



CITY MANAGER RECRUITMENT MAY 2026

Exploring the City of Polson

Polson is located on the Flathead Indian Reservation in a natural amphitheater at the south end of Flathead Lake -- the largest natural freshwater lake in the western United States. This charming lakeside community is the trading center for one of Montana's most fertile farming areas. In a prime cherry growing region and home to numerous cherry orchards, Polson celebrates with an annual Cherry Festival downtown Polson. Downtown Polson is the site of many other festivities throughout the year as well as the site of Polson's Farmers' Market.

The broad, sweeping Mission Valley south of Polson is bordered by the rugged, snow-capped Mission Mountains. The Flathead River that flows from Polson features whitewater rafting and Seli's Ksanka Qlispe' Dam (formerly Kerr Dam). The National Bison Range at Moiese with its large herds of bison, elk, deer, antelope, and big horn sheep are nearby, as well as the Ninepipes and Pablo Wildlife Refuges for bird watchers.

Community Profile

Polson, Montana is the county seat of Lake County and is located in northwestern Montana on the Flathead Indian Reservation and at the southern shore of Flathead Lake. Polson is approximately 70 miles north of Missoula, 50 miles south of Kalispell, and 70 miles south of Glacier National Park.

Geography

Elevation: 2,927 feet

Average July Maximum Temperature: 82.2 F

Average January Minimum Temperature: 19.4 F

Average Annual Precipitation: 15.32 inches

Population

Polson 5,357 (2021)

Lake County 32,033 (2021)

Municipal Structure

Commission-Manager Government

Volunteer Fire Department

City Law Enforcement

City Zoning within incorporated limits and City-County Planning Area

Municipal Golf Course

City Utilities:

Water & Sewer

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager serves as the chief executive and administrative officer for the City of Polson, providing leadership and oversight of daily municipal operations and organizational administration. Reporting directly to the City Commission, the City Manager oversees all City departments, implements Commission policies and directives, and ensures the delivery of efficient, responsive, and high-quality municipal services.

Essential Duties of the Manager:

- Manages and supervises all department, agencies, and offices of the city to achieve goals within available resources; plans and organizes workloads and staff assignments; trains, motivates and evaluates assigned staff; reviews progress and directs changes as needed.
- Provides leadership and direction in the development of short- and long-range plans; gathers, interprets, and prepares data for studies, reports, and recommendations; coordinates department activities other departments and agencies as needed.
- Provides professional advice to the City Commission and department heads; makes presentations to the Commission, boards, civic groups, and the public.
- Communicates official plans, policies, and procedures to staff and the public and ensures all inquiries and communications are returned in a timely manner.
- Prepares reports, agenda and agenda materials, ordinances, resolutions, correspondence, and other administrative documents.
- Ensure compliance with City ordinances and applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
- Facilitates effective communication and collaboration among elected officials, staff, residents, and community organizations.
- Represents the City in community, regional, and intergovernmental meetings and initiatives.
- Prepares and presents the budget to the Commission for its approval and execute the budget adopted by the Commission.
- Appoints, suspends, and removes all employees of the City except as otherwise provided by law, ordinance, or the Charter.

See attached City Manager Position Description amended May 2026. Also review City Code 3.02 Duties of the Manager and State Statute, 7-3-304, MCA

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City Commission seeks a City Manager with strong leadership, communication, organizational, fiscal management, public speaking, presentation, and negotiation skills, along with a collaborative and service-oriented approach to municipal administration. The City Manager is appointed by the City Commission and serves at the pleasure of the Commission. The ideal candidate should understand this role clearly; supporting the Mayor and City Commission, implementing policy direction, and ensuring the organization is professional and accountable.

This individual will be an approachable leader who builds strong relationships with elected officials, staff, residents, and community stakeholders while maintaining a visible presence in the community. The successful candidate will demonstrate high ethical standards and professional integrity, effective public communication skills, and a commitment to operational excellence and continuous organizational improvement.

Salary Range: \$95,000–\$115,000 (DOQ)

Excellent insurance and benefits package. Enrollment in Montana Employee Retirement System (PERS) Pension.

Minimum Qualifications

Education and Experience:

- Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with a degree in public administration, political science, business management, or a closely related field, and five (5) years of applicable experience in public sector administration.

Necessary Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Considerable knowledge of modern policies and practices of public administration; working knowledge of public sector finance, human resources, public works, public safety, community development, and grant writing process;
- Skill in preparing and administering budgets; skill in planning, directing, and administering necessary programs; skill in operating and using a personal computer, including word processing and spreadsheet programs; calculator, smart phone, multi-line telephone system, copy machine and fax machine.
- Ability to prepare and analyze comprehensive reports; ability to carry out assigned projects to their completion; ability to communicate effectively verbally and in writing; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with employees, city officials, and the public; ability to efficiently and effectively administer a municipal government.

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree in public administration, business administration, political science, or a related field or specialized certification such as ICMA Credentialed Manager or Certified Public Manager (CPM).
- Five to ten years of progressively responsible local government or public-sector management experience.
- Experience working with tribal governments and officials, state agencies and officials, and county government departments and officials.
- Knowledge of state legislative processes is desirable.
- Equivalent combinations of education and experience that provide the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities may be considered.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Submit comprehensive resume, cover letter, and professional references in one PDF file to City Clerk/HR Coordinator Cora Pritt via email: cityclerk@cityofpolson.com

Questions should be directed by email to Interim City Manager George Simpson at citymanager@cityofpolson.com

Application review will begin on June 22, 2026, and position remains open until filled.