



# Sunnyside, WA | Apply by June 7, 2013

Are you up for a challenging finance director position in the sunny and beautiful Yakima River Valley? If so, this opportunity is for you!

First, consider that this city has a great council/manager tradition! In 1948, Sunnyside became the first city in Washington to adopt the council/manager form of government. Further, it achieved the coveted distinction of All American City in 1979.

How about its location! Sunnyside is equal distance between the major metropolitan areas of Spokane, Seattle, and Portland. On I-82, Sunnyside sits midway between the Tri-Cities on the east and the City of Yakima on the west.

Now you know where Sunnyside is, think about its amenities. It has 300 sun-filled days each year with very low precipitation. The year-round temperatures are mild and it is situated in a large and diverse agricultural valley

where fresh fruit, vegetables, mint, grapes, asparagus, and hops are produced. Also, the dairy industry has a large presence in the community.

Sunnyside has a low cost, attractive rural lifestyle. The neighborhoods are cozy where you can get to know the people next door. Housing prices are low compared to the rest of the state. If you are tired of the fast paced lifestyle, traffic, and congestion of a major urban setting, you'll enjoy the easy going tempo of Sunnyside where you can go from one side of town to the other in less than ten minutes!

Sunnyside also has much to offer the outdoor enthusiast. Exercise buffs will appreciate the primary walking, jogging, and biking trail. This trail goes east 15 miles to Prosser, Washington. The nearby Yakima River is a place where people enjoy tubing, floating, fishing, and other water activities. Snow skiing, hiking, and hunting are available in the nearby mountains.

If you are into winery tourism, Sunnyside sits in the heart of the burgeoning wine industry of the state – part of the 2nd largest viticultural area in the United States. There is much to visit and taste as the Yakima Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA) produces 40% of the wine made in Washington.

Education is important to Sunnyside residents. School facilities are well-maintained and plentiful with one elementary school devoted entirely to kindergarteners! Post-secondary educational opportunities are available in the area.

Sunnyside is a culturally diverse community. The annual Cinco de Mayo celebration is one of the largest in Washington and brings in visitors from all over the state. An enclave of Dutch initially involved in agriculture makes up part of the social and political fabric of Sunnyside. The people of Sunnyside are warm, friendly and very accepting of newcomers.

## History

The settlement was originally founded by Walter Granger in 1893. His idea was to bring water from the Yakima River via the Sunnyside Canal to irrigate local farmland. However, the Panic of 1893 intervened and Granger's creditors foreclosed on the canal. By the end of 1901, the population had doubled, finally exceeding 300 people, the legal minimum to incorporate. At the time, the town consisted of a bank, 11 stores, three hotels, a newspaper, two blacksmith shops, two livery barns, three churches, and a school. On September 16, 1902, residents voted 42 to one to incorporate as the town of Sunnyside.



Table I: Sunnyside Climate Monthly Averages

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average High °F	38.9	47.2	58.1	67.0	75.1	82.2	90.0	88.6	79.5	66.9	50.5	40.0	65.3
Average Low °F	23.0	27.0	31.9	37.5	44.8	51.0	54.7	52.8	45.9	37.9	30.1	25.3	38.4
Precipitation in Inches	0.90	0.62	0.45	0.47	0.55	0.53	0.18	0.25	0.44	0.58	0.90	0.93	6.79
Snowfall in Inches	4.5	1.80	.2	0.00	.0	0.00	.0	0.00	.0	0.01	.8	4.0	12.4

Source: Western Regional Climate Center

Sunnyside's population increase at this time was stimulated by the immigration of the Dunkards from South Dakota. Their name referred to their practice of baptizing their members in irrigation canals and ditches. In 1902 they had "built a commodious place of worship at Sunnyside" and it was the largest church in Yakima County at the time.

The Dunkards, members of the German Baptist Progressive Brethren, formed a Christian Cooperative Colony in Sunnyside. The Brethren bought the entire town site and were the developers of its first bank, and a telephone system. They enforced clauses prohibiting alcohol, dancing, and gambling as a condition on every parcel of land sold. As a result, the old maps of the state identified the town with a cross or halo symbol.

In the 1930s, refugees from the Dust Bowl also moved to Sunnyside because of abundant water and opportunities. In 1917 under the leadership of Mayor William Bright "Billy" Cloud (1870–1959), Sunnyside initiated a project to pave its dirt streets. This effort was necessary because years of irrigation had raised the water table to the point that the streets had become unbearably muddy. The cost of the entire project was approximately \$63,000.

## Commerce

The entire region has a population of 286,000 and can be described as rural. Agriculture is an economic mainstay (over \$1 billion sold locally, nationally and internationally each year) and local businesses largely support and/or compliment that industry. Other significant industries in the region include healthcare, warehouse/distribution, manufacturing, alternative energy and tourism.

Locally, the top ten taxpayers in Sunnyside include the cheese plant, utilities, steel fabrication, retail, dairy, fruit processor, hop processor and PVC pipe manufacture.

## Climate

Sunnyside's climate is characterized as semi-arid. Winters are moderate and summer days are hot, can reach into the 100s in July. See table 1.

The City enjoys four distinct seasons. Precipitation is minimal compared to other regions in Washington State.

## Demographics

The racial makeup of the city is 85% White and the remainder being other races or those of two or more races. Those of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity are 82% of the population.

There are 4,332 households out of which 57.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 49.6% are married couples living together, 21.1% had a female householder with no husband present, 8.4% had a male householder with no wife present, and 20.9% are non-families. 17.0% of all households are made up of individuals and 8.6% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size is 3.60 and the average family size is 4.02.

The median age in the city is 25 years. 38.5% of residents are under the age of 18; 11.4% are between the ages of 18 and 24; 26.4% are from 25 to 44; 15.3% are from 45 to 64; and 8.3% are 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the city is 50.1% male and 49.9% female. The median household income is \$34,922 versus a state

average of \$58,890. 28.2% of the population lives below the poverty level.

## The City Government

Sunnyside is classified in the Revised Code of Washington as an "optional code city" with a "council/manager form of government". As such, it is overseen by seven elected Councilmembers. One of the members is selected to be mayor and another to be the deputy mayor. Both serve for two years. Four council members represent geographic districts and three serve at large. All are elected at large and serve staggered four-year terms. The City does not have term limits. Elections are held in November of odd numbered years.

Due to resignations, two newly appointed members represent districts and have only served a few months on Council. All four district positions are up for election this November and both newly appointed members have indicated they will file for election. Councilmembers receive modest compensation for their service.

The City Council has two regular meetings per month and a scheduled workshop each month. The City has seen significant turnover in the city manager and finance director positions during the last five years. The present City Council is committed to ensuring a stable work environment, and giving the appropriate direction to the city manager, then allowing him/her to successfully operate within the established parameters of the council/manager system of government.

The City provides a full range of traditional services to its citizens. These are provided by the following city departments: Police, Fire, Public Works (which includes water, sewer, streets, parks, airport, and community development), City Clerk, Human Resources,



Finance and Recreation. The recreation programs and community center are operated by volunteers through a local non-profit, Sunnyside Arts and Sports Association (SASA). Electricity is provided in Sunnyside by Pacific Power and natural gas by Cascade Natural Gas.

The City's total budget for 2013 is \$21.8 million. General Fund is approximately \$9.2 million, its largest sources of revenue are: utilities taxes, sales and use taxes, and property taxes. About \$5.7 million (62.5%) of the General Fund is devoted to Fire and Police. Other agencies including the hospital, housing authority and school district fund all or in part the law enforcement personnel assigned to their facility. A community initiative directed at persistent crime issues and gang violence has been successful with total Part 1 Offenses being reduced 38.7% from 2005 to 2012!

The City has 93 full-time and two part-time or seasonal employees. The Finance Department has three to four employees. The City has five labor groups with bargaining rights. In 2013, the Police and Fire collective bargaining agreements are up for renewal.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Stability is the most consistent theme heard in preparing this recruitment profile. Turnover in key positions over the last five years has been an issue. Institutional knowledge must be restored and a group of staff members retained who can consistently address Council and community concerns.

One of the major concerns the City faces is improvements need to be made to the City's budget management tools and financial recordkeeping systems. The new finance director will be crucial in setting up and maintaining an effective financial management system in Sunnyside.

The bookkeeping and account reconciliations are behind schedule although that should be corrected prior to the new finance director joining the staff. The Council needs monthly reports that accurately reflect the financial condition of the City in order to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities. Budget documents need to outline fund balances, projected revenues, expenditures

and other tools to graphically portray the big picture of the City's finances to the City Council and the public.

Finally, in the last several years budget shortfalls have reduced city staff spreading a large work load among a few people. The new finance director will need to be adept at training and developing staff, particularly understanding each person's role and job description. Also, understanding how to cross train limited financial staff so essential financial functions can be performed by more than one person will be a necessity.

## The Ideal Candidate

This position is a great opportunity for the right person. He/she will report directly to the new city manager. To be successful, the ideal candidate must have a "hands on" understanding of municipal financial functions; however, the City is not looking for a micro manager, but someone who has actual experience with the various financial functions and can convey that knowledge and experience to others as he/she organizes and directs the department. The finance director must be approachable and open to new ideas and suggestions from a small staff.

The essential job functions are:

- Perform the professional accounting functions and financial record keeping including general ledger maintenance, compilation of financial statements and preparation for annual audits.
- Manage utility billing, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and payroll functions; produce the annual financial report and closing of year-end financial records; perform cash and investment management functions.
- Ensure proper internal controls for the City's financial operations and proper policies and procedures that support State Bars Manual and generally accepted accounting principles.
- Perform and coordinate the processes for developing the annual operating and capital

budgets for the City; prepare the City's annual budget, expense reports and revenue reports.

- Perform and coordinate the implementation of the City's performance measurement program within the accounting area with audits throughout the city departments.
- Research, analyze and present data in special, complex program policy areas to the city manager and department heads within areas of responsibility; ensure compliance with prescribed budget procedures and instructions; present and defend policy analysis recommendations; draft financial ordinances and resolutions.

The position requires graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in finance, business administration, accounting or related field. A current Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation is desirable. Five years of increasingly responsible experience in public sector financial operations, including two years of administrative and supervisory responsibility is required. Bilingual (English/Spanish) candidates are encouraged to apply.

## Compensation

The salary range is \$78,096 to \$95,880 per year plus benefits.

## Residency

Residency in the city is desirable, but not required.

## Confidentiality

Candidates' names will not be released without the candidates' permission. However, it is possible that when the city manager selects finalists, their names may be released to the public.

## How to Apply

Email your resume to [Recruit28@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit28@cb-asso.com) by June 7, 2013. Faxed or hard copy applications will not be

considered. Please direct all of your questions to John Darrington at (509) 836-6300 or (509) 823-5138.

## The Process

Applicants will be screened between June 1st and June 30th with an invitation to interview by no later than July 8th. Finalists will be interviewed in Sunnyside in mid-July with a selection shortly thereafter.

## Other Information

Sunnyside is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages minorities and women to apply.

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