



City of Lawrence

City Manager

The Opportunity – City of Lawrence, Kansas

This is a flagship opportunity for a talented and successful City Manager. Lawrence is a city with a highly developed professional staff, strong infrastructure, excellent city services, a highly educated citizenry, and abundant economic development opportunities. It's no coincidence that Lawrence is home of the University of Kansas, whose School of Public Affairs & Administration has produced some of the very best City Managers in the nation.

The City of Lawrence

Think Madison, Wisconsin. Think Austin, Texas. Think Berkeley, California. Think Lawrence, Kansas. With a deep appreciation for diversity, education, arts, and community, Lawrence prides itself on being independent from its counterparts in the region. With just over 90,000 residents and the home of two universities, Lawrence has many amenities of larger cities without forfeiting the Midwestern, small-town charm that its residents hold so dearly. Unquestionably the cornerstone of this charm is Massachusetts Street. Mass Street, as it is known by Lawrencians, is a beautiful example of an idyllic downtown. Historic, vibrant, and thriving, Mass Street was recently named the most popular tourist attraction in all of Kansas.

The University of Kansas (KU) and the Haskell Indian Nations University complement a highly regarded public school system. Lawrence has an educated populous that is informed, engaged, and presents a deep pool of talent to serve on boards and commissions. Citizens respect and appreciate critical thinking, diversity of opinion, and collaboration. Civic pride is readily apparent in Lawrence's cleanliness and this same pride in its citizens has revealed itself in support for schools, a new library, a technical education center, and other public projects.

Lawrence enjoys a low crime rate, numerous parks, a growing network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and abundant cultural and recreational activities. Its appreciation for the arts has recently been infused into neighborhood redevelopment. An excellent quality of housing stock sits across diverse neighborhoods in Lawrence.

Located between the Kansas City metropolitan area and the City of Topeka, the capital, Lawrence is the county seat of Douglas County. Cooperation between the two units of government is excellent, with some sharing of services.

City Government

Lawrence operates a council-manager form of government, although the council is known as the City Commission and its members are referred to as Commissioners. The five Commissioners are elected at large and three City Commissioners are up for election every two years. The two top candidates win four-year terms and the third place finisher wins a two-year term. In this way, a majority of the Commission can be replaced in any election. No term limits exist. The City Commission elects a Mayor and Vice Mayor annually.

With over 800 FTE positions, the City of Lawrence provides a full slate of municipal services across ten departments. The FY 2016 budget was recently adopted at \$207 million and is supported by steady increases in both assessed valuations (2.4% increase from FY 2015) and sales tax revenues (3% assumed increase over FY 2015). The recently adopted budget included reinvestments in City employees and deferred maintenance, along with investments in the arts, community mental health, increased multi-modal transportation, and other progressive initiatives.

The City Commission appoints two positions, the City Auditor and the City Manager. The City Manager is the chief executive for the City and leads a very professional and developed staff, including two Assistant City Managers. Historically, Lawrence has City Managers of long tenure, having only three since 1970.

Additional information about the City of Lawrence, including the City's budget, organizational chart, and staffing levels is available on Ralph Andersen & Associates' website.

City Manager Responsibilities

The City Manager of Lawrence, Kansas is an at-will, executive position who serves at the pleasure of the City Commission. Highlighting the stable leadership in the executive management of the City, it has been almost ten years since the City Commissioners have dealt with a top level vacancy at the helm of this organization. Following twenty-five years of public service with Lawrence, nine as City Manager, David Corliss recently accepted another opportunity, which resulted in this opening with the City.

Key strategic executive leadership responsibilities of the City Manager include:

- Directing the implementation of the City Commission's goals, objectives, policies, and priorities through leadership;



- Assume full management responsibility for assigned staff and departments; recommend and administer policies and procedures;
- Promoting effective and efficient delivery of programs and services through the application of strategic management tools;
- Ensuring the overall fiscal health of the organization, including development of the budget, approving the forecast of funds, and providing oversight over expenditures;
- Providing options and alternatives on a variety of complex topics and programs so that the Commission may consider an array of choices, inclusive of staff recommendation and fiscal impacts, in order to set future policy direction based on sound and professional advice and counsel;
- Guiding and facilitating discussions and establishing strategies to address capital improvement projects and deferred maintenance across the full spectrum of the organization;
- Leading efforts of strategic planning and performance measurements that are tied to the budget and are both achievable and capable of being implemented;
- Engaging in intergovernmental activities in the local, state, university, and regional arenas that promote the mutual interest of those jurisdictions; and
- Creating a culture of effective communication throughout all levels of the organization as well as throughout the community.
- Two business parks, Lawrence VenturePark and East Hills Business Park, are ready for tenants with the goal to create more high-wage jobs in Lawrence.
- A major road project, the South Lawrence Trafficway, is nearing completion. Linking I-70 on the west and Kansas Highway 10 on the east, the ring road will create abundant opportunities for commercial and industrial development.
- Poised for growth, Lawrence knows it needs to grow responsibly and not simply sprawl. However, leadership is needed to guide this growth.
- The State of Kansas has restricted both property tax and sales tax increases by municipalities without voter referendum, leaving the need to seek other diverse and creative revenue sources if expenses dictate. Providing opportunities for existing businesses to grow is as important as attracting new business.
- It is a great asset to have a well-educated and highly engaged community. It yields better decisions, with broad support, but it is not without challenges. The City Manager must create opportunities for citizen involvement and reach meaningful consensus on issues.
- The next City Manager will have the opportunity to lead the process in creating a new strategic plan.
- While high quality, the cost of housing in Lawrence is among the highest in the state. There remains a need to address affordable housing.
- While by no means strained, there are opportunities to improve relationships and explore sharing of services with nearby communities, universities, and Douglas County.

Challenges and Opportunities

The next City Manager of Lawrence will be presented with known challenges and opportunities:

- City Commissioner and appointed Mayor Jeremy Farmer recently resigned from the City Commission. A highly regarded and very experienced Commissioner has been named Mayor, and an open and transparent process is being crafted to fill the open seat.
- The Lawrence Police Department is in need of a new facility. In 2014, voters narrowly rejected a 0.2 percent sales tax increase to fund the facility. The rejection was on the heels of a highly controversial public project, Rock Chalk Park. While a tremendous community asset, the sports park remains a sensitive issue that needs rebranded to move forward.

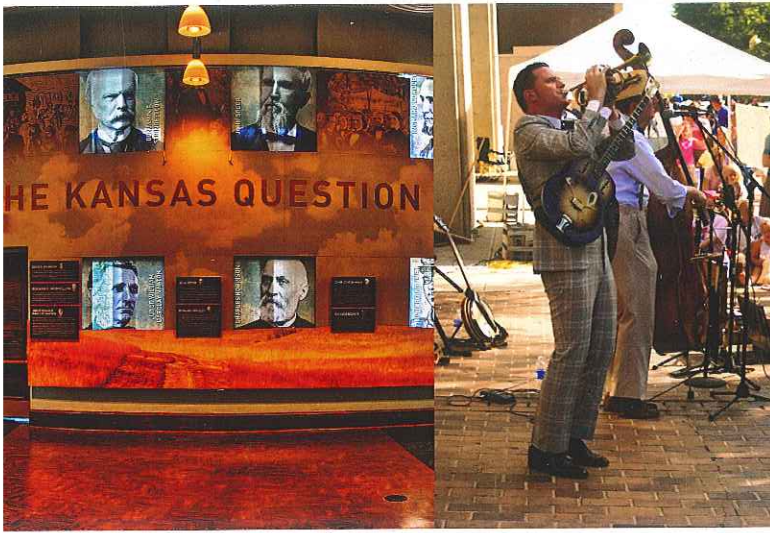
The Ideal Candidate

The next City Manager in Lawrence must be experienced and well qualified, but must also possess certain traits that will be essential for success:

- Lawrence is a city with a very **open government**. The City Manager must not only be **accessible and communicate well**, but enjoy the **close communication** with the Commission, staff, citizens, developers, and other units of government. It is important to **listen and connect** to people, regardless of their background.



"Walk down Massachusetts Street with someone familiar with its history and the story that unfolds is one of perseverance and resolve. Originally settled prior to the Civil War, the town's main street was burned to the ground and left a pile of ashes by pro-slavery raiders in 1863. They targeted the city for its abolitionist stance and its participation in the Underground Railroad that aided escaping slaves. Slowly, Lawrence rebuilt itself and Massachusetts Street as Douglas County's primary commercial and social area."
American Planning Institution, Great Places in America: Streets



- The next City Manager must be ***courageous*** and be willing to say what needs to be said, even if it is unpopular, and even if it threatens his/her standing. This ***strong voice*** must come from experience, wisdom, and vision.
- Experience in ***collective bargaining*** is important, as both police and fire employees are represented.
- Lawrence seeks a ***progressive executive*** who can leverage technology and is well versed in ***responsible growth, energy conservation, historical preservation, and multimodal transportation*** for its citizens. ***Experience with social issues***, such as homelessness and mental health, is an asset.
- Lawrence ***values diversity*** and the incoming City Manager must be ***culturally competent*** and appreciate the value diversity adds.
- A proven track record of ***economic development success*** is highly desired.
- A ***predisposition for planning***, both in the short- and long-term, and the ability to engage others in planning is an asset.
- It is vital that the next City Manager be ***invested, establish deep roots, and be active in the community***, sharing the passion for Lawrence that its citizens so clearly have.

Education and Experience

Education: Equivalent to a Master's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in public administration, business administration, or a related field.

Experience: Ten (10) years of increasingly responsible experience in government or business management, including five (5) years of administrative and supervisory responsibility.

Residency: Residency is not a prerequisite for employment, but the selected candidate must establish permanent residence within the incorporated boundaries of the City of Lawrence, Kansas within the first six (6) months after date of employment.

Compensation

The successful candidate will receive a highly competitive salary with an excellent executive benefit package that considers the candidate's salary history and track record of career success. The City Commission will negotiate a mutually agreeable employment agreement with the selected candidate including assistance with moving and relocation, if appropriate. Further details on compensation may be obtained through Ralph Andersen & Associates.

The Recruitment Process

This is a confidential process and will be handled accordingly throughout the various stages of the process. Candidates should be aware that references will not be contacted until mutual interest has been established.

All interested candidates should apply by Friday, October 2, 2015 to Ralph Andersen & Associates at apply@ralphandersen.com and should include a compelling cover letter, comprehensive resume, and three-years of salary history. Preliminary Skype interviews will be conducted as necessary. Top candidates will be invited for a comprehensive interview process tentatively set for late October. Additionally, a supplemental questionnaire may be required with responses to specific questions and submittal of sample work products.

For further information or questions on the recruitment process, please contact Mr. Greg Nelson or Ms. Heather Renschler at (916) 630-4900. Confidential inquiries are welcomed.

The City of Lawrence is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



City of Lawrence
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE