

CITY MANAGER

CITY OF WESTLAKE VILLAGE

SOURCE: MICHAEL PAULE



Recruitment services provided by Ralph Andersen & Associates



A Unique Opportunity

Renowned for its outstanding quality of life, spectacular setting, and all-around beauty, the City of Westlake Village (pop. 8,358) is seeking a dynamic and accomplished executive to join this financially healthy and well-managed organization. This position is the result of the retirement of a long-tenured and highly regarded individual. Revenues are in excess of \$20 million with healthy reserves and a small complement of both full-time staff and contract personnel. The City Council is seeking an engaging leader with exceptional interpersonal and communication skills and a strong passion for public service.

This top professional will thrive in an environment that embraces an entrepreneurial spirit and approach to local government, sets high expectations, and demands a high level of customer service and responsiveness. The selected City Manager will also bring an inclusive management style combined with a hands-on approach to day-to-day operations, continuing to build on the extremely positive culture in the organization. Experience working for a contract city in California is highly regarded by the City Council.

Collaboration skills and a passion for best practices in managing municipal services are key characteristics the City Council will be looking for in the next City Manager. Additionally, a thorough understanding of municipal finance, budgeting, community planning, public works, and contracting for a wide range of services is of high importance to the City Council. Although the City is primarily built-out, opportunities and challenges will likely arise in the future centered around meeting State affordable housing requirements, implementing one or more specific plans dealing with upgrades/renovations to existing commercial and business properties, coordinating creative public-private partnerships, addressing long-term capital improvement program priorities and projects, overseeing existing City services and programs aimed at maintaining and enhancing the City's high quality of life for its residents, and addressing and implementing innovative approaches to improve broadband services to residents and businesses.

In summary, the new City Manager will be focused on overseeing the organization's ability to consistently deliver excellent customer service and responsiveness to support a progressive, engaged, and forward-thinking City Council.

The Community

Located in Los Angeles County adjacent to the border of Ventura County, the City of Westlake Village was incorporated in 1981 and was one of the first master planned communities in the country. It continues to be one of the most desirable places to live within the region and possibly one of the top choices on a national scale.

The community has a unique and special small-town charm as it places great emphasis on its unofficial motto: the "city in the country". Characteristic phrases that define and distinguish Westlake Village include: great place to raise a family; wonderful balance between the residential, commercial, and business sectors; incredibly beautiful physical amenities such as wide boulevards, richly landscaped parkways and medians; top-notch schools; quality living; neighborliness; safe, quiet neighborhoods; and a strong sense of community pride, civic responsibility, and identity.

Those who choose to live and work in Westlake Village tend to have a very strong connection to the community given its overall beauty, tranquility, and peacefulness, coupled with the many amenities it offers. The City helps encourage this connection in various ways which promotes an engaged lifestyle for its residents. Also typifying this lifestyle is a commitment to public and community service manifested through the support of numerous charitable organizations by the City and by residents through contributions, volunteering, and direct financial support. Residents have a long history of participation in numerous City volunteer projects, committees, and boards, and they have a genuine and sincere appreciation for the quality services provided by the City.

A Great Place to do Business

The City is the location of choice for major employers including the world headquarters of Dole Food Company and the corporate offices of Guitar Center, Bank of America Home Loans, Move, Inc., and Securitas Security Services are also located within the City limits.

Currently, hotels located in the City serving the community and visitors to the region include the Four Seasons Hotel, the Marriott Residence Inn, and the locally owned Westlake Village Inn.

Daytime population of the community swells to approximately 10,000 with the influx of employees and visitors.

The Organization

The City operates under the Council-Manager form of government. The five members of the City Council are elected to four-year overlapping terms, with the Mayor selected among his/her peers to serve a one-year term. The City Council has a long and well-established tradition of civility and decorum and its relationship with staff is highly respectful and supportive. The City Council appoints the City Manager, who in turn, serves as chief executive of the organization. Additionally, the City Council appoints the City Treasurer and the City Attorney. City Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of every month with the exception of a one-month hiatus in August when the City Council holds no meetings.

In Westlake Village, the City Council also serves as the Planning Commission. The City utilizes two advisory Boards including the Cultural Recreation Advisory Board and the Public Safety Advisory Board (newly created), each composed of seven residents and two members of the City Council. Typically, the City will rely upon these boards, as well as both standing and ad-hoc City Council committees, to review and work through City issues leading to recommendations to the full City Council.

The City has a total 2018-2019 budget of approximately \$22.8 million (\$11 million in General Fund operating expenses with an approximate \$9.5 million Capital Improvement Program), and a full-time staff of 12 along with 3 part-time staff not including the appointed Treasurer. The largest share of the General Fund operating costs totaling \$2.8 million are attributed to public safety representing 25.25% of the total budget. The City is financially stable with over \$6.4 million in general fund reserves and \$12.4 million in unrestricted capital improvement program reserves.

Currently, the City contracts for animal control, building and safety, legal, library, parks, recreation and cultural services, law enforcement, and public works. Fire protection services are provided by the Los Angeles County Consolidated Fire District.

The City Manager's Office

The City Manager directs, coordinates, and manages the overall administrative activities and operation of the City and advises and assists the City Council while exercising significant independent judgment and initiative. The City Manager is

appointed by the City Council and serves at its pleasure. The current City Manager, Ray Taylor, recently celebrated his 25th anniversary with the City, having been with the organization since 1993. Mr. Taylor will be retiring later this year; however, to ensure a smooth transition, he will continue to provide leadership to the organization through the final stages of the selection process.

The Ideal Candidate

The City Council is seeking a creative and innovative individual to employ a team approach in proactively addressing issues that impact the City Council and the community. The new City Manager will also embrace the culture of the organization and continue to promote the values held by the community for highly ethical, responsive, and efficient delivery of services. Approachability, attention to detail, patience, responsiveness, and follow-through are absolutely key to success in this community.

The City Manager will be an "idea" person, able to develop and promote strategic initiatives for the City Council's discussion and consideration, while incorporating best practices in local government.

Additionally, the City Manager will have a hands-on and collaborative approach to management with frequent interaction with staff and the City Council, fostering an open dialogue and strong lines of communication. The City Council desires a manager who enjoys working in the public sector and appreciates contributions from all sources within the organization as well as the engaged community. Successful candidates will also promote the use of new and emerging technology in their approach to city management.

The City Manager will have unquestioned personal integrity, display honesty, and have strong ethics. He/She will also have excellent communication and interpersonal skills and the ability to address issues with a collaborative and inclusive management style.

The ideal candidate will also possess the following characteristics:

- Genuine concern for preserving the quality of life presently offered to residents of Westlake Village with an appreciation for the natural beauty of the area and a high regard for the importance of environment, quality of life, and open space to local residents;





- Results-driven approach to municipal finance, public safety, and all aspects of municipal service delivery;
- Appreciation for exceptional customer service, service delivery that exceeds community expectations, effective and efficient operations, transparency, and overall community access;
- Confident style that will promote candid and open discussions and encourages the review of options and alternatives for the City Council's consideration;
- Able to provide leadership to both the City Council and staff with the ability to set goals and objectives, motivate others, and contribute effectively to their timely achievement and successful performance; and
- Strategic thinker, able to be pro-active in a variety of management decisions.

The new City Manager will provide strong leadership and be primarily involved in:

- Balancing an array of community needs including continuing the high-level of transparent, frequent, and open communications;
- Addressing ongoing infrastructure needs, service delivery, public safety, and overseeing overall enhancements through effective planning and community development for a nearly built-out environment; and
- Continuing to promote and embrace the City's tradition of providing a strong leadership role in intergovernmental relationships, local agencies, and boards.

Experience and Education

Review of Qualifying Experience and Education – The full City Council will be actively involved with Ralph Andersen & Associates in the initial screening and evaluation of resumes to determine the appropriate match of professional experience and education.

- **Experience** – This position requires a minimum of eight years of progressively responsible experience in an administrative, managerial, or staff capacity in a comparable organization with similar complexities. Experience working with a contract city structure and engaged elected body is strongly desired. California municipal experience is highly regarded by this

City Council. All highly qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply. In an effort to find the most suitable candidate, the City Council will consider a broad spectrum of talented individuals with a preference for municipal service in California.

- **Education** – Ideally, candidates will have a Master's or other advanced degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in planning, public or business administration, or a closely related field.

Compensation

The City Council is prepared to offer a highly competitive salary for the region consistent with recent practices plus executive level benefits including CalPERS Retirement (3%@60-Classic; 2%@62-New). A mutually agreeable employment agreement will be negotiated and may include relocation assistance for the selected candidate. Candidates should be aware that the City does not participate in Social Security. Further details can be obtained through discussions with Ralph Andersen & Associates.

To Be Considered

Interested candidates may apply for this career opportunity by submitting a resume and a compelling cover letter by **Friday, September 21, 2018** to apply@ralphandersen.com. Candidates should be aware that the City Council desires a smooth transition of leadership and, as a result, the Council along with the outgoing City Manager, Ray Taylor, will work together to facilitate a smooth transition. Invited finalist candidates will be interviewed by the full City Council in mid-November (Saturday 11/10 and Sunday 11/11). The retiring City Manager will continue to serve in the role until the selected candidate joins the organization, ideally before the end of 2018.

This is a highly confidential search process. References will not be contacted until mutual interest has been established. Confidential inquiries are welcomed and should be directed to Heather Renschler, Ralph Andersen & Associates at (916) 630-4900.

The City of Westlake Village strongly supports a vibrant and diverse workforce and encourages all highly qualified candidates to submit for consideration.