

TOWN OF HARTFORD JOB DESCRIPTION

TOWN MANAGER

FLSA Designation: Exempt

Revised: June 1, 2023

Nature and Scope of Position

The Town Manager serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Town of Hartford and is charged with the efficient and effective administration of town departments as outlined in the Hartford Town Charter and the Town Manager Statute (24 V.S.A. § 1231-1243).

The Manager is responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Town across a wide spectrum of operational areas. The Manager is ultimately responsible for developing and managing the annual budget, overseeing all personnel matters, implementing Selectboard decisions, delivering town services in a cost-effective manner, and identifying strategic opportunities for the Town.

Essential Job Functions

The Manager serves as the critical link between the Selectboard and the staff and is responsible for the following duties and responsibilities:

- Serve as the principal advisor and staff member to the Selectboard; ensure that Selectboard meetings are well staffed with clear, concise materials and action items that facilitate the work of the board.
- Facilitate the development of policy-oriented goals and objectives at the Selectboard level and implement those goals and objectives through the Department Heads and other staff.
- Cultivate an accomplished team of Department Heads and facilitate their collaboration in support of Town priorities; provide the supervision and performance management necessary to build a high-performance organization.
- Ensure the preparation and implementation of various Town budgets and capital programs and periodic reporting on the financial condition of the Town; serves as chief procurement officer for the Town.
- Develop or maintain a deep knowledge of Vermont municipal management and the laws, best practices, and emerging trends in the field; serve as resident expert on Town government that supports all citizens ability to serve on the Selectboard.
- Take a leadership role, directly or indirectly, on major Town agreements such as union contracts, insurance settlements, and legal matters.

- Serve as primary press contact for the Town, unless a Department Head or Selectboard Chair is more appropriate due to the subject matter.
- Serve as a principal representative of the Town; regularly engage with stakeholders, partner organizations, and the general public. Appear formally and informally at Town and community events.
- Develop and maintain an organizational culture that is inclusive and accessible to all perspectives.
- Provide the Selectboard with strategic advice that includes professional expertise of the staff, operational constraints, and legal requirements.
- Provide the Selectboard with regular status reports on priority projects.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Strong, working knowledge of local government.
- Ability to think strategically and anticipate possible outcomes based on knowledge and experience.
- Ability to build consensus and find common ground between different perspectives.
- Strong project management skills.
- Ability to gain the trust and respect of others.
- Ability to use tact and diplomacy to express disagreement or concerns to others while still serving as a strong collaborator.
- Ability to inspire confidence of others.
- Ability to accept constructive criticism, communicate, and work well with others.
- Ability to build and maintain effective relations with State and Federal agencies, Town leadership, business leaders, and community stakeholders.
- Ability to drive and travel locally and statewide.

Education, Training, and Experience

- Bachelor's Degree required; a relevant advanced degree such as public administration, business management, or public policy may be helpful.
- At least seven years of public management experience.
- Working knowledge of principles and practices of public administration.

Physical Demands / Work Environment

This is an office-based position. The Manager is expected to have a physical presence throughout the Town. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is required to communicate frequently with the public and other staff members, operate office equipment, move throughout the Town, and travel throughout the State. The employee is often required to sit for long periods of time. The employee must occasionally lift and or move up to 25 pounds.



TOWN MANAGER

To apply send a confidential resume and
cover letter to Dominic Cloud at

dcloud@vlct.org



THE COMMUNITY

Hartford, Vermont - 5 Villages, 3 Rivers, 1 Community



Hartford (pop. 10,684) is a center of commerce and culture in the Upper Valley, a two-state region long known for combining high-quality jobs with a high-quality lifestyle. Set against the backdrop of Vermont and New Hampshire's Green and White Mountains, Hartford combines big-town amenities with small-town charm and relationships.



Major regional employers include Dartmouth College; Dartmouth Health; the Veterans Affairs Medical Center; Simon Pearce Glass and Pottery; Hypertherm Associates; Timken Aerospace; King Arthur Baking; and Vermont Law and Graduate School. Hartford's strategic location at the confluence of Interstates 89 and 91, the Connecticut and White Rivers, and the Amtrak served New England Central Railroad has attracted growth and investment since its first days as an Abenaki fishing village over 200 years ago.



The Villages of Hartford

The Town of Hartford is comprised of five unincorporated villages—Hartford, Quechee, White River Junction, Wilder, and West Hartford—as well as rural countryside. The largest village, White River Junction, is enjoying an arts-filled renaissance fueled by the creative economy. Northern Stage is a prominent year-round theatre company; the Center for Cartoon Studies offers a two-year master's program in fine arts; JAG Productions is a multi-racial theatre company with Black artists and community organizers at its center; and the Briggs Opera House is a vibrant community theatre space. These and other economic engines fuel the new restaurants and multifamily housing that characterize this growing urban community.

*For more on White River Junction,
listen to Brave Little State*



Quechee Village is clustered along the Ottauquechee River, which runs through the small village featuring a waterfall, historic buildings, and one of the most photographed bridges in New England. The library is a focal point for many activities and the Quechee Lakes Resort offers four-seasons of recreational opportunities including a golf course and the Quechee Lakes Ski area.

Wilder Village is a residential neighborhood that was originally developed as one of the first planned worker communities in the country. The grid pattern streets and compact village settlement are still present today and complement North and South Kilowatt Park along the Connecticut River, featuring a boat launch, picnic areas, and open recreational areas.

Hartford Village is a tightly knit village with residences located in the hills overlooking the White River. Hartford Village was the early “downtown” of the town of Hartford.

West Hartford Village is the Town’s rural village and features long views of fields and forest, winding country roads, and small hill farms. The village is crossed by the Appalachian Trail and features its own small library and community center, and a town park along the White River.

Hartford has a robust public school system and numerous private schools—from pre-K to graduate-level degree programs—all of which are part of a thriving educational environment in the Upper Valley. The Hartford Area Career & Technology Center provides hands-on, career-based skills for secondary-level students and adults, and the Hartford Area Regional Collaborative provides alternative and autism programs at the historic Wilder School. The Upper Valley has a long tradition of valuing education and the strength of its school systems reflect this legacy.





Hartford is also home to many recreational facilities and natural areas. The Upper Valley Aquatic Center is a non-profit 50,000 square foot year-round aquatic center featuring a ten-lane competitive swimming pool, a splash park, and a lesson pool. The Wendell A. Barwood Arena is owned and operated by the Parks and Recreation Department and is a first-class seasonal ice rink facility that hosts high school and youth leagues, the Upper Valley Curling Club, and many skating programs from October through March each year. The Vermont Institute of Natural Science, a 47-acre natural area and educational facility, is nationally renowned for its raptor rehabilitation and environmental education programs and features a Forest Canopy Walk which provides a unique educational exhibit unlike anything else in Vermont.

The Sherman Manning Aquatic Facility opened during the summer of 2022. The Town's new facility, built on the Hartford High School Campus and within the footprint of the old outdoor pool facility, provides a variety of seasonal aquatic opportunities for all and features a zero-depth entry, splash pad, spiral slide, and lap lanes. Each village within Hartford has its own unique park facility for community gatherings and activities. The 60-acre Maxfield Sports Complex is home to high school athletics, recreation programs and the Upper Valley Nighthawks.

For the prospective Manager (and any accompanying family members), Hartford offers an active, healthy lifestyle filled with entertainment, cultural activities, restaurants, and recreational offerings. Life is good in Hartford.



THE ORGANIZATION

Hartford is a full-service municipality with 105 full-time employees and a combined operating budget of \$24 million spread over six major funds. The Town is governed by a seven-member Selectboard, elected at large from throughout the community. General Fund budgets are adopted by the voters at an annual meeting, and there is a strong tradition of civic engagement and public participation.

The Manager form of government is well established. Pursuant to both the Town Charter and Vermont State Law, the Selectboard hires the Manager and the Manager hires the department heads who, in turn, manage the staff. Many Department Heads are recent hires, and it is a strong, capable team. The Manager is well supported by a large administrative team in Town Hall, including Directors of Finance and Human Resources.

The balance of the employees are concentrated in the Police, Fire, Public Works, and Recreation departments. The Police Department has 23 employees and most are represented by the New England Police Benevolent Association. The Fire Department has 29 employees and most are represented by the Hartford Career Firefighters' Association. The Public Works department has 30 employees and most are represented by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. The Parks & Recreation Department has 8 full time employees and over 30 part time employees. Both the Fire Department and the Parks & Recreation Department are nationally accredited in their respective fields.

Hartford is one of the largest municipal organizations in the State. The organizational culture values customer service and dedication to public service. The prospective Manager should have a strong public management background and a skill set that prepares them for a high-profile position running a large, multifaceted organization.

THE POSITION

The Manager serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Town and is charged by law with the efficient and effective administration of all town departments. The Manager is responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Town across a wide spectrum of operational areas. Much of the Manager's work is performed through Department Heads, though the Manager is ultimately responsible for developing and managing the annual budget, overseeing all personnel matters, delivering town services in a cost-effective manner, and continuing Hartford's reputation as a community of distinction and opportunity.

The Manager works closely with the Selectboard to develop an annual list of policy-oriented goals and objectives and implement those goals and objectives through the Department Heads and other staff. They often serve as the "Chief Alignment Officer" by ensuring that Selectboard priorities are translated to staff and that Selectboard priorities are thoughtfully developed based on the professional expertise of the staff.

The Manager must be the consummate generalist and able to easily transition from high-level conversations about growing the tax base and diversifying housing opportunities to operational matters such as parking enforcement on Main Street and annual street paving.

While the position has many responsibilities, it is fundamentally a people-centered position. The Manager must be able to inspire confidence from the elected officials and the general public; must be able to lead the staff and align them with the Selectboard's policy objectives; and must be comfortable in a highly visible role where the ability to connect with others is an essential function.

A detailed job description is available at www.hartford-vt.org

THE OPPORTUNITY

Hartford has tremendous natural and structural strengths as a community and as an organization. It has traditionally attracted some of the best Managers in the region due to the breadth of professional responsibility and the ability to offer a commensurate salary. The last several Managers, however, have had shorter tenures due to a variety of individual circumstances. While the strength of the Department Heads has kept matters largely on course, the organization has experienced some instability from turnover in the CEO role. The next Manager, therefore, must be a stabilizing force.

Desired Characteristics

- ✓ **Strong, working knowledge of public management.** Previous experience as a Town / City / County Manager in a full-service community is desirable, though the Town will also consider applicants who have served as a Senior Manager in a State, Federal, or Regional government, or as an Assistant Manager or Department Head in a community where the Manager has responsibilities similar or greater than those in Hartford.
- ✓ **Ability to Think Strategically and Anticipate Possible Outcomes based on knowledge and experience.** The next Manager must be a strategic thinker and able to navigate through challenging political waters.
- ✓ **Consensus Builder.** In the political vernacular, Hartford is a purple town. The Manager must be skilled at finding the common ground between different perspectives and helping to forge consensus.
- ✓ **Facilitator in Chief.** The next Manager must be able to facilitate the work of the Selectboard in a manner that allows for divergent policy opinions to be expressed, a decision to be made, and the Town to move forward; they must practice the art of the possible when necessary.
- ✓ **Inclusive Style and Presence.** Hartford has a joint town / school Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion that is several years into implementing their joint strategic plan. The next Manager must be comfortable developing and implementing governing and management processes that are inclusive and accessible to all perspectives.
- ✓ **Comfortable "Managing Up."** The Manager must be able to express disagreement or concerns to the Selectboard while still serving as the chief facilitator of the Selectboard's policy-setting work.
- ✓ **Comfortable "Managing Out."** The Manager must be approachable and collaborative with the public and other community stakeholders. A big part of this position is being visible, making connections, and bringing new life to the position.
- ✓ **Excited for the Challenge.** The next Manager should be genuinely excited about the challenge of managing a diverse, robust community that has a multitude of strengths but could use some assistance restoring stability to their day-to-day operations.
- ✓ **Bachelor's Degree Required.** A relevant advanced degree such as public administration, business management, or public policy may be helpful. Previous leadership experience in a dynamic, public organization is essential.



COMPENSATION

The Selectboard anticipates starting the next Manager with an annual salary between \$130,000 and \$160,000, depending on qualifications and experience. Hartford participates in the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System Group C, a portable defined benefit program that allows retirement at age 55. Alternate defined contribution arrangements are available as well. The Town pays 85 percent of health insurance premiums and contributes \$3,475 to an HRA for employees with a spouse or family.

The Manager will receive either a town car or a mileage stipend. Residency is not required, though proximity to Hartford is important for participation in the civic life of the community. A relocation stipend of up to \$7,500 is available.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Town has formed a search committee who will conduct the first round of interviews. The committee is comprised of two staff members and seven community members representing diverse constituencies within the Town. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns is managing the search, and Dominic Cloud is the recruiter for VLCT. Mr. Cloud is a current City Manager in another community and can be reached at (802) 309 - 1775. To apply, please send a confidential resume and cover letter addressed to Town Manager Search Committee Chair, via Mr. Cloud at dcloud@vlct.org. This position is open until filled, however resume review will begin July 10, 2023.

