

Thornton, Colorado

Transportation Director
Recruitment



THORNTON
COLORADO



City Profile

Thornton is the 6th largest city in Colorado and benefits from its proximity to downtown Denver, Denver International Airport, and the foothills of the beautiful Rocky Mountains. Thornton has a current population of just over 153,000 people and is expected to grow by another 90,000 people in the next 30-years. The city offers both established neighborhoods, and newer, affordable homes, creating a safe, sought-after, and active environment with a wide variety of municipal services. Thornton has a very diverse population with a wide range of socio-economic conditions for residents throughout the city.

While early development in Thornton was primarily residential, it has become a destination for primary employers and regional retail. There are three Regional Transportation District commuter rail stations with two additional planned stations further north. Thornton has nearly 1,000 acres of land developed or designated for public parks and trails. Thornton recently opened a new community center with an attached library and a partnership to produce an innovative nature library is under construction. The community desires to have safe connections to enjoy all of the various amenities the city has to offer.

Thornton is taking a proactive approach in identifying and prioritizing local infrastructure that will greatly benefit from safety improvements to help reduce the number of severe crashes that result in fatality or serious injury. The Thornton Vision Zero Action was adopted in 2024 with a goal of achieving zero fatal and serious injury crashes on the city's roads by 2040. The Plan looks to create a safe transportation system for all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and vehicle users.

Today, Thornton continues moving forward in a responsible manner that strengthens Thornton's increasing footprint. This includes the City's responsiveness to growth with an ever-growing menu of city services, programs, and capital investments. Our mission is to build a resilient and thriving Thornton by providing vital services that support safety and well-being for our community.

Form of Government

Thornton is a home rule city operating under the Council - Manager form of government. The city council consists of the Mayor who is elected at large, and eight Council members, two elected from each of the city's four wards. The Mayor and Council members each serve four-year terms, and all have an equal vote. The City Council enacts ordinances, approves the City budget, and appoints the City Manager, City Attorney, and Municipal Judge. The City Manager administers the daily operations and programs of the City through the department heads, other staff members, and employees. The Transportation Director reports to the Assistant City Manager.





Department Profile

The city of Thornton began an organizational review in 2025 to identify opportunities to modernize the city's organization structure to enhance decision-making, collaboration, and service delivery while increasing the capacity to address emerging policy and service challenges associated with a growing community. The process included numerous employee interviews, focus groups, staff survey, peer city review, and consultant recommendation that in turn has been refined internally through multiple phases. As a result of the process, the Transportation Department was created to specifically focus on enhancing transportation options, mobility, and safety. The new Transportation Department will be formed when the new director begins. The department is estimated to have approximately 75 employees, and manage roughly a \$15M operating budget and a key stakeholder for a \$49M capital budget. A Department of Engineering and Asset Management will handle capital projects, fleet, and real property while a Department of Utilities will handle the water, sewer, and solid waste utility groups. Together, these three departments report to the Assistant City Manager.

Transportation Director Summary

Under general direction of the Assistant City Manager, leads, directs and manages the multimodal transportation system and right-of-way infrastructure in a manner to reduce congestion, enhance user safety, address service gaps, and reliably connect the community and its resources. Provides visionary leadership to link land use, housing, and economic development strategies with the transportation system. Implements the approved strategic workplan and addresses the city priorities through thoughtful leadership and policies.

Essential Functions

(Essential functions, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, may include the following tasks, knowledge, skills and other characteristics. The list of tasks is ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY, and is not a comprehensive listing of all functions and tasks performed by positions in this class.)

Leads, directs, and manages all activities and operations of the department for management of the right-of-way, including traffic engineering and operations, transportation policy, street operations, pavement management, right-of-way (ROW) permitting, utility locates, snow plowing, and stormwater management.

Develops and implements long-range transportation strategies that integrate transit, cycling, pedestrian, and vehicular needs in coordination with the Vision Zero Master plan and Transportation and Mobility Masterplan.

Develops intergovernmental strategy including partnerships and funding. Represents the city and maintains strong relationships with regional partners, including the Regional Transportation District (RTD), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), North I-25 Coalition, North Area Transportation Alliance (NATA), E-470 Public

Highway Authority, SW Weld County Subregional Transportation Forum Group, ADCOG Subregional Transportation Forum Group, CO 7 Coalition, and Adams County.

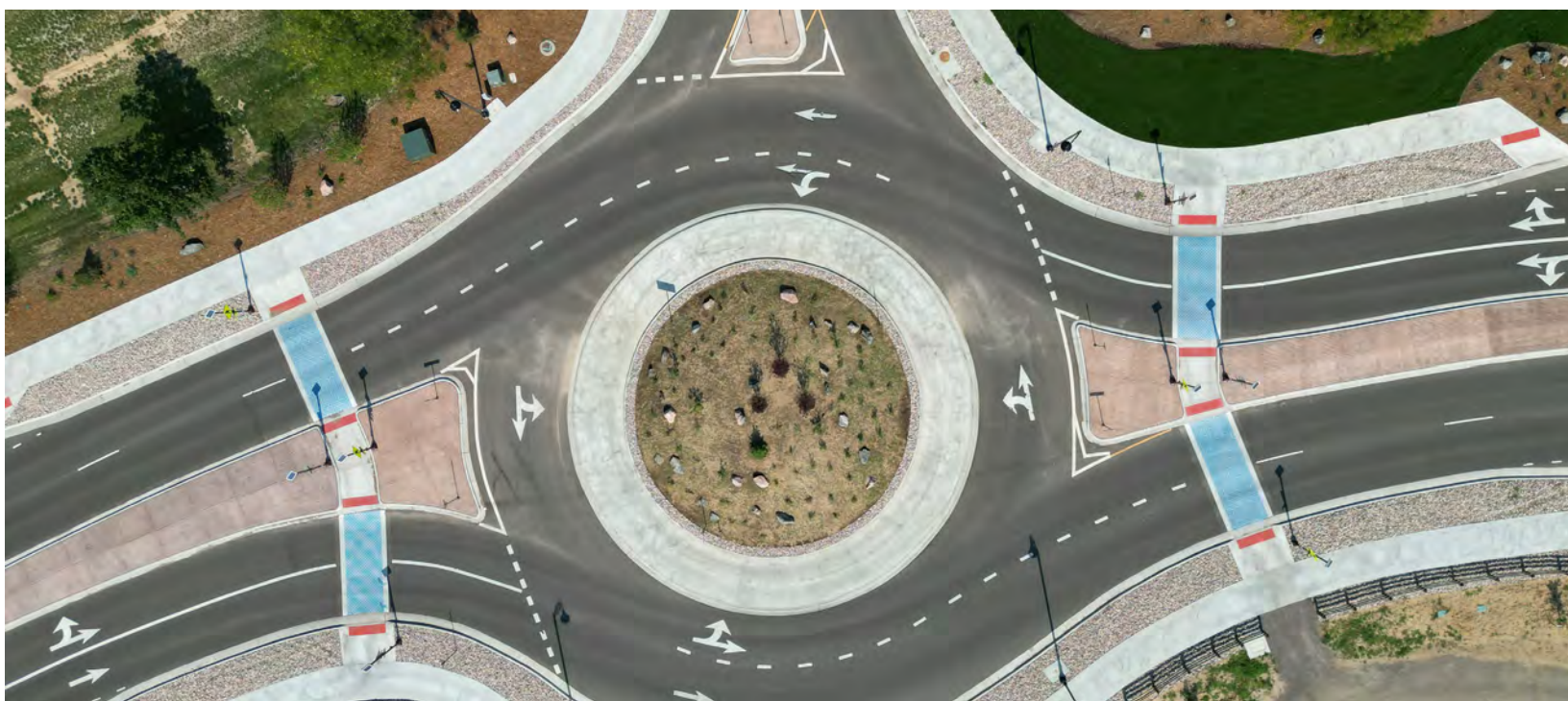
Oversees permitting for traffic control and construction in the ROW to reduce delays, enhance communication, and ensure safety of the public.

Interacts with other departments and agencies to promote and coordinate activities, goals, and programs- specifically related to enhancing the usability and safety of the transportation system.

Assesses local needs and updates the strategic plan for the future of the department, the city, and the community. Analyzes problems, identifies alternative solutions, projects consequences of proposed actions, and implements recommendations in support of goals and provide excellent customer service.

Develops and implements the department budget, including coordination with the other departments for major capital projects and fleet. Determines levels of staff, equipment and other resources needed to effectively and efficiently provide departmental services and programs. Pursues grant opportunities at the federal, state, and local level.

Balances advocacy for individual department wants/needs with commitment to and support for the best overall outcomes for the city and community.



Education/Experience

Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering or related field from an accredited college or university; eight years' experience in management-level civil engineering, traffic engineering, public works, and/or utilities operation, including five years of supervisory experience. Equivalent combinations of education and experience may be considered.

Licensing/Certification Requirements

Colorado Professional Engineering License is highly desired.

Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will be a leader who is both politically savvy but also grounded in a technical background through their experience. They will have the ability to navigate and communicate between various groups, interests, and audiences and advocate for the city's priorities. They will advance the city's transportation related strategic plan actions by recognizing opportunities between private development, transportation organizations, and city capital improvements. They will be comfortable leading, developing culture, and managing change as they will be establishing a new department with new team members.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Skill in determining levels of staff, equipment, and other resources needed to effectively and efficiently provide departmental services and programs.

Skill in developing, implementing, and evaluating policies and procedures in order to achieve department missions, goals, and objectives.

Skill in dealing constructively with conflict, developing consensus and facilitating change.

Ability to assess community and city needs and strategically plan for the future.

Ability to effectively represent the city in meetings with professional organizations, other public

agencies, and the public.

Ability to monitor departmental operations and customer service to ensure quality control, and to identify and resolve deficiencies.

Ability to listen well and communicate effectively orally and in writing with various audiences.

Ability to serve effectively as a member of a senior management team.

Ability to analyze and evaluate information accurately, and to express ideas clearly when providing oral and written reports or recommendations on administrative, financial and technical issues.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with city management, employees, elected officials, board and commission members, other agencies, community members and the general public.

Compensation and Benefits

The City of Thornton offers a competitive salary range of \$182,914-\$241,446 annually commensurate with the successful candidate's qualifications and experience. The City provides a comprehensive benefits package to support employees through important events in their life, to enhance their life outside work, and to help them plan and prepare for the future.

How to Apply

Apply Here



For more information on this position, contact:

Marsha Reed, Senior Vice President

MarshaReed@GovernmentResource.com |
806-789-9641

The City of Thornton is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. Applicants selected as finalists will be subject to a comprehensive background check.



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