

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

FOREST LAKE *Minnesota*



Why Apply?



This is an excellent opportunity to help lead the City of Forest Lake, a gateway community located on the Interstate 35 corridor between the Twin Cities and the “up north” recreational activities of greater Minnesota. Forest Lake is home to a scenic chain of lakes, strong school district, YMCA, library, airport, numerous parks, walking/biking trails, and other recreational opportunities. It has a solid variety of commercial, industrial, and retail opportunities and room to grow responsibly, with approximately 35% of its total land area still to be developed. This position offers a true variety of opportunities and challenges for the next City Administrator.



Welcome to FOREST LAKE

Forest Lake is a growing community of approximately 21,000 residents located at the northern edge of the Twin Cities metropolitan area, offering suburban convenience and small-town familiarity with a distinctly lake-oriented character. Its location provides easy access to the St. Croix Valley and Minnesota's lake country, while Interstate 35 offers a direct route to the Twin Cities about 30 miles to the south.

Forest Lake developed as a stop on the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad in the late 1800s and soon became a summer destination. The community steadily expanded as seasonal cottages became year-round homes. Today, housing ranges from established neighborhoods near downtown to lakefront homes, newer subdivisions, and properties with acreage along the city's more rural edges.

Downtown sits on the western shore of its namesake lake, where Lakeside Memorial Park provides a swimming beach, playground, docks, and open lawn overlooking the water. Boating and fishing are popular throughout the warmer months, while ice fishing becomes part of the winter landscape. The City is also working to strengthen connections between downtown and the waterfront through its adopted Downtown Plan and shoreline improvements.

Forest Lake maintains 23 parks and 18 open spaces, including the Hardwood Creek Regional Trail, a paved route for walking and biking with a parallel turf trail for horseback riding and winter snowmobiling. Hockey and skating are part of local life with the Forest Lake Sports Center and City-maintained outdoor rinks serving residents throughout the winter.

Community traditions bring people downtown throughout the year, including Forest Lake's multi-day Fourth of July celebration—one of Minnesota's oldest and largest Fourth of July celebrations, with a parade and fireworks over the lake. Summer also brings Arts in the Park with live music, local vendors, and the annual Community Corn Feed, while Hometown Holiday fills Lakeside Memorial Park with bonfires, youth performances, and visits with Santa.



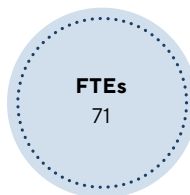
THE CITY OF FOREST LAKE

Forest Lake is a full-service municipality serving approximately 21,000 residents across 36 square miles in Washington County. Incorporated in 1893, Forest Lake is a Minnesota Statutory Plan A city operating under the Council-Administrator form of government.

The City Council is composed of a Mayor and four Councilmembers, all elected at large. The Mayor serves a two-year term, while Councilmembers serve staggered four-year terms. The City Council appoints a City Administrator to serve as the chief administrative officer.

The City operates with a 2026 budget of \$15.2 million and a team of 71 FTEs and 4 PTEs. Departments include Administration, Community Development, Finance, Fire, Police, and Public Works. The City also owns and operates the Daniel A. Deponti Municipal Airport.

City operations are centered at City Center, which opened in 2014. The facility brought Police, Fire, Administration, Building, and Zoning together under one roof, replacing the City's much smaller 1939 municipal headquarters. In addition to City offices and public service counters, City Center includes the Council Chamber, conference spaces, and a second-floor community room.



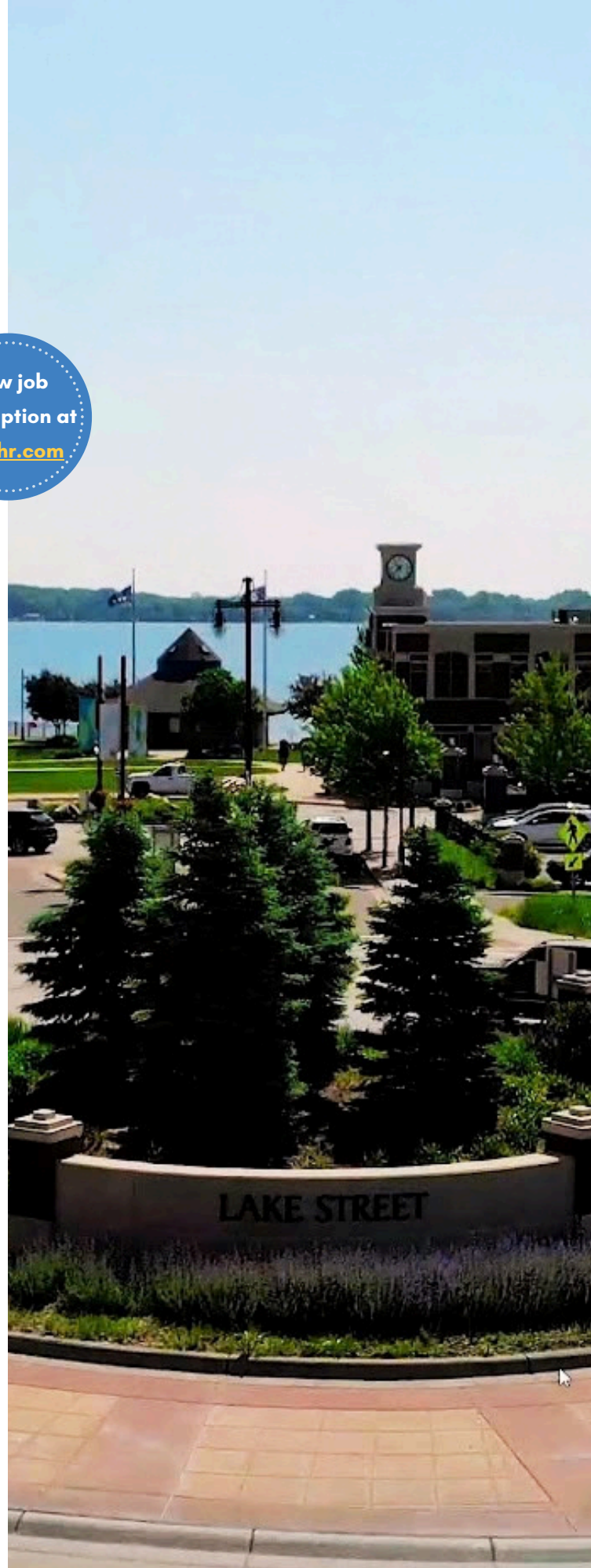
THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

The City Administrator is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, and coordinating the daily operations of all City departments and functions, while providing information and support to the City Council and advisory commissions.

View job
description at
gmphr.com

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

- Excellent communication and listening skills.
- Strong work ethic.
- Enjoys community engagement and desires to be involved in civic events.
- Approachable and understands how to mentor staff, Council, boards, and commissions to achieve Forest Lake's vision.
- Process facilitator who is skilled at navigating complex projects or issues and securing the decisions needed to bring projects to completion.
- Pragmatic, realistic, and fiscally responsible.
- Solid understanding of municipal finance.
- Empowers department heads and builds strong teams without micromanaging.





OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADERSHIP

1) **Improve Continuity of Operations**

- Initiate strategic planning with the Council and Management Team.
- Conduct an organizational study to identify the most effective service delivery model.
- Partner with Human Resources to strengthen newly established HR initiatives.
- Collaborate with the Finance Director on a utility rate study in 2027.
- Continue the work on the long-range capital and street improvement programs.
- Continue the momentum of improved communication and collaboration between the City Council and Management Team.

2) **Airport Operations**

Work with the Community Development and Public Works Departments to address airport development, improvements, and funding.

3) **Economic and Community Development**

In concert with the Community Development Director, the Administrator should focus on:

- Developing a viable Downtown Revitalization program based on the existing study.
- Identifying the right development proposal for “Headwaters 123” (123 acres of City-owned property).
- Working with the EDA and Chamber of Commerce to develop a formal business retention and attraction program.

4) **Capital Projects**

- Commence efforts to construct a new Public Works Building.
- Advance the design and reconstruction of Judicial Ditch #4 as land acquisition nears completion, coordinating community engagement and pursuing funding opportunities.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or related field. Master's degree preferred.
- 3 to 5 years of local government experience.
- An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The City of Forest Lake offers an annual salary range of \$171,662–\$208,894, based on qualifications and experience, along with a comprehensive benefits package. A 3% cost-of-living adjustment is anticipated for 2027, increasing the salary range to \$176,812–\$215,161.

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance
- Life & AD&D insurance
- Short- and long-term disability insurance
- HSA and FSA options
- Vacation: 120–216 hours annually based on years of service
 - Qualifying prior service may be credited.
- Sick/ESST leave: 8 hours per month
- 12 paid holidays plus 2 floating holidays annually
- Mileage/vehicle reimbursement



RESOURCES

[City Budget](#)

[2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)

[10-Year Capital Plan](#)

[Financial Management Plan](#)

[Org Chart](#)

[Forest Lake Chamber of Commerce](#)



Forest Lake
AS GOOD AS IT SOUNDS



**TO
APPLY**

Apply Online: gmphr.com

First Review: November 25, 2026

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