

W A S H I N G T O N

# PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

# \$202,550 - \$285,168 DOQ

*Plus Excellent Benefits*

*Apply by*  
**February 8, 2026**  
*(First Review, Open Until Filled)*

**PROTHMAN**



## THE POSITION

The City of Tacoma is seeking an experienced, strategic, and visionary **Public Works Director** to join our Executive Leadership Team. As a key member of the City's senior management team, the Public Works Director provides overall leadership and direction for a department of approximately **300 employees** dedicated to building and maintaining the infrastructure that keeps Tacoma moving.

The Public Works Department is responsible for the planning, construction, operation, maintenance, and environmental stewardship of the City's transportation system and public infrastructure, including 50 public facilities and a fleet of over 1,400 vehicles. The Director ensures that these essential public services enhance the quality of life for all Tacoma residents and visitors in a fair, responsible, sustainable, and equitable manner.

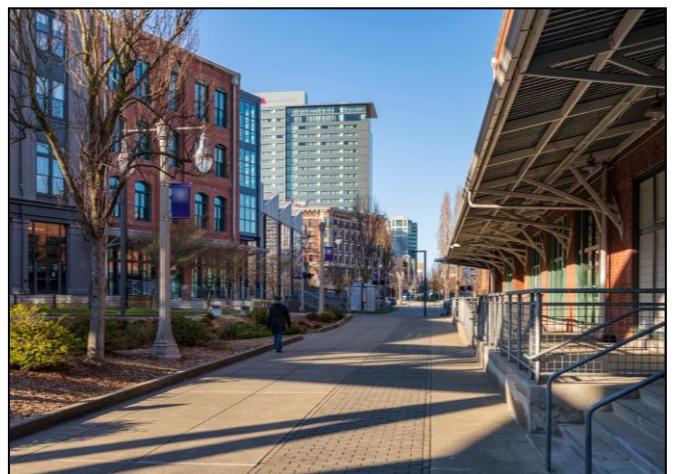


### Key Responsibilities

- Provide strategic leadership and direction to the Public Works Department, ensuring alignment with the City's Strategic Plan and City Manager's key strategic objectives.
- Act as the City Engineer, with responsibility for approving all capital projects within the right-of-way and ensuring compliance with City codes, standards, and design manuals.
- Oversee the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of streets, bridges, sidewalks, lighting, signals, and related infrastructure.
- Manage a biennial budget of approximately \$250 million, ensuring long-term financial stability and responsible stewardship of resources.
- Lead the development and implementation of departmental policies, programs, and projects that support neighborhood, community, and economic vitality.



- Collaborate and build partnerships with the City Council, City departments, community organizations, neighborhood councils, and business districts.
- Foster strong intergovernmental relationships with key regional partners, including the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber, Parks Tacoma, Tacoma Public Schools, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit, Washington State Department of Transportation, Port of Tacoma, University of Washington Tacoma, Puget Sound Regional Council, and the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- Serve as an expert witness and policy authority on engineering, infrastructure, and right-of-way issues.
- Direct, mentor, and empower a talented leadership team, including the Assistant Director, Office Manager, Budget Manager, Grant Coordinator, and Special Assistant to the Director.



## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will be a **collaborative, innovative, and inclusive leader** who embraces the City's values of equity, accountability, and service. This person will bring a proven record of success in managing large, complex public infrastructure systems and a strong understanding of sustainable, multimodal transportation and community-focused service delivery.

### This successful candidate will:

- Bring strong technical and policy expertise in public works operations, capital project management, and right-of-way oversight.
- Demonstrate a commitment to transparency, customer service, and community engagement.
- Foster cross-departmental collaboration and lead organizational change.
- Exhibit exceptional financial management and strategic planning skills.
- Inspire, develop, and empower a diverse workforce.
- Be a seasoned Public Works leader with significant budget, staff, and major project management experience.
- Be experienced at mentoring and developing a senior-level staff team.
- Be willing and experienced in collaborating across departments for the benefit of the community, including working closely with Planning & Development Services and Environmental Services rather than prioritizing the department first.
- Bring innovation to the position, particularly in understanding how to pursue multi-modal transportation projects.
- Be skilled at developing funding opportunities including both State and Federal grants and creative in blending various sources of funding to meet current and future needs.
- Understand how to work effectively with a variety of advocacy groups whose transportation needs may be strong and not always aligned.
- Be comfortable managing a degree of ambiguity in funding, staffing levels, and capital project prioritization.
- Serve as a strong asset to the City Manager and Deputy City Manager(s) on the Executive Leadership Team.



## THE COMMUNITY

Tacoma is centrally located just 32 miles south of the city of Seattle and 31 miles north of the state capital, Olympia. The City of Tacoma is also home to the Port of Tacoma, which is among the largest container ports in the United States. Like most cities in the northwest, Tacoma is surrounded by beautiful nature, offering residents many opportunities for outdoor adventures. Largely suburban in nature with a small, but dense, urban core, Tacoma is home to numerous institutes of higher learning that attract students from across the country. The University of Washington Tacoma, Pacific Lutheran University, University of Puget Sound, a satellite campus of the Evergreen State College, three community/technical colleges, and several trade and business schools are within Tacoma's geographic area. Downtown's Cultural District is the site of the Washington State History Museum, Museum of Glass, the Tacoma Art Museum, and America's Car Museum.

With its affordable housing, distinctive neighborhoods, and vibrant business districts, the city has been recognized numerous times as one of the best places to live in the nation.

**View this exciting video to learn more about the City of Tacoma:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2n5MWI8KFVl>



## A COMMITMENT TO EQUITY & DIVERSITY

At the City of Tacoma, we're on a mission to make our workforce as diverse and inclusive as the community we serve. We actively seek out candidates from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. Join our team at the City of Tacoma and help us build a more vibrant, inclusive, and equitable community for all.

## COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The current salary range for the director position is **\$202,550 - \$285,168** annually. The City of Tacoma provides excellent medical, dental, and vision benefits for the whole family; paid holidays and personal time off; participation in Tacoma Employees' Retirement System and a growing variety of City-sponsored health and wellness opportunities. For more information on the City of Tacoma's benefit package feel free to explore [City of Tacoma Benefits](#).

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

A bachelor's degree in planning, engineering, business or public administration, or a directly related field (master's degree preferred).

At least **12 years of progressively responsible public works or engineering management experience**, including **executive or senior leadership** responsibility for major public infrastructure programs.

**Registration as a Professional Engineer (PE)** in Washington State (or the ability to obtain within six months of appointment).

The City of Tacoma is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **February 8, 2026**. Applications, supplemental questions, resumes and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. Resumes, cover letters, and supplemental questions can be uploaded once you have logged in at [www.prothman.com](#).

## WHY TACOMA?

Tacoma is a vibrant, progressive city situated on the beautiful Puget Sound, offering a unique blend of urban amenities, natural beauty, and cultural diversity. With a deep commitment to sustainability, equity, and innovation, Tacoma is building a future that reflects the voices and values of its people.

Join us in shaping the next chapter of Tacoma's infrastructure - one that connects communities, supports economic vitality, and enhances quality of life for all.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The City of Tacoma is partnering with the Prothman Company for this hiring process. To apply, go online to [www.prothman.com](#) and click on Open Recruitments, select City of Tacoma – Public Works Director and click on Apply Online. The application will include an online form, a resume, a cover letter, and two supplemental questions.

Please include a list of six work-related references. **No reference checks will be conducted without receiving candidate permission.**

The initial application review is **February 8th, 2026**. Semifinal Interviews will be conducted between **February 9th & February 20th, 2026**.

Final interviews in Tacoma will be offered to select candidates. These are anticipated to be conducted on **March 19th & March 20th, 2026**. To be considered for this position, you must be available during this time.



[www.prothman.com](http://www.prothman.com)

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