

HOPEWELL *Virginia*

**CITY OF HOPEWELL, VA
WATER RENEWAL DIRECTOR**

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WATER RENEWAL DIRECTOR

The City of Hopewell, VA is seeking a highly skilled professional to serve as its next Water Renewal Director. As a key member of the Executive Leadership Team, the next Director will take the lead on major wastewater infrastructure projects as well as manage the Water Renewal Department. The ideal candidate possesses a balance of senior local government management experience and a strong background in wastewater management, engineering, construction, infrastructure development, and/or project management.



ABOUT THE CITY

Hopewell is an independent, historic, riverfront city—adjacent to Prince George and Charles City counties, as well as the Fort Lee Military Installation, located in the Commonwealth of Virginia. With a population of approximately 23,000, Hopewell is centrally located about 20 miles south of Richmond and approximately 130 miles south of Washington, D.C. Hopewell occupies 11 square miles and is bounded by the Appomattox and James Rivers on three sides.

Hopewell was developed by the DuPont Company of Wilmington, Delaware in 1914. This company built a dynamite factory and then switched to the manufacture of guncotton during World War I. Although DuPont left Hopewell after the war, many manufacturing giants have since located in the city. These companies have included: Allied Signal, Firestone, Goldschmidt, Hercules/Aqualon, Honeywell and Smurt-Stone. Products as diverse as the first automatic dishwasher, the first Kraft paper and cardboard boxes, china and artificial silk have been manufactured in Hopewell.

Hopewell, formerly City Point, is the second oldest continuously occupied settlement in the United States giving it a rich history with many historic buildings and landscapes. The City of Hopewell has been called the “Wonder City” because of its resiliency and tendency to bounce back. Despite many past challenges, including the loss of the industry that initially built the City, and a fire that all but destroyed it in 1915, in 2026 Hopewell will celebrate 110 years of incorporation.



HOPEWELL FACTS

Incorporated: 1916
Slogan: “The Wonder City”
Population: 23,033
Size: 10.8 square miles
Total Households: 9,418
Median Income: \$48,681
Median Home Value: \$165,100



CITY ORGANIZATION AND DEPARTMENT

The City of Hopewell operates under a Council-Manager form of government. This form of government is also known as the "Small Mayor form of government." Council-Manager government combines the political leadership of elected officials with the managerial experience of an appointed manager or administrator. All power and authority to set policy rests with an elected governing body, which includes a Mayor and members of the Council. The governing body in turn hires a nonpartisan manager who has very broad mandate and authority to run the organization. The city manager serves as the organization's chief executive, leading a staff of talented professionals who deliver high-quality services across a full range of municipal functions.

Thirty years ago a group of City leaders and managers of local industry set forth a remarkable partnership whereby the City of Hopewell and five major industries would join together on a common environmental mission: to clean up the combined industrial and domestic renewable waters of the Hopewell area while meeting or exceeding all environmental standards. This was no easy task but by cooperation and communication, the "first of its kind" regional water renewal facility began treating a combined waste stream in the summer of 1977.

Local industry and the City continue to work together to reduce toxic discharges and find new and innovative ways to improve the treatment plant's effectiveness and efficiency to better protect the James River. There's always more to be done when it comes to cleaning up the environment and with the combined resources and support of the local government, industry, and the citizens of Hopewell, they remain vigilant in their mission of protecting the environment.

The Water Renewal Department has 53 full-time and 3 part-time allocated positions and an FY26 operating budget of \$19 million. The Sewer Operations and Maintenance Fund is a combined budget of \$7.9 million for FY26. They operate a 50 MGD, Municipal Publicly Owned Wastewater Treatment Facility that treats 85% industrial and 15% domestic wastewater treatment. It serves the City of Hopewell, local industries, and surrounding localities (Prince George County, Fort Gregg Adams) as a regulated discharger into the James River, which is a tributary in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The capital budget is \$7.5M.

It is anticipated that the capital plan budget as well as both operations and maintenance budgets will be updated under the leadership of the selected Water Renewal Director. Additionally, the rate structure and governance structure will need to be revised to reflect the new capital work that must be accomplished – and the related capital, operations and maintenance budgets





THE POSITION

The Water Renewal Director will oversee wastewater operations, and provide high-level leadership in areas such as capital improvement planning and project delivery, budget development and financing, regulatory compliance, asset management, and workforce development. The role requires a visionary leader capable of navigating complex operational agreements with private industry while advancing Hopewell's mission of protecting public health and safety while being fiscally responsible.

As Director, they will lead with vision and purpose—overseeing strategy, operations, and performance across the entire department. Strong leadership will ensure the department is equipped, aligned, and empowered to deliver exceptional service and meet the evolving needs of the community. They will also:

- **Short and Long Term Strategic Planning:** Formulates, interprets and implements City policies, administrative regulations and directives. Negotiates and advises local industry groups on areas related to wastewater resource issues and keeps City officials informed on all wastewater resources-related issues.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Oversees the development of programs, objectives and operating budgets of all areas within Water Renewal. Reviews and approves capital budgets and five-year plans. Supervises the preparation of financial plans, annual financial reports, cost of service and rate studies.
- **Workforce Development:** Establishes an organizational culture to attract and retain top talent by offering clear career paths and development opportunities for employees at all levels.
- **Leadership:** Redefines departmental mission, vision, and goals to meet levels of service, environmental objectives, and community needs. Supervises employees and coordinates personnel-related activities to include, but not limited to training, coaching and counseling and establishing performance goals.
- **Stakeholder Relations:** Works closely with the City Manager and the executive team to continue to develop strong partnerships with the industry. Reviews existing cooperative agreements and recommends changes to management and City Council.

KEY PRIORITIES

- Ensure compliance with applicable wastewater quality, safety and environmental regulations.
- Implement capital improvement and operations/maintenance programs to ensure that wastewater facilities meet their intended level of service. Develop appropriate engineering studies, designs, and asset management approaches to support capital and operations/maintenance programs.
- Effectively develop annual budgets and financing plans to support the implementation of capital and operations/maintenance programs. Solicit input from appropriate stakeholders in preparation of annual budget and five-year plans.
- Provide recommendations to the City Manager on governance structure to effectively meet the department's mission and level of service associated with the wastewater facilities.
- Review, update, and implement appropriate recommendations from the recent Comprehensive Master Plan in 2024, to identify, repair, and maintain the wastewater facilities.
- Review, update, and implement staffing needs per the recommendation of a Staffing Study completed in 2023, where applicable. ; including recruiting a strong management team to assist you in turning this facility around to become a premier model for its type and size nationwide
- Manage the development of a rate study, including rate structure analysis, to effectively recover the cost of service while maintaining sustainable sewer rates for Water Renewal customers.





MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- A bachelor's degree in engineering, biology, or chemistry from an accredited institution is required, with a master's degree and Professional Engineer (PE) license preferred. An equivalent combination of experience and education that enables success as the director will be considered.
- Strong technical background in wastewater treatment and possesses a deep knowledge of appropriate regulations at federal and state levels.
- Has a demonstrated record of success managing a large portfolio of assets.
- Demonstrates the ability to build consensus with stakeholders that have diverse and conflicting interests while supporting the department's mission.
- Ten years' progressively responsible experience in the management of a medium or large public or private sector water or wastewater utility; and experience in issues affecting government is required.

While technical expertise is essential, success in this role hinges on exceptional interpersonal intelligence, political acumen, and strategic awareness. The ideal candidate will be a skilled communicator and collaborator—able to build trust, foster dialogue, and navigate complex relationships with elected officials, executive leadership, and industry leaders.

HOW TO APPLY

The salary range for this position is \$200,000 to \$250,000 depending on experience/qualifications. The City of Hopewell provides a comprehensive benefits program that includes generous paid leave, health and dental coverage, participation in the Virginia Retirement System, and much more. For more information about benefits, click [City of Hopewell Benefits Plan](#).

Candidates can apply online at www.govhrjobs.com with a resume, cover letter, and contact information for five professional references. Deadline for applications is November 7, 2025. For more information, contact Sarah McKee, Senior Consultant, at 847-380-3240 ext. 120.

The City of Hopewell is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The City makes reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with disabilities throughout the recruitment process. The City is committed to compliance with the American Disabilities Act and is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Diversity and inclusion are critical to their success. They seek to recruit the most talented people from a diverse candidate pool and strongly encourage all qualified candidates to apply.