

## **CITY MANAGER** **West Liberty, Iowa**

West Liberty, Iowa, population 3,736 is seeking a high-quality candidate with strong, energetic, and visionary leadership skills to serve as their next City Manager. West Liberty is a small community located in eastern Iowa, just 30 minutes east of Iowa City/Cedar Rapids and 60 minutes west of the Quad Cities. It has the advantage of all the resources of major metropolitan areas with less than an hour's drive while living in a small community with lower cost of living. The City Manager has 9 direct reports. There is a total of thirty-six (36) full-time employees and approximately forty (40) part-time/seasonal staff. The annual operating budget is approximately \$15 Million. To learn more about West Liberty and the position profile, visit their website at <https://www.cityofwestlibertyia.org>.

The successful candidate will have experience with economic development, budgeting, and financial management, strategic planning, and be ethical, creative, responsive and a teambuilder. The next City Manager shall be a skilled communicator with the public, mayor and council, staff, and public.

### **Education**

- Bachelor's degree with coursework in public administration, urban studies, business administration or in related field or Public Manager Certification accredited by the State of Iowa within one year of hire.
- Master's degree preferred.

### **Experience**

- Five (5) years of responsible City or County government operations and management experience, or an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

### **Salary and benefits**

- \$84,368 to \$109,182 annually, depending upon qualifications.
- Holidays, Vacation, and Personal Sick Leave.
- Health Insurance, Dental coverage, Short-term Disability and Life Insurance available salary.
- Retirement equal to City's share of IPERS at a rate of 9.44% of annual salary.
- 457 Plan Retirement equal to City's share of up to \$1,800 annually.

### **Car Allowance**

- A vehicle may be provided or mileage reimbursement at IRS rate.
- Must obtain valid Iowa Driver's License.

### **Cell Phone**

- Cell phone provided or stipend is available to reimburse costs of monthly cellular phone.

### **Residency**

- Residency within the twenty (20) miles of the city limits is required within six months of employment.

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### **Additional Information**

Confidential materials such as a cover letter, resume, salary history, and 5 professional references should be sent to:

Elizabeth Hansen, Midwest Municipal Consulting LLC  
[ehansen@cityofwestlibertyia.org](mailto:ehansen@cityofwestlibertyia.org)  
515-391-9816

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled with the first review on **April 23, 2021**.



Midwest Municipal Consulting

The City of  
West  
Liberty, Iowa  
seeks a  
strategic  
leader and  
effective  
relationship  
-builder to  
serve as the  
next ...



# CITY MANAGER

## The Community

West Liberty is a small community located in eastern Iowa, just 30 minutes east of Iowa City/Cedar Rapids and 60 minutes west of the Quad Cities. It has the advantage of all the resources of major metropolitan areas, with less than half an hour's drive, while living in a small community with a lower cost of living.

The residents are a culturally diverse population from Latin America, South America, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Many families are fourth generation residents of the city. The Latino population is 54%, the first city in Iowa to have a majority Latino population. The school system is ranked #1 high school in the state according to US News & World Report 2018 Rankings. It features a Dual Language Program for K-12 student. More than 51% of the high school students speak both Spanish and English. Although diverse, the community sees itself as a small town where people care about one another.

The major industry is West Liberty Foods, a food service supplier, established in 1947, employing 800-850 people. Shaking Earth Digital, located in downtown, develops apps for mobile, tablet and desktop devices. They work all over the world. Liberty Communications, internet provider, is a Certified Gig-Capable Provider able to offer internet speeds up to a Gig using fiber network and broadband connections.

The sense of community pride and commitment is strongly shared among the city staff and





business community. That sense of community is built upon a shared vision.

## The Community, continued...

The community hosts a number of events that occur annually, including:

- The city's biggest event, the Muscatine County Fair is held every year in July.
- Summer Music in the Park is every Friday.
- The Children's Festival is held every year in September.
- In the months of April- August the West Liberty Raceway hosts races nearly every Saturday night.

**Airport:** West Liberty residents utilize several Regional Airports (Eastern Iowa, Southeast Iowa and Dubuque) within an hour drive in and is only 40 miles from the Quad City International Airport, a hub providing four airlines serving to 11 major airports in the US.



**Arts and Culture:** The Eulenspiegel Puppet Center has been performing for over 40 years and has called West Liberty its home for many of those years. The New Strand Theatre is a historic opera building that has been hosting performance arts and movies in the community since 1910. The historical Rock Island Depot, built in 1897, now serves as a museum.

**Churches:** There are nine (9) churches in West Liberty.

### Parks and Recreation:

West Liberty offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities in their nine (9) well-maintained parks, including a swimming pool with a waterslide, a skate park, multiple ball diamonds, soccer fields, frisbee golf, tennis, a walking trail and much more. West Liberty Golf & Country Club opened in 1959 and is a 9 hole course featuring 3,057 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par of 36.

### Education:

The West Liberty Community School District (WLCS D) consists of elementary, middle, and high schools. Construction of a new high school was completed in 2004. A new middle school was opened in 2009 with a combination of new construction and extensive





renovations of parts of the old high school. The school district serves over 1220 students with a student/teacher ratio of 11/1. West Liberty High School was ranked #1 in the state according to US News & World Report 2018 Rankings. The West Liberty Elementary, Middle School, and High School are all International

Spanish Academies (ISAs). The WLCSD Dual Language Program allows students to take all of their classes in both Spanish and English, increasing their bilingual skills and their understanding of another culture through language immersion. Students enter the program in pre-kindergarten and parents make a commitment on behalf of their child and themselves to participate in the program through fifth grade.

**Library:**

The West Liberty Public Library building was constructed in 1904 with the help of a \$7500 grant from Andrew Carnegie. It is listed as a State Historical Building and has been renovated and expanded various times over the years. The library holds a host of activities throughout the year including summer reading programs, screenings of educational movies, toddler story times, a morning coffee book club, and much more.



**Health Care:**

In West Liberty, there are four (4) health and wellness options, including Chiropractic Care, Physical Therapy and a mobile family clinic.

**Public Safety:**



**Fire:**

The West Liberty Volunteer Fire Department also provides ambulance service. There is one centrally located fire station in the community. The Department provides fire suppression to the residents of West Liberty as well as many other emergency services. The fire fighters are certified at the Fire Fighter II level. The fire department also is active in fire prevention

activities. This includes the fire fighters providing fire prevention education to all students in kindergarten, 2nd, and 6th grades.



**Police:**

The West Liberty Police Department is comprised of six (6) full time officers, several Part-time and Reserve Officers and recently ranked as the number 6 safest community in Iowa as reported by The SafeWise Report.



## Governance and the Organization

The City of West Liberty’s Council/Manager form of government is a system founded on the balance between the policy-setting functions of the five-member City Council, the Mayor, and the management expertise of an appointed City Manager. There are five (5) council members elected by City residents to serve for four-year overlapping terms. The mayor serves a two-year term. To assist the city council in their duties there are numerous commissions, committees, and task forces which operate to address needs and trends identified by city staff and the community. The City Council meetings are held every First and Third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The Council meetings are located at City Hall in the Council Chambers at the 101 E Fourth St. entrance.

West Liberty is a full government service community, including administration, electric, police, fire, public works, solid waste, recycling, parks and recreation, library, water and wastewater utilities.

The city’s current tax rate is \$15.31415 per \$1,000 valuation and has a FY 19–20 general fund budget of approximately \$14.6 million, \$8.4 million in TIF, and \$17.3 million in GO, TIF and revenue debt service.

The city staff is relatively young. This is a result of retirements and turnover of staff members. The city manager needs to consider how to encourage quality employees to stay. Management styles are evolving toward greater employee involvement in determining how employees do their jobs. There is often more than one way to get the job done, and allowing employees and supervisors the latitude to make decisions on how to meet the objectives, results in a higher level of job satisfaction and performance.

## Leadership and Innovation Opportunities

The City of West Liberty held a goal setting work session in December 2019 and will likely conduct another session in December 2021. The next City Manager will participate in the process and will be expected to develop long-term strategies that will help the city address the current projects and priorities.

## Desired Capabilities

The City of West Liberty seeks a creative and visionary leader to be the next City Manager. The ideal candidate will have a management style that evolves toward greater employee involvement in determining how employees do their jobs. There is often more than one way to get the job done, and allowing employees and supervisors the latitude to make decisions on how to meet the objectives, results in a higher level of job satisfaction and performance.

Incentives for the employee to acquire skills that benefit the city, and accepting input from those employees, along with recognition of quality job performance is a means to retaining quality people. Employees' involvement includes the employee understanding the importance of providing good and friendly service to the citizens. It also requires recognition of the value of cooperation with the needs of the business community. Contemporary leadership is a combination of being open to new ideas and cheerleading success.

Leadership involves holding people accountable. The organization benefits when employees are recognized for success and held accountable for substandard performance. The latter is not an easy responsibility or a pleasant duty. To fail to meet the responsibility of holding people accountable degrades the organization's internal operations.

City departments are diverse in their responsibilities. It is easy to develop the tendency to operate in silos, each department working on objectives without consideration of how that impacts other departments. The city manager has the responsibility to create a team atmosphere. Each department becomes aware of the jobs of the other departments and should seek to identify a way to work cooperatively.

The city manager is the chief executive officer for the city and is the public relations contact person. This means being open with news media about city operations, admitting when things do not go right and making sure it is known when the city does a good job. The city manager must understand the obligation to be involved in community organizations, if not a member of the organization, then be readily available to meet with those organizations to discuss city business. Skill with social media venues such as Facebook and Twitter and speaking at public events and with citizens shopping at the local stores will serve the community's need to know. The city manager is a public figure and these opportunities are very much part of the job.

Every community is working on economic growth and redevelopment. West Liberty has the advantage of being attractive to startups and entrepreneurs. The availability of reasonable commercial rental space and Gigabit internet speeds make this an attractive place to launch a new business. The city manager can use these resources to stimulate economic development.



Specific traits identified:

- Experienced in local government operations
- Good communication skills
- Clearly plans and programs
- Advocate for the objectives of the city
- Comfortable in a culturally diverse population
- Accepts responsibility
- Skilled in human relation issues
- Recognize employee accomplishments
- Economic development and growth
- Capable using compromise to achieve goals
- Understand bonding, TIF, grants
- Experience with city owned utilities
- Accept/evaluate new ideas with open mind
- Comfortable being a public figure
- Approachable in public
- Open in controversial situations
- Active in community events/organizations
- Hold employees accountable
- Experience with developing housing
- Using technology to operate more efficiently
- Understand budgets and how to manage

## The Position



West Liberty, Iowa, population 3,736 is located in eastern Iowa, near Iowa City/Cedar Rapids. It has the advantage of all the resources of major metropolitan areas with less than half an hour's drive while living in a small community with lower cost of living. The city owns and operates the electrical power system, water system, wastewater treatment plant, and solid waste which includes curb side recycling. Experience with managing city owned utilities is valuable.

The residents are a culturally diverse population from Latin America, South America, Asia, Europe, and Africa. Many families are fourth generation residents of the city. The Latino population is 54%, the first city in Iowa to have a majority Latino population. The school system is ranked #1 high school in the state according to US News & World Report 2018 Rankings. It features a Dual Language Program for K-12 student. More than 51% of the high school students speak both Spanish and English.

The major industry is West Liberty Foods, a food service supplier established in 1947 employing 800-850 people. Shaking Earth Digital located in downtown develops apps for mobile, tablet and desktop devices. They work all over the world. Liberty Communications, internet provider, is a Certified Gig-Capable Provider, able to offer internet speeds up to a Gig using fiber network and broadband connections.

The successful candidate will have the skills to develop increased housing programs, economic development and is comfortable working with a culturally diverse population. The next city manager will be expected to understand budgeting, TIF, and bond management. That person will be expected to represent the city with local groups and participate in community events.



## Education and Experience

Bachelor's degree with coursework in public administration, political science, accounting, finance, business management or administration, economics, or related field and a minimum of three (3) years of increasingly responsible experience managing municipal government operations or comparable organizations. Master's degree or certified public administrator preferred. Experienced in local government operations.

## Compensation and Benefits

The salary range is \$84,368 to \$109,182 annually, depending on experience, IPERS and ICMA 457 retirement benefits, life and short-term disability, medical and dental insurance, and Holiday, Vacation, and sick leave benefits. A vehicle is provided or mileage reimbursement is available. A stipend is available to reimburse costs of monthly cellular phone usage. Residency within twenty minutes of the City Limits is required within six months of employment.

## How to Apply

Submit your cover letter, resume, salary history and five work related references by April 23, 2021 to Midwest Municipal Consulting, LLC. at [Ehansen@cityofwestlibertyia.org](mailto:Ehansen@cityofwestlibertyia.org).

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Hansen by calling 515-391-9816.

## Tentative Timeline

Applications will be accepted until	April 23
Screening/Written and/or Phone Interviews	May 7
Selection of Finalists	May 14
Background Checks by	June 4
Interviews	June 17-18
New City Manager Starts	July or August



The City of West Liberty is an Equal Opportunity Employer.





# CITY OF WEST LIBERTY, IOWA

## City Manager

**DATE:** Adopted 12/20

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**CLASSIFICATION:**

Exempt

**DEPARTMENT:** Administration

**JOB DESCRIPTION:**

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**Summary/Objective**

The City Manager is responsible for planning, organizing, directing and coordinating all municipal activities; serve as the chief administrative officer of the City and is responsible for the proper administration of all affairs of the City.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

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The City Manager is appointed by a majority vote of the city council for a term as agreed upon. The City Manager is directly responsible to and reports to the Mayor and the City Council; providing highly responsible and complex administrative support to the Mayor and City Council in legislative, policy, fiscal, and other technical matters of municipal affairs under their direction.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

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- Acts as the official liaison for the City in working with public and private agencies. Required to attend all meetings of the Council, County, Regional and other administrative agencies as requested by Mayor and /or Council. Also handles citizen's complaints and/or concerns and problem resolution.
- Sees that business affairs of the City are conducted by approved methods and in an efficient manner.
- Implements, coordinates and administers contracts and policies of the City Council.
- Provides for the enforcement and regulation of ordinances, resolutions, and laws and insures the provision of services as expected. Responsible for the investigation of harassment and discrimination claims of misconduct.
- Supervises the construction, improvement, repair, maintenance and management of City property and accountability for the physical facilities of the City.
- Supervises the management of building structures and land under the jurisdiction of the Council and be charged with the care and preservation of all City-owned equipment, tools, machinery, appliances, supplies and commodities.
- Assists the Mayor, Council, City Clerk and all department heads in preparing the annual budget in the manner prescribed by law. Responsible for all accounting and procedures such as budget control and finance, insurance, capital improvement and planning, and implementation of funding sources and conducts the business affairs for the City using modern and efficient account methods and keeps the council advised as to the financial and other conditions of the City and makes recommendations as to its future needs.
- Authorizes purchasing of material, supplies, capital outlay and services of departments of the City that have been budgeted and appropriated by resolution of the Council, and enforce a

program to determine that such purchases are received and are quality and character called for in the order.

- Maintains accounting of all obligations, agreements, commitments and contractual franchises involving the City and report to the Mayor and Council any deviations from the exact terms as specified therein.
- Maintains at all times accurate and current records of all affairs of the departments in a form acceptable to the Council. Copies of such records shall be available for public inspection except as otherwise prohibited by law.
- Has direct responsibility for the supervision, direction and administration for the following departments and offices and be directly responsible to the Mayor and Council for proper function of the same: Streets and Solid Waste, Water/Sewer, Wastewater, Electric, Police, Fire, Building, City Clerk, and Parks and Recreation.
- Participates in oversight of staff training, employee development and evaluations, promotions, demotions and discharges, subject to the approval of the Council.
- Conducts weekly staff meetings with department heads.
- Makes recommendations to the governing body a standard schedule of pay for each appointive office and position in the City services, including minimum, intermediate and maximum rates.
- Provides administrative support and assistance to the Mayor and perform duties in the coordination of all phase's municipal activity as directed by the Mayor and Council. Provide monthly updates to Mayor and Council of city activities and progress towards council goals or policy agreements.
- Coordinates the work of the City Attorney and City Engineer.
- Other duties as directed by the Council or as included in the City Code.
- Build relationships with business community and play a leadership role in economic development.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS (POSITION REQUIREMENTS AT ENTRY):**

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- Municipal budgeting and public finance administration and practices.
  - Knowledge of the organization, functions and problems of municipal, county, state and federal community-related statues and government; knowledge of the principles and methods of public administration and public finance, including city planning and development of infrastructure.
  - Comprehensive knowledge of the principles, practices, liabilities and methods of personnel administration and supervision as it relates to recruitment, labor relations, employment, safety, compensation, benefits, contracts, temporary staffing, training, performance evaluation, employee relations and investigations, and government compliance laws, rules, and regulations that govern public employment in the State of Iowa. High level of proficiency in effectively managing others for high performance. Successful team and organizational building, goal development and project follow through.
  - Various funding techniques including Tax Increment Financing.
  - Organization and Management practices and policies.
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- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships.
  - Modern practices and principles of Public Administration.
  - Computer, internet use, e-mail and central faxing.
  - Principals of Personnel / Human Resources Management.
  - Strategic Planning, Development and Implementation.
  - Public works operations and infrastructure replacement.

**SKILLS AND ABILITIES:**

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- Ability to read financial reports and legal documents.
- Have interpersonal relationships that encourage openness, candor and trust, both internally and outside of the City; establishing and maintaining an effective working relationship with coworkers, supervisor, City Council, Mayor, the press and the general public.
- Have exceptional oral and written communication skills; communicating effectively, both orally and in writing, in a wide variety of situations with diverse individuals and groups.
- Have excellent time management and organizational skills. Must have the ability to manage multiple projects and prioritize workload in a timely and effective manner. Performing duties efficiently and accurately to meet time sensitive deadlines.
- Ability to be innovative and creative in decision-making and problem resolution situations and in the performance of job duties.
- Understand and maintain confidentiality of all City and personnel information.

**TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS:**

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Education: Graduation from high school or equivalent GED. Bachelor’s Degree majoring in public administration, urban studies, business administration or in related field.

Experience: At least five years of increased responsibility within municipal or public leadership/management roles, or an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

Preferred Education/Training: Master’s Degree majoring in public administration, urban studies, business or public administration or in related field.

**LICENSING REQUIREMENTS:**

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- Position must be bondable in an amount determined by City policy.
- Shall possess valid State of Iowa vehicle operator’s license.
- If a Bachelor’s Degree is not obtained, the City Manager shall obtain a Public Manager Certification accredited by the State of Iowa within one year of hire.

**ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL ABILITIES:**

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Positions in this class typically require: sitting, reaching, standing, grasping, kneeling, talking, hearing, seeing, and repetitive motions. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

Exerting up to 25 pounds of force occasionally and/or a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to lift, carry, push, pull or otherwise move objects. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and ability to adjust focus.

Work is generally performed in an inside office environment with appropriate heating and cooling and is not subject to significant occupational or environmental hazards other than those normally associated with general public contact. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

**SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY:**

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The City Manager manages supervisors in the following departments: Streets and Solid Waste, Water/Sewer, Wastewater, Electric, Police, Fire, Building, City Clerk, and Parks and Recreation. Acts as a liaison and provides direction to both the library and water supervisors and boards. Position is responsible for leadership, performance management and facilitation of hiring of employees within those departments.

**POSITION TYPE AND EXPECTED HOURS OF WORK:**

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This is a full-time position, and hours of work and days are generally Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Shall generally be available for off-hour emergencies. Must be able and willing to work the hours necessary to accomplish assigned duties; attend evening meetings and/or critical events and activities, as appropriate; and travel out of town as necessary to attend and/or participate in workshops, conferences, seminars, and meetings during work and non-work hours.

**DISCLAIMER:**

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The above information is intended to describe the general nature and level of work to be performed by employees in this position. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities, requirements, and working conditions. The City reserves the right to change or assign other duties to this position as needed and as deemed appropriate. Employees holding this position will be required to perform any other job-related duties requested by management. Reasonable accommodations may be made as needed for employees to perform the essential duties and responsibilities and meet the requirements of the position. City of West Liberty employees are considered at-will employees. An employee may terminate his/her employment at any time and the City may also terminate the employee's employment at any time. Unless otherwise provided by contract or law, all employment with the City of West Liberty is to be considered "at-will".

**SIGNATURES:**

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Employee signature below constitutes employee's understanding of the requirements, essential functions, and duties of the position.

Employee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_