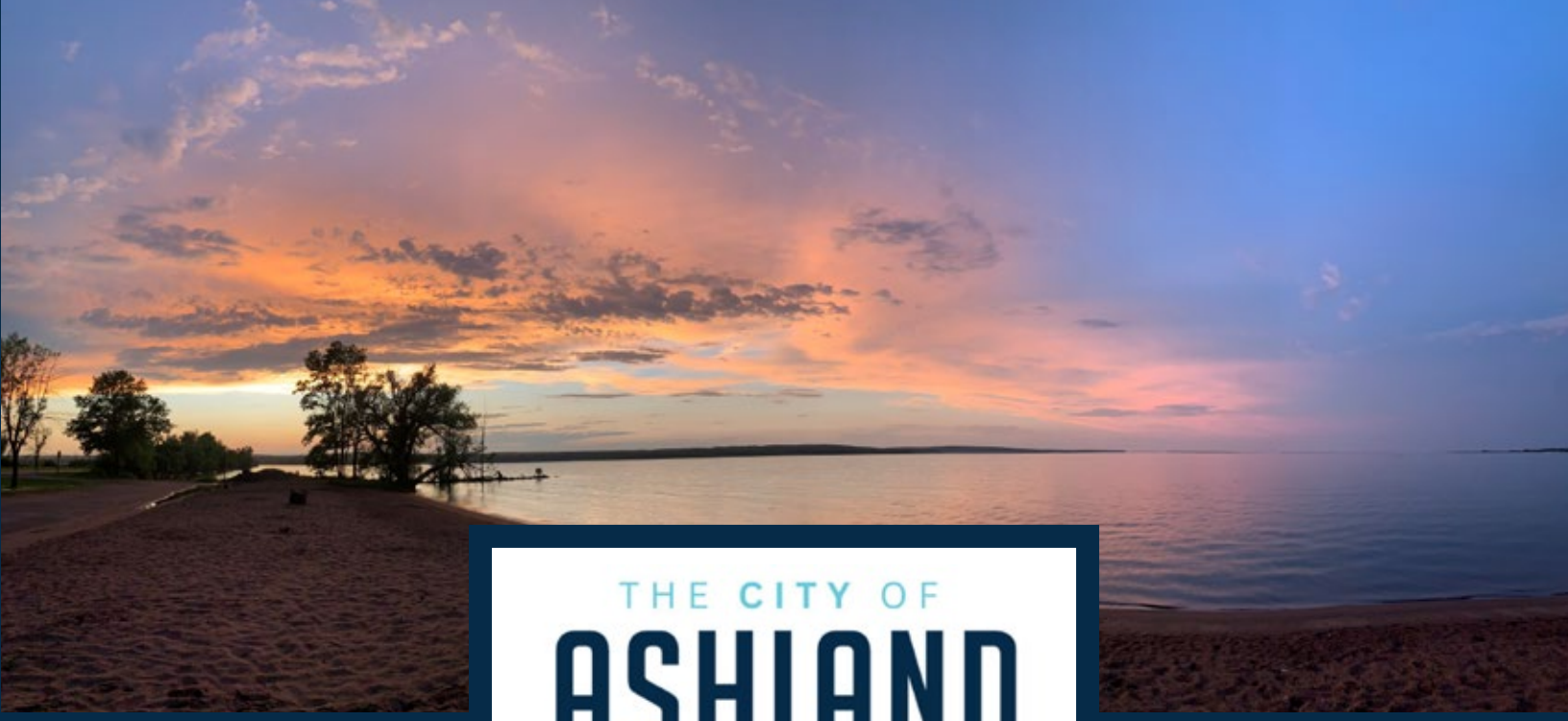

THE CITY OF ASHLAND WISCONSIN

# Director of Public Works
# Ashland, Wisconsin

Position Profile

Public Administration Associates

# THE COMMUNITY

The City of Ashland, Wisconsin (pop. 7,935) is a progressive city located at the junction of U.S. Highway 2 and Wisconsin State Highway 13 near the head of Chequamegon Bay on the pristine shores of Lake Superior and approximately 60 miles east of Duluth, Minnesota. As the county seat of Ashland County, the city has an outstanding collection of natural, cultural, and historical assets which give the city a strong foundation for a competitive and vibrant future.

Tourism is an important part of the area's commerce with its strategic location on Lake Superior. Tourists enjoy world-class fishing, scenic views, spectacular waterfalls, and one of the best birding destinations in the Midwest. Ashland's downtown business district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and boasts distinct architectural styles, fine dining, and unique shops and galleries. Ashland has been designated the Historical Mural Capital of Wisconsin with 21 vibrant murals dotting the city and highlighting various aspects of Ashland's colorful past.

Ashland is home to Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College and the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute. K-12 students are served by the School District of Ashland with each of its four schools receiving the New Wisconsin Promise Award of Excellence. Students have the option to attend a private Catholic school in the city or enroll in a school within the neighboring Washburn School District.

## Values of the City of Ashland

**Natural Environment**
Ashland appreciates the natural environment as a cornerstone of their community, now and for future generations. Consideration of land, air, and water quality will affect their decisions.

**Rich History**
Ashland promotes and preserves their history. Knowledge of the past, historical architecture, and distinctive neighborhoods instill community pride.

**Unique and Diverse Cultures**
Ashland embraces diversity and respects a variety of perspectives, opinions, traditions, experiences, cultures, and identities including those of the local tribes. They create, promote and support a welcoming and inclusive environment.

**Way of Life**
Ashland fosters a way of life that promotes a sense of well-being and fulfillment. They support excellent municipal services in a thriving economy and vibrant community.

**Stewardship**
Ashland will build a stronger and more resilient Ashland for today and future generations. By embracing stewardship, they sustainably manage human, natural, financial, and material resources.

# THE POSITION

The Director of Public Works leads the Public Works and Engineering Department of the City and is responsible for planning, directing, managing, and overseeing the activities and operations of the Department.  The City of Ashland has a Mayor-Council form of government with a hired City Administrator. The mayor is elected at large. Seven Councilors, elected for two years, staggered terms and representing specific districts of the City, comprise the Ashland Common Council. The council serves as the legislative branch of city government, enacting ordinances and resolutions, approving the annual budget, setting policies, and taking other actions to guide the operations of the Ashland city government. The city has a total budget of $23 million and a Standard and Poor's credit rating of A+.

The Director of Public Works reports to the City Administrator. The Department of Public Works has an operating budget of $6.5M and capital project budget of $10.0M. The Director leads a staff of 28 employees, including engineering and utilities.

The Director of Public Works supports the work of the City Council and City Administrator by coordinating official business and providing leadership and direction to the Department. The Director of Public Works is actively contributing to the overall management of the city as a member of the City's Senior Administrative Team.  The Director advises and supports the City Administrator in consideration of general City policies, programs, and concerns and performs related work as required including the oversight of public works & utility employees.

**To be successful as the Director of Public Works this individual must be able to:**

1. Clearly and articulately provide information to the City Administrator and City Council, other City Staff, and community stakeholders.

2. Possess an open and approachable demeanor in community engagement.

3. Serve as a role model for the Department in displaying dedication, energy, vitality, and the ability to accept new and exciting challenges, while at the same time being able to learn from and bounce back from setbacks,

4. Have the experience, capabilities, and confidence to assume full management responsibility for all public works services, activities and operations including administration, engineering, construction and maintenance of streets, yard waste, storm water, sanitation, utilities, fleet/facility, planning, land division and zoning and to be able to recommend and administer policies and procedures.

# FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Support Economic Development through fiscally strong Tax Increment Finance Districts
- Support residential growth through new subdivision developments.
- Help support Industrial and Technology development.
- Analyze and prepare a long-term Parks Maintenance and Capital Replacement Plan in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Director
- The City Council has identified Local Street Maintenance as a significant priority in the city, and the Public Works must plan and efficiently implement the annual street improvement and maintenance program for the city.
- Develop staff capacity and capability in the public works department.
- Develop and design roads and public infrastructure that serve an expanding industrial and residential base.
- Develop staff and a team approach to public works.
- Continue to improve an aging utility infrastructure.

# THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Ashland is seeking candidates who have demonstrated leadership in their past positions and exemplify creativity and innovation. The city desires a department leader who has the experience of leading a multi-divisional department through a period of growth and challenges while possessing the strong ability to cultivate positive and productive relationships. The successful candidate will demonstrate a high level of both personal and professional integrity; open and positive communication skills with a willingness to be active and engaged in the Ashland community, while leading by example.

The next Ashland Director of Public Works must have excellent communications skills and be able to establish a good rapport with a wide variety of community members. Carrying oneself with a high degree of professionalism with personal integrity is a given. The city desires a candidate who fosters teamwork and who will support and encourage a positive working environment and professional development opportunities for public works staff.

The next Director must be able to work with other area stakeholders such as the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Ashland County staff, and others, including seeking additional funding for public works projects. The next Director will manage capital projects in sewer & water utilities, street & infrastructure improvements and park development and improvement projects.

The City prefers a candidate with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, public administration, business administration or related field and a considerable amount of training, experience and knowledge in Engineering, Public Administration, Business Administration, or related fields. Including modern theories, principles and practices of public works administration, engineering, capital project construction management, field maintenance operations, program development and administration. Requires the ability to interpret applicable laws, codes, ordinances, especially planning, land division and zoning and regulations governing modern and accepted public works construction, maintenance, and engineering practices. The successful candidate must be able to assist in the preparation of the budget and with the administration and financial management of projects. Requires advanced knowledge of research and analytical methods. Requires sufficient math skills necessary to perform statistical analysis and interpret complex construction plans and maps. Requires sufficient knowledge of personal computer operations needed to properly operate common office software and used to construct relational databases that support department operations.
The Position requires effective written and oral communication skills necessary to interact with a wide variety of individuals including members of the public, vendors, contractors, City staff, and elected officials.

A minimum of 5 years or more of progressive experience in municipal public works management and supervision is desired. Professional engineering registration in Wisconsin is preferred. A valid Wisconsin's driver license is required. A combination of equivalent experience and education will also be considered.

# SALARY RANGE

The hiring range for this position is $90,000 to $105,000 plus excellent benefits. A hiring bonus of $7,500 will also be paid upon a successful six-month performance review. Relocation assistance for this position is also available.

# HOW TO APPLY

Send cover letter, resume, salary history, and five work-related references (one PDF) to Public Administration Associates, LLC

**Attn:** Bruce G. Stelzner, Associate
**E-mail:** bruce.stelzner@yahoo.com
**Address:** 18968 75th Avenue, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
**Phone:** 715-577-1330
**Application Deadline:** Position will remain posted until filled.

Confidentiality must be requested by the applicant and cannot be guaranteed for finalists.