

CITY MANAGER

KIRKSVILLE *Missouri*

**Revised
Education
Requirements**

Why Apply?

Kirksville, one of the hardest-working cities in Missouri, is seeking its next City Manager, as its current manager is retiring after 23 years of service in the role. Kirksville is the largest and most populous city in Adair County, Missouri, and is home to three institutions of higher education: Truman State University, A.T. Still University, and Moberly Area Community College. This community has a true sense of place, is financially sound, and firmly believes in partnerships to accomplish its goals. Kirksville has built a solid management team, and staff works exceedingly well with City Council. This is a community that provides a wonderful quality of life, continues to be poised for success, embraces collaboration, and believes everyone has a place in Kirksville.



Welcome to KIRKSVILLE

Kirksville is a vibrant town of approximately 17,500 residents and the regional center of northeast Missouri. As the seat of Adair County, the city plays an important role as a hub for education, healthcare, government, and commerce—all while retaining a welcoming small-town feel.

Education is a defining strength of Kirksville, where residents can pursue their education from kindergarten through medical school without ever leaving the community. Kirksville is home to three colleges: Truman State University, Missouri's only public liberal arts and sciences university; A.T. Still University, the founding institution of osteopathic medicine; and a full-service satellite campus of Moberly Area Community College. Kirksville also serves as a regional center for healthcare and employment, anchored by Northeast Regional Medical Center, a 93-bed hospital and Level III trauma center, along with manufacturing and industrial employers such as Kraft Heinz, which operates an Oscar Mayer production facility and is one of the community's major employers.

Community life is anchored by Kirksville's historic downtown square, built around the Adair County Courthouse. Local shops and eateries surround the square, which hosts annual gatherings such as the Whiskey and Turkey Festival, Summer on the Square concert series, Red Barn Arts and Crafts Festival, and Christmas Parade. In 2026, the city welcomed the Special Olympics Missouri State Summer Games for the second consecutive year.

The city maintains 10 community parks, including a disc golf course, skate park, wading pools, fishing access, and the region's only fully accessible playground. Renovated in 2021, the Kirksville Aquatic Center features an indoor pool, seasonal outdoor water park, and fitness classes and family programming. Just west of the city, the 3,215-acre Thousand Hills State Park offers fishing, boating, and swimming on Forest Lake, an expansive reservoir with 17 miles of shoreline. Visitors also enjoy hiking and mountain biking trails, cabins and campsites, and Native American petroglyphs estimated to be more than 1,500 years old. Kirksville Regional Airport serves the area with daily flights to Chicago through Contour Airlines.





THE CITY OF KIRKSVILLE

Incorporated in 1857, the City of Kirkville is a third-class city, operating under the Council-Manager form of government. The City serves a population of 17,530 across more than 14 square miles with a \$59.6 million annual budget (\$39.7 million operating and \$19.9 million capital) and a team of 167 FTEs across 10 departments.

Municipal operations include Administration, Adair County Emergency Communication Center, Airport, Community & Economic Development and Codes & Planning, Public Works & Engineering, Finance, Fire, Missouri Rural Enterprise & Innovation Center, Parks & Recreation, Police, and Tourism.

Policymaking and legislative authority are vested in a five-member City Council responsible for passing ordinances, adopting the budget, appointing committees, setting policy, approving contracts, and hiring the City Manager and City Attorney on a contractual basis. Councilmembers are elected at large on a nonpartisan basis to staggered three-year terms.

In April of each year, after the municipal election, the City Council elects two Councilmembers to serve as Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem. The Mayor presides over City Council meetings and is recognized as the official head of the City. Mayor Zac Burden has been serving in his position since 2019.

FTEs
167

BUDGET
\$59.6 million

AREA
14 square
miles

POPULATION
17,530





THE CITY MANAGER

Reporting to the City Council, the City Manager serves as the administrative head of the City, with a primary responsibility to implement the Council’s vision by carrying out its policies and ordinances, overseeing day-to-day government operations, and appointing department managers. The City Manager directs all administrative functions while leading the development of strategic goals through a balance of hands-on management and effective delegation to key staff.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES:

- 1) Establish meaningful relationships across the organization and community during this leadership transition by creating a visible presence and supporting Kirksville’s strong culture of partnership and consensus-building.
- 2) Complete a facilities study of existing police, 911, fire, and water treatment facilities, including potential funding options for future facility needs.
- 3) Evaluate opportunities to regionalize services for 911.
- 4) Develop and present revenue diversification strategies for City Council consideration.
- 5) Address legislative challenges and establish relationships with new state and federal legislators as current incumbents leave office.
- 6) Expand community engagement to strengthen awareness of Kirksville’s value to residents and businesses.
- 7) Support implementation of the water meter replacement program.
- 8) Address substandard housing by identifying programs that support residential rehabilitation.
- 9) Identify opportunities to consolidate economic development efforts and strengthen business retention and attraction.



IDEAL CANDIDATE TRAITS

- Leads with integrity, sound judgment, and a clear commitment to ethical leadership.
- Applies strategic thinking to define a clear vision, align others around it, and identify practical steps for execution.
- Builds trust with staff, Council, and the community through consistency, transparency, and credibility.
- Solves problems by evaluating options, removing obstacles, and developing creative, practical solutions to emerging needs or concerns.
- Demonstrates strong financial acumen, including a deep understanding of municipal finance, revenue strategies, and grant requirements.
- Empowers department heads to lead their teams while providing guidance, mentoring, and support when needed.
- Makes timely, well-reasoned decisions and demonstrates confidence in moving priorities forward.
- Takes personal accountability for decisions and follows through on issues and questions in a timely manner.
- Demonstrates strong emotional intelligence, resilience, and composure when receiving criticism or navigating difficult situations.
- Communicates complex ideas clearly and effectively to a wide range of audiences.
- Responds thoughtfully to concerns and actively listens to multiple perspectives before reaching conclusions.
- Maintains an approachable, transparent leadership style that supports productive relationships across diverse groups.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in public administration, business administration, political science, or related field; seven years of local government management, including three in senior leadership. Municipal executive experience preferred. Master's degree and ICMA credential desirable. Equivalent education, training, and experience may be considered.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The City of Kirksville offers an annual salary range of \$130,000 to \$160,000, based on qualifications and experience, along with a comprehensive benefits package.



RESOURCES

[2026 Budget](#)

[Comprehensive Plan](#)

[2026 City Goals](#)

[2026 State of the City Presentation](#)

[Visit Kirksville](#)



**TO
APPLY**

Apply Online: gmphr.com

First Review: October 16, 2026

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