

VERNON HILLS, ILLINOIS  
**PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/ENGINEER**



**EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT**

## VERNON HILLS, ILLINOIS

### PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR/ENGINEER

GovHR USA, LLC is pleased to announce the recruitment and selection process for **Public Works Director/Engineer for the Village of Vernon Hills, Illinois**. The Village is seeking experienced, team-oriented candidates to join their dedicated leadership team. This brochure provides background information on the Village of Vernon Hills as well as the requirements for the position. Additional information about Vernon Hills can be found on the Village's website: [www.vernonhills.org](http://www.vernonhills.org).

Candidates interested in applying for the position should electronically submit their résumé and cover letter, along with contact information for five (5) work-related references by December 9, 2022, at [www.GovHRUSA.com](http://www.GovHRUSA.com). Questions regarding this opportunity should be directed to the Executive Recruiter working with the Village of Vernon Hills:

GovHR USA  
Maureen Barry, Senior Vice President  
Phone: 847-380-3240, x116



## THE COMMUNITY

Vernon Hills is a vibrant, family focused community located 37 miles north of Chicago in Lake County, known for its attractive shopping options, strong services and political stability.

Incorporated in 1958 and covering 7.7 square miles, Vernon Hills is located in central Lake County approximately 37 miles north of downtown Chicago. The Village is located near Interstate 94 (Chicago-Milwaukee Tollway), which allows easy access to Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, Milwaukee's Mitchell Airport, and downtown Chicago. The Village has experienced significant growth in the past five years in both retail and residential markets and is a major center of employment and commerce.

The [diverse population](#) is well served by a combination of transportation options and a variety of housing types. These factors, along with effective planning and significant recreational amenities, has made Vernon Hills one of the most desirable areas of development in the Chicago metropolitan area. Vernon Hills is increasingly becoming a major employment center, as well as a major center of retail shopping in Lake County. The Village's retail base includes a large regional shopping mall (Hawthorn Mall), eight (8) shopping centers, and numerous freestanding retailers. Several corporations are headquartered in Vernon Hills and other major employers are situated in approximately 1,000 acres of office parks that are conveniently located adjacent to major roadways. The Vernon Hills Athletic Complex (VHAC), owned and maintained by the Village of Vernon Hills, is a full-service sports facility, known throughout the region for hosting baseball, softball, football, cheerleading, lacrosse, and soccer events.

## VERNON HILLS AT A GLANCE

Population: **26,850**

Land Area: **7.71**  
square miles

Households: **10,006**

Median Age: **39.1**

Median Household  
Income: **\$100,725**

Median Home Value:  
**\$341,500**

Permits issued (2021):  
**1,759** with a  
construction value of  
**\$295,477,163**





## VILLAGE GOVERNMENT IN VERNON HILLS

The [Village](#) is known as a lean, resourceful organization. With a great deal of pride, Vernon Hills retains its status as one of the few communities in Illinois without a local property tax, which necessitates a focus on cost containment measures, innovation and strong development efforts. The Village takes great pride in their exceptional level of services to residents, particularly senior citizens, and promotes a host of activities to bolster a strong sense of community, safety, and prosperity.

The Village provides a diverse but limited array of services. Its major functions are police services, construction and maintenance of Village streets, storm water management facilities and related infrastructure, building and facility maintenance, commercial and residential construction review and inspection, development review, and general administrative services. The Village actively works on development and redevelopment strategies such as the use of sales tax rebates and has established three Tax Increment Finance Districts. The Village also operates a cable studio and a golf course and owns and maintains a Metra train station. Water and sanitary sewer services are provided by Lake County. Fire protection for most of the Vernon Hills area is provided by Countryside Fire Protection District, while the remainder is serviced by the Lincolnshire-Riverwoods Fire Protection District. The Village is served by two library districts, two townships, four elementary school districts, and three high school districts.

The Village is a home rule organization governed by a Village President and six (6) Trustees, who are elected at-large to serve four-year overlapping terms. Vernon Hills operates as a Trustee-Village form of government. The Village Board is responsible for establishing policy, which is then implemented by an appointed Village Manager and professional staff. The Village Manager oversees a staff of 98 full-time employees and 7 part-time employees (101.5 FTEs).

*Entrusted by its residents, the Village of Vernon Hills is dedicated to delivering municipal services in a responsive, professional, and proficient manner.*

The FY 2022/2023 [budget](#) is \$45.3 million (including capital and debt expenses), with a General Fund budget of \$35.4 million and strong reserve levels. Standard and Poor's and Moody's Investors Services have assigned 'AAA' and 'Aaa' bond ratings, respectively, the highest bond ratings possible, to the Village's outstanding bonds. The Village's conservative financial policies and its self-supporting debt (including debt from the three TIFs) contribute to the high ratings and ensures the Village's ability to obtain future borrowings at low interest rates.

The Village's revenue sources have rebounded well in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and given federal funding received to assist with costs related to the pandemic, the Village is on solid financial footing. Sales tax (including home rule) accounts for 58% of the General Fund revenue budget. The Village experienced a notable increase in sales tax revenue in FY2022 compared to COVID-19 years FY2020 and FY2021, slightly surpassing sales tax revenues of pre-COVID years. The Village also experienced slight growth in commercial and residential construction, resulting in increased permit fee revenues.

The Village maintains several Capital related funds, including an Equipment Replacement fund and Motor Fuel Tax fund for road improvements, both of which are expected to be subsidized by the General Fund balance in future years, as needed, to support ongoing road projects. The General Fund has strong reserve levels, operating at approximately 101% of operating expenses as of April 30, 2023, significantly higher than the Village policy.

## POSITION AND DEPARTMENT

Appointed by the Village President with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees, and reporting to the Village Manager, the Public Works Director/Village Engineer (the "Director") ensures the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Vernon Hills through maintenance of the Village's infrastructure and the efficient day-to-day operation of the many public works services in the Village. The Director administers all Public Works and Engineering programs and activities while ensuring adherence to applicable laws, regulations and requirements.

The positions of Director of Public Works and Village Engineer were combined approximately 12 years ago due to the skillset of the current Director, who is planning to retire after serving the Village for 30 years. The Director currently leads a department of 20 additional full-time employees, including six direct reports, and a group of seasonal employees. The Department is currently broken down into five divisions, which include Forestry, Street Lighting & Building Maintenance, Engineering, Streets & Grounds, Fleet Maintenance, and Administration.

The Fiscal Year 2022/2023 budget for the Public Works Department is \$6.1 million. The Capital Fund budget for the same period shows anticipated revenues of \$2.5 million and expenses of \$2.7 million. Motor Fuel Tax revenues are expected to be \$1.7 million, contributing to \$2.5 million in planned permanent improvements.

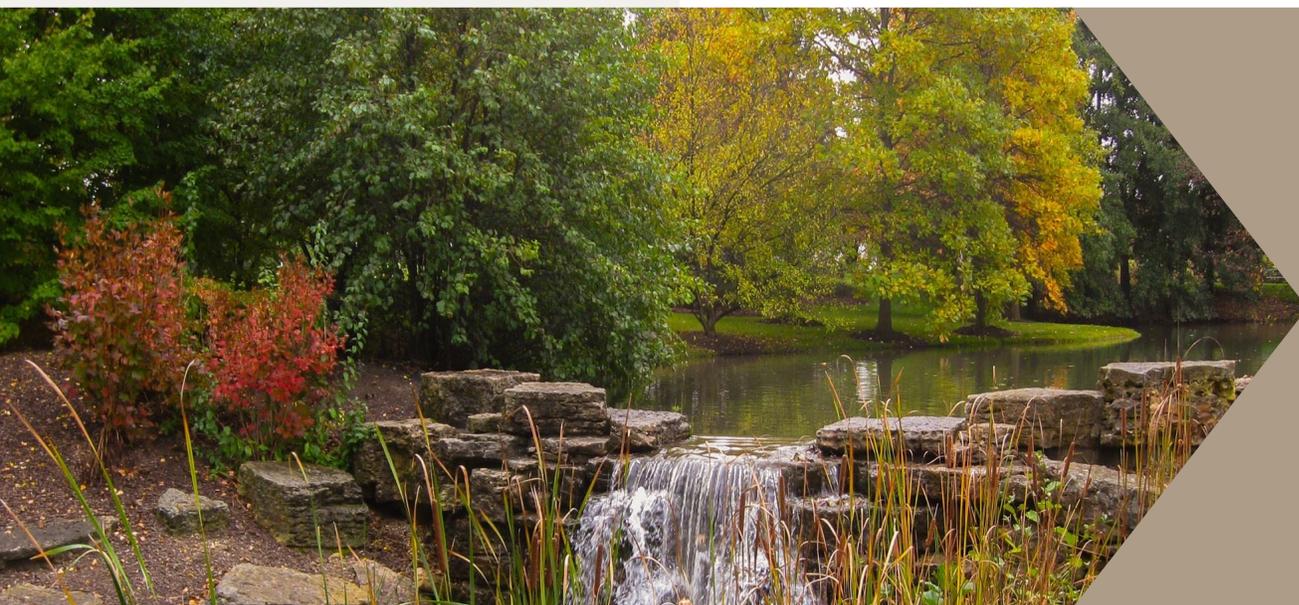
The next Director must continue to deploy the Department's staff to maximize the use of its resources and provide excellent public works and engineering services to the Community. The Village's physical infrastructure and facilities are modern and in sound condition, with maintenance routinely occurring as scheduled.



## PRIMARY POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

The essential job functions of the Director include, but are not limited to:

- Responsible for the administration of programs of the Public Works/Engineering Department, including snow and ice control operations; street, sidewalk and bike path, storm water system, detention basin, dams/bridges and waterways; public building operation; municipal site operation; street lighting and traffic signal system; forestry and landscape; fleet management of vehicles, equipment and fueling system; emergency response – flooding, street light, signage and tree damage and special event set-up and assistance.
- Assist staff in ensuring compliance with all laws and regulations affecting the Public Works and Engineering operations of the Village.
- Plan, direct and administer the Public Works Department; provide direction, technical advice and leadership to employees. Make hiring recommendations and assists in the hiring of personnel.
- Respond and oversee resolution of resident/visitor inquiries/complaints relative to operations/service of Department.
- Prepare department resolutions and ordinances for Village Board meetings.
- Complete capital projects assigned to the Public Works/Engineering department. Conduct studies and prepare reports concerning the infrastructure of the Village.
- Recommend the construction of public works projects. Develop plans and specifications for public works department engineering projects.
- Coordinate use of Public Right of Way for utilities. Issue permits and oversee work and restoration.
- Prepare engineering analysis and reports for ordinance adoption. Review plans, specifications and other documents prepared by the Village engineering consultants.
- Provide information and assistance to and serve as liaison to Federal, State, County and local officials on projects affecting the Village of Vernon Hills.
- Oversee safety planning, including procedures, protective clothing and protective equipment to ensure the safety of all village employees and the public. Ensure the department and the Village are in compliance with OSHA, NIOSH, EPA safety, health and other state standards.
- Develop and assist the Village in disaster planning efforts.
- Forecast operational needs, anticipate costs, develop the Public Works/Engineering Department budget and maintain budget within budgetary allotments.
- Recommend purchases and negotiate contracts with vendors and/or third parties. Review specifications for new equipment and trucks. Receive and review bids.
- Work with various departments to maintain current policies.
- Responsible for the development and implementation of a practices and procedures manual that addresses matters of departmental operation. Establish training sessions to ensure that practices and procedures are implemented and followed with consistency.





## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the responsibilities listed in the *Primary Position Responsibilities* section, the next Director can expect to work closely with the Village Manager, Village President, Board of Trustees, and staff on the following issues:

- Oversight of a 2023 federal grant for the expansion of Lakeview Parkway will be a focus. Work with the contracted engineering firm on pre-bid specifications and construction oversight.
- Assist in the development of a long-term financial plan to address operating and infrastructure needs in the face of rising operating costs. Continue the Village's practice of employing fiscally conservative, yet cost-effective public works, engineering and infrastructure maintenance and practices.
- Work to help the department transition to new leadership following the retirement of its longtime director.
- Provide guidance as it relates to public infrastructure at the ground level with respect to new development in the village, particularly at Hawthorn Mall.
- Maintain positive and cooperative relationships with other neighboring jurisdictions, including Lake County Public Works, Illinois Department of Transportation, school, park, library districts and townships (Vernon and Libertyville).
- Continue to seek out innovative revenue ideas to assist the Village in maintaining its high level of services without significant tax increases as they apply to public works and engineering operations.
- Evaluation and implementation of new technological advances in public works and engineering systems and other operations applications where appropriate.

## EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

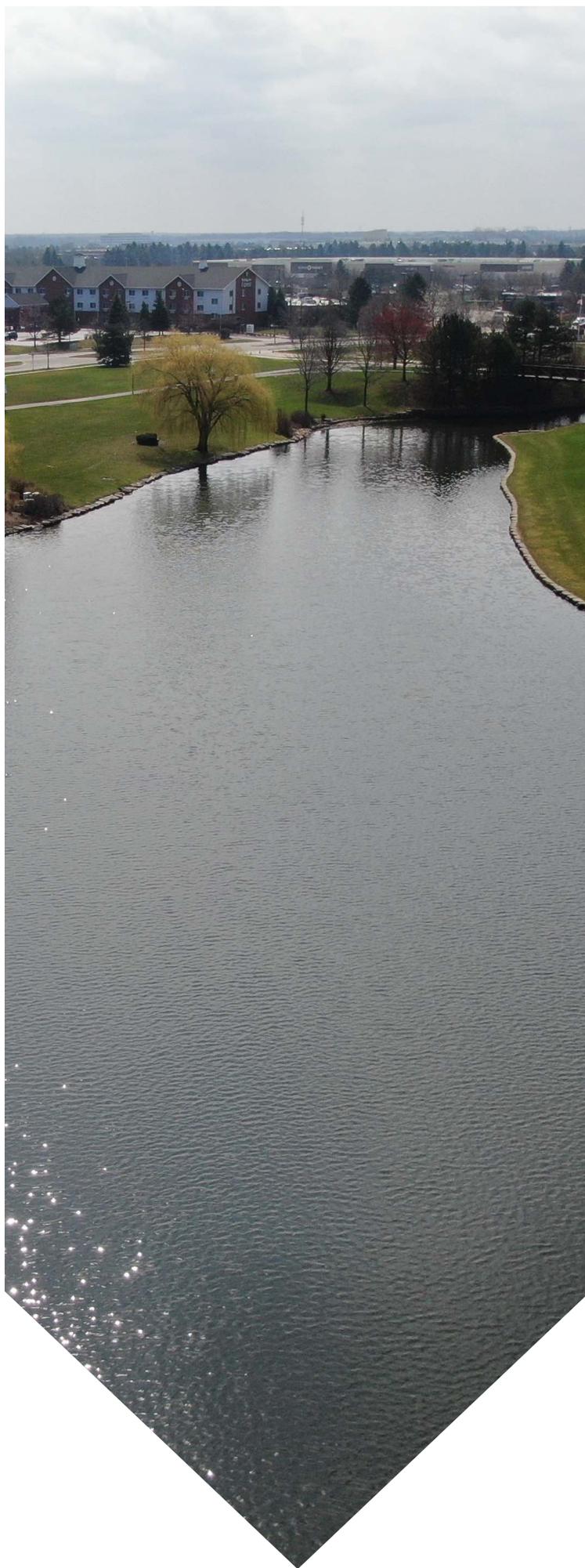
The Village is seeking a proactive, collaborative, motivating Director to lead the Public Works Department. The successful candidate will have the following:

- Bachelor's degree required, with a preference in Civil Engineering.
- Illinois Certificate as a Registered Professional Engineer is highly desired.
- Minimum of five years' experience in the area of design, maintenance, and construction in a municipal work program is desired.
- Minimum of five years supervisory experience is required.
- Knowledge of materials and equipment used in all facets of public works operations is recommended.
- Valid Illinois Vehicle Operators License is required.
- Strong oral and written communication skills, capital improvement and strategic planning abilities, and a demonstrated proficiency and enthusiasm for working closely with other Village staff and elected officials.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

In addition to the requirements listed above, the Village is seeking candidates with the following traits:

- Management experience in creating an environment of trust, integrity and mentorship where employees respect one another and where the Department consistently provides a high level of customer service.
- An understanding of the principles of government budgeting, recognizing the long term cost implications of proposed new programs, capital and operating items.
- Demonstrated ability to provide strategic leadership and long-range planning practices.
- Ability to assess the skills and abilities of existing personnel in an effort to maximize their talent and expertise, including opportunities for employees to take on new challenges as professionals.
- Proven verbal communication and listening skills, both one-on-one and in a public speaking venue, treating everyone in a professional and respectful manner.
- An appreciation for working in a setting where customer service expectations are high.
- Personal and professional integrity, with the ability to gain respect and inspire the trust and confidence of subordinates, co-workers, elected and appointed officials, as well as the general public.
- Clear and concise communication, able to present complex technical information to any audience in a manner that is understandable and jargon-free.
- Ability to make effective presentations before the Village Board, along with strong public relations experience, and excellent writing skills.
- A genuine passion for public service from both an internal, department standpoint and for service to the community.
- A positive and flexible team builder who is committed to the well-being of the staff, one who works with staff to identify departmental needs and find solutions which meet those challenges.
- A manager who both defends his/her staff when appropriate and holds the team accountable.
- A proactive, anticipatory and innovative leader; someone who can make difficult decisions and stand behind those decisions.
- An open, friendly personality and communication style. A calm demeanor, with a sense of humor when appropriate to the circumstances.
- Shows sound judgement in keeping the Village Manager and Board apprised of major activities and operations of the Department in a consistent and timely manner, passing on both "good news and bad news" in a tactful, self-confident and professional manner..





## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The anticipated starting salary is \$160,865 - \$176,960 based on qualifications and experience. A comprehensive benefits package includes a vehicle allowance, participation in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF), health insurance including medical, dental, and vision coverage (also available to dependents), life insurance, and optional 457 plan participation. The Village does not have a residency requirement.

## HOW TO APPLY

Apply online at [www.govhrjobs.com](http://www.govhrjobs.com) with a resume, cover letter, and contact information for five professional references by December 9, 2022. Questions about the position are encouraged and may be directed in confidence to Maureen Barry, Senior Vice President, GovHR USA at 224-380-3240, x116.

**The Village of Vernon Hills is an Equal Opportunity Employer.**

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[www.GovHRUSA.com](http://www.GovHRUSA.com)



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