

# THE TOWN OF DURHAM, NH

## DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS RECRUITMENT



The Town of Durham, NH (Census Pop. 16,439) is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Public Works Director. Durham encompasses 25.5 square miles (124 local lane miles) in New Hampshire's seacoast region, one of the most beautiful and desired locations in the state and is home to the University of New Hampshire with an enrollment of 16,000 students. Durham is located just one hour north of Boston, MA and one hour south of Portland, ME. The Durham Public Works Department is a highly trained, cutting edge professional organization made up of twenty-three full time, two part-time, and six seasonal employees. It is comprised of twenty-six individual operational budgets and at present nineteen Capital Improvements Projects. The DPW budget also supports the operational needs of all other Town departments. Operating under a Town Charter with a Council/Manager form of government, the DPW Director reports directly to the Town Administrator.

Experience in operation and maintenance, project and construction management, roadway design, bridge design, municipal water systems, public wastewater (one of the best treatment systems in the Seacoast area) systems, MS-4 stormwater utilities, and service delivery, with a team-orientation and customer-focus essential. The ideal candidate should possess a record of establishing and reaching goals, strong leadership and management experience, the ability to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the department, a positive labor-relations background, strong budgeting skills, a passion for public service, and a dynamic personality in order to create and respond to change as needed in a highly educated, forward thinking, and demanding college community. The candidate must be self-reliant, have initiative and be able to develop innovative, creative, and imaginative solutions to unique problems. Other essential traits include a commitment to continuous improvement (Kaizen), the capacity to build trust and motivate staff, strong interpersonal and communication skills, honesty, patience, flexibility, an open mind, and the ability to develop and maintain lasting relationships with internal and external constituencies.

BA/BS in Engineering, Public Administration, or closely related field strongly required, PE certification preferred; 7-10 years progressively responsible experience, in public works or engineering administration and operations including labor relations, budgeting, supervision, road maintenance and construction, engineering, water and wastewater operations, solid waste management, building and grounds maintenance and management and equipment maintenance and management with at least five (5) years in a supervisory or administrative level. Any combination of education and experience that demonstrates possession of required knowledge, skills and ability will be considered.

Salary range \$92,500 - \$121,000 with excellent benefits. Starting salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Durham is an equal opportunity employer.

**TO APPLY:** Submit resume & cover letter as PDF attachment to: [recruitment@mrigov.com](mailto:recruitment@mrigov.com) by March 16, 2020 at 8 AM.

**For Additional Information please see:** [www.mrigov.com/career](http://www.mrigov.com/career)

## **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Durham has a rich cultural history as a small New England town located on Great Bay, with a past that includes shipbuilding and early industrial mill enterprises as well as the establishment of the University of New Hampshire. The town also has deep agricultural roots and a tradition of natural resource protection.

Today, Durham still has many small-town characteristics, and residents benefit from a town that has strong community bonds, excellent schools, an accessible downtown, and a wide variety of cultural, environmental, and recreational opportunities. Durham citizens recognize that while the community has small town characteristics, it is also home to the region’s largest employer – the University of New Hampshire (UNH). The University is the entity that makes Durham unique and sets it apart from other communities in the Seacoast and other NH municipalities.



The University offers benefits and resources that other communities strive for and contributes significantly to Durham’s economy and character. Yet despite all of the benefits, Durham understands that a large institution of this type poses unique challenges to the town.

Durham has been going through a significant transformation over the past several years. The town has sought development in order to breathe new life into the downtown, for residents as well as UNH students, and has also looked to development to increase the tax base in

order to stabilize property taxes. Both of these development goals are in part related to having to share the town with the University of New Hampshire.

Over the past several years, there have also been some dramatic changes in downtown Durham as well as beyond the downtown because of a significant amount of private student housing developments. The number of new buildings and the size of some of them have impacted the perception of Durham as a small-town community, and residents have expressed concern about the large number of students living in these buildings.

The tax burden has remained a concern for Durham residents. Taxes are high because of the cost of financing the school district, and the cost of high-quality public works/police/fire/school, and other municipal services, as well as the limitations for economic growth. These constraints on growth are stressed by the limited land available for development due to Durham’s natural landscape, existing developed land, local conservation efforts, University owned land, as well as land in current use and restrictive land use regulations that make it challenging for developers. There remains a need to stabilize this problem using a balanced approach of smart economic development, reasonable fiscal policies, and collaboration with UNH on public/private ventures to allow a broader diversity of residents to afford to live in Durham.



## ***Vision for the Future***

While most residents recognize that Durham is no longer the small town it once was, they would like it to retain the aspects of small town life, including an engaged community, a friendly, vibrant downtown for people of all ages, and a natural environment that isn't overshadowed by the built environment.

## ***Additional characteristics of the community include:***

***Natural Beauty*** – Durham is home to beautiful forests, open spaces, and waterfront shorelines, wetlands, and other natural amenities thanks in large part to a long tradition of preserving its natural resources. Residents have noted scenic views along the Oyster and Lamprey Rivers, College Woods, Mill Pond, Adams Point, Wagon Hill and more.



***Recreation*** – Residents generally agree that a broad range of outdoor and indoor recreational activities can be found throughout the town, and they play an essential role in making Durham a vibrant community. The town has made a conscious effort to increase residents' sense of belonging by encouraging them to participate in a variety of healthy, fun activities. The Durham Parks and Recreation Department recommends outdoor activities including bird watching, boating, cross country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, horseback riding, ice skating, pond hockey, and hiking. Durham has an extensive network of public trails, which showcase the community's commitment to natural resource protection and diverse wildlife habitats. There are also a number of events including the Memorial Day Parade and the annual Frost Fest that help to strengthen community bonds.

***Strong School System*** – Durham has a solid reputation as a community that provides quality educational opportunities for students. The Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD) serves the communities of Durham, Lee, and Madbury and offers a high standard for education and infuses young learners with the importance of a good education. The ORCSD has a history of embracing progressive educational philosophy.



***Cultural, Agricultural, and Historic Resources*** – The construction of the new Town of Durham Public Library is a good example of how strongly the community advocates for the preservation of its cultural resources. The library is far more than a building that houses books and newspapers, as it has become a community gathering place where residents engage in a variety of activities: book discussions, poetry readings, arts and crafts, family movies, CPR courses, cooking demonstrations, and more. Durham residents have continually supported the protection of farmland and



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forest land, indicating the high value placed on the land and their heritage. Durham residents have access to the community gardens at Wagon Hill, a 139-acre property acquired by Durham in 1989. Citizens also have access to local food, farm stands, and a Farmers' Market. Durham is rich with history, exemplified by the many historic sites, structures, events, and people.

Currently, the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources has four Durham properties listed on the National Register: the General Sullivan House, Wiswall Falls Mills Site, Thompson Hall, and the Durham Historic District.

**University Town** – There are a lot of qualities that go into making a great university town. In Durham, the juxtaposition between the downtown center and the University of New Hampshire creates an ongoing and continuous mix of students and full-time residents. During a semester, the downtown area is often filled with people from all walks of life. From students to longtime residents, and everyone in between, the interactions between Durham and the University population are forever linked due to the close proximity of the campus. Durham enjoys the many intellectual and cultural benefits of being a college town, while recognizing the challenges associated with its relationship with the University.

