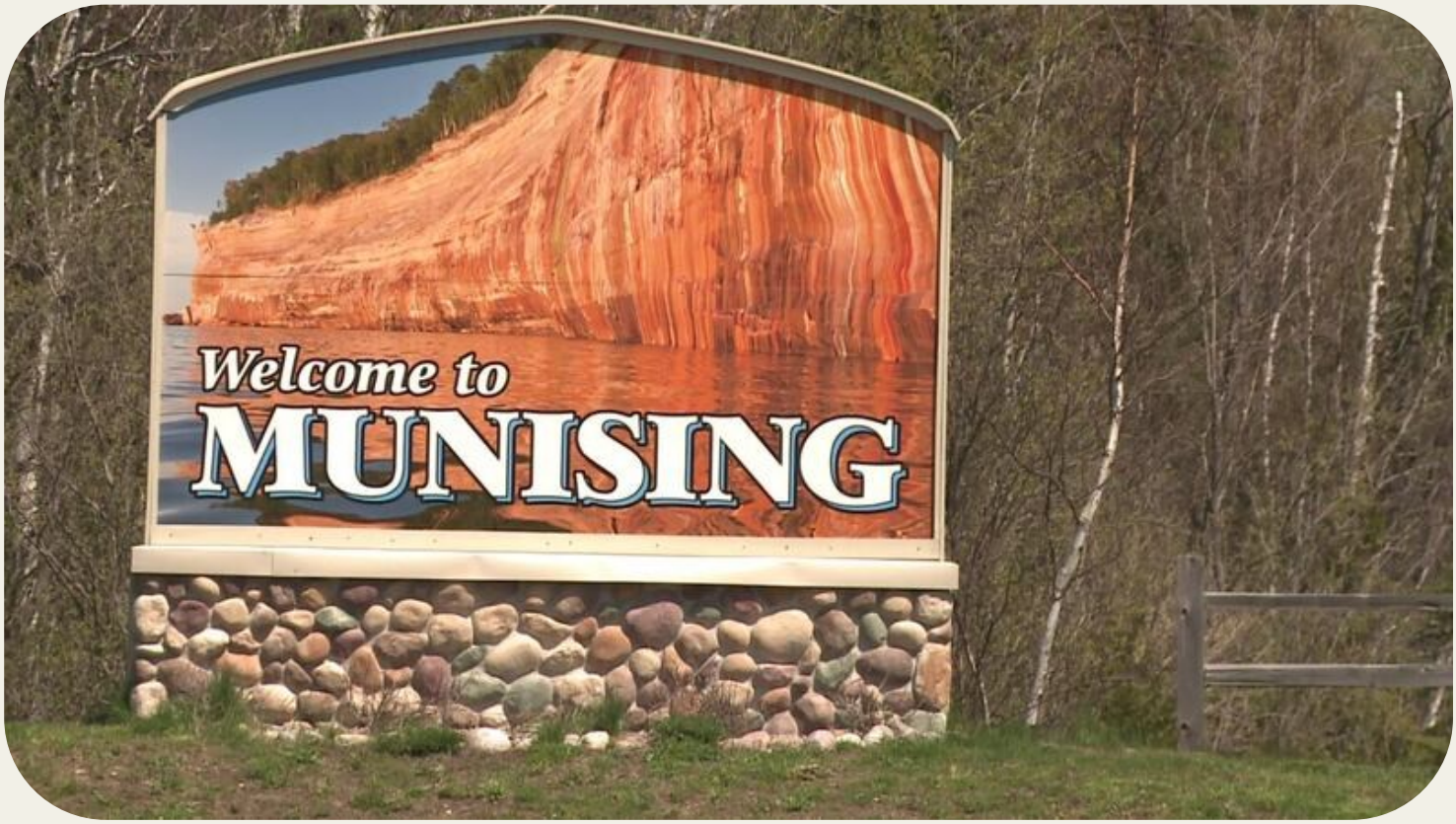
Executive Search

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

CITY OF MUNISING

CITY MANAGER



Lead where others vacation.

City of Munising

The City of Munising seeks a strategic and innovative city manager/DPW director to lead their idyllic waterfront community, located on Lake Superior's southern coast in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Michiganders are rightfully boastful of all Michigan's grand peninsulas have to offer, and nowhere do all the state's attributes merge more beautifully than in the Munising. The perfect opportunity is now available for the dynamic leader who has dreamed of living and working in an outdoor four-season paradise.

Munising seeks a new city manager to work along side elected officials, and help the community grow and devlope. An approachable and accessible leader will flourish in this small-town environment that offers significant amenities. The City of Munising is a full-service, progressive community.

The City of Munising operates as a commission/ manager form of government. With an overall budget exceeding $7.7 million, including a general fund which exceeds $2.9 million, Munising is financially stable with a diversified economic base. With a population of 1,986 residents, the city has a taxable value exceeding $83 million and employs 23 full-time employees and several seasonal employees who deliver quality services.



The new city manager will develop and maintain relationships with elected officials, department heads, and all levels of city employees. To successfully foster these relationships, communication, interpersonal, and human relations skills are essential and desirable qualities. In addition, the new city manager will respect and value city residents, demonstrating an ability to interact with a range of people with varied attitudes and positions. The community has an engaged citizenry who expect a transparent city government and open communication between the city manager, mayor, commission members, and citizens.

Over the past decade, Munising has successfully implemented a significant revitalization plan, investing more than $25 million in water, sewer, and road infrastructure, along with parks and recreation trail development. Today, nearly a million visitors flock to the area year-round to access its significant outdoor attributes.

The City of Munising will offer a competitive compensation and benefits package, with a salary range of $95,000 to $110,000 and a defined benefits plan with an employer contribution of 8 percent and an additional 2 percent employer contribution if the employee matches the 2 percent. Additional duties include serving as DPW director and zoning administrator.

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The Organization

As a commission/manager form of government, the Munising City Commission is made up of five members, all elected to three-year staggered terms. The city commission hires the city manager, sets policy and direction, approves capital and operating budgets and major expenditures, and serves as the legislative authority by approving ordinances and major planning initiatives.

The mayor and city commission members trust the expertise of the city manager and rely on the position's professionalism. Elected officials advocate for creativity and are supportive of improvements made to processes and recommendations advanced by city staff.

The mayor, city commission, department directors, and city staff are rightfully proud of the level of excellence the city has achieved; city residents expect this high level of service to be maintained. The mayor and city commission have a solid history of working collaboratively with the city manager and city staff.

With an active Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Parks and Recreation Committee, the city is currently contracted with the Central Upper Peninsula Development Authority to assist the city with updating its master plan. The city operates a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and has three well fields and one elevated water tank. The city provides water and wastewater services under a franchise agreement with two adjacent townships. The city partners with the Alger County Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Munising Bay Partnership for economic and community development needs.

The city has 23 full-time employees: nine in DPW, four in WWTP, five in police, and five in administration. The city has a seasonal harbormaster and employs several other seasonal employees. The city has two unions—POAM, with four members, and AFSCME, with 12 members. Both union contracts are up in 2028. The city has 25 paid on-call volunteer firefighters, averaging 24 calls per year.



Munising owns and operates a marina with 20 seasonal slips, 24 transient slips, and 800 lineal feet of broadside mooring and a boat launch. The city also owns and operates the Munising Tourist Park campground with 100 developed sites and 25 rustic tent sites.

Selected financial information for the city:

- Fiscal year July 1 to June 30
- General fund budget $2,837,576
- Fund balance in general fund $2,864,121
- Overall budget $7,746,435
- Overall long- and short-term debt $18,441,000
- Of this debt, $16,135,000 are water/ sewer revenue bonds
- Unfunded defined benefit pension liability $5,126,802
- Total unrestricted cash, all funds $2,345,256
- City millage 17.3425
- Plus voted Headlee override 2.6575
- Taxable value $83,087,200

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The Community



The City of Munising is the county seat of Alger County, which has a total population of 9,015 residents and is made up of eight townships and one village, along with the city. The city has a total area of 9.03 square miles, of which 5.25 square miles are land and 3.78 square miles are water.

Located on the south shore of Lake Superior, the city is surrounded by wild beauty, protective hillsides, and picturesque Munising Bay. With well over a million tourists per year visiting the city, it is a gateway to Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Hiawatha National Forest, Grand Island Recreation Area, and numerous scenic treasure troves of lighthouses, waterfalls, and a host of other natural wonders.

The Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore consists of 42 miles of Lake Superior shoreline, 73,236 acres, more than 100 miles of hiking trails, 22 backcountry campgrounds, and the famous Lake Superior-carved sandstone cliffs and caves.

The Hiawatha National Forest, made up of 894,836 acres, three islands, six wilderness areas, six historic lighthouses, and 19 campgrounds, has abundant opportunities for hiking, biking, backpacking, camping, snowmobiling, and ATV riding, along with thousands of acres of woodland to explore.

The Grand Island National Recreation Area, a 13,500-acre addition to the Hiawatha National Forest, showcases a rich natural and cultural history and offers a unique island recreational opportunity.



The Community Continued

Munising is also home to the Alger Underwater Preserve, offering several unusual attractions, including intact shipwrecks, sea caves, and an underwater interpretive trail.

Munising offers deep snowpack, frozen waterfalls, and Great Lakes icebergs in winter and is home to the Midwest's largest ice climbing festival and two cross-country ski trail systems. It is also the Midwest's premier snowmobiling destination. Munising loves snow!

In the summer months, Munising offers the famous Pictured Rocks cruises, Grand Island boat tours, guided kayak tours, shipwreck tours, glass-bottomed boat tours, Lake Superior wreck dives, riptide rides, and pontoon boat rentals.

The name "Munising" is derived from an Ojibwe Native American word meaning "island near a lake." The area served as home to the indigenous Ojibwe and later early fur-trading Europeans who arrived in the area as early as 1834. Munising was incorporated as a village in 1897, became the county seat in 1902, and was incorporated as a city in 1915.

Major employers include Mativ Munising paper mill, Alger Maximum Correctional Facility, Munising Memorial Hospital, Kewadin Casino—which is owned and operated by the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians—Timber Products mill, and Munising Public Schools. The school district, serving 572 students, has an excellent K-12 public education system consisting of William Mather Elementary School and Munising Middle/High School. The city is also home to the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore headquarters and a Hiawatha National Forest district office.

The booming tourism sector is a major employer, with more than 1,000 motel and short-term rental rooms available. Since 2010, tourism has doubled, with a record of 1.3 million visitors set in 2021. The city proudly hosts the "Pictured Rocks Days" celebrated in June, the "Greatest 4th in the North," and other community events.

Munising has 1,198 housing units and a total of 944 households, with a median household income of $54,375. Among residents, 27.5 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, 10.4 percent of the residents are veterans, 29 percent are age 65 or older, and 65.4 percent of households own their home.



Projects, Opportunities, & Challenges

Upcoming Projects

- Washington Street redevelopment, water, sewer, road - $6.9 million
  - Scheduled for 2026, funding obligated
- Phase 1 boat launch upgrade
  - Next few years
- Bike path expansion planning for Sand Point Rd (2027)
- Safe Routes to School Grant (2026-2028)
- Lead Service Line Replacement Project (2026-2027)
- DPW equipment replacement (ongoing)
- Wastewater treatment plant upgrades
  - 10 years out
- Sunset Motel - Project development with Brownfield Authority, and owner equity



Opportunities

- Michigan Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC)
- Flagship City with the Pure Michigan Campaign
- Excellent fiber network throughout the city
- Developed trail system through the city
- Visitors from all over the country and the world
- Water and sewer capacity
- Vibrant and authentic downtown
- Vibrant and strong K-12 school system
- Extraordinary outdoor recreation and wild natural beauty
- Strong and active city commission and committees

Challenges

- Tourist growth issues and demands
- Seasonal fluctuations
- Increased traffic flows and management
- Housing shortages for all price ranges
- Seasonal unemployment
- Attracting young, talented workers
- Expanding housing opportunities
- Managing unfunded pension liability
- Replacing aging equipment stock

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The Ideal Candidate

The City of Munising will consider applicants who value small-town way of life, and have knowledge of local government operations and management experience. Applicants should have:

- Minimum of a bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or a related field. Experience may be substituted for educational requirements.
- Three (3) years experience in governmental management or five (5) years in business management or equivalent.
- Must have a valid driver's license
- Residency is preferred

Other skills that the applicant can illustrate in a resume or cover letter include:

- Solid government, finance, and budgeting experience, as well as an understanding of the requirements and strategies for infrastructure improvement financing.
- Experience in labor relations and labor negotiations.
- Successful acquisition and management of grant funds.
- An understanding of the precepts of economic development and community development in the areas of housing, placemaking, and branding.
- Code enforcement experience
- Open-door policy to respectfully interact with residents, elected officials, city employees, and department heads.
- History of intergovernmental relations and collaboration
- An understanding of chart of accounts, municipal accounting software, and daily, monthly, and year-end accounting functions. Experience with B&SA software is a plus.
- Able to build shared visions
- DPW operations experience
- Zoning administrator experience
- Committed to volunteerism and community participation
- Understanding of downtown and community development
- Interacting with and supporting a local newspaper



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Application Process

Send applications to:

The first round of applications will be reviewed November 13th , 2026

Please submit resume, cover letter, consent form, and five (5) professional references to:

Email:
citymanager@cityofmunising.org
Subject Line: Munising Search

Questions can be directed to the Mayor, Chris Berry, at berry@cityofmunising.org.

Candidates desiring confidentiality of their interest, as allowed for and provided by Michigan law, must indicate such in a separate subject line above the body of the cover letter.

This search is conducted by an Equal Opportunity Employer.



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GATEWAY TO ADVENTURE

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