



Van Meter, Iowa City Administrator



**Apply by April 23, 2026
4:30 PM Central Time**

The City of Van Meter, Iowa (ACS 2024 estimate 1,628) seeks a strong, innovative leader with outstanding economic development, communication, and organizational development capabilities for its next City Administrator. Van Meter is looking for a knowledgeable, assertive leader who can support the elected officials in their policy-making efforts. Van Meter is a growing community located on the western edge of the Des Moines, Iowa metropolitan area and enjoys a prime location on I-80 with desirable transportation access supporting its continued economic expansion. Van Meter's growth, economic foundation, stable finances and tenured leadership offer an amazing professional opportunity. The City Administrator will be active and visible throughout the community and a mentor to staff.

Please contact Theia Management Consulting
at 515.322.6597 with any questions.

Recruitment Timeline

Application materials due
by: April 23, 2026, 4:30 p.m.
CT

Zoom Interviews for
Candidates: April 30

Finalist interviews:
May 16, including
community tours and public
meet and greet

Employment Start:
30-45 days post employment
agreement approval



Van Meter, Iowa City Administrator Population 1,628

Our Community

Van Meter is located in Dallas County, Iowa, one of the fastest growing counties in the country and lies along the Raccoon River. Van Meter enjoys an expanding economy, having participated in the Certified Site program through the Iowa Economic Development Authority. A large, global corporation recently purchased hundreds of acres in the City's industrial park for a data center.

The city combines a strong sense of community building on its enviable location to guide growth strategically. Van Meter offers schools with a full range of educational and extracurricular opportunities, including advance placement classes. The median home value in Van Meter is slightly higher than that for the State of Iowa due to the number of new homes in the community. Van Meter offers a safe environment, providing full law enforcement and a paid-per-call Fire/EMS service.

Residents enjoy an extraordinary quality of life with access to three parks and a recreational complex. The community is ideally located along I-80, running coast-to-coast and with convenient access to multiple airports, higher education opportunities, and cultural amenities. Van Meter is minutes from the multitude of recreational and entertainment opportunities in the greater Des Moines area and is also less than a two-hour drive to Omaha, NE.

The community has a history of impressive growth, with the 2020 census showing a population increase of more than 46%.



Lava Lamp making was popular during a STEM event at the Van Meter Public Library.



Firefighters train regularly in preparation for community needs.



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Economy

Van Meter is in a competitive location on the edge of multiple major city centers in the central Iowa area, offering vast economic opportunities and amenities. Van Meter is included in the Waukee and West Des Moines regional labor shed, providing significant employment opportunities.

The City of Van Meter has partnered with a number of economic development resources in the Greater Des Moines Area to work toward economic development goals, which includes the development of Certified Sites.

The largest industries in Van Meter by job count are: Educational Services (116 or 37.8%); Construction (64 or 20.8%); Administration & Support, Waste Management (28 or 9.1%); and Health Care & Social Assistance (27 or 8.8%).



Downtown Van Meter

City Organization

Van Meter is a Mayor-Council/ form of government. The City is governed by a Mayor and a five-member City Council elected to alternative, four-year terms. The City Council meets regularly on the second and fourth Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. respectively. The Mayor and Council are assisted by citizen boards and commissions including Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustment, Parks & Recreation Commission, and the Library Board. The City employs a full-time staff of 12, supported by part-time staff members and seasonal support. The total budget is \$23,292,610, including transfers, with a general fund of \$2,998,465 and levy rate of \$14.16402. The City police force consists of 3 full-time sworn positions. Fire protection and Emergency Medical services are provided by a part-time Fire Chief, supported by Paid Per Call department members.

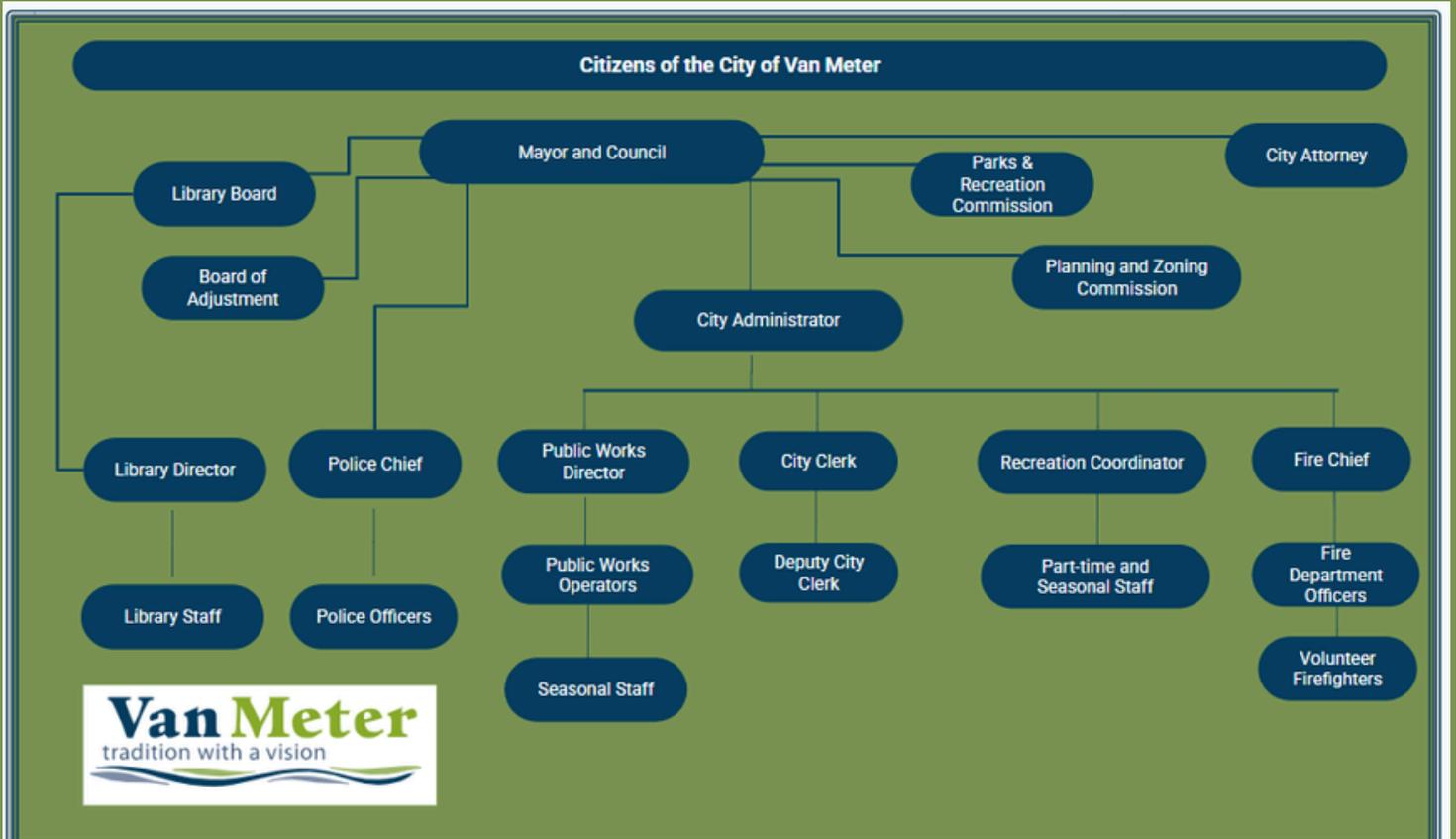
**Police Officers
regularly read
to children in
the Van Meter
Public Library.**





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Organizational Chart



Parks and Recreation

The Van Meter Recreational Complex is a community recreation hub on the north edge of Van Meter with softball fields, baseball fields, and soccer fields. It's a great place for organized sports, youth leagues, and spectating local games. Concessions and restrooms are available during events.

Johnson Park features playground equipment and a 9-hole disc golf course. The City Park offers playground space and an open lawn. Trindle Park, managed by Dallas County Conservation, offers picnic areas, playground, and reservable shelter house. Memorial Park is designed for community and family activities. Nearby Badger Creek State Recreation is a large recreation area with a 276-acre lake for fishing and boating, wooded spaces, and sunflower fields.



Parks & Rec hosts Yoga in the Park.



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Education

Van Meter boasts a strong public school system with personalized and career-focused learning, library programs for lifelong education, early childhood learning options, and connections to post-secondary pathways and scholarships. The Community School District serves students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in a single, personalized, progressive PK–12 building. The High School has also been recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School for academic excellence and college/career readiness. Opportunities for higher education in the region include Drake, Grandview, and Des Moines Universities and Des Moines Area Community College. Van Meter is also approximately 50 miles from Iowa State University.



Van Meter's kayak launch supports active recreation on the Raccoon River.

Transportation

Highway access is one of Van Meter's greatest transportation assets. The community is located immediately south of Interstate 80, one of the nation's primary east–west corridors. I-80 provides direct access east to Des Moines—a 20–25 minute drive—and west toward Council Bluffs and Omaha. Nearby Iowa Highway 92 offers additional regional connectivity, linking Van Meter to surrounding communities such as Winterset. Travelers can easily access Interstate 35, the major north–south route running through the center of the country. This network of highways positions Van Meter well for commuting, business travel, and freight transportation. Des Moines International Airport is 25 minutes to the east and Omaha's Eppley Field 2 hours to the west, both offering commercial flights. General aviation airports are also nearby, including Hobbes Field in Ankeny and Winterset Municipal Airport.



Van Meter is home to a K-12 Community School.



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Cultural Opportunities

Van Meter offers cultural experiences that feel distinctly Iowa—rooted in history, folklore, and strong community traditions. The Bob Feller Hometown Museum is housed in the city hall building, honoring the legendary Hall of Fame Pitcher who was nicknamed “The Heater from Van Meter”. Van Meter is also home to several festivals throughout the year, including Raccoon River Days, Fan Fest, and the Van Meter Visitor Festival, inspired by the town’s famous 1903 cryptid legend. What began as a strange newspaper account has grown into a celebration of folklore and storytelling, with speakers, walking tours, and themed events.

There are several arts and cultural activities in the region, with access to the Civic Center, Vibrant Music Hall, Iowa Events Center, the Blank Park Zoo, and the Des Moines Art Center, to name a few. There are ample shopping and entertainment facilities in the region, including Jordan Creek Mall and hundreds of other retailers, as well as a multitude of restaurants located in Van Meter and throughout the Des Moines Metropolitan Statistical Area.



Residents and visitors enjoy Raccoon River Days, an annual festival.

Religious Opportunities

Churches such as Van Meter United Methodist Church, Van Meter Baptist Church, and Trinity Lutheran Church offer Sunday services, Bible studies, youth programs, and opportunities for service, reflecting Methodist, Baptist, and Lutheran traditions. Residents can also access a wider range of denominations and worship styles in nearby communities within the Des Moines metro area.



Van Meter is home to the Iowa Veterans Cemetery (left) and the Bob Feller Memorial (right).



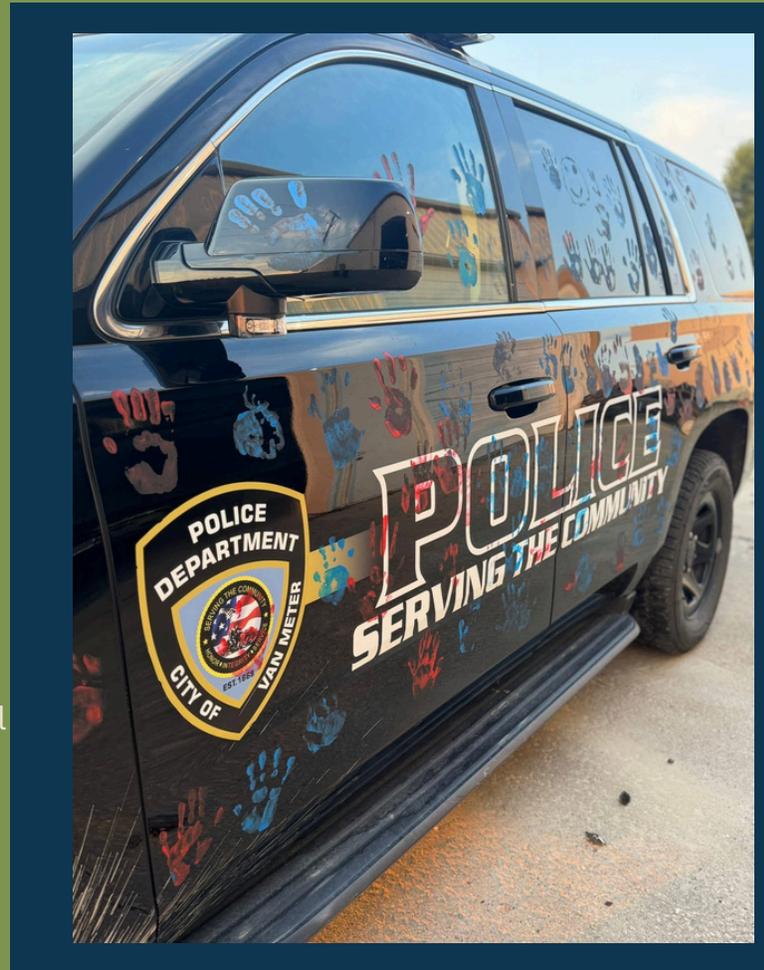
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The Position

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

Specific duties include but are not limited to:

- Ensure that City Council directives, approved operational policies, resolutions and ordinances of the City are enforced and executed or referred to the proper officials for compliance;
- Supervise municipal operations and the administration of all City departments;
- In cooperation with the department directors and supervisors, develops effective administrative planning, budgeting and control procedures;
- Ensure that department directors and supervisors are providing effective service to the public and efficiently conduct all municipal affairs within overall City Council objectives;
- Prepare annual budget recommendation for City Council consideration and controls expenditures within approved budgetary guidelines;
- Control purchasing functions; assure that assigned areas of responsibility are performed within budget; perform cost control activities; monitor revenues and expenditures to assure sound fiscal control; assure effective and efficient use of budgeted funds, personnel, materials facilities and time;
- Evaluate operations and make recommendations to the City Council regarding City organizational structure to best achieve City objectives;
- Recommend and/or appoints all officers and employees to fill authorized positions and recommend salary structures, employee benefits, and staffing needs;
- Ensure effective management of physical assets by planning for replacement and upgrading;
- Oversee all City Fund management and investment activities, ensuring that effective accounting practices are used to properly control financial assets and provide accurate information for financial planning;





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The Position

- Set agendas and provide supporting data and documents for Council meetings; attend all Council meetings and work sessions, keeping Council and Mayor informed to assist them in their policy making role;
- Ensure positive public relations by providing efficient public services and effectively handling citizens questions and concerns;
- Represent the City in local, regional, state and national meetings and in meetings with consultants;
- Provide assistance to the various City boards and commissions;
- Supervise the performance of all contracts for work services to be done by or for the City;
- Provides leadership and direction in the development and implementation of short and long range plans; and
- Assist the City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission in carrying out the Comprehensive Plan.

This position requires a high degree of information sharing between the administration staff, department heads and other city team members, library, City Council, boards, and commissions, and the public.

Communication, economic development, organizational development, and project management are critical skillsets for this position. Candidates should have strong planning abilities and excellent financial management skills, including a good working understanding of Tax Increment Financing. The City Administrator is expected to be highly visible and active throughout the organization and the community.

The community has experienced significant population growth and is poised for significant economic growth and is currently working with a globally recognized corporation on a data center project. Recent infrastructure projects are upgrading and modernizing the City's infrastructure. The City is also focused on quality of life initiatives, including an upcoming large trail project.

The community's goals are supported by active volunteer groups, including the Van Meter Community Development Corporation.



Van Meter City Hall



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Qualifications

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

- Experience in budgeting, staff and project management, and intergovernmental relations.
- Strong understanding of municipal government structure, finance, and community development practices preferred.
- Significant expertise and understanding of Tax Increment Financing.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with elected officials, staff, community members, and external partners.
- Must be bondable.
- Top-notch communication skills, with significant ability to ensure the council and public are kept informed in a timely manner.
- Collaborate with community partners, such as economic development organizations, school representatives, volunteer groups, board and commission members, etc.
- Assist the city council to stay on task and move forward with direction and strategic plans.
- Promote coordination and emphasize communications among department's staff.
- Establish expectations for staff performance and be a mentor and hold staff accountable for actions.
- Create and maintain an open and respectful work environment. Establish the framework for a cohesive, team-driven city hall staff.



The 5K Fun Run is a population event during Raccoon River Days.

The next City Administrator will be a dedicated and detail oriented leader who communicates effectively and provides strong direction for strategic actions to achieve the community's vision. The successful candidate must have a significant knowledge base to support effective policy making and provide excellent counsel to elected officials. The City Administrator will be involved in the community and promote an atmosphere of quality service and collaboration, with a keen talent for mentoring staff.

The successful candidate should also possess unshakeable character and be a good listener with a strategic outlook and the ability to communicate this outlook to staff and Council.



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Upcoming Projects

The City is working with a globally recognized brand that is developing a data center. The new City Administrator will work with representatives on a development agreement. The City also has additional industrial ground available, 430 acres of which was recently purchased for another data center.

The City is working on a water treatment plant, the funding plan for which will be a priority for the next administrator. The City is also currently involved in upgrading water mains in the older part of town.

Sewer lagoon improvements are needed in the next 3 to 5 years.

A new municipal building (City Hall, Library, Police, and Fire) goes to bid in June.

The City is working on the first phase of a major trail project, anticipated for summer construction.

The City Administrator will need to finalize a recent annexation.



The Van Meter Public Library is a hub of activity, hosting classes and special events throughout the year (above).

Firefighters help educate students on fire prevention and safety (left).



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Announcement/Advertisement

The City of Van Meter, Iowa (ACS 2024 estimate 1,628) seeks an innovative leader with outstanding communication, economic development, and organizational development capabilities for its next City Administrator. Van Meter is a growing community located on the western edge of the Des Moines, Iowa metropolitan area and enjoys a prime location on I-80 with desirable transportation access supporting its continued economic expansion. Van Meter's growth, economic foundation, stable finances and tenured leadership offer an amazing professional opportunity in an organization with dedicated staff ready to support the community's further success. The City Administrator will be active and visible throughout the community and a mentor to staff.

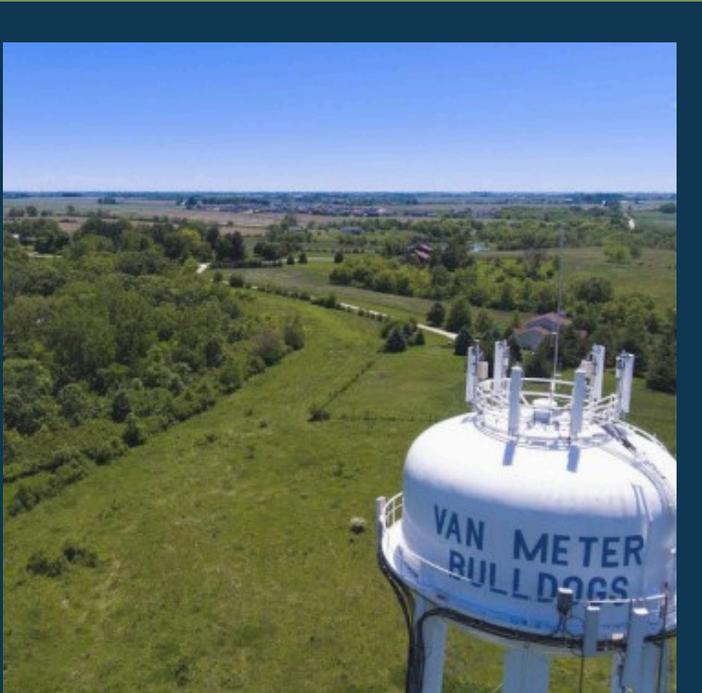
Candidates should possess a four year degree (Master's preferred) in public administration or a related field and significant experience in municipal management or leadership. The City offers a competitive benefits package and a starting salary range between \$90-120K DOQ. City residency preferred. Relocation allowance is negotiable.

To apply, submit resume, cover letter, and five references by April 23, 2026, 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: April 23, 2026, 4:30 PM
- Semifinalists notified: April 27, 2026
- Zoom interviews: April 30, 2026
- Finalist interviews: May 16, 2026
- Employment Agreement approval: by May 22, 2026
- Start of employment: 30-45 days after approval



An aerial view shows the natural beauty of the area (above).

The Van Meter Police Department regularly engages in community outreach activities (right).

