



City Administrator



Avoca, Iowa

Apply by November 25, 2025
4:30 PM Central Time

The City of Avoca, Iowa (1,683) seeks a dynamic and forward-thinking, detail-oriented leader with outstanding communication, planning, project management, and economic development capabilities for its next City Administrator. Avoca is a growing community located in western Iowa and enjoys an enviable location of being between Des Moines, IA and Omaha, NE directly adjacent to Interstate 80. Avoca's brick streets and consistent growth offer an outstanding professional opportunity in an organization with tenured and talented staff and stable community leadership. The City Administrator will be highly collaborative and visible throughout the community.

Please contact Theia Management Consulting
at 515.322.6597 with any questions.

Recruitment Timeline

Application materials due
by: November 25, 2025, 4:30
p.m. CT

Zoom Interviews for
Candidates: December 4

Finalist interviews:
December 19 - December 20,
including community tours
and public meet and greet

Employment Start:
30-45 days post employment
agreement approval



City of Avoca, Iowa

City Administrator

Population 1,683



Our Community

Avoca has long been a gateway between urban and rural living, offering residents and visitors the best of both worlds. The city combines a strong sense of community with the convenience of being just 40 miles from Omaha, Nebraska, and approximately 60 miles from Des Moines, Iowa. Avoca is a small town with a big heart, offering an ideal setting for someone seeking to make a significant impact in local government. The community is tight-knit, and residents enjoy an array of local parks, recreational activities, and a strong sense of civic pride. The city's downtown area features a mix of historic buildings, local businesses, and community gathering spots, creating a welcoming environment for both residents and visitors.



Avoca Public Library

Avoca was founded in 1869 during construction of the Pacific, Chicago, and Rock Island Railroads. The city is named from "The Meeting of the Waters," a Thomas Moore poem about the River Avoca in Ireland. Avoca quickly developed as a regional service center for the surrounding farms. The city is situated within Iowa's Loess Hills and located between the West Nishnabotna River and its East Branch. Avoca was also the boyhood home to Johnny Carson, famed night talk show host, and opened a pool in 2002 with a generous contribution from Mr. Carson.



Historic
Downtown
Avoca is host to
Farmers
Markets and
other special
events
throughout the
year





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Economy

Avoca's economy is based on a diversified mix of industries, with health care and social assistance, retail trade, and manufacturing being the largest sectors by employment. The community is host to several restaurants and benefits from the efforts of Avoca Main Street, Inc., dedicated to enhancing the vitality of downtown Avoca through historic preservation, economic development, and community engagement.

Multiple events, such as 4th of July, Farmers Markets, Longest Table, Spooktacular, Holidays on Main, etc. attract visitors and residents and contributes to the vibrancy of the community.



Avoca Main Street, Inc. is a key partner in facilitating economic opportunity in the community

City Organization

Avoca is a Council/Mayor form of government with a City Administrator. The City is governed by a Mayor elected to two-year terms and a five-member City Council elected to four-year terms. The Avoca City Council meets regularly on the third Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. The Mayor and Council are assisted by citizen boards and commissions including Culture and Recreation, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustment, Utility Board, Avoca Veterans Community Center Commission, Avoca Betterment Association, and the Library Board. The City employs a full-time staff of 10. The total budget is \$11,686,975 million, excluding transfers, with a levy rate of \$14.30559. The City police force consists of partial full-time coverage augmented with support from the Pottawattamie County Sheriff. Fire protection services are provided by a 29 member volunteer department. The City operates a water utility and a wastewater treatment plant. The water supply is from the Regional Water Rural Water Association with the City providing water transmission and maintenance. The City also operates a stormwater utility.



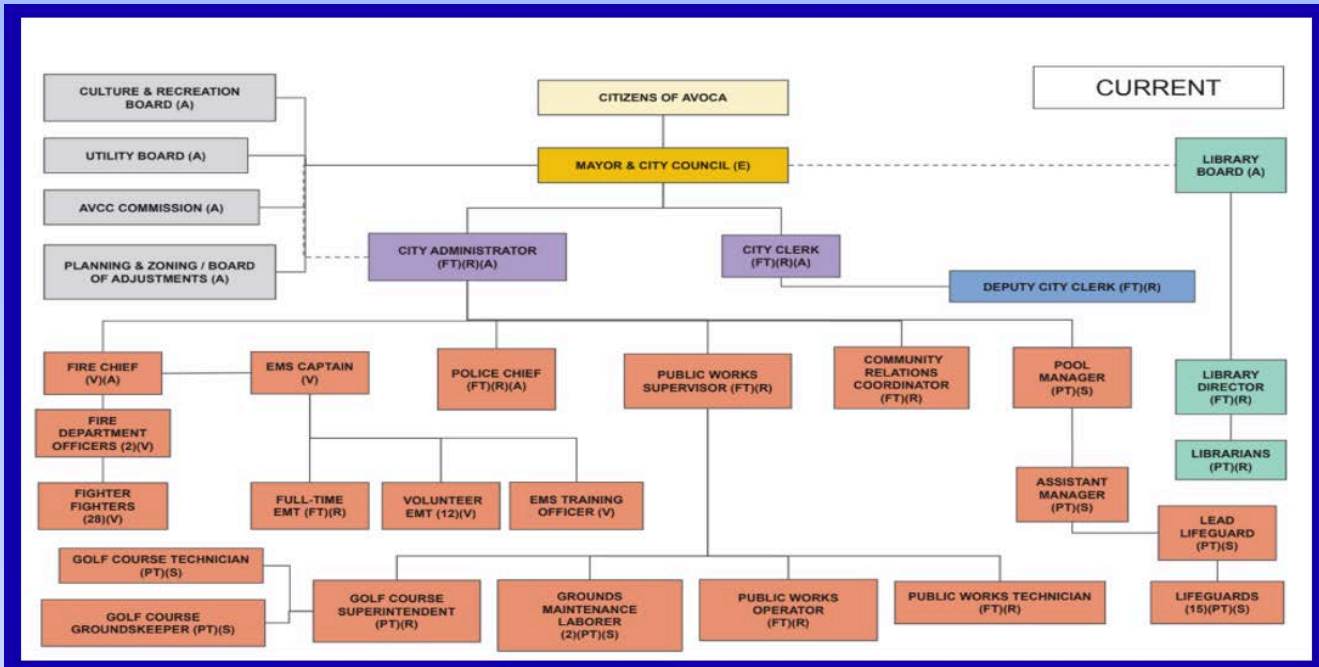
Avoca has beautiful greenspace amenities



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Organizational Chart



Parks and Recreation

Avoca is heavily invested in its parks system and recreational activities. The City is home to the Avoca Aquatic Center, a challenging 9-Hole golf course and clubhouse restaurant, 10 miles of pedestrian trails, and Edgington Memorial Park which includes a disc golf course, dog park, park shelters, water access to the East Branch of the West Nishnabotna River. The City Graceland Cemetery is part of the State of Iowa's Perpetual Care program.

The City is also home to the Sweet Vale of Avoca Museum. The Newtown-Avoca Historical Society has a goal of preserving for future generations. The Historical Society is comprised of s and meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month.



Play Structures in Edgington Memorial Park



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Education

Avoca is served by the Avoca-Hancock-Shelby-Tenant-Walnut (AHSTW) Community School District is home to schools ranked as “High-Performing” and “Commendable”. The District has approximately 765 students. Avoca is home to the AHSTW District’s schools.

Opportunities for further education in the region are found at Iowa Western Community College (Council Bluffs), University of Omaha (Omaha, NE), and Creighton University (Omaha, NE), Drake University (Des Moines) Grand View College (Des Moines), Iowa State University (Ames, IA), Simpson College (Indianola, IA), Des Moines University, and the Des Moines Area Community College. There are also private schools in the area.



Avoca is home to AHSTW Facilities

Transportation

Avoca is adjacent to Interstate 80, which runs from Boston, MA to San Francisco, CA and is served by State Highway 59. For train travel, Avoca is 45 minutes from Omaha and 2 hours from Osceola, IA, both with major Amtrak connections. Omaha’s Eppley Field is 50 minutes away and the Des Moines International Airport is approximately 90 minutes away, both undergoing major expansions and both offering domestic and international flights. There are also smaller general aviation airports near Avoca, such as the Harlan Municipal Airport, Ida Grove Municipal Airport, and the Dacy Airport, available for private flights and smaller aircraft.



Longest Table Dining Event - photo courtesy of Avoca Main Street, Inc



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Cultural Opportunities

Avoca has a charming historic downtown area with charming buildings, multiple events, and local businesses. Festivals regularly occur in Avoca and throughout the region. The Sweet Vale Museum is open on weekends from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Memorial Day through Labor Day. Other times of the year, the museum is open on the third Sunday of the month, as well as hosts special programs.

Avoca's strategic location between Des Moines, IA and Omaha, NE, offers multiple entertainment and cultural opportunities, such as the Civic Center, Casey's Center, The Playhouse, The Des Moines Art Center, Omaha's Children's Museum, Joslyn Art Center, etc. There are also smaller concert venues available in nearby Waukee and West Des Moines, IA.

Other destinations of interest include Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium in Omaha, Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha, Blank Park Zoo, Living History Farms, the Des Moines Science Center, the Botanical Center, etc.



Sweet Vale Museum

Religious Opportunities

Avoca is home to three churches, with the major denominations of Catholic, Lutheran, and Presbyterian represented in the area.



Avoca Aquatic Center



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The Position

The City Administrator is the chief administrative officer of the City and is responsible for the general supervision and direction of the administration of the city government in accordance with codes, ordinances, resolutions and directives from the city council.

Specific Duties Include:

- Directs and supervises all city departments.
- Plans, organizes, assigns, trains, motivates, and evaluates staff; reviews progress and implements changes as needed.
- Develops and implements strategic short-term and long-term plans.
- Gathers, interprets, and prepares data for studies, reports, and recommendations.
- Coordinates department activities with other departments and external agencies.
- Offers professional advice and policy recommendations to the City Council and department heads.
- Provides regular communication to the City Council about policy goals and City matters.
- Communicates official plans, policies, and procedures to staff and the public.
- Prepares, submits, and administers the city's annual budget; manages financial planning processes.
- Monitors revenues and expenditures to maintain fiscal responsibility; performs cost control activities.
- Determines work procedures, prepares schedules, and streamlines workflow to improve operational efficiency.



Avoca Dog Park (Picture by Jager Images)



Avoca benefits from great volunteers! Keep Avoca Beautiful. Volunteers help with flower beds.



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The Position

- Issues instructions and ensures tasks are completed according to policies and procedures.
- Resolves grievances, complaints and operational errors and maintains workplace harmony.
- Prepares detailed reports and studies to assist the City Council's decision-making process.
- Hires, evaluates, and terminates city employees in accordance with personnel policies, excluding certain roles as specified by city ordinance.
- Ensures all laws and ordinances are faithfully executed.
- Advises the City Council on financial conditions, city needs, and future planning.
- Represents the city at City Council meetings, boards, commissions, and community functions.
- Ensures adherence to safety regulations and protocols.
- Serve as a liaison between elected officials, staff, and the public, maintaining transparency and effective communication.
- Collaborate closely with the Avoca Betterment Association in the planning and implementation of projects supported by \$5.6M from the Larkin Foundation as part of the Revitalize Southwest Iowa Project.

This position requires a high degree of information sharing between the Administration staff, department heads and other city team members, library, City Council, and the public. Communication and project management are critical skillsets for this position. Candidates should also have strong planning and financial capabilities, including a good working understanding of Tax Increment Financing. The City Administrator is expected to be highly visible in throughout the community.



The Avoca Public Library hosts a variety of activities for all ages throughout the year.



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Qualifications

Candidates should possess a four year degree (Master's preferred) in public administration or a related field and experience in municipal management or leadership. The new Administrator should also possess **strong communication and interpersonal skills as well as exceptional project management, planning, personnel management, and economic development capabilities.**

Additional qualifications:

- Experience in strategic planning, budgeting, staff management, and intergovernmental relations.
- Strong understanding of Iowa municipal government structure, finance, and community development practices preferred.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with elected officials, staff, community members, and external partners.
- Must be bondable.
- Keep the council informed and prepared to address media and public in a timely manner.
- Work closely with the School District and the County Board.
- "Open door" policy, listen and follow through.
- Assist the city council to stay on task and move forward with direction.
- Possess strong negotiation skills.
- Promote coordination and emphasize communications among department's staff.
- Maintain a regular schedule of staff meetings.
- Establish expectations for staff performance and track results.
- Be a community booster and actively participate in service clubs.
- Create and maintain an open and respectful work environment. Set up the framework for a cohesive, team-driven city hall staff.



The Avoca Aquatic Center attracts more than 50,000 users annually.

The next City Administrator will be an energetic and confident leader who can communicate effectively and provide strong direction for strategic actions to achieve the community's vision. The City Administrator will become involved in the community and promote an atmosphere of quality constituent service and collaboration.

The successful candidate should also possess a dynamic and outgoing personality with a positive and progressive attitude, as well as a strong customer service orientation.



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Upcoming Projects

The City of Avoca has several large projects underway and in the planning stages. The Avoca \$3.5M Avoca Fire & Rescue Station project broke ground in April 2025. The Station will feature state-of-the-art amenities, including seven bays, two overnight rooms, a storage area, and a conference room. Construction is underway and is tentatively scheduled for completion by the end of December.

Avoca has also launched a renovation of the Fred Funston Post 227 Legion Hall into the Avoca Veterans Community Center. Construction is underway with tentative completion targeted for May 2026.

Other areas of focus for the upcoming City Administrator include evaluating water challenges; updating water meters; collaborating with the Department of Transportation on Highway 59 improvements; supporting daycare operations; and developing and implementing plans for a City Hall expansion, among others.



Interior renderings of the Avoca Veterans Community Center



Rendering of the Avoca Fire & Rescue Station



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Announcement/Advertisement

The City of Avoca, Iowa (1,683) seeks a visionary leader with outstanding communication, project management, planning, and economic development capabilities for its next City Administrator. Avoca is a growing community with a strategic locations adjacent to I-80 between Des Moines, IA and Omaha, NE. Avoca's historic downtown, including brick streets and growth offer an outstanding professional opportunity in an organization with tenured and talented staff and stable community leadership. The City Administrator will be highly collaborative and visible throughout the community. The City offers a competitive benefits package and a starting salary between \$75-90K DOQ. City residency preferred. Relocation allowance is negotiable.

To apply, submit resume, cover letter, and five references by November 25, 2025, 4:30 p.m. Central Time to theiamanagementconsulting@gmail.com. Inquiries can be directed to Theia Management Consulting, LLC at 515.322.6597.

Timetable for Search

It is the City's intent to conclude the search process as expediently as possible. Therefore, candidates are urged to tentatively mark the following dates on their schedules:

Application deadline: November 25, 2025, 4:30 PM
Semifinalists notified: December 2, 2025
Zoom interviews: December 4, 2025
Finalist interviews: December 19 & 20, 2025
Employment Agreement approval: December 22, 2025
Start of employment: 30-45 days after approval



Avoca Parks offer great recreational opportunities throughout the year (above), including a 9-hole golf course (to the right)

