



Photo Credit: Ross Cummings



BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

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CITY OF BELLINGHAM, WA HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

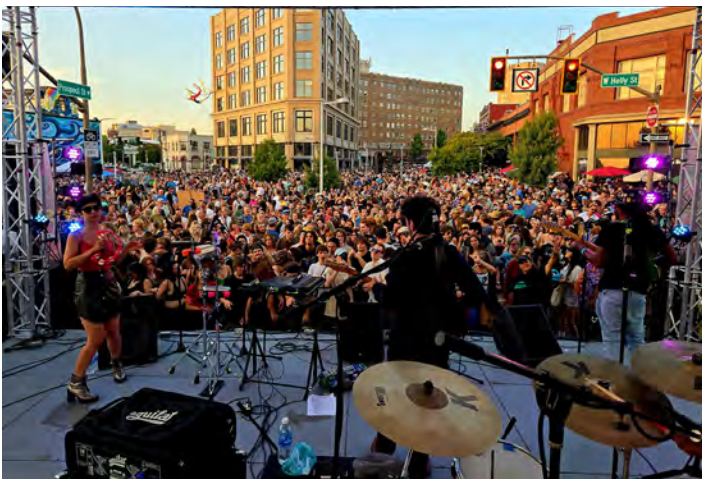
We invite you to learn more about the City of Bellingham and our Human Resources Director position. Our vision is to be among the best cities in the nation and an employer of choice, with excellent government in service to our community. Learn more and imagine yourself in this exciting and influential role.

ABOUT BELLINGHAM

Bellingham, Washington is among the most beautiful and vibrant communities in the country. We have a small city vibe combined with big city events and activities, natural beauty and recreation galore, all nestled between the Cascade Mountains and the San Juan Islands. A short distance to both Seattle and Vancouver, BC, Bellingham is the recipient of an extensive list of awards, including many designations as a “best place” for livability, outdoor adventures and leadership in sustainability.



Photo Credit: Audra Mercille



Recreation, Arts and Culture: Known as a recreation destination, Bellingham has invested for decades in a top-notch system of parks and trails. Within easy reach are world-class skiing, sailing, kayaking, mountain biking, climbing, and hiking. It's truly an outdoor lover's paradise. With a thriving arts scene, unique shopping districts, and a plethora of local eateries, breweries and more, there's something for everyone in the urban center. From the live productions at the Mount Baker Theatre to the Smithsonian-affiliated Whatcom Museum, independent cinema at the Pickford Film Center, and music, art, comedy and other offerings at venues throughout the community, Bellingham proudly supports an active and innovative culture of arts and entertainment.

Housing and Neighborhoods: Bellingham is among the fastest growing cities in the Pacific Northwest. With an eye toward sustainable growth, the city has preserved its historic roots and has connections to the Indigenous nations who have called this land home since time immemorial. While looking to the future, walkable, bikeable neighborhoods and urban villages are spread throughout the city. You'll find neighborhoods with distinct character and housing styles: regal Victorians, waterfront hideaways, country farmhouses, condominiums, traditional single-family homes, and thoughtfully planned new developments.

Education: Education stands tall in Bellingham, with a well-supported, well-funded, acclaimed K-12 public education system in our Bellingham Public Schools. Public higher education institutions including Western Washington University, Northwest Indian College and two community colleges also call our area home, adding vibrancy and diversity to our community and offering an array of programs, including exciting community and continuing education options, ensuring people of all ages have opportunities for lifelong learning.

This is just a small sample of what's great about Bellingham! Learn more:

- Local tourism agency, [Visit Bellingham](#)
- City of Bellingham [website](#)

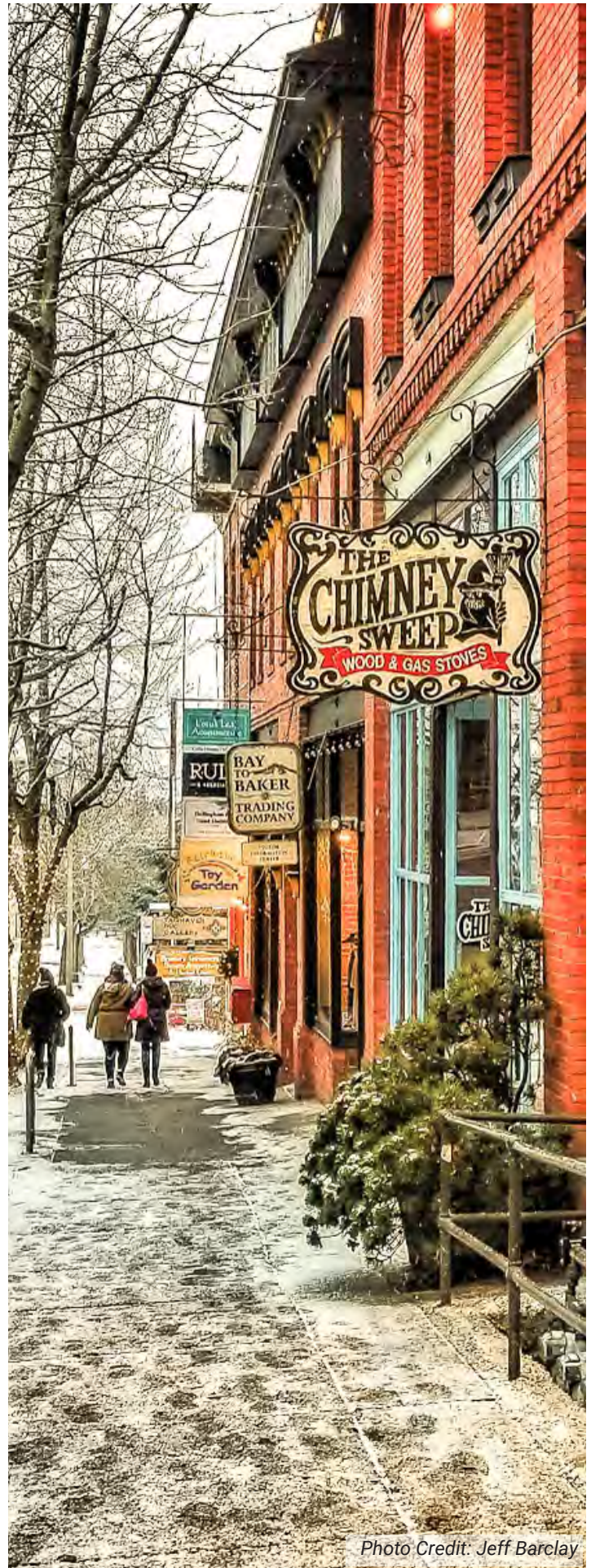


Photo Credit: Jeff Barclay



OUR CITY GOVERNMENT

The City of Bellingham is committed to working toward a vision of being a safe, sustainable and equitable community where current and future generations can thrive. Like many communities, we face challenges and opportunities that define and inspire our City government's important work in achieving this vision.

Current priorities for the City include increasing housing options, promoting sustainable growth, addressing climate change, inspiring and empowering a service-oriented workforce, ensuring strong fiscal stewardship, strengthening community engagement, and maintaining a safe and welcoming community for everyone.

These and other priorities are in addition to providing a full suite of excellent municipal services that include public safety, economic development, environmental stewardship and remediation, street and multi-modal transportation infrastructure, utilities, culture and recreation activities, general government services, and much more.

Activities owned and/or operated by the City include water, wastewater and stormwater facilities, county-wide emergency medical services, municipal parking facilities, a golf course, a cemetery, a museum, a four-branch library, nearly 100 parks, an athletic complex with a stadium, an aquatic center and multiple athletic fields.

A ONE CITY APPROACH

We are passionate about a One City approach to the City's work. To meet today's challenges we must harness innovation, expertise and creativity across the City's departments and branches of government.

One City is our vision for a community-first approach to providing local government services. To the community we serve, we are "one City," accountable as a whole for delivering excellent service and good government. A key initiative for 2025, One City is both an ethos of service and a practical approach to all our collective work.

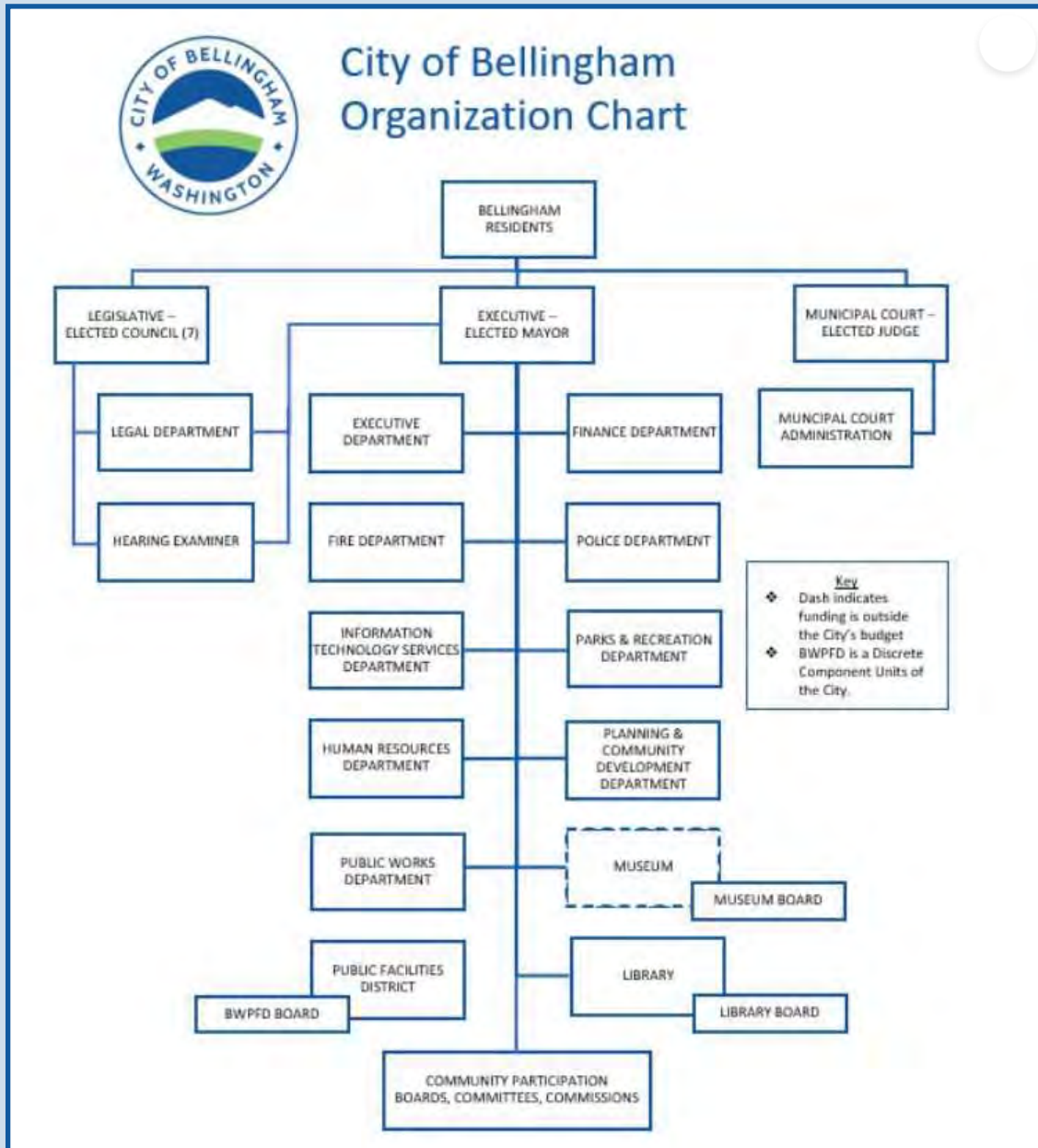
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The City Charter establishes a Mayor-Council form of government, with the City administration led by an elected Mayor in a strong-Mayor system.

Our seven-member City Council serves as our legislative, policy-making branch of government. An elected judge presides over Bellingham Municipal Court as our judicial branch.

Most administrative department heads – including the HR Director – are appointed by and serve at the Mayor’s discretion.

The Mayor heads an administrative operation that includes overseeing approximately 1035 full-time employees and an added 50 seasonal workers. There are nine collective bargaining units. The City ensures the effective delivery of essential municipal services through an overall budget in 2025 of \$548.9 million, which includes \$122.2 million for general funding operations. The 2025 Human Resources general fund budget is \$3.0 million.





POSITION SUMMARY

Our new Human Resources Director will help set the tone and direction to create a culture of belonging, excellence, shared responsibility and compassion. We are an organization that sees the nobility in public service and is committed to providing the best service possible to the community we love. We value the contributions of employees and seek to do all we can to inspire their passion and creativity, provide opportunities to grow, and reward and honor their work.

The Human Resources Director is responsible for the City's workforce strategy, including developing policies to attract, retain, and nurture talent, reinforcing a City staff capable of serving the community with distinction, and fostering an inclusive workforce that mirrors the City's values and demographics.

The Human Resources Director leads and coordinates a comprehensive Human Resources program with a team of 25 staff to support all employees and collective bargaining units. The Human Resources Director role encompasses a wide range of

responsibilities aimed at administering and enhancing the City's human resources system. This includes advising on human resource issues, revising policies, aiding the Civil Service Commission, overseeing staff, and ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.

The position leads recruitment, retention, and training programs, manages civil service, conducts studies on employment practices, oversees labor negotiations, maintains adherence to Equal Opportunity Programs, conducts workplace investigations, preserves records, and develops recognition programs to boost employee morale and performance.

City leaders understand the importance of the human resources department and are eager to support the new director. This begins with the director creating a department that listens to the employees and strives to find ways in which the department can better help them. The director will provide guidance to elected and appointed leaders by showing a commitment to honesty, strong ethical standards and creating a positive culture for the workforce.



TOP PRIORITIES

Immediate priorities for the new director include:

- Lead the department to be the guiding force for recruiting and retaining top employees and for the City to become a highly desired employer in the community. The director will collaborate closely with the Mayor's Office and others to develop a strategic plan that will create initiatives to help the City become an employer of choice.
- The City is currently changing its human resources management system to Workday and the new director will need to quickly and thoroughly be acclimated to it. The department administers various programs through this system, including payroll, so it is a vital part of the department and municipal operations. The department will also administer the system and be responsible for training and development.
- In coordination with the Mayor's Office, the next director is charged with developing long range strategies that focus on diversity, equity and inclusion in the workforce, including implementation plans and programs to sustain these efforts.
- With nine collective bargaining units within the City, the director must have strong labor relation skills as well as an ability to quickly understand the current collective bargaining agreements. An ability to assess the long-term impacts of collective bargaining components and the sequencing of those nine agreements is imperative to the success of the director.
- The director will need to quickly assess the culture of the organization and begin to implement programs that build a positive culture by breaking down barriers and inviting everyone to play a role in creating a workplace that is reflective of its cultural values.
- The next director must have the ability to analyze current training and education initiatives of the department as they relate to the various levels of management positions within the city. This analysis must include how the system currently offers training for all levels of management and how training can be improved to foster successful succession planning within all departments.





THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

- Must have the ability to create a culture within the department and strategies for the entire organization that foster a positive work environment and reinforce municipal service as a highly regarded career choice.
- Is a highly skilled and approachable leader who excels in developing clear and strategic documentation while effectively managing intricate communication dynamics.
- Can skillfully assess workforce issues, crafting thoughtful responses that inspire constructive, solution-focused conversations.
- Will foster an environment where collaboration thrives, encouraging team members to share their expertise and contribute to shared goals.
- Is a strong communicator and can simplify complex HR concepts and laws, ensuring that all staff understand and can apply them in their roles.
- Is committed to continuous improvement and will lead major organization-wide projects and initiatives, setting strategic priorities and monitoring progress toward achieving goals.
- Will cultivate a culture of accountability and growth within the Human Resources Department and beyond.
- With an initiative-taking approach, is skilled at identifying the needs of others and creatively resolving issues, even in situations where guidelines may not be defined.
- Will evaluate and manage performance while developing corrective action plans when necessary, ensuring that all team members are aligned with the organization's goals.
- Can lead and support overall Citywide strategic plans and priorities and can organize HR to provide support to leaders and staff to achieve these goals.
- Will be a resolute supporter and partner to the City's justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Must identify areas of improvement and develop effective strategies for resolution to ensure that the department is responsive and aligned with the organization's vision for excellence.





CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor's degree in human resources, public administration, business administration or related field from an accredited university. Master's degree preferred.
- Five years of progressively responsible experience with at least three years senior management experience in a comprehensive human resources program including supervision.
- Extensive experience managing collective bargaining and labor relations is required.
- CLRP, SPHR/SHRM-SCP and/or PHR/SHRM-CP Certification preferred.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The current hiring range for the position is \$169,164 - \$204,696 DOQ. The City's excellent and comprehensive benefit program includes medical, dental and vision coverage for employees and their dependents, plus life insurance and long-term disability for employees. The package includes generous paid leave provisions, including vacation, 12 holidays per year and sick leave.

City employees participate in the Washington State Retirement System with joint contributions from the City and the employee. The City offers an Employee Assistance Program, and employees have the option of participating in a Flexible Spending Plan for health care/dependent care reimbursement, as well as deferred compensation programs. Residency is not required, but highly preferred.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates should apply online at GovHRjobs.com with a cover letter, resume, and contact information for at least five professional references, by February 21, 2025. For further information, contact Executive Consultant Sarah McKee at 847-380-3240 ext. 120.

The City of Bellingham 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.