



*Deadline Extended – Looking For a Few More Great Candidates*

— POSITION AVAILABLE —

## CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Apply ASAP but no later than August 9, 2024

Located on the banks of the Mississippi River, Davenport is characterized by rolling hills and breathtaking riverfront views. In fact, in 2021, WorldAtlas named it as one of ten “Prettiest River Towns in America.” More importantly, the City is known for its friendly neighbors, strong midwestern values and work ethic, proud heritage, and excellent quality of life. In other words, Davenport is a great place to call home, and it has been recognized as such—Livability named the City as one of the top 100 best places to live in the United States in 2023.

Beginning as a river-based trade center, Davenport remains a thriving commercial hub. It is the largest of the municipalities composing the Quad Cities—an area that hosts several successful Fortune 500 companies including Kraft Heinz, Sterilite Corporation, Nestle Purina, Sears Manufacturing, and John Deere and is the third largest City in the state of Iowa. Interstate 80, rail service, and an abundant supply of water makes it a highly desirable place for many businesses to locate.

For those who love the outdoors, the City offers much in the way of outdoor activities. Ready access to the Mississippi River and open space make it a perfect place to explore and enjoy outdoor



hobbies. Boating and fishing (walleye and bass, in particular) are popular. Biking, hiking, and hunting opportunities are abundant.

Unlike many cities, Davenport has preserved access to the Mississippi with nine miles of riverfront land with much of it designated as park space. The area contains numerous athletic fields and other venues such as the out and back 14.2 mile Riverfront Trail and the city-owned Modern Woodmen Stadium where the River Bandits, a KC Royals High A, team plays. Another popular park is the 134 acre Sunderbruch Park with trails for hiking, mountain biking, and horse riding. The Vander Veer Botanical Park offers rotating displays within the glass Conservatory and scenic Grand Allée walkway. The 450 acres Credit Island Park provides a boating ramp, nature trails, playgrounds, basketball and tennis courts, various sports fields, and several historic sites to explore. Golfers will also enjoy the city's three golf courses including two 18-hole courses (Duck Creek & Emeis) or an educational-focused 9-hole course (Red Hawk), as well as numerous courses in the surrounding area. Ice skating is available year round at The River's Edge along with ice hockey opportunities. In all, the City operates nearly 60 parks and related facilities. The City also owns the Davenport Municipal Airport, which offers flying lessons, sight-seeing tours, and an annual airshow. It is also a great place to simply watch aircraft take off and land.

For the culturally inclined, Davenport offers a surprisingly large art community as well as being home to several highly regarded museums. These include the Putnam (one of the first museums west of the Mississippi and which focuses on the sciences) and the Figge Art Museum (which houses over 4,000 works of art). Two blocks from City Hall, Adler Theatre presents a diverse line-up of live, theatrical productions featuring celebrity headliners, first-rate Broadway shows, comedians, and the Quad City Symphony Orchestra. The adjacent River Center Convention Center also hosts the annual, and widely popular, Festival of Trees. Taking place during the week of Thanksgiving, it brings holiday magic to the Quad Cities with over 150 designer displays, fun-filled attractions, special events, and the largest helium balloon parade in the Midwest.

Being part of the Quad Cities means other venues are nearby. For example, the Vibrant Arena at The Mark in Moline is a 12,000 multi-purpose venue hosting concerts and sporting

events (such as the Quad Cities Steamwheelers arena football team). At the Village of East Davenport, visitors stroll past Civil War era buildings while also exploring the area's boutiques, bars, and eateries.

The City pays homage to Bix Beiderbecke, an internationally celebrated jazz legend and one of Davenport's most illustrious natives. It starts in July with the Quad City Times Bix 7 where runners cover a seven-mile course through Davenport. The following weekend is the annual Bix Jazz Festival, a three-day music festival held at the Rhythm City Casino Event Center. The City is also a part of the TBK Bank Quad Cities Marathon, a USATF Certified and Boston Qualifier course, which features some of the finest and most beautiful river views in the country.

The pedestrian Davenport Skybridge is another "can't miss" attraction. Spanning River Drive and connecting the downtown to the riverfront park, it offers spectacular views of the Mississippi River and downtown Davenport. Another popular activity is the April to October outdoor Freight House Farmers' Market along the riverfront.

As noted previously, Davenport is widely recognized as a wonderful place to live. In addition to its amenities, the area offers excellent health facilities and a low cost of living. Of 299 cities in America, Niche ranked Davenport as 24th for "Cities with the Lowest Cost of Living" and 44th for "Best Cities to Buy a House." With the City covering a total of 66 square miles (an area 40% larger than San Francisco), housing options are plentiful and range from townhouses, farms, and multi- and single-family homes.

The downtown has undergone a renaissance whereby many of its older buildings have been converted to apartments or other commercial attractions. The result is approximately 1,700 units in the City's center. Another 120 unit building is under construction within sight of City Hall. Crime tends to be concentrated in specific areas, and rarely impacts most residents.

Davenport boasts diverse school options, including public, private and parochial schools. Those seeking advanced education can visit St. Ambrose University and Eastern Iowa Community College locally, as well as Palmer College of Chiropractic (established here in 1897 as the first chiropractic school in the

world). Other notable campuses are well within driving distance and include the University of Iowa in Iowa City (60 miles), University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls (140 miles), and Iowa State University in Ames (190 miles). Less than 200 miles to the east, in Illinois, are the highly regarded Northwestern University, University of Chicago, and University of Illinois.

Characterized by strong midwestern values, residents work hard, are kind, are family and community oriented, have a “can do” attitude and mean it when they say their word is their bond. Neighbors truly care about neighbors and, particularly in times of need, step up to help. While many have lived here for generations, others are new. The City is culturally diverse, yet welcoming in a way that creates a close knit community.

Davenport’s accessibility to transportation networks is one of its greatest assets. Major roadways (including Interstates 74 and 80) pass through or near the City. Air travel is readily available at Quad City International Airport (10 miles south in Moline) with nonstop flights on the major carriers, as well as on Allegiant, to Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas-Ft. Worth, Denver, Las Vegas, Orlando, and Phoenix. 180 miles to the east is Chicago O’Hare International (ninth busiest airport in the world) and Chicago Midway (30th busiest in the United States). General Wayne A. Downing Peoria International Airport is approximately 100 miles southwest and provides another option with many direct flights on the major carriers. Although service is more limited, non-stop flights on American, Delta, Frontier, United and Allegiant can be found at Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids (75 miles northwest). Finally, Davenport/Quad Cities is also a popular docking spot for Mississippi River cruises through Viking River Cruises and American Cruise Lines.

All in all, Davenport is a thriving center of history, economics, and recreation. It is simply a great place to live, raise a family, and grow professionally. So, if you are an outstanding City Administrator, there is something here for you!

## HISTORY

Prior to the French claiming the area now known as Davenport in the 1700s, it was inhabited by Indigenous Americans including the Sauk, Meskwaki, and Ho-Chunk tribes. In 1803 it was sold to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Settlers of

Table 1: Davenport Demographics

Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	74.1%	0 to 15	17.7%
Black	12.0%	15 to 25	12.5%
Asian	2.2%	25 to 45	30.4%
Native American	0.4%	45 to 65	22.5%
Other	11.3%	65 to 85	15.0%
Total	100.0%	Over 85	1.9%
Hispanic Ethnicity (all races)	8.8%		
2022 Estimated Population: 100,491			

Educational Achievements (25 & Over) and Other Statistics	
High School or Higher	91.0%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	32.3%
Median Age—Davenport	37.1
Median Age—U.S.	38.9
Median Household Income—Davenport	\$54,630
Median Household Income—U.S.	\$74,580
Poverty Rate	15.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

European descent began to arrive in 1808, and the City was incorporated in 1836 making it one of the oldest cities in the upper Midwest.

Serious development began at the end of the Black Hawk War in 1833 when the lands were opened for settlement. Access to the Mississippi meant shipping was easy and over time Davenport became a major grain hub as the Midwest became the greatest agricultural center of the world. Commercial development became prominent as early as 1850.

Over the past 175 years, Davenport has experienced many successes and hardships. During the mid-1800s, the City further grew as a center of commerce due to the Rock Island Railroad Company and the lines it built through the area. In the early 1900s, the City was prospered as it grew and developed. Though growth slowed during the Great Depression, the City rebounded





Figure 1: Location of Davenport, IA

due to federal relief programs and the post-World War II industrial boom.

Davenport's population peaked at 103,264 in the 1980 Census but soon began to decline due to the fallout of railroad industry's restructuring of the 1970s and the farming crisis in the 1980s. By the 1990 Census, it had declined to 95,333. A slow resurgence followed and by the 2020 Census it had rebounded to 101,724.

With its location, infrastructure and midwestern work ethic and values, Davenport's future is indeed bright as it attracts and retains commercial and residential growth.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Since 1970, per the U.S. Census, Davenport's population has hovered around 100,000. In terms of population, the City currently ranks approximately 330 nationally. Its most recent demographic data is found in Table I.

## CLIMATE

Davenport has a humid continental climate characterized by hot, humid summers and windy, cold winters. During the summer, average high temperatures are in the low to mid-80s, with

average lows in the low 60's. In the winter, the average high temperature ranges between the low 30's with average lows well below freezing. Spring brings frequent rain and some last-minute snowstorms. Fall is generally mild and comfortable.

Annually, Davenport on average receives 37 inches of precipitation. As with much of the Midwest, tornadoes may occur, though Davenport has not had a devastating tornado in its recorded history. Due to proximity to the Mississippi River, annual precipitation upriver and no permanent levees, major flooding is a concern within the downtown area and frequently requires implementation of the City's flood plan.

## GEOGRAPHY

As the Scott County seat, Davenport is located along the center of Iowa's eastern edge, bordering the Mississippi River between Iowa and Illinois. The City is part of the Greater Quad Cities of Iowa-Illinois (also known as the Davenport-Moline, Iowa-Illinois Combined Statistical Area), and is approximately halfway between Chicago and Des Moines.

Table 2: Principal Employers, Davenport, IA

Employer	Industry	Employees
Genesis Medical Centers	Healthcare	4,700
Davenport Community Schools	Education	2,500
Arconic/ALCOA	Manufacturing	2,400
Amazon	Retail	1,800
John Deere Davenport Works	Manufacturing	2,000
Tri-City Electric Co.	Utilities	1,200
City of Davenport	Government	1,070
Eaton/Cobham Mission Systems	Aerospace	950
Kraft Heinz/Oscar Mayer	Food and Beverage	790
Eastern Iowa Community College	Education	675
United Parcel Service	Courier	640

Source: Davenport, IA 2023 AFCR & the Quad City Times

The City covers 65.92 square miles (63.80 square miles being land and 2.12 square miles being water). The average elevation in the City is 580 feet above sea level.

COMMERCE

The Quad Cities are a major economic hub with Davenport being the engine. Its largest employers are displayed in Table II above. Elsewhere in the area are John Deere’s headquarters (Moline) and the Rock Island Arsenal (a major U.S. Army base in Rock Island). Other Quad Cities’ firms with more than 4,000 employees include UnityPoint – Trinity (health care), Genesis Health System, and Hy-Vee (retail groceries).

THE GOVERNMENT

Davenport follows the Mayor-Council form of government. The elected body is comprised of a Mayor (elected at large) and 10 Council members (eight represent geographic wards and two are elected at large). Elections are held in November of odd-numbered years, with two year terms beginning the following January. Most notably, all 11 seats come up for election at the same time. Presently, four Council members and the Mayor have served three or more terms, one member is serving his second

term, and five other members are serving their first full term. Historically, members have served more than one term.

The Mayor appoints the City Administrator subject to a two-thirds confirmation by the City Council. The Mayor or any two members of City Council may initiate a resolution to dismiss the City Administrator, although a two-thirds vote of the entire City Council is required to pass the resolution.

The City Administrator is accountable to the Mayor and Council as an elected body, delivers and implements the City Council’s goals and policy drivers through an annual workplan development process, and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the City. Of 14 departments,

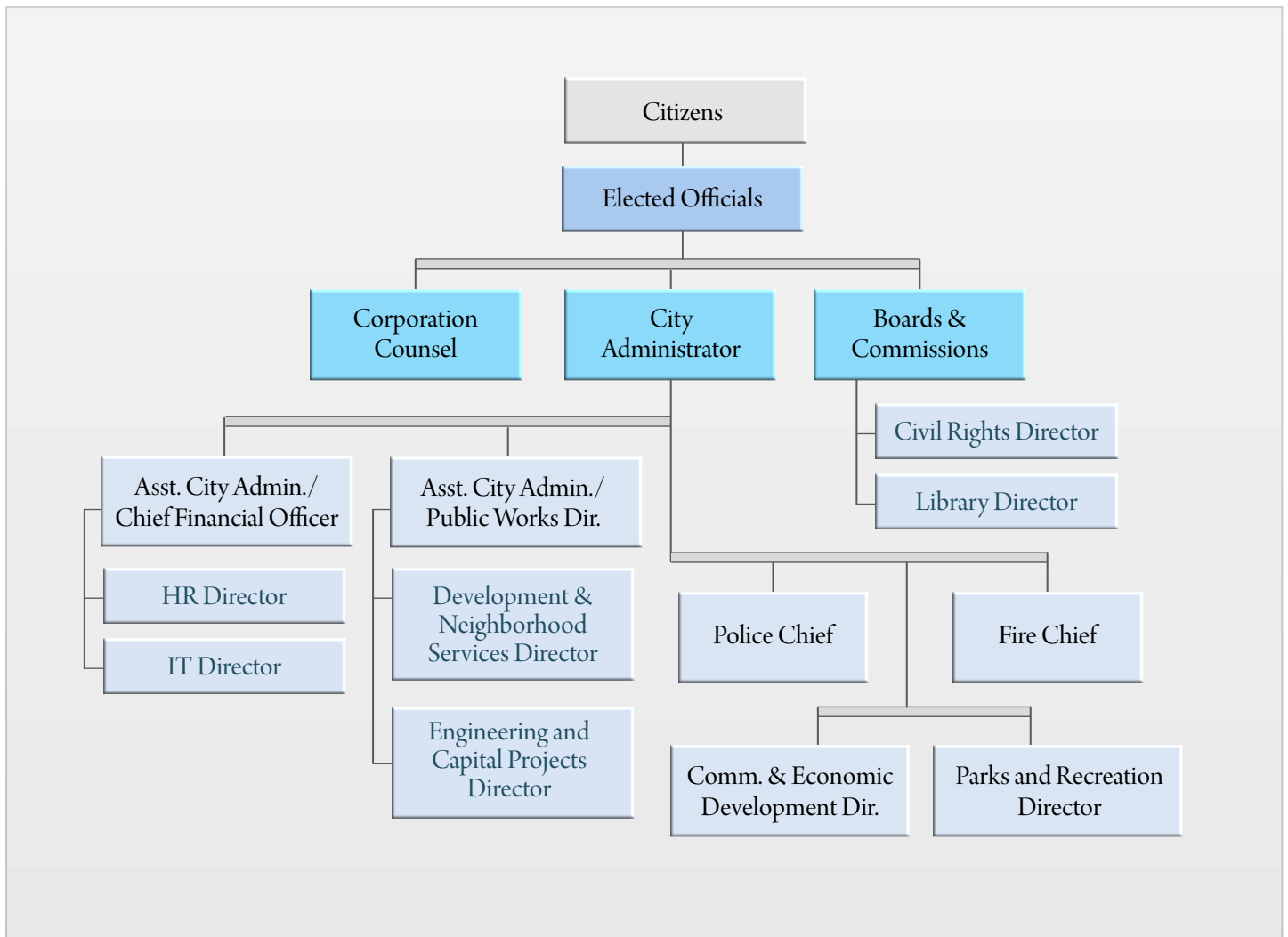
the City Administrator or designee directly appoints ten of the department directors. The Director of the Davenport Public Library is appointed by the Board of Library Trustees, the Civil Rights Director is appointed by the Davenport Civil Rights Commission.

The City Administrator recommends the appointment of the Corporation Counsel, the Mayor appoints, and the City Council confirms the appointment by a two-thirds majority vote. Similar to the City Administrator, the Mayor, City Administrator, or any two members of the City Council may initiate a resolution to dismiss the Corporation Counsel, but it still requires a two-thirds vote of entire City Council to pass.

Each year following an election cycle, the incoming City Council establishes policy level goals and drivers that are then implemented through the adoption of the City Administrator’s annual workplan. The 2024 workplan can be found at: [Strategic Goals & Administrator’s Workplan–City of Davenport \(davenportiowa.com\)](https://davenportiowa.com/StrategicGoals&AdministratorWorkplan-CityofDavenport).

While the water utility is owned by a private company (Iowa American Water), Public Works manages wastewater collection and treatment, as well as the municipal airport, public

FIGURE 2: CITY OF DAVENPORT, IOWA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



transportation, and solid waste collection and disposal. Additionally, notable facilities include a city-owned minor league ballpark (leased to an operator), two public swimming pools, and three golf courses. While most operations are centralized in-house, public safety dispatching is consolidated for the county under the Scott Emergency Communications Center. The City has fourteen departments and 956 full-time equivalent positions. That said, the City presently has 1,149 active full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees. Most are in public safety (police–189 and fire–137) and public works (270). Parks and Recreation (currently 330) sees a boost during summer months for seasonal operations. See Figure 3 for additional information concerning the City’s organizational structure.

The City is focused on continuous improvement and maintaining highly qualified and competent professionals within

its core competency areas. The result is seven of its departments having achieved accreditation or recognition in their respective areas, including Public Works/Engineering & Capital Projects, Police, Fire, Development and Neighborhood Services, Library, Parks and Recreation, and Finance. Further, the City has an Aa2 bond rating with Moody’s (increasing from Aa3 last year) and AA from S&P.

Davenport’s total budget for fiscal year 2025 is \$239,098,740 with a general fund budget of \$60,908,621. The City has six collective bargaining (union) groups, including Police (all sworn, non-management police officers) and Fire (all sworn, non-management firefighters). The other four bargaining groups include Teamsters, Transit, AFSCME, and AFSCME-Library which will all begin their respective collective bargaining negotiations this fall for contract implementation dates of July





1st, 2025. The Assistant City Administrator/ Chief Financial Officer (currently the Interim City Administrator) and Human Resources Director serve as the principal negotiators on behalf of the City with some outside legal support from a well-recognized law firm.

## THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As the Interim City Administrator and Mayor's Special Committee composed of residents, business leaders, and elected officials put it, the "trains run on time." The staff is excellent, and the City is very strong financially. As previously mentioned, seven of its departments are nationally accredited, bond ratings are stable or increasing with notable comments received by both rating agencies, and the City has been recognized by both the State and Federal governments with recent significant and rare grant opportunity awards. Nonetheless, the new City Administrator will have some challenges to address.

A primary focus of the next City Administrator will be to develop and implement a public transparency strategy aimed at ensuring the public's confidence in its government. Over the last several years, the City has experienced a number of challenges such as the 2019 flood and temporary flood wall breach, last year's partial collapse of an apartment building at 324 Main Street, and three settlement agreements with former staff members that has been widely covered in the media.

Communication and telling the City's story will need to be another strategic focus area of the next City Administrator. As mentioned previously, there are great things happening in Davenport, yet many residents appear to be unaware of them or they have been

overshadowed by other events. The City has recently hired a Chief Communications Officer with significant expertise in developing media partnerships, brand management, and general public relations. The next City Administrator will directly supervise this new position, and a partnership in building a transparency strategy rooted in openness will be important.

The City's location and availability of water and electric, transportation, and capable and educated workforce has made it a desirable destination for business enterprises. In the middle of the last decade, Kraft Heinz was considering moving its 70 year old food processing plant out of the City. Instead, it built and opened a new, state-of-the-art \$200 million food processing facility in east Davenport providing 475 jobs. In 2018, Sterilite (a major manufacturer of plastic containers) opened a 2.5 million square foot manufacturing and distribution facility (500 jobs) in Davenport's northern industrial area near Interstate 80, and in 2020, the facility expanded. Earlier this year, Amazon held a grand opening of its robotics fulfillment center (2.3 million square feet and an optimal desired workforce of 2,300 employees) in the same area. On May 21st, Meta was announced as the company behind the planned development of a 715,000 square foot, two-building data center in north Davenport on a 328 acre property. It is expected to invest approximately \$800 million in capital. Momentum is strong with the industrial park nearing capacity, and the next City Administrator will have the unique opportunity to set the stage for additional development in the western part of the City through the development of a new certified industrial park with the State of Iowa. The infrastructure work is currently underway.

In another area, the 2023 election brought five new members to the City Council. The next City Administrator will need to continue efforts to build cohesion through significant communication efforts while ensuring that all members feel heard and receive the same information.

Other issues or challenges include: (1) Being prepared for disasters. The river seems to be flooding more often. In 2020 and again in May of 2024, a derecho (a storm similar to an inland hurricane) struck the City. Blizzards and ice storms are always a winter threat. (2) While the City has done much to address it, crime rates are higher than they would like but are currently trending downward due to the implementation of model best

practices such as the Gun Violence Intervention strategy. (3) Ensuring representation and access in all parts of the City including transportation.

Finally, the new Administrator will be expected to review the City government and how it operates. While the City seems to accomplish its mission well, there is always room for improvement. The new Administrator will need to ensure that the operation is running as smoothly and efficiently as possible. That said, implementing some changes quickly will be difficult as the City is governed by a complex collection of state and local civil service laws and collective bargaining statutes and agreements.

### THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Mayor and City Council are seeking an individual who will be a partner, supporter, and trusted advisor to them, City staff, and the City's Boards and Commissions. He/she will treat all of the elected officials with respect and ensure they all receive the same information at the same time. While recognizing he/she works for the elected officials, the individual will have a strong belief in self, high emotional intelligence (EQ), and will be comfortable telling them what they need to hear, not what they want to hear. The City is not looking for a "yes" person, but someone who will express his/her opinion diplomatically in the right place at the right time. The individual will support recommendations and opinions with facts and have a strong moral compass. That said, once the elected officials have made a decision, the Administrator will do his/her very best to execute that decision.

The ideal candidate will have the ability to build consensus both inside and outside the government. The individual will realize he/she cannot please everyone, will have a strong backbone, and very thick skin. He/she will understand politics but not become involved. The Administrator will seek input, but when it comes time to make a decision, he/she will not hesitate. The individual will have excellent change management skills and know how to implement changes while gaining buy-in from related stakeholders or team members.

The best candidate will exhibit the highest level of professionalism and integrity while also being approachable and as transparent as possible. Recognizing that loss of trust is an issue,



he/she will be open and honest, and have strong people and relationship building skills. Establishing credibility will be critical to the Administrator's success, and the individual will realize that humility and the willingness to admit mistakes will play a key role in that effort. The individual will have a good sense of humor and realize it is also useful in diffusing difficult situations.

The next City Administrator will have outstanding oral and written communications skills, while realizing that listening is often the most important part of any conversation. Being emphatic will be an important plus. He/she will be a spokesperson for the City, tell its story, and be comfortable interacting with the media with ability to discern when and how to be the City's forward-facing spokesperson. The best candidate will be patient and let people know that they are being listened to and heard. He/she will be comfortable interacting and relating to people from all walks of life and backgrounds. The individual will recognize that cultural differences exist within broad categories. A Hispanic from Cuba has a different cultural background for example, than one from Mexico or Venezuela. A Black person from Davenport will have a different heritage than one from Haiti or a country in Africa. Adapting his/her communication style to the circumstances and the individual or group will be important. The individual will need to be very comfortable in the public eye and understand that how the message is delivered is often as important as the message itself—that distrust can be alleviated through wise decisions and by anticipating of potential pitfalls and avoiding them.

The best candidate will be a visionary but also a problem solver with a can-do attitude—someone who thinks strategically and reviews issues with an open mind. He/she will aggressively seek solutions while emphasizing the positive and building consensus. The individual will be customer experience oriented and continue to instill this focus area in all aspects of the organization.

The next City Administrator will be an exceptional manager with a proven track record of achievement. The individual will have a sincere interest in the well-being of the residents, businesses, and employees. He/she will be a mentor and will

inspire, motivate, and encourage the staff to achieve what is best for Davenport. At the same time, he/she will recognize the importance of his or her leadership and maintain strong supervisory and leadership skills. Being respectful of others, delegating, and encouraging an environment where creativity will flourish will be important. The best candidate will recognize talent, mentor that talent, and be confident enough to step back, letting Directors and employees do their jobs. He/she will give assignments and set broad performance parameters, but will also expect results and hold employees accountable while providing leadership support during the process. When necessary and advisable, the individual will roll up his/her sleeves and help.

The ability to anticipate/resolve issues before they become problems is critical. Good judgment and common sense are essential. He/she will not stay behind a desk in the office but will be in the field and in the community listening, always looking for better ways to accomplish the City's business, to communicate the City's message, and most importantly, to improve the residents' quality of life.

In terms of specific skills, the individual will have significant experience in management, communications, finance, economic development, redevelopment, and intergovernmental relations. Knowledge of the application of technology to solve problems and make processes more efficient and effective will be a plus.

The Mayor and Council are looking for someone who will recognize Davenport for the gem it is, become part of the community, and build internal longevity and stability.

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Possession of a master's degree in business administration, public administration, or a related field from an accredited college or university is required; and, eight (8) years of increasingly responsible experience in a local public agency in an administrative and managerial capacity involving the development and administration of organization-wide policies and procedures and the supervision of management level employees, or an equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the required work in this position.

## INTERNAL CANDIDATES

The current Interim City Administrator is not applying for the position.

## COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$200,000 to \$290,000 and the actual salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent, and the City Administrator will participate in the Iowa Public Employees Retirement System, unless the individual chooses to opt out.

## RESIDENCY

The City Administrator is required to live within the boundaries of the City of Davenport.

## HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to [Recruit26@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit26@cb-asso.com) by August 9th. Questions should be directed to Scott Krim at (801) 628-8364, or Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All applications will be kept strictly confidential, and none will be released without the candidate's prior permission. Under Iowa law, the finalists' names will be made public, but only after we notify the candidate and he/she agrees to remain in the search.

## THE PROCESS

Resumes will be screened as they are submitted. Finalists will be selected on August 30th. Interviews will be conducted on September 9th and 10th with a selection anticipated shortly thereafter.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The City of Davenport is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It strongly encourages women, minorities, and veterans to apply.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the City, visit:

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

[www.downtowndavenport.com/explore](http://www.downtowndavenport.com/explore)

[quadcitieschamber.com](http://quadcitieschamber.com)

[visitquadcities.com](http://visitquadcities.com)