



POLICE CHIEF

\$162,720 - \$196,884

Plus Excellent Benefits

Apply by

February 6, 2022

(First Review, Open Until Filled)

PROTHMAN



BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON



The City of Bellingham is among the most livable, vibrant communities in the country. Located in the northwest corner of the United States, Bellingham is centered just 90 miles north of Seattle and 60 miles south of Vancouver, B.C. The city consists of 30.1 square miles and has a population of over 90,000.

With Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands to the west, snowcapped Mt. Baker and the Cascade Mountains to the east, and the surrounding area dotted with lakes, Bellingham is a breathtakingly beautiful place to live and work. Residents can ski the slopes of Mt. Baker and sail Bellingham Bay in the same day, explore miles of hiking and bike trails, or stay in town and enjoy a vibrant arts scene, unique shops and restaurants, and community-wide emphasis on locally produced food and other products. Bellingham is among the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country, and the town and surrounding wilderness make it a distinctly livable city. Bellingham is the recipient of a long list of awards, including many designations as a “best place” for livability and outdoor adventures and recognition for leadership in sustainability.

The community proudly supports an active and innovative arts culture with numerous museums and art galleries, and a rich variety of musical and theatrical performing arts. The Whatcom Museum (a Smithsonian affiliate) houses contemporary art and historic exhibits, and is one of the state’s largest museums outside of Seattle. The Mount Baker Theatre hosts more than 100 live performances each year. The City’s rich historic heritage has been preserved, and historic districts now house specialty shops, bookstores, and fine dining.



The City has a wide variety of desirable neighborhoods and housing styles, from regal Victorians to waterfront hideaways, country farmhouses, condominiums and thoughtfully planned new developments. Education is a top priority in Bellingham and Whatcom County.

Citizens support excellence in education, including nationally lauded K-12 schools, highly regarded private schools, a community college, a technical college, and Western Washington University, which is highly ranked among public regional universities in the West.

THE CITY

The City of Bellingham has a non-partisan Mayor-Council form of government. Of seven Council positions, six are elected by ward and serve four-year terms, and one at-large position serves a two-year term. The City has \$780 million in planned expenditures for the 2021/2022 biennium and nearly 1,000 employees, many of whom are represented by nine collective bargaining units and a civil service system. Additional information about the City is available by visiting: www.cob.org

THE DEPARTMENT

The Police Department consists of 188.4 FTEs and operates on a departmental budget of \$70.4 million for the 2021-2022 biennium. The department is currently accredited by WASPC and is comprised of 2 Divisions, each commanded by a Deputy Chief. One division includes Uniformed Patrol, Special Operations, and Investigations. The second division includes Administrative Services including the Office of Professional Responsibility, Training Records, IT, What-Comm Communications Center, Accreditation, and Policy Development.

The Police Department is proudly dedicated to establishing community relationships and providing the services necessary to make Bellingham a safe and enjoyable place to live, work, and play. The department enjoys a supportive, collaborative relationship with city council members and other city departments. The leadership team is progressive, with the executive team comprised of the department’s Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Lieutenants, What-Comm Dispatch Deputy Director, Records Manager, Legal Advisor and Administrative Coordinator.

The department includes 122 commissioned officers and 66.4 civilian personnel. Having adopted a community-oriented policing philosophy, in conjunction with high standards of selection, education and training, the department is dedicated to providing the highest level of law enforcement services to the community. The Bellingham Police Department works closely with Western Washington University, Whatcom County Sheriff's Office, Federal Law Enforcement Agencies, The Opportunity Council's Homeless Project, The Boys and Girls Club, Northwest Youth Services, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services, and other key community stakeholders.

In 2021 the department responded to more than 71,656 calls for service. While calls for service are typically handled by the Uniformed Patrol Division, supporting units include K9, Crime Scene Investigations, Major Crime Investigations, Special Victims Unit, Traffic, Parking Enforcement, and Intelligence/Crime Analysis. Special Response Units include SWAT, Crisis Negotiation Team, Hazardous Devices Unit, and Unmanned Aircraft System.

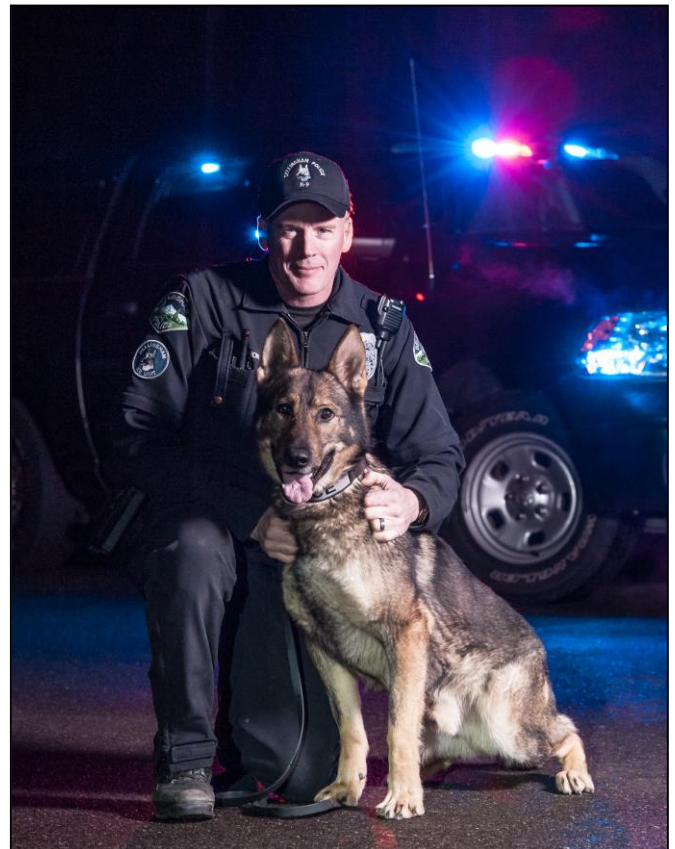
The What-Comm Communications Center is the primary answering point for all 911 calls placed in Whatcom County. The What-Comm Communications Center also dispatches law enforcement calls for service to the Bellingham Police Department, Whatcom County Sheriff's Office, Ferndale Police Department, Everson/ Nooksack Police Department, Lynden Police Department, Sumas Police Department, Blaine Police Department Nooksack Tribal Police, and Lummi Nation Police. Calls requiring response from other agencies, such as the Washington State Patrol, Western Washington University Police, Coast Guard, or other police departments outside of Whatcom County are transferred appropriately. Fire and medical-related calls are transferred to Prospect Communications Center managed by the Bellingham Fire Department.

In 2021, What-Comm Communications Center dispatchers processed more than 142,966 911 calls. As the city's population increases every year, so does the number of calls for service. In addition to emergent police-related calls, What-Comm handles after-hours animal-related calls for the Whatcom Humane Society. What-Comm also handles other emergent notifications to agencies such as PSE (Puget Sound Energy) and telephone companies.

THE POSITION

Reporting directly to the Mayor, the Police Chief actively provides leadership, direction, and general administrative oversight to the Police Department and employees responsible for police protection and law enforcement services within the jurisdictional boundaries of Bellingham, for the operation of the County-wide public safety emergency dispatch center, and for cooperative relationships and initiatives with regional law enforcement agencies. This position involves significant community engagement and public involvement with elected officials, law enforcement agencies and institutions, residents, neighborhood groups, and other governmental entities. As a member of the City's executive management team, the Police Chief collaborates with the Executive Department, City Council, and other City departments on strategy and policy to ensure that the City's mission and core values are incorporated into operational activities and services.

For a full job description and to view the required necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities required of the Police Chief, please view the attachment found [here](#).



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Proactive Community Engagement: Enhance trust between the Department and the community. Engage with community stakeholders to develop a shared vision and goals for public health and safety. Promote transparency and accountability and work collaboratively with the community to solve problems. The Police Chief must be open-minded and ready to engage in dialogue that challenges conventional wisdom and embraces new approaches to public safety.

Evidence-Based Public Safety Strategies: Implementing best practices, policies, and procedures based on current research, and a broad knowledge of modern police strategies, training, and technologies. Support development of a non-enforcement response program for individuals experiencing crisis and expansion of alternatives to traditional policing.

Employee Relations: Develop positive, productive relationships within the Department through open and responsive management and enhance a strong internal culture of service orientation, compassion, integrity, professionalism, inclusivity, accountability, self-examination, and continuous improvement. Cultivate respect and appreciation for diversity.

Training: Provide for professional development that enhances employee success and supports positive employee morale. Ensure all officers are well-versed in de-escalation tools, anti-bias, and the complexities of law enforcement legislation passed during the 2021 legislative session that has changed the way some law enforcement services are delivered.

Housing and Human Services: The Police Chief will be expected to be a creative problem solver, bringing fresh ideas and a progressive approach to issues such as houselessness, mental health, and substance abuse while working collaboratively with fellow Executive Team Members, surrounding jurisdictions, social service providers, and others on these issues.

Equity: Advance a racial equity framework; examine and improve the Department's internal policies, practices, and systems and provide appropriate training to eradicate structural and institutional racism. Collaborate on City and community-led initiatives to increase equity and access to services.



Staffing: Develop a strategic plan to return the Department to full staffing including anticipating future vacancies and implementing new and innovative ways to recruit and retain a diverse, highly qualified and engaged workforce that is committed to community policing.

IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Bellingham is seeking an experienced, transformational leader to serve as its next Police Chief for the Bellingham Police Department. The individual in this role will be expected to lead the Department in a time of reflection and community outreach that will reimagine the way the Department operates and serves the residents of Bellingham. The ideal candidate will have experience successfully leading a police agency through significant change using strategies that promote trust, reflect community values and enhance public safety.

The Chief must be capable of operating with independence and initiative, making difficult decisions with confidence under stressful conditions. A commitment to transparency and developing a progressive policing vision for the department that inspires actions consistent with the vision and values of the City is a must. This will require the next Police Chief to continually consider varying perspectives and display a high level of emotional intelligence and cultural sensitivity. The selected candidate will have a proven ability to be an open-minded and involved leader who will work effectively and collaboratively with the community, City leadership and stakeholders, both internal and external. This is a position of public trust; personal integrity and ethics must be beyond reproach.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

This position requires seven (7) years of progressively responsible law enforcement experience as a commissioned officer, including five (5) years in senior law enforcement management. Local government law enforcement experience is highly desirable. Candidates must possess a bachelor's degree in law enforcement, criminal justice, or a related field. Advanced law enforcement training (e.g. FBI National Academy, Executive Command College, or other advanced/executive training) is desirable.

In place of the above requirements, any combination of relevant education and experience which clearly demonstrates the knowledge, skill, and ability to perform the essential functions of the job will be considered.

State law requires U.S. citizenship or lawful permanent resident, law enforcement basic certification or equivalency from Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission, and a thorough police background check that includes a polygraph and psychological evaluation.

Mayor Seth Fleetwood announced on September 21, 2021 that obtaining full COVID-19 vaccination no later than December 3, 2021 will be a condition of employment for all City employees. You can read the full announcement [here](#).

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

- **Salary: \$162,720 - \$196,884**
- Medical Benefits
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Life and AD&D Insurance
- Long Term Disability Insurance
- LEOFF Retirement
- 401(a) Plan (Up to 3% Match)
- Deferred Compensation Savings Plan
- Professional Development
- 12 Paid Holidays
- 15 Days Sick Leave at Hire, Accrue 8 Hours per Month
- 20 Hours Vacation per Month
- To view details about the benefits provided, please view the attachment found [here](#).

For more information on the City of Bellingham and the Bellingham Police Department, please visit:

www.cob.org



The City of Bellingham is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **February 6, 2022** (first review, open until filled). Applications, supplemental questions, resumes and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. To **apply online**, go to **www.prothman.com** and click on "**Open Recruitments**", select "**City of Bellingham, WA – Police Chief**", and click "**Apply Online**", or click [here](#). Resumes, cover letters and supplemental questions can be uploaded once you have logged in. Photos Credits: Connie Petty – Page 1 Lower Banner Photo; Courtesy City of Bellingham – Page 1 Top Right Photo.

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