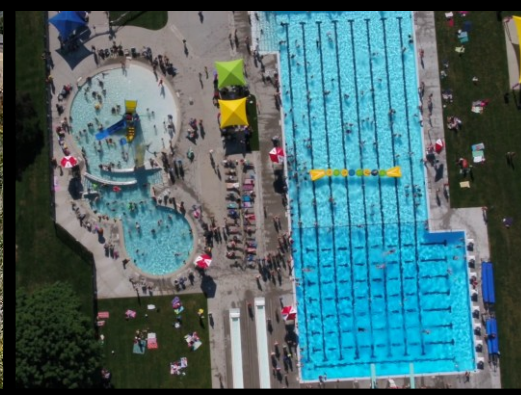




Washington

PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR

\$153,993 - \$187,356

Apply by
August 28, 2026
(First Review, Open Until Filled.)

***P*ROTHMAN**



WHY APPLY?

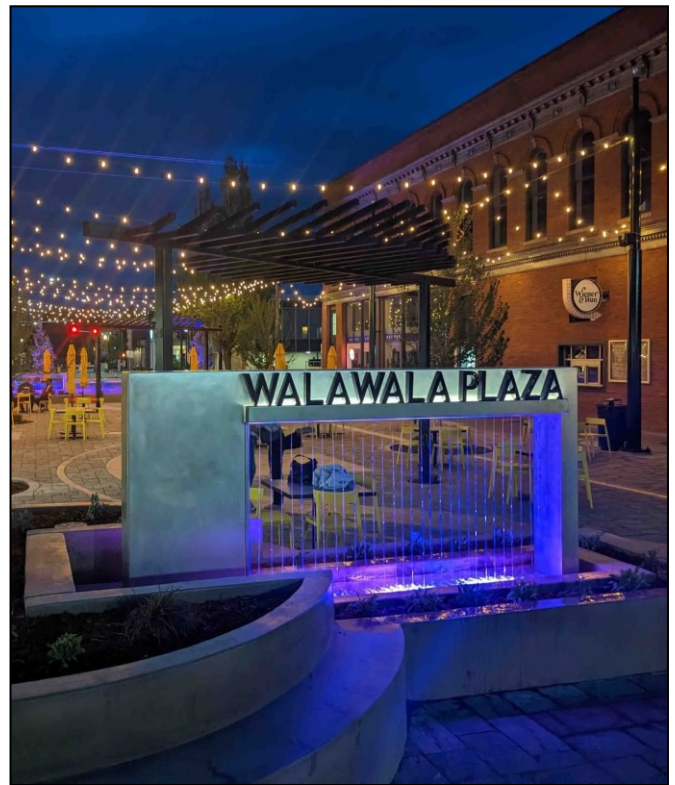


This is an excellent opportunity for an experienced parks and recreation professional to join a well-established full-service city in one of Washington's most distinctive and highly regarded communities. The City of Walla Walla offers a stable organizational environment, and the opportunity to work alongside a collaborative leadership team.

The Parks and Recreation Director will play a central role in shaping the future of the City's parks, recreation, and community facilities, including the newly municipalized Veterans Memorial Golf Course, aquatics, urban forestry, and cemetery operations. The Director will help develop a sustainable approach to funding capital projects, guide the department through its first leadership transition in roughly 24 years, and provide sound guidance to the City Manager, City Council, departments, staff, and the community. For a leader who values public service, accountability, teamwork, and the ability to make a visible impact, Walla Walla offers a compelling combination of organizational stability, and exceptional quality of life.

THE COMMUNITY

Located in southeastern Washington at the foot of the Blue Mountains, Walla Walla is a vibrant community of approximately 35,000 residents within city limits and serves as the urban center and county seat of Walla Walla County. Incorporated in 1862 and located on the ancestral lands of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla tribes, the community blends a rich agricultural and cultural history, and welcoming small-city atmosphere, with outstanding dining, higher education, arts, culture, and year-round recreation.



As one of Washington's oldest communities, Walla Walla features an award-winning, nationally recognized historic downtown with locally owned shops, tasting rooms, art galleries, restaurants, coffee shops, and beautifully preserved architecture. The community has received numerous national recognitions, including being named the Friendliest Town in the Country by USA Today, one of the 24 Best Places to Live and Work by Sunset Magazine in 2014, and America's Best Wine Region by USA Today in 2020, 2021, and 2022. Walla Walla has also earned 32 years of Tree City USA recognition, showing the community's long-standing commitment to urban forestry, neighborhood character, and quality of life.

The Walla Walla Valley is home to Whitman College, Walla Walla Community College, and Walla Walla University, located in neighboring College Place, which contribute to the region's cultural vitality and provide valuable opportunities for education, workforce development, and lifelong learning. Agriculture remains an important part of the region's identity and economy. The valley is known for wheat, barley, fruit, and the Walla Walla sweet onion, Washington's official state vegetable. It has also become one of the country's premier wine destinations, supported by a thriving culinary scene and numerous wineries, vineyards, and tasting rooms throughout the valley.



Residents enjoy four distinct seasons and convenient access to outdoor recreation. Bennington Lake and the nearby Blue Mountains offer opportunities for hiking, cycling, camping, fishing, hunting, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. Local parks, trails, rivers, golf courses, theaters, museums, festivals, and community events provide a wide range of activities throughout the year.

The City is also making significant investments in community infrastructure and public amenities. Key projects planned or underway in 2026 and 2027 include pavement and water distribution improvements, street reconstruction, bridge maintenance and replacement, wastewater treatment plant digester upgrades, the Highway 12 and North Clinton Street interchange project, and improvements to Reser Road and other major corridors. The City is also advancing a \$16 million revitalization of the Walla Walla Public Library, funded through grants, a capital campaign, an angel donor commitment of \$7 million, and other sources.

Walla Walla is approximately one hour from the Tri-Cities and is served by Walla Walla Regional Airport, which provides commercial air service to Seattle. The community offers the character and connection of a smaller city while remaining accessible to larger regional destinations.



THE CITY

The City of Walla Walla operates under a Council-Manager form of government, with a seven-member City Council serving as the City's legislative governing body. Four councilmembers are elected by ward, representing the Central, South, East, and West wards, and three are elected at-large. Councilmembers are elected to four-year terms, and the Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem are selected by the City Council for two-year terms.

The City Manager serves as the City's chief executive officer and is responsible for overseeing City operations. Walla Walla's City Manager, Elizabeth Chamberlain, has served as City Manager since December 2022 and has been with the City since 2014, previously serving as Development Services Director and Deputy City Manager.



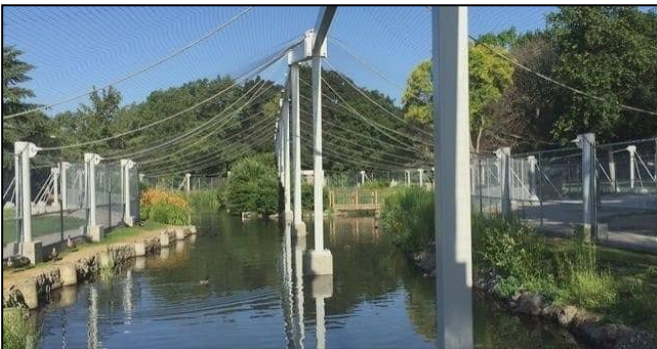
The City provides a full range of municipal services through the departments of Administration, City Attorney, Development Services, Finance, Fire, Human Resources, Library, Parks & Recreation, Police, Public Works, Support Services, and Technology Services. The City operates with a 2025-2026 biennial budget of \$293,583,000 across all 37 funds, including a General Fund budget of \$100,609,690. The City has 314 FTEs and hires approximately 109 temporary employees annually to support seasonal and operational needs in areas such as the pool, golf course, streets, parks, and sanitation.



THE DEPARTMENT

The City of Walla Walla Parks and Recreation Department provides a broad range of parks, facilities, programs, and community services that support recreation, wellness, and quality of life for residents and visitors.

The Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the City's parks and recreation facilities, Veterans Memorial Pool, urban forestry program, Mountain View Cemetery, and a diverse portfolio of recreation programs, classes, leagues, and special events. At the end of 2025, the City also assumed responsibility for operating Veterans Memorial Golf Course, expanding the Department's role in managing important public recreational assets.



The Department operates with a budget of approximately \$12.2 million (2025-2026 biennial budget), with an additional \$1.2 million allocated for Veterans Memorial Golf Course operations. The Department is supported by 26 full-time equivalent employees and supplements its workforce with approximately 92 temporary employees during the busy summer season. This seasonal expansion enables the Department to deliver aquatics, recreation programs, park services, special events, and other community offerings during the period of highest public use.

To learn more about the operations of the Parks & Recreation, visit the department's page [here](#).

THE POSITION

Under the general direction of the City Manager, the Parks and Recreation Director plans, organizes, and directs the City's parks, recreation, and facilities operations, including parks, golf, cemetery, aquatics, sports, urban forestry, and other community recreation programs. The Director provides strategic leadership for the Department, develops short- and long-range plans, prepares and administers the biennial budget, oversees capital projects and contracts, and ensures services are delivered effectively, responsibly, and in alignment with the City's core values.



As a member of the City's executive Leadership Team, the Director contributes to citywide strategic planning, policy development, emergency preparedness, and organizational decision-making. The position leads and develops departmental staff, builds productive relationships with community members and partners, and promotes a strong culture of customer service, collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement.

To view the position's full job description, please see the attachment provided [here](#).



UPCOMING PRIORITIES

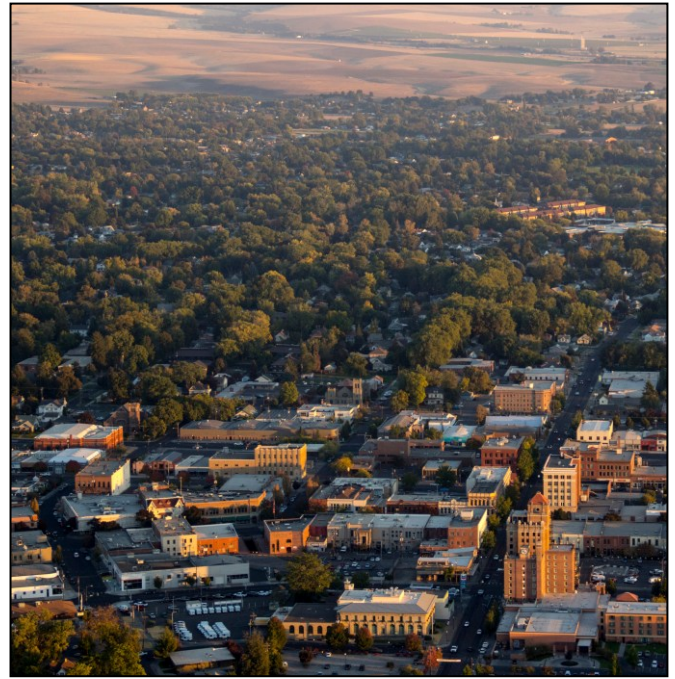
Veterans Memorial Golf Course: The City assumed responsibility for the course at the end of 2025, making 2026 the first full year of municipal operation in approximately 30 years. The financial and operational data gathered during this initial year will provide an important foundation for preparing the 2027–2028 biennial budget, evaluating service levels, and identifying future capital and operational needs.

Sustainable Capital Funding: The Director will be expected to help develop a sustainable approach to funding parks and recreation capital projects. Following the unsuccessful Metropolitan Parks District ballot measure in February 2026, the City does not anticipate returning to voters with a parks-related funding package until approximately 2029. In the meantime, the Department lacks a dedicated, ongoing revenue source for major capital improvements, creating an important strategic and community-engagement challenge for the next Director.



Fiscal Management and Rising Costs: Rising utility expenses, particularly water costs, will require thoughtful resource management and clear communication with the community. The Director will need to balance fiscal constraints with public expectations regarding park appearance, maintenance standards, and overall levels of service.

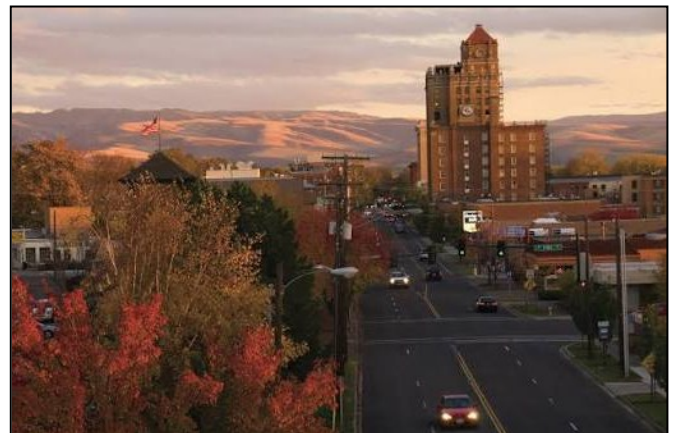
Leadership Transition: This recruitment represents a significant leadership transition for the organization. It is the City's first open recruitment for a Parks and Recreation Director in approximately 24 years, following a long period of leadership continuity and internal succession.



EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

The successful candidate will possess a bachelor's degree in recreation, public administration, or a related field, along with at least eight (8) years of progressively responsible relevant experience, including four (4) years of increasingly responsible supervisory experience in parks and recreation operations. An equivalent combination of education and experience that demonstrates the ability to successfully perform the essential duties of the position may be considered. A valid state driver's license is required.

Preferred qualifications include a master's degree; public-sector experience in a city or county environment; International Society of Arboriculture certification; and bilingual proficiency in Spanish.



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

➤ \$153,993 - \$187,356 DOQ

- Medical, dental, orthodontia, and vision insurance, with multiple plan options. City contributes toward full-family medical, dental, and vision coverage.
- Health Savings Account contribution for employees enrolled in an HDHP.
- City-paid \$50,000 life and AD&D insurance.
- Voluntary life, AD&D, long-term disability, and supplemental insurance options.
- Washington State PERS retirement plan.
- Deferred compensation options with City match up to 3.5%.
- 20 days of vacation annually for Department Directors, increasing to 25 days with longevity.
- 10 paid holidays annually.
- 40 hours of floating holiday time (used within the calendar year).
- Sick leave accrual of 8 hours per month.
- Employee Assistance Program, including six covered sessions per issue.
- YMCA corporate membership discount.
- Wellness program.
- Additional candidate incentives might include relocation assistance, professional development support, and front-loaded vacation.



For more information on the City of Walla Walla and the local community, please visit:

www.wallawallawa.gov

www.wallawalla.org

www.wvwchamber.com

For a full review of benefits and perks provided, please click [here](#).

The City of Walla Walla is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **August 28, 2026** (first review, open until filled). Applications, resumes, cover letters, and supplemental questions will only be accepted electronically. To **apply online**, go to **www.prothman.com** and click on "Open Recruitments", select "City of Walla Walla, WA – Parks & Recreation Director", and click "Apply Online", or click [here](#).



www.prothman.com

206.368.0050