

**Executive Recruitment for**

**RACINE, WISCONSIN**

GovHR USA is pleased to announce the recruitment and selection process for a Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Racine, Wisconsin. This brochure provides background information on the City and its organization, as well as the requirements and expected qualifications for the position. Candidates should apply by June 7, 2019 with resume, cover letter and contact information for five work-related references to [www.govhrusa.com](http://www.govhrusa.com) to the attention of Lee Szymborski, Senior Vice President, GovHR USA, 630 Dundee Road, #130, Northbrook, IL 60062. Tel: 847-380-3197. The City of Racine is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**Lee Szymborski, Sr. Vice President**

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Formal applications should be submitted to:  
[www.govhrjobs.com](http://www.govhrjobs.com)



**COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC WORKS**



## ANNOUNCEMENT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Commissioner of Public Works – Racine, WI (pop. 78,860)** On the shores of Lake Michigan, Racine is located 25 miles south of Milwaukee, and 75 miles north of downtown Chicago. Racine is home to multi-national firms such as S.C. Johnson & Son, CNHI (Case New Holland), Twin Disc and Modine, and has a legacy of industrial and manufacturing businesses. The City is working to establish itself as a leader in Smart City technologies, as well as capitalizing on redevelopment and revitalization efforts currently underway.

Incorporated in 1848, the City has a rich history. Today, Racine supports contemporary lifestyles in a City that provides a range of services. Racine reflects its diverse industrial and farming background; while the county abounds with rolling farmland, downtown Racine offers high rise condominiums and town homes along the lakeshore, and individual neighborhoods with homes of all sizes.

This position, appointed by the Mayor and reporting to the City Administrator, has general control, supervision, and direction of the following offices and divisions: Engineering, Transportation, including Transit, Equipment Maintenance, Street Maintenance, Solid Waste, Bridges, and Building, Facilities and Fleet. This position also supervises the office of the City Engineer.

The City also was recently designated as one of only five national winners of the Smart Cities Council's "Smart Cities Readiness Challenge". In that regard, the Commissioner will be expected to provide leadership and direction on how the City can best plan for, invest in and effectively implement Smart City Technologies, particularly related to transportation, mobility and transit.

The City seeks an experienced, innovative and collaborative leader to serve as its next Commissioner of Public Works. Strong public communication skills are essential as is the ability to work with internal and external stakeholders. A full understanding of all aspects of Public Works, large-scale capital improvements projects and engineering principles and standards, as well as the ability to embrace new technology and new methods of service delivery is necessary.

The Department of Public Works employs more than 130 FTEs, including seasonal positions.

Qualified candidates should have:

- Extensive knowledge of civil engineering principles and practices with a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university required; a master's

degree in management, engineering or a related field desired.

- Ten (10) years of progressive work experience in civil engineering and public works operations, including at least five (5) years in management, with public sector management experience preferred.
- Registration as a professional engineer in the state of Wisconsin, or the ability to obtain licensure within twelve (12) months preferred.
- Accomplished manager with experience planning and directing major infrastructure projects and public works operations.
- Demonstrates the ability to build effective working relationships with an array of stakeholders, including state and federal agency officials.

The Commissioner of Public Works is appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Common Council. The position reports to the City Administrator. Residency in the City is highly encouraged. Starting salary range: \$118,000 - \$134,000 +/- DOQ. Excellent benefit package.



## COMMUNITY HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Following the Black Hawk War in 1832, "Wisconsin fever" enticed many pioneers from Western New York State, rural New England and Britain who settled Port Gilbert at the junction of the Root River and Lake Michigan. The name Port Gilbert never gained acceptance over the earlier Indian designation of Kipikawi (Root River) or its French version, Racine. In 1841, the community was named as Racine, and incorporated as a city in 1848.

The railroads came and served in transporting the diverse products of the City's industries: auto parts, engines, foundry products, printed materials, household and personal care products, garden equipment, machine parts

and scores of others. The earliest schools were private, the first opening in 1836.

Waves of immigrants, including Danes, Germans, and Czechs, began to settle in Racine between the Civil War and World War I. African Americans started arriving after World War I, and Latinos migrated to Racine from roughly 1925 onward. It is believed that Racine has the largest North American settlement of Danes outside of Greenland. Today, Racine is a highly-diverse, urban melting pot where demographics reveal a resident population of 62% White, 23% African American; and 21% Latino or Hispanic.

Racine was a center of innovation and factory production almost from the beginning. The first industry in Racine was the manufacture of fanning mills, machines that separate wheat grain from chaff. Other leaders of industry in Racine included Case New Holland/CNHi (heavy equipment), S. C. Johnson (cleaning and chemical products), and Modine (heat exchangers), Twin Disc (power transmission equipment), and Insinkerator (garbage disposals). Racine was also an early car manufacturing center. Racine's harbor was central to the shipping industry in Wisconsin in the late 19th century.

Today, Racine is the fifth largest city in the state, a full-service municipality with a broad and diverse economic base including the five pioneer industry leaders noted above. A large number of community and business groups and organizations take an active role planning and implementing programs and projects that are of benefit to the community.



There are 33,741 households in Racine. A wide variety of housing sizes, styles and price ranges are available throughout the community. The median household income is \$42,590 with a median home value of \$134,900 based on recent U.S. Census data. The Milwaukee–Racine–Waukesha combined statistical area has a population of more than 2.04 million.

The City encompasses 18.68 square miles, of which there are more than 80 parks and preserves, including several

miles of recreational trails. The City also owns and maintains beach access to Lake Michigan at North Beach, a 50-acre community park and Blue-Wave Beach which is one of the City's and Midwest's premiere recreational sites. The Racine Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department's inventory consists of parks totaling over 1,100 acres, including five community centers, three golf courses, a zoological park (Racine Zoological Garden) and many other facilities providing a variety of recreational opportunities.

Community residents have a choice of both public and private elementary and high schools. Racine is served by the Racine Unified School District which offers a comprehensive educational program for students in the kindergarten through the twelfth grades. The district operates three high schools, five middle schools, four combined senior high-and-middle schools and 21 elementary schools. Private and parochial school choices can also be found in Racine and neighboring communities, such as Racine Lutheran High School, St. Catherine's Catholic High School, and in neighboring Wind Point, The Prairie School.

Located in downtown Racine is the largest campus of Gateway Technical College (GTC), one of eight GTC locations in southeastern Wisconsin. GTC is part of the 16 district Wisconsin Technical College System. GTC serves over 25,000 students and offers 65 education programs focusing on health, business, manufacturing & engineering and service careers.

In addition to GTC, the greater Racine area offers a wide variety of higher education opportunities. Chief among them include the University of Wisconsin – Parkside, with a student enrollment of more than 4,800, offering 33 undergraduate majors and three master's degrees in 22 academic departments and Carthage College, a liberal arts Lutheran school of 2,600 students founded in 1847.

Award-winning healthcare is easily found in Racine – Ascension/Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare, All Saints hospital -- and in nearby Pleasant Prairie (St. Catherine's Medical Center Campus), Kenosha (Aurora Medical Center), and throughout the greater Milwaukee area.

Racine's outstanding harbor, home to the 921 slip Reefpoint Marina, draws sailors and fishermen from a wide area and it annually hosts Salmon-A-Rama, the world's biggest freshwater fishing contest. The Racine Zoo, also located on the shores of Lake Michigan is home to a wide variety of animals and presents the Animal Crackers outdoor summer Jazz concert series. Just north of the City is the Wind Point Lighthouse, one of the oldest and the tallest lighthouses on the Great Lakes, built in 1880.



Racine is home to many architectural works by Wisconsin native Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959). Among his best-known works are buildings at the SC Johnson headquarters campus near Racine's Southside Historic District. Other Frank Lloyd Wright-designed buildings in the Racine area are the Hardy House on Main St. and the Johnson Foundation's Wingspread Conference Center.

Racine's residents enjoy many local cultural attractions and many ethnic festivals. The Wustum Museum provides ongoing fine arts programming, while, the Racine Art Museum (RAM), in downtown Racine, holds the most significant contemporary craft collection in North America, with more than 8,000 objects from nationally and internationally recognized artists. The Racine Symphony Orchestra is celebrating more than 80 years and presents classical and pops concerts annually. The Racine Heritage Museum presents broad array of Racine's diverse history of innovation. Racine's location just a few minutes east of I-94 between Milwaukee and Chicago also allows its residents to enjoy the cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities offered in those cities.

## CITY GOVERNMENT IN RACINE

The legislative body of the City is the Common Council, which consists of 15 Aldermen elected by district for overlapping two-year terms. The Mayor is elected separately for a four-year term, with the current term expiring in 2022.

The policies of the City are set by the 15-member Common Council and the Mayor. The Mayor only votes in the case of a tie or when he wishes to exercise his veto power. As Chief Executive Officer, the Mayor appoints the Commissioner of Public Works subject to confirmation by the Common Council. The Commissioner of Public Works reports to the City Administrator. The most recent Commissioner retired after serving eight years in the position.

The City provides a full range of municipal services including police and fire protection, parks, recreation & culture, public works, city development (including planning, housing, community development, building & zoning), library, health services, water and sewer utilities, transit, and general administrative services.

The Commissioner of Public Works serves as the liaison to the Public Works and Services Commission. The Commissioner works closely with the Mayor and City Administrator on budgetary matters and other day-to-day administrative efforts.

The Racine Water and Wastewater Utilities provide Lake Michigan water filtration and distribution systems, as well as sanitary sewerage collection and treatment service to Racine residents. The Utility also provides extraterritorial water and wastewater treatment to parts of neighboring Mount Pleasant, Caledonia, and Sturtevant.



## THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The department is comprised of 130 FTEs in working in the following divisions:

**Engineering:** The office is responsible for engineering and management of the City's network of streets, sidewalks, traffic signals, streetlights and other public infrastructure. The Engineering Division also oversees the operation of the Parking System and Mass Transit System. The City maintains 260 miles of roadways and 772 controlled intersections.

**Fleet and Equipment Maintenance:** This division purchases and maintain vehicles and equipment used by all City of Racine departments. Equipment Maintenance maintains and manages over 1,000 vehicles and pieces of equipment ranging from plow trucks, fairway mowers,

squad cars, wheel loaders, buses. Equipment Maintenance also manages and operates the fueling site supplying approximately 800,000 gallons of fuel annually to all city vehicles and develops the specifications for purchasing new vehicles and equipment and works with user departments to ensure the correct piece of equipment is purchased.

**Street Maintenance:** This division provides for the necessary upkeep and maintenance of the streets and right-of-ways in the City. All City streets and alleys are swept on a continual basis. Street maintenance is an integral part of the division's activities. Replacing bad pavement and curb and gutter, asphalt patching, and crack filling are types of maintenance activities performed. The maintenance of fixed bridges in the City is also done by the Street Maintenance. In the fall, leaf collection becomes a major function of the Division. The division is also responsible for snow removal in the winter.

**Building and Facilities:** This division is responsible for maintaining 362,000 square feet of space in the five major municipal buildings. The Division is under the direction of the Assistant Commissioner of Public Works. The staff is responsible for the maintenance of all heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems in the buildings. The division is also responsible for any structural repairs, plumbing or mechanical needs that the buildings require. The division has a staff of qualified stationary engineers to maintain the boilers and chillers in the buildings along with any plumbing and electrical upkeep needed.

**Solid Waste:** This division is responsible for the collection and disposal of all solid waste, including recyclables in the community. The City uses an automated cart system for collection. The division also oversees bulky waste collection, hazardous materials collection and yard waste collection.



## RACINE AT A GLANCE

<b>Population:</b> 78,860
<b>Households:</b> 33,741
<b>Equalized Value:</b> \$3.2 Billion
<b>Land Area:</b> 18.68 square miles
<b>Median Home Value:</b> \$134,900
<b>Median Household Income:</b> \$42,590
<b>Bond Rating:</b> AA-
<b>Racine Workforce:</b> 733 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs)
<b>Total FY 2019 Combined Budgets:</b> \$201.7 million

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The incoming Commissioner of Public Works will be faced with a number of challenges and opportunities that are not uncommon for in today's environment. They include:

- The ability to maintain a high level and expectation of services while being mindful of available budget resources. The City expects to add population in the coming years and that will also add to demands on services.
- The city is experiencing strong redevelopment interest and is working to redevelop a 27-acre former industrial area along the river in downtown. Because the Engineering Department is a part of the Public Works, the next Commissioner must have an understanding of the importance of how to maintain standards yet be able to facilitate development and growth of the City.
- With an active and engaged Mayor and 15-member Common Council, as well as a host of internal and external groups, communication, transparency and collaboration with elected officials, employees, residents, businesses, and all stakeholder organizations are critical skills for the next Commissioner of Public Works. Strong listening abilities and a genuine desire to engage the Common Council and the community in problem-solving is expected from the position.
- The City was recently designated as a Smart Cities Council "Smart Cities Readiness Challenge Award Winner", becoming the smallest city ever to receive such a designation. The next Commissioner of Public Works is expected to have a significant hand in the

City's efforts in this regard which include partnerships with the FoxConn Innovation Centers and Gateway Technical College.

- The City recently implemented an automated cart system for solid waste and recycling collection. The next Commissioner is expected to identify opportunities to improve this service delivery, including methods of encouraging a reduction in volume as the city landfill has limitations for the future.
- The City recently established an intergovernmental commission for transit. The next
- Commission of Public Works will bear responsibility for working with neighboring jurisdictions on a transit system that serves the greater region but does not unduly burden the City of Racine.
- The Public Works facility itself is aging and the next Commissioner will need to be pro-active in planning for the future and considering all options for the facility.



## EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

The City is seeking highly professional candidates who are passionate about local government and have the desire to be equally passionate about the City of Racine. The following education, experience, management, and leadership criteria have been identified by the Mayor, Common Council, and City staff as important skills and abilities for the candidates to possess and demonstrate.

- Knowledge of civil engineering principles and practices with a B.S.C.E. degree from an accredited college or university; a master's degree in management, engineering or a related field desired.

- Ten (10) years of progressive work experience in civil engineering and public works operations, including at least five (5) years in management, with public sector management experience preferred.
- Registration as a professional engineer in the state of Wisconsin, or the ability to obtain licensure within twelve (12) months required.
- Accomplished manager with experience planning and directing major infrastructure projects and public works operations.
- Have the experience and judgment to recognize the need for change when it arises, and the leadership skills, political savvy, technical competence, will and courage to effect such change.
- Have management experience in creating an environment of trust, integrity and mentorship where employees respect one another and where the organization seeks to eliminate silos and consistently functions at a high level of customer service.
- Have experience in intergovernmental relations, working with appropriate local, regional, state, and federal jurisdictions and agencies in a constructive and cooperative manner, presenting and representing City-approved policies in an effective and authoritative manner.
- Have a record of keeping up to date and abreast of modern/innovative Public Works technology, programs and procedures, understanding how technology can be used to enhance transparency in government, increase efficiencies and provide better customer service for residents.
- Familiarity, experience and appreciation for a climate in which snow and ice removal is a common occurrence.



## Management Style and Personal Traits

- Have a background of professional and personal integrity, honesty and of leading/motivating personnel by example.
  - Have the maturity, self-confidence, and strength of professional convictions to provide administrative insights and administrative counsel to the City's elected officials and Staff, being able to firmly and diplomatically present professional views and carry out administrative decisions in a timely, professional, and impartial manner.
  - Be an articulate and an effective communicator, both orally and in writing and be someone who is comfortable listening to and talking with a wide spectrum of people; someone who can clearly and concisely present written and oral information to decision makers; willingly share information as appropriate.
  - Be a strong administrative leader and be able to help Public Works staff to identify, analyze, prioritize, and thoroughly deliberate and address issues which are critical toward meeting both current and longer-range needs of the department and overall community.
- Be comfortable in developing staff and delegating appropriate authority while remaining informed and conversant on the status of all programs and projects.
  - Be a self-starter who has the vitality and energy to motivate and lead others; someone who seeks and enjoys a challenge.
  - Be a collaborative leader willing to partner with internal and external stakeholders to address the overall needs of the City.
  - Be one who can establish trust quickly with others and one who can relate to all elements of the community. Be one who genuinely embraces and promotes diversity.
  - Promote a strong, service-oriented, "customer relations" approach by all employees in the department in dealing with citizenry.
  - Be proactive, anticipatory and innovative. Possess an open mind in dealing with the City's complex and challenging issues and be willing to try new models of service delivery.

