

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

CITY OF BELGRADE *Montana*



Why Apply?



This is an outstanding opportunity to help shape the future of one of Montana's fastest-growing communities. The next Public Works Director will play a central role as Belgrade continues its transition from a small town into a modern, full-service city. Belgrade is seeking a Director who can maintain reliable daily public services while developing a Public Works organization capable of delivering an ambitious Capital Improvement Program over the next decade. The Director will benefit from broad responsibility across every aspect of municipal public works, from modernizing operations to developing a talented team prepared for the future. If you are looking to make a lasting impact in a community surrounded by exceptional natural beauty and significant professional opportunity, Belgrade offers a truly career-defining leadership role.



WELCOME TO BELGRADE

Located in the heart of Montana’s Gallatin Valley, Belgrade is a fast-growing community of approximately 13,800 residents just west of Bozeman along Interstate 90. Sitting at an elevation of 4,454 feet with views of the Bridger Mountains and surrounding farmland, Belgrade offers small-town charm, Big Sky scenery, and easy access to world-class outdoor recreation.

Belgrade’s roots date back to the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad in the 1880s, when the town developed as a railroad and agricultural community west of Bozeman. The City of Belgrade has long served the surrounding farms, ranches, and rural neighborhoods of the Gallatin Valley. Today, that agricultural heritage remains, even as the city experiences significant residential and commercial growth. According to U.S. Census data, Belgrade grew by more than 25% between 2020 and 2025, and the City projects the community will add between 4,800 and 6,000 new residents over the next decade.

Belgrade is proud of its history as a small western town and is making intentional efforts to shape growth while remaining a welcoming, tight-knit community. Residents enjoy a growing downtown, stock car racing at Gallatin Speedway, the annual Belgrade Fall Festival on homecoming weekend, excellent schools, and numerous hometown parks. Belgrade is also home to Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport (BZN), Montana’s busiest airport. The airport supports the region’s tourism and business economy, while its close proximity makes Belgrade a desirable home base for remote workers and frequent travelers.

The region is best known for abundant outdoor recreation, from blue-ribbon fishing in the Missouri headwaters to world-class skiing and riding at Bridger Bowl and Big Sky. Hiking, camping, hunting, mountain biking, and river rafting are all within easy reach, and Yellowstone National Park is just 90 miles south.





THE CITY OF BELGRADE

Incorporated in 1906, the City of Belgrade is a full-service city serving approximately 13,800 residents across nearly 5 square miles in Gallatin County. The City operates with a 2026 budget of \$45 million and a team of 111 authorized FTEs. Departments include City Administration, Municipal Court, Finance, Community and Economic Development, Public Works, Engineering, Internal Services, Legal, Police, Library, and Parks & Recreation.

The City operates under the Council-Manager form of government, with a Mayor elected citywide and six Council members elected by ward, two from each of the city's three wards. Mayor Mike Meis previously served on the Belgrade City Council before being elected mayor in 2025.



The City celebrates Belgrade's rich history while, at the same time, striving toward a future where Belgrade residents enjoy an outstanding quality of life. Appointed in 2021, City Manager Neil Cardwell leads an energetic and collaborative leadership team that is driven to find innovative solutions to challenges that regularly arise in managing one of the fastest growing cities in the state. The City fosters an environment that encourages courageous conversations and new ideas.

THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The City of Belgrade Public Works Department is responsible for providing and maintaining essential infrastructure and services that support the community's quality of life and continued growth. Operating with a 2026 budget of approximately \$8 million and 21.25 FTEs, the department is organized into four divisions: Streets, Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater. The Public Works Director is supported by two direct reports, the Public Works Superintendent and Public Works Administrative Assistant.

The City's core infrastructure systems are important to Belgrade's daily operations and continued growth. The water system includes nine wells, two elevated storage tanks, three pressure zones, and 88 miles of transmission mains, delivering water to residents and businesses while supporting fire protection through nearly 1,000 hydrants. Commissioned in 2022, the Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) is designed to treat up to 1.7 million gallons per day and currently exceeds performance expectations, removing approximately 95% of nutrients through biological treatment processes. The Streets Division maintains more than 150 combined centerline miles of City-owned transportation infrastructure.





THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Reporting to the City Manager, the Director of Public Works serves as the executive leader responsible for the Public Works Department, ensuring the delivery of safe, reliable, efficient, and cost-effective public infrastructure and utility services. The Director develops long-range capital improvement strategies, manages departmental budgets, ensures regulatory compliance, and provides leadership to departmental staff while advancing the community's strategic goals. This includes coordinating assigned activities with other City departments and outside agencies and providing highly responsible and complex support for the City of Belgrade.

For the City of Belgrade, keeping pace with growth requires greater emphasis on long-range planning, asset management, prioritization, and proactive decision-making while continuing to deliver excellent day-to-day services. Success in this position will depend on maintaining strong working relationships with the City Manager, City Engineer, Community Development, Finance, consultants, contractors, regulatory agencies, and the development community. Belgrade relies extensively on engineering, design, construction management, and specialty consultants to supplement internal resources. The Director will spend considerable time managing these relationships, establishing expectations, ensuring accountability, and coordinating work across multiple simultaneous projects.





THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

- A strategic leader who focuses on the big picture, works proactively, and empowers others to succeed.
- An experienced municipal public works professional with strong operational knowledge and sound judgment.
- A positive, approachable, and transparent communicator who builds trust with employees, elected officials, and the public by listening first.
- Manages time effectively, delegates appropriately, and develops staff rather than engaging in every decision or operational detail.
- Builds cohesive, team-oriented organizations that foster accountability, professional growth, shared ownership, and personal responsibility.
- Passionate about developing supervisors, mentoring future leaders, and creating an organization capable of sustaining long-term success.
- Politically astute and skilled at building and maintaining productive relationships with elected officials, developers, contractors, partner agencies, and the community.
- Comfortable and effective in communicating complex operational and infrastructure issues to elected officials and the public in a clear, understandable manner.
- A grounded and confident decision-maker who remains flexible, accepts responsibility, admits when additional expertise is needed, and works collaboratively with staff to develop the best solutions.
- A collaborative leader who supports organizational priorities, understands the role of an executive leadership team, and is comfortable contributing to decisions without always being the final decision-maker.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Building a Modern Public Works Organization

Belgrade has restructured its Public Works Department to better position the organization for the future. A key priority for the next Director will be implementing and, in partnership with the City Manager, continuing to refine that vision by establishing clear roles, building leadership capacity, and fostering a collaborative working relationship with the City Engineer, who currently reports directly to the City Manager. Success will require a strategic leader who delegates effectively, empowers staff, builds trust throughout the organization, and leads the department with a management style centered on accountability, collaboration, and long-term organizational excellence.

Planning for Sustainable Growth

Belgrade continues to experience rapid residential and commercial growth, requiring the City to continually expand and modernize its infrastructure. The next Director will help ensure that water, wastewater, transportation, and stormwater systems keep pace with development while addressing the impacts of previous growth. This includes strategic planning, execution of the Capital Improvement Program, and implementation of systems and processes that position the department to meet the community's future needs.

Modernizing Critical Infrastructure

Significant investments are underway to strengthen and expand Belgrade's core utility systems. Current priorities include increasing water supply reliability through additional wells and well rehabilitation, adding new storage capacity, optimizing wastewater treatment capacity through facility improvements and future expansion planning, improving aging transportation and utility infrastructure, and ensuring the City's long-term infrastructure investments support continued community growth and resiliency.

Establishing a Comprehensive Stormwater Program

One of the City's highest priorities is transitioning stormwater management from a maintenance function to a comprehensive utility and regulatory program. The next Director will lead the development of a dedicated stormwater division, support creation of a future utility, address aging drainage infrastructure and localized flooding concerns, and ensure compliance with increasingly complex MS4 and NPDES regulatory requirements. This represents a unique opportunity to build an essential municipal program from the ground up.

Expanding Organizational Capacity

As the community grows, so must the department's ability to deliver high-quality public services. Key initiatives include filling critical vacancies, developing staff, adding specialized positions such as fleet maintenance, improving operational efficiency, and planning for expanded Public Works facilities to accommodate additional personnel, equipment, and the future stormwater division. Building organizational capacity will be essential to sustaining Belgrade's high level of service.



EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, engineering, construction management or a closely related field.
- At least 7 years of progressively responsible experience relating to construction, maintenance, and repair of public works systems and operations.
- At least 3 years of successful supervisory experience.
- Or any equivalent combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

PREFERRED

- Successful management and leadership experience working in a city, county, or state government.
- Master's degree in public administration, engineering, or a related field.
- Experience managing municipal water, wastewater, stormwater, and transportation systems.
- Knowledge of engineering techniques as applied to municipal practices.
- Registration as a Professional Engineer (P.E.) in the State of Montana.

Special Requirements: License as Water and Wastewater Operator must be obtained within one year of hire. (The City will assist with this process.)

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The City of Belgrade is offering an annual salary range of \$148,338 to \$177,572 for this position, depending on experience and qualifications, along with a comprehensive benefits package.

RESOURCES

[Public Works Department](#)

[City Budget](#)

[City Org Chart](#)

[Gallatin County](#)

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TO APPLY

Apply Online: gmphr.com

First Review: **August 9, 2026**

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