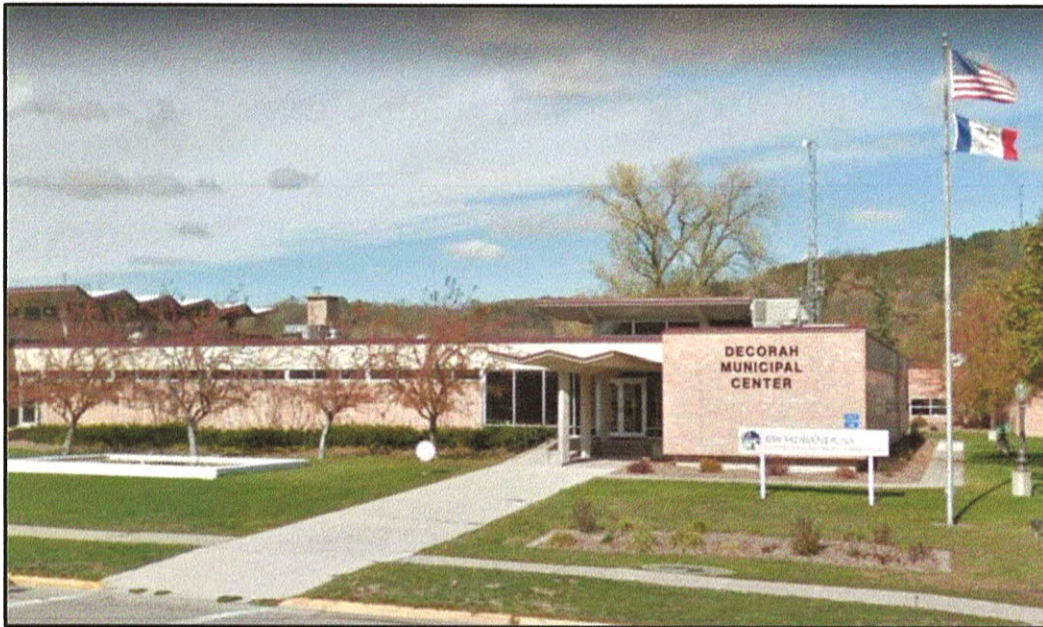




**HINSON** CONSULTING, LLC

LOCAL GOVERNMENT HIRING, PLANNING & FINANCE

# DECORAH, IOWA City Manager Position Profile



**Apply by June 7, 2021**

[Decorahcm2021@gmail.com](mailto:Decorahcm2021@gmail.com)

**Contact: Brent Hinson**  
**Hinson Consulting, LLC**  
[hinsonconsultingllc@gmail.com](mailto:hinsonconsultingllc@gmail.com)  
**641-373-2535**

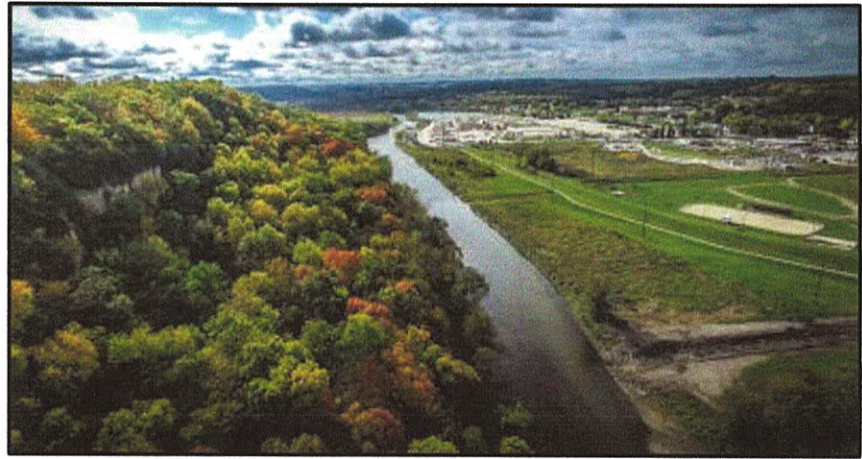




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**About Us**

Decorah is a scenic and vibrant college town of 8,127, in northeastern Iowa. The community was founded in 1849, and has been home to Luther College, an outstanding private liberal arts college, since 1862. Decorah’s public high school was recently named “Best in Iowa by US News.



**The Upper Iowa River**

Decorah is located in the beautiful “Driftless” region of northeastern Iowa, a place of deep valleys, exposed bedrock, and towering bluffs, untouched by the glaciers of the most recent Ice Age.

The City of Decorah seeks a savvy, highly competent and ethical professional for the position of City Manager.

**Recent Accomplishments**

- New code compliance officer position created to handle building & zoning, and building codes being implemented.
- Sustainability Plan adopted and Sustainability Commission created. The plan envisions economic prosperity, environmental integrity, and community resilience as essential ingredients to the Council’s vision for Decorah- one that is healthy, resilient, adaptable, and safe. The plan includes a goal of attaining carbon neutrality by 2040. The full plan is available at: <https://bit.ly/3tbwt8f>.
- FY22 Street Improvement Plan approved. \$5M Locust Road improvement project completed in 2020.
- Downtown Assessment completed with Iowa Downtown Resource Center.
- Creation of task force to investigate possible creation of a new municipal electric utility.

**City Government & Organization**

The City of Decorah has the Mayor-Council with appointed City Manager form of government typical to Iowa. The mayor and seven City Council members are elected to serve four-year overlapping terms; five members are elected by geographic wards and two are elected at-large. The Mayor chairs meetings of the Council, but does not vote. The City Council meets in regular session on the first and third Mondays of the month.



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The current City Manager resigned to accept another position in the field of city management after more than 9 years of service with the community. His predecessor served in the position for 17 years. The fact the position has only been open twice in a quarter-century underlines the outstanding opportunity and history of continuity that the position presents to qualified applicants. The Interim City Manager is the City Clerk and Treasurer, who does not intend to apply for the position.



**Decorah's Trails in Autumn**

The City employs 68 full-time employees, including the position of City Manager. The City's annual budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 is \$17.7 million in governmental funds and \$2.2 million in proprietary funds, not including transfers between funds. The City Manager is responsible for day-to-day oversight and coordination of all departments.

A breakdown of budgeted FY20-21 city expenditures is as follows:

Public Safety- Police, Fire & Flood Control.....	\$2,126,783
Public Works- Streets, Lighting & Airport.....	\$3,112,239
Health & Social Services .....	\$15,250
Culture & Recreation- Library, Parks & Rec .....	\$3,080,720
Community & Economic Development.....	\$648,987
General Government.....	\$1,000,484
Debt Service.....	\$933,978
Capital Projects.....	\$6,800,000
Enterprise- Water.....	\$879,287
Enterprise- Sewer.....	\$1,032,113
Enterprise- Stormwater.....	\$133,000
Enterprise- Other .....	\$66,900
Enterprise- Debt Service .....	\$131,375
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,961,116</b>

The major sources of city revenues include the following:

Property Taxes.....	\$5,024,984
Tax Increment Financing .....	\$140,759



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Other Taxes- Local Option Sales, Hotel/Motel.....	\$1,569,543
Licenses & Permits .....	\$61,000
Use of Money & Property .....	\$80,550
Road Use Taxes .....	\$1,015,875
Water Enterprise User Fees .....	\$1,030,072
Sewer Enterprise User Fees .....	\$1,105,500
Airport User Fees .....	\$40,420
Stormwater User Fees .....	\$133,000
Other Enterprise User Fees .....	\$577,200
Grants & Reimbursements .....	\$1,918,479
Other Fees & Charges for Service .....	\$536,660
Proceeds of Debt .....	\$7,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,734,042</b>

The City’s current tax rate is \$14.19148 per \$1,000 valuation. Total fund balances estimated for 6/30/21 are \$6.2 million. The City currently has \$11.2 million in outstanding general obligation debt, amounting to just 38.4% of its debt limitation under Iowa Code.

City boards & commissions include: Airport Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Cable TV Commission, Planning & Zoning Commission, Civil Service Commission, MetroNet (DMN) 28E Board, Tree Board, Historic Preservation Commission, Human Rights Commission, Low Rent Housing Agency, Telecommunications Utility Board, Solid Waste Committee, TIF/LMI Commission, and Sustainability Commission.

Decorah’s city departments include: Police, Fire, Streets, Clerk/Treasurer, Parks, Information Technology, Building & Zoning, Water, and Wastewater.



**Future NBA Stars in Decorah Rec Programs**

The Police Department has 13 sworn and one administrative assistant position, and has a budget of \$1.7 million. The department handles around 4,000-5,000 calls for service per year, including around 180 reportable incidents per year. The department engages in the community in a variety of ways, including DARE, the Walking School Bus program, Elderly Care program, and Vacation Home Check program.



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The Fire Department provides fire protection to Decorah and surrounding areas. The department has 3 full-time employees and a budget of \$400,000. Full-time firefighters are supplemented by a larger group of volunteer firefighters. The department is well-equipped, with apparatus including a 115' articulating aerial.

The Decorah Street Department maintains over 100 miles of roads, and many parking lots in the downtown area and makes all necessary repairs upon streets, alleys and sidewalks to keep them in safe condition for travel. This includes minor street and curb repair or replacement, pothole repair, spray patching roads, snow and ice removal, street sweeping, and leaf pickup. Newly added to the department in recent years are the in-house positions of City Engineer and Assistant City Engineer.

The Clerk/Treasurer Department includes 4 full-time positions, and performs financial management, utility billing, payroll, accounts payable/receivable, and oversees building maintenance staff. A considerable challenge for the new City Manager will be the upcoming retirement of the longtime Clerk/Treasurer.

The Parks Department oversees the maintenance of over 500 acres of parkland, a campground, the municipal aquatic center, and operates year-round recreational programming for all ages in the community.



**Trout Run Trail**

The Decorah Public Library serves over 6,500 registered patrons and has a collection of over 131,000 physical and digital materials for all ages. Last year, the library hosted nearly 470 programs for 10,000 attendees. In a

non-COVID year, public meeting spaces are used by an additional 6,000 people attending civic, educational, and nonprofit meetings and programs. The library is the host agency for one of the largest Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP) in the state. DPL is one of Iowa's most active mid-sized libraries.

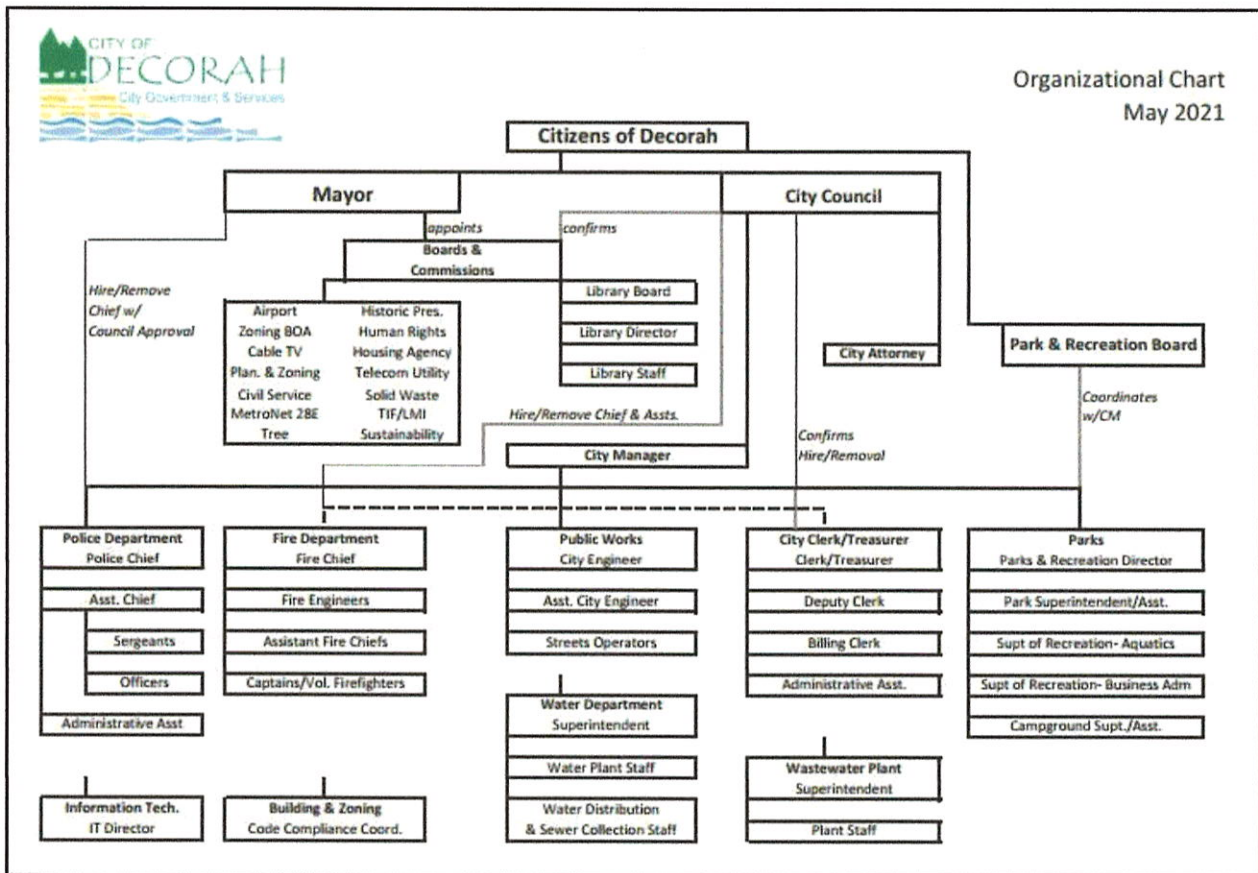
The Water Department oversees operations of the water plant, water distribution, and sewer collection infrastructure. Due to Decorah's plentiful and high-quality water



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resources, the plant is able to operate in a highly budget-friendly manner at an Iowa DNR Grade II level, with minimal chemical treatment of water needed.

The Wastewater Plant Department oversees Decorah’s activated sludge treatment plant, which was originally put into service in 1985, and improved in 2004 with upgrades including ultraviolet disinfection and a 1MG biosolids thickening-storage tank. Planning has begun for system upgrades in the coming years.



**OTHER COMMUNITY ASSETS**

**Education**

Luther is a top private, 4-year liberal arts college. Luther has called Decorah home since 1862. It currently hosts 1,900 students on a beautiful 1,000-acre campus. Luther is associated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It offers over 60 majors, minors, and programs, and is a close partner with the City and a key contributor to the community’s vibrancy and appeal. Another post-secondary education option is Northeast Iowa Community College, located in nearby Calmar.

Outstanding primary and secondary education is available in the Decorah Community School District or St. Benedict Catholic School. Northeast Iowa Montessori School offers

instruction for children in preschool and lower elementary school. Numerous other preschool programs are available in the community.

**Downtown Decorah**

Decorah boasts a classic American main street, with a wide range of shopping options, from clothing to gifts to books, and many dining options. Hotel

Winneshiek, in the heart of downtown, has a legacy going back to 1905. The current iteration of the hotel began operations in 2000 after the building was restored to its former glory. The adjacent Steyer Opera House has been sensitively repurposed as a performance and meeting space. The downtown district was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2017.



**Luther College**



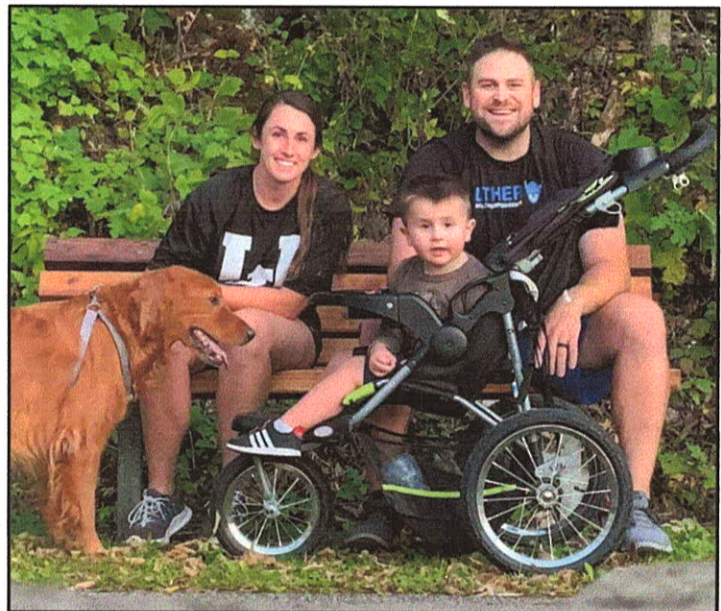
**Beautiful Downtown Decorah**

### **Health Care**

Decorah's residents have access to great health care, available through the Winneshiek Medical Center and Decorah Clinic Physicians, part of the Mayo Clinic Health System, and through the Gunderson Lutheran Decorah Clinic, a part of the Wisconsin-based Gunderson Health System. These health providers furnish additional services through outreach providers who visit Decorah on a rotating basis, thereby supplying local access to cardiologists, oncologists, endocrinologists, and numerous other specialties. The Gunderson Life Flight helicopter is hangered at the Decorah Municipal Airport.

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Outdoor recreation is key to Decorah's identity, and the Upper Iowa River is a recreational gem. This 150-mile tributary of the Mississippi is the only Iowa river to be nominated for inclusion in the nation's Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, and has been recommended as one of the top 100 adventures in the U.S. by National Geographic Adventure Magazine.



For bikers, walkers, and joggers, Decorah boasts the 11-mile paved Trout Run Trail which loops through the heart of town and into the surrounding countryside. A spur connects the trail to nearby Freeport

which additional connecting spurs under construction. Along Trout Run Trail, you have an opportunity to visit Siewers Spring, the home of the Iowa DNR Trout Hatchery. The trail also offers a view of the nest of the Decorah Eagles (see next item for details). Decorah is also home to over 20 miles of off-road/hiking/mountain biking trails.

### **The Decorah Eagles**

Decorah gained a massive Internet following beginning in 2011 with the live stream of nesting bald eagles, a project of the Raptor Resource Project, which also seeks to breed & release peregrine falcons and other birds of prey. The eagle live stream had over 250 million views in 2011 alone. The project continues, and over 280 million unique viewers have watched the eagles mature from eggs to fledglings. See [raptorresource.org](http://raptorresource.org) for more information.



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### **Breweries**

The Toppling Goliath Brewery in Decorah is known for its IPAs and barrel-aged stouts. They distribute in 30 states and create more than 40 beers that rotate throughout the year. Pulpit Rock Brewing Company was founded in a former dairy facility in 2015, and pursues what the owners call “the contemporary American beer experience”, with a diverse and regularly changing set of offerings.

### **The Arts**

Decorah offers many opportunities for lovers of the arts, from a community art gallery to a community theatre and a community orchestra, to a local film festival. Luther College hosts a Center Stage Series that includes music, dance, theatre, and more on a schedule from September to April of each year.

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### **Duties and Responsibilities of the Position of City Manager**

The duties of the manager shall be as follows:

A. Supervise enforcement and execution of the city laws;

B. Attend all meetings of the council unless excused by the mayor;

C. Recommend to the council such measures as he may deem necessary or expedient for the good government and welfare of the city;



D. Have the general supervision and direction of the administration of the city government and may appoint with approval of the council such administrative assistants as shall be deemed advisable;

E. Supervise the performance of all contracts for work to be done for the city, make all purchases of material and supplies and see that such material and supplies are received and are of the quality and character called for by the contract;

F. Power to appoint or employ persons to fill all places for which no other mode of appointment is provided and shall have power to administer oaths of office;



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G. Power to discharge summarily any officer, appointee or employee that he/she is empowered to appoint or employ, subject, however, to the provisions of the Soldier's Preference Law (Code, Chapter 35C), and the Civil Service Law (Code, Chapter 400), except that any administrative assistants to the manager shall hold office at the manager's pleasure;

H. Cooperate with any administrative agency or utility board of trustees;

I. The manager or any person appointed for this purpose may summarily and without notice investigate the affairs and conduct of any department, agency, officer or employee under his supervision;

J. Provide for and cause records to be kept of the issuance and revocation of licenses and permits authorized by city law;

K. Keep the council fully advised of the financial and other conditions of the city, and of its future needs;

L. Prepare and submit to the council annually the required budgets;

M. Conduct the business affairs of the city and cause accurate records to be kept by modern and efficient accounting methods;

N. Make to the council not later than the tenth day of each month an itemized financial report in writing, showing the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. Copies of financial reports must be available at the clerk's office for public distribution.

O. Perform other duties at the council's direction.

P. Be directly responsible to the council for the administration of municipal affairs as set forth in this chapter. All departments of the city shall report and be responsible to the city manager, except for the police department which shall report to the mayor.

All departmental activity requiring the attention of the council shall be brought before the council by the city manager, and all council policy concerning administration shall be coordinated through the city manager.

Q. Have the power to employ, reclassify, discipline or suspend any employee under the city manager's direct control. The city manager shall also have the power to employ, reclassify, discipline, suspend or discharge any employee under the supervision and control of any department head, but only with the concurrence of the department head. The city manager shall not have the authority to employ or appoint, reclassify, discipline, suspend or discharge the police chief, fire chief, city attorney, or the city clerk-treasurer. The city manager shall also recommend to and seek direction from the council or mayor when the city manager and a department head are not in agreement in regard to the employment, reclassification, suspension, discipline or discharge of a city employee.



## CITY MANAGER POSITION PROFILE MAY 2021

### **City Council Goals**

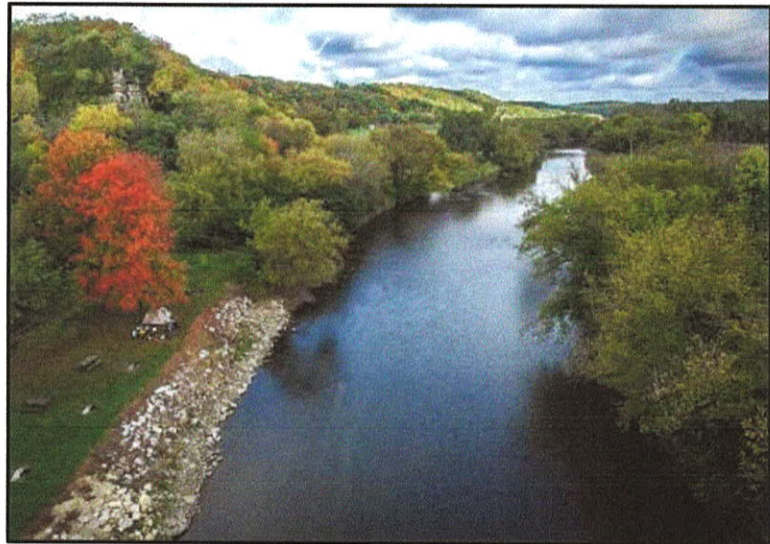
The City Council adopted goals in January 2020 for the ensuing 18-24 months, many of which are in active stages of implementation or have been completed:

#### **Budgetary & Financial**

- Hire building/zoning administrator.
- Adopt Sustainability Plan.
- Adopt Street Improvement Plan.
- Staff compensation update.

#### **Community-Based Goals**

- Pursue economic development through: Childcare, housing & incentives, business growth, hotel/motel tax financial analysis, and downtown improvement.
- Sustain City/Luther College relationship.
- Work toward establishment of a municipal electric utility.



#### **Organizational Effectiveness**

- Update staff compensation, salary matrix & pay plan.
- Develop succession plan for key positions within organization.
- Update Capital Improvement Plan.

### **Announcement/Advertisement**

City Manager, Decorah, Iowa. Decorah (population 8,127), a scenic, vibrant, progressive college town in the Driftless Region of northeastern Iowa, is seeking a visionary and energetic leader for the position of City Manager. Starting salary \$120-130k DOQ/E. Preferred qualifications include a master's degree in a relevant field and 5-7 years of progressive public sector management experience. City of Decorah residency is required within six months of hire. Relocation & transitional housing allowances are negotiable.

Applications should be submitted to [decorahcm2021@gmail.com](mailto:decorahcm2021@gmail.com). Application materials requested include: a cover letter, resume, salary history, and five work-related references. Applications will be accepted until 5 PM on June 7, 2021. EOE.



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**Tentative Timetable for Search Process**

It is the City's intent to conclude the search process as expediently as possible with the goal of offering the position to a candidate by July 10. Therefore, candidates are urged to tentatively mark the following dates on their schedules:

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Application deadline.....   | June 7, 2021               |
| 2. Notifications of semifinalists for the position.....  | June 14                    |
| 3. Virtual interviews of semifinalists .....   | Wednesday, June 16<br>(PM) |
| 4. Candidates' day to tour the community and meet City employees, Mayor and Council members..... | Friday, July 9             |
| 5. Interviews of candidates.....   | Saturday, July 10          |
| 6. Offer of employment.....  | July 10                    |
| 7. City Council approval of employment contract .....  | July 19                    |
| 8. Proposed starting date of employment .....  | By September 20            |

