivery approaches necessary to ensure efficient and responsive city services. In this capacity, the manager identifies operational or policy issues and implements improvements to align with the strategic plans, ordinances, and directives adopted by the Mayor and City Council. As the principal staff advisor to elected officials, the City Manager provides professional analysis and guidance to support informed decision-making, coordinates City Council agendas, and ensures the timely execution of all Council actions.

On an administrative level, the manager is responsible for high-level workforce leadership, which includes recruiting and evaluating department directors while fostering an organizational culture rooted in accountability and collaboration. Financial stewardship is also a core function; the manager oversees the preparation and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, ensures sound internal controls, and keeps leadership apprised of financial trends and risks. Additionally, the City Manager handles labor relations strategy and participates in collective bargaining.

Beyond internal operations, the City Manager serves as a key representative for the city in intergovernmental and community relations. This involves collaborating with regional, state, and federal partners to pursue funding and legislative priorities, as well as acting as a chief spokesperson to engage with residents, businesses, and the media. To maintain the highest standards of governance, the manager stays current on emerging trends and legal developments through professional organizations and continuing education.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Thorough knowledge of municipal operations, public administration principles, and local government finance.
- Strong executive leadership, organizational development, and strategic planning skills.
- Demonstrated ability to manage complex organizations and competing priorities.
- Excellent analytical, judgment, and decision-making abilities.
- Exceptional written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Ability to work effectively with elected officials, employees, labor representatives, and the public.
- High level of professionalism, discretion, and ethical conduct.
- Proficiency with standard office software and municipal management systems.

QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATION

- **Required:** Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Political Science, or a related field.
- **Preferred:** Master's Degree in Public Administration or a related discipline.

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

- **Ten years** of progressively responsible senior administrative or executive management experience in the public sector.
- **Five years** of management experience specifically supervising professional staff.

PREFERRED EXPERIENCE

- Background as a City Manager, Assistant/Deputy City Manager, or Department Director within a municipal government. Demonstrated experience with collective bargaining and labor relations.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to pass background and regulatory screening as required.
- Ability to travel to meetings within the State of Alaska and elsewhere, including Washington, D.C.

WORK CONDITIONS

Work is performed primarily in an office setting with frequent meetings and periodic travel to places in Alaska and the lower 48 including Washington D.C. Evening and weekend work may be required.

SALARY & BENEFITS**SALARY: \$210,000 - \$230,000 DOE****LIST OF BENEFITS**

- Up to a \$10,000 hiring bonus
- Up to a \$10,000 relocation assistance
- Annual Travel Allowance of \$2,500 after the first year of employment
- 100% employer-paid medical premiums (employee & dependents)
- 100% employer-paid basic life/AD&D insurance (employee & dependents)
- 100% employer-paid LifeMed (medevac) insurance (employee)
- Personal Leave Accrual starting at 16 hours a month; progressing to 32 hours a month
- 9 Paid Holidays and 4 Floating Holidays per year
- Longevity bonus starting on the 3rd year of employment
- Eligible for Alaska Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)
- Eligible for 457 Plan with MissionSquare
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA) - Employees can utilize the Health FSA for up to \$3,400 per plan year and the Dependent Care FSA for up to \$7,500 per plan year (optional benefit)
- Free membership for Parks, Culture and Recreation (employee only)
- City-owned vehicle to drive for work and personal use
- City-owned employee housing available for rent

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit a Resume and Cover Letter to Tom Young at
Tom.Young@reffettassociates.com

Individuals interested in learning more about this opportunity should feel free to email Tom for more information.

About Reflett Associates

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