

# CITY MANAGER

City of Milton-Freewater

Annual Salary:

\$140,000–\$160,000 DOE/DOQ

Milton-Freewater,  
Oregon



Are you a grounded, community-engaged executive who can lead a full-service municipal organization while strengthening management practices and advancing infrastructure priorities? If so, apply to be the City of Milton-Freewater's next City Manager!

We're looking for an exceptional, hands-on leader who is:

- Experienced in municipal management and public-sector leadership, within the State of Oregon is desired
- Financially astute with strong budgeting and utility oversight expertise
- A collaborative communicator who builds trust with staff, Council, and the community

A unique community with strong roots and real opportunity – read on to learn more about this role!



# ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Milton-Freewater is a welcoming, close-knit community of approximately 7,151 residents located in northeastern Oregon's Walla Walla Valley near the Blue Mountains and the Oregon-Washington border. Known for its agricultural heritage, multicultural character, and strong sense of community, Milton-Freewater offers a blend of rural charm and regional connectivity.

The City is uniquely defined by its history as the only hyphenated city in Oregon, formed through the merger of Milton and Freewater in 1950. Today, it maintains a strong identity rooted in cooperation, resilience, and community pride.

Outdoor recreation is abundant, with access to hiking, fishing, hunting, skiing, and ATV trails, while the nearby Rocks District AVA attracts visitors to one of the region's premier wine destinations. The local economy is driven by agriculture, food processing, and wine production, supported by a network of small businesses and regional employers.

Milton-Freewater offers access to higher education institutions within 10–20 miles, as well as nearby healthcare facilities and regional amenities in Walla Walla and the Tri-Cities.

# GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

Milton-Freewater operates under a Council-Manager form of government. The Mayor is elected, and the City Council consists of elected members who establish policy and provide strategic direction.

The City is a full-service organization providing:

- Electric (Power & Light)
- Water and Wastewater
- Solid Waste and Recycling Services
- Police, Fire, and Emergency Dispatch
- Library, Planning, and Economic Development
- 911 Public Safety Answering Point
- Recreation - Aquatic Center, 18 Hole Municipal Golf Course, Skate Park, 52 acres of Parks & Recreation

With approximately 65 FTEs and a budget of roughly \$45–48 million, the City's operations are complex and heavily influenced by its municipally owned utility systems.



POPULATION  
**7,151**



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME  
**\$52,183**



MEDIAN HOME VALUE  
**\$240,000**

AVERAGE MONTHLY RENT  
**\$877**

History



Tourism



## ABOUT THE JOB

The City Manager serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the City and is responsible for leading all municipal operations, implementing Council policy, and ensuring organizational effectiveness.

Reporting to the Mayor and City Council, the City Manager will:

- Provide strategic and operational leadership across all City departments
- Oversee preparation and administration of the annual budget
- Ensure effective management of utility systems and infrastructure planning
- Strengthen organizational systems, communication, and accountability
- Build strong relationships with Council, staff, and the community
- Promote transparency, responsiveness, and high-quality service delivery
- Lead regional and intergovernmental collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions, tribal governments, school districts, and other partners

Early leadership priorities for the first 12–24 months include:

- Moving forward long-term capital planning for the City's municipal utilities and critical infrastructure
- Strengthening financial policies, reserves, and multi-year forecasting
- Modernizing internal systems, policies, and communication practices
- Expanding community engagement and clear communication with residents
- Supporting organizational development, employee growth, and a positive workplace culture



## DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

Divisions within the organization

- Administration (City Recorder, HR, Finance)
- Public Safety (Police, Fire, Dispatch)
- Public Works & Utilities (Water, Sewer, Solid Waste)
- Community Development (Planning, Economic Development)
- Library Services
- Municipal Court
- Aquatic Center
- 18 hole Golf Course

## ORGANIZATION QUICKFACTS



EMPLOYEES

**65 FTEs**



BUDGET

**\$47.8  
MILLION**

## KEY PROJECTS FOR 2026

- Upgrading aging electrical infrastructure, including substations and transformers
- Advancing water system improvements, including new well development and reservoir replacement
- Implementing updated recycling program requirements
- Continuing renovation of historic City Hall facilities
- Strengthening financial policies, reserves, and long-term capital planning

# THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is an experienced municipal leader who brings strong executive-level judgment, operational discipline, and a collaborative leadership style. They will have a proven ability to manage complex organizations, particularly those with utility operations, while fostering trust and accountability.

This individual will be a visible and engaged community leader who values Milton-Freewater's unique culture and rural character. They will demonstrate strong financial acumen, the ability to modernize systems and processes, and a commitment to transparent communication with elected officials, staff, and residents.

The successful candidate will be a hands-on leader who listens first, sets clear expectations, and follows through—balancing respect for the community's history with a forward-looking, solutions-oriented approach.

The City Council is committed to supporting the City Manager's success through clear goals, regular communication, and a stable governance environment. Experience working effectively with elected bodies, employee groups, and, where applicable, collective bargaining units is highly valued.



## EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS

### Required:

- Bachelor's degree in public administration or a related field (or equivalent experience)
- At least seven (7) years of progressively responsible municipal management experience
- Demonstrated experience in budgeting, organizational leadership, and public-sector operations

For candidates without a bachelor's degree, a combination of education, training, and increasingly responsible management experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be considered.

### Preferred:

- Experience as a City Manager, Administrator, or Assistant City Manager
- Knowledge of municipal utilities and enterprise operations
- Bilingual (English/Spanish) skills
- Advanced degree in public administration or related field
- Membership in ICMA, OCCMA, or a similar professional association and a demonstrated commitment to the ICMA Code of Ethics
- Experience in labor relations and/or working with collective bargaining agreements

### Other expectations:

- Occasional travel for regional meetings and professional development (e.g., LOC, OCCMA, ICMA)
- Valid driver's license (or the ability to obtain one by date of hire) and an acceptable driving record

# SALARY & BENEFITS

- **Compensation:** \$140,000–\$160,000 DOE/DOQ within an employment agreement negotiated based on qualifications and experience
- **Health Benefits:** Medical, dental, vision, and orthodontic coverage (Regence Blue Cross), with low out-of-pocket costs; City pays approximately 90% of premiums
- **Paid Leave:** Up to 4 weeks of vacation (increasing with tenure), 12 days sick leave, and 12.5 holidays annually
- **Retirement:** Oregon Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), with City-paid contributions
- **Additional Perks:** Paid life insurance, City to provide a city cell phone and laptop, vehicle/mileage allowance, paid Long Term Disability, Accidental death and Dismemberment, and additional perks
- **Relocation Assistance:** The City is prepared to offer a reasonable relocation package for the successful candidate
- **Residency:** Residency in the city is preferred in any case, but a new Charter amendment forthcoming for consideration will require residency anywhere within the Milton-Freewater zip code

This is an appointed, at-will position that serves at the pleasure of the City Council under the terms of a professional employment agreement.



## HOW TO APPLY

Apply Here



For more information on this position, contact:

**Clay Pearson, Senior Vice President**

[cpearson@governmentresource.com](mailto:cpearson@governmentresource.com) | 713-816-8639

*The City of Milton-Freewater is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. The City of Milton-Freewater values diversity, equity, and inclusion and strongly encourages applications from candidates with a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a full background check, which may include criminal history, employment and educational verification, and, where relevant, credit and driver record checks, consistent with applicable law.*