

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

# City Manager

City of Durand



# City Manager

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## CITY OF DURAND

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Durand, Michigan is a real home town. Its residents value a way of life where volunteers make a difference, children walk to school through clean, safe neighborhoods, newcomers are welcome and the community's past is respected. Known for its hospitality and can-do spirit, Durand offers its residents a unique quality of life. Surrounded by agriculture fields and dairy farms, citizens relish a small-town, family-oriented atmosphere while being only a short drive from Michigan's most vibrant urban centers and its most prestigious educational institutions.



Durand is a full-service city, with a compact, walkable downtown populated by a wide variety of locally owned businesses, home to just over 3,400 residents living within its 2.10 square mile boundary. With a City Council, supportive of the council-manager form of government, and long-term knowledgeable employees this city is looking for creative, engaged leader who can capitalize on Durand's unique advantages to be its third City Manager in 28 years.

Despite Michigan's economic woes of the last decade, Durand's population is stable and the housing market healthy. It is rightfully proud of significant infrastructure expansion and community rebuilding successes and eagerly looks forward to the next round of accomplishments. To be the next City Manager in Durand, the new executive must be energetic, innovative and capable of tackling big goals. He or she will bring a high level of initiative to city hall and expertise in housing and economic development.

Supporting a staff of 44 (21 FT, 8 PT and a paid-on-call Fire Department of 20 firefighters) Durand's 2016 General Fund Budget is \$2,104,845 with Enterprise Funds adding another \$2,079,900. The audited fund balance from 2015-16 is \$592,624.

Durand will offer a competitive benefit package including retirement, well rounded fringe benefits and a salary within a range of \$65,000-\$77,500 depending on experience, skills and negotiation.

- ▶ **POPULATION**  
3,400
- ▶ **SIZE**  
2.1 SQ MI
- ▶ **BUDGET**  
\$2.1 MILLION
- ▶ **SALARY RANGE**  
\$65,000  
\$77,500

## ▶ THE COMMUNITY

A small town atmosphere and traditional values are the hallmark of this community where restaurant owners greet customers by name and people speak to each other on the sidewalk. Neighbors are welcoming and newcomers are readily accepted. As a consequence, the demographics of Durand are beginning to shift as more and more 20 and 30 somethings are moving in to raise families. Residents will tell you, “This is where I choose to live and can easily commute from”.

In Durand, children can still walk to a school down the street. With a solid core of supporters, the Durand Area School District serves 1,650 students from the rural communities of Durand, Bancroft and Lennon. (<http://www.durand.k12.mi.us/>) Voter approved bonding in November of 2015 assures continuing technological and facility improvements in this well-regarded system with strong academic offerings including Mandarin in the Middle School, STEM Summer Camp and a wide-range of athletic and extra curricula opportunities.

In only 2.7 square miles Durand has reserved over 20 acres for a well-maintained park system housing neighborhood pocket parks, playgrounds and athletic facilities including baseball/softball fields, basketball courts and covered ice and in-line skating venues.



Thanks to an active Chamber of Commerce, Durand Union Station, Inc., and other energetic volunteers a solid roster of events and festivals are offered every year to keep area residents and tourists entertained and active. Among the highlights are Railroad Days ([www.durandrailroaddays.com](http://www.durandrailroaddays.com)), Wednesday Light Live (music downtown), End of Summer Cruisin', Harvest Fest and Santa's Lighted Parade. (For more information about Durand's attractions and all that Shiawassee County offers see [www.durand-chamber.com](http://www.durand-chamber.com) and [www.shiawassee.org](http://www.shiawassee.org) ).

As home to the Michigan Railroad Museum, and future site of the National Railroad Memorial, Durand's residents are protective of and committed to their roots as “Railroad City, USA”. In fact, before there was even a village, tracks began to move through this eastern point in Shiawassee County until, at the zenith in the early 1900s, 42 passenger trains, 22 mail trains and 78 freight trains rumbled through the center of Durand every day.

While the rail industry is no longer a major player in the community's economy, it served as a rallying cry for community spirited activists who formed a successful non-profit which renovated and continues to manage the city's 110 year-old depot, one of the most photographed train stations in America. Today the Durand Union Station provides safe and secure overnight parking and services the Amtrak Blue Water Line linking Port Huron and Chicago; anchors the central business district; recruits tourists, event planners and railroading aficionados; while providing a historic backdrop for the Farmers Market and several other community gatherings.

The community's appreciation of its roots can also be seen in the preservation of period architecture that grew up and around the rail yards. Today the highly walkable and newly “streetscaped” downtown boasts a unique

sidewalk installation, enhanced public parking, new restaurants and committed local business owners whose growth and stability residents and government officials alike strongly support.

Buffered by agriculture fields and dairy farms, Durand can provide picturesque living just a short drive from any exciting urban amenity you need to experience. It is close to four international airports and sits on the important I-69 Trade Corridor. Durand is just over 30 minutes from Lansing (the state's capitol); less than 90 minutes from all Grand Rapids and Detroit have to offer; and an equal distance to the bridge to Ontario, Canada.

Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency (SATA) provides a millage supported "dial-a-ride" county-wide transportation service.

Within a short drive in any direction continuing education opportunities and Division I athletics are available. Within 30 minutes from Durand's center students have access to: University of Michigan Flint; three Baker College campuses; Kettering University; Mott Community College; Lansing Community College; Michigan State University and Cooley Law School. Those willing to add a few minutes to the commute and can easily make the campuses of Saginaw Valley State University, Central Michigan University and the University of Michigan.

Durand is a city of resilient, hard-workers with a true affection for their chosen community. In the midst of Michigan's recession and declining municipal revenues the City reconfigured its organization, combined duties, shrunk its employee base, and held a tight lid on finances. Always looking forward, Durand leveraged resources and sought innovative alternatives for moving the community forward. The government and community members rallied around the downtown and supported events and rebuilding efforts. Voters ponied up as well and passed a street millage to assure that infrastructure would be maintained.

The success of those efforts is evidenced in the new downtown streetscape and upgraded parking facilities, solid fund balance, a \$10.6 million water, sewer and storm improvement project in final stages of completion, and a Community Excellence Award from the Michigan Municipal League membership.

Durand is proud of what it has accomplished, but expects to continue moving forward. It is looking for a new city manager, possessing an inherent sense of initiative, who will be personally driven to expand on Durand's success and capitalize on its potential.



## ▶ THE ORGANIZATION

Durand is governed by a seven-member non-partisan Council with one at-large member serving a two-year term and six holding four-year terms representing the city's two precincts. Terms are staggered and elections are held in even-number years. The Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem are selected by their peers.

Durand was chartered as a city in 1937 and has been a solid council-manager form of government since its earliest days. The elected officials are responsible for legislative functions, budget approval and setting policy and direction. All Department Directors report to the City Manager who serves as the chief administrative officer accountable for implementation of policy and daily operations of the city. The council describes itself as "fiscally conservative but very supportive of departmental needs."

The relationship between city employees and the residents they serve is respectful and cordial. Residents appreciate a "face-to-face" relationship with city administrators and staff members.

All primary partners in the community's stability (the Council, Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority and executive staff) appear well-connected, equally informed, and in agreement on the general direction for Durand.

This full-service city relies on a combination of employees and professional contracts. Assessing, planning and engineering services are provided through outside firms under contract. The Clerk/Treasurer; Police Chief; Fire Chief (with a paid-on-call department); Public Works Director and Building Department Director report directly to the Manager.

In response to Michigan's recession which included significant reductions in revenue

sharing to local governments, Durand instituted several job and staffing reorganizations and functions with a highly experienced, loyal and lean administrative core.

Department Directors, averaging upwards of two decades of local government service, are independent decision makers with wide responsibility for managing personnel, projects and expenditures within their units. Directors attend Council meetings, present information and answer the questions of the elected officials and residents. Over these last few years most annual budget building responsibility has been in the hands of the Manager and Treasurer.

A total of 44 full, part-time and on-call employees support the residents of Durand. Hourly positions in Public Works and the Police Department are represented by the Teamsters. It is expected that one additional position will be added to the Clerk/Treasurer office in the very near future.

Commitment to the business of good government and loyalty to the citizens of the community are hallmarks of this organization's culture. Good working, professional relationships exist between departments. Cross training has allowed for duties to be shared across department lines and interdepartmental assistance is a regular and ongoing occurrence and expectation. The "all-for-one" atmosphere comes, more, from the shared values of the team members than any formalized policy.

Durand's directors tend to be face-to-face communicators and, because of the pressure of the daily work load, prefer project-based, solution-driven meetings rather than status or organizational sessions.

A dedicated road millage and equipment reserve fund are integral to the project, mainte-

nance and purchase planning. A campaign to increase the voted street millage is in the offing.

This is an employee team that recognizes and supports the community and its elected officials in their efforts to define a vision for Durand's unique brand and a direction for its future. To lead Durand's team into the future, the new manager will need the skills and drive to take on the "big projects" including financial stability and economic development while always keeping other administrators in the loop. He or she will need to be flexible, looking for alternative ways to get things done. The new executive will respect the expertise of team members and support the chain of command to maintain an effective and efficient organization.

Only friendly, supportive, kind and accessible members will be welcome on this team. Employees expect ethical and appropriate behavior and a public commitment to the employees and the community they serve.



## ▶ THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

To be considered as the next city manager in Durand, candidates must have a “go-getter” can-do attitude with the ability to creatively solve problems with lean resources. To be considered a qualified applicant, respondents must have attained and will describe in the accompanying cover letter or resume:

- A Bachelor’s Degree in a related field such as public administration, finance, urban planning, etc. (an MPA is preferred);
- And three year’s local/municipal government management experience at minimum. An iteration of experience must show an increasing level of responsibility culminating in executive, administrative and/or management control for projects and supervision.
- An appropriate combination of education and professional governmental experience including internships and specialized training may be considered when applying tests for minimum requirements
- Certification or direct experience and/or training in community and economic development will be considered a plus
- A history of volunteerism and/or community involvement is to be illustrated

Any applicant who moves to the level of candidate will be capable of implementing, monitoring and managing complex municipal and service projects. He or she must illustrate:

- Strong aptitude for municipal budgeting and possession of financial planning acumen as the city manager is the chief financial and budget officer for the city
- Project management skills
- A significant understanding of the principles of community and economic development including residential housing and neighborhood capacity building; tax base growth and business assistance and development
- Ability to bid, negotiate, implement and monitor all manner of contracts
- Well-developed interpersonal communication and presentation skills
- Possession of human resources and labor relations talent with the ability to lead all functions including hiring, training, team building, employee development, union contract negotiations and implementation
- Proficiency in writing grant applications and management
- Skills in developing and delivering the city’s message to many audiences on behalf of the elected officials for the benefit of the entire community
- Tech savvy and comfortable with multiple communication strategies

Durand’s new chief executive will display and take initiative. He or she will take the “ball and run with it.” To fit well in this community and with its elected officials, the Manager must be honest, trustworthy and:

- Confident
- A continuous learner
- A creative problem solver
- A willing face-to-face communicator; searching out input from residents and other employees before decisions or recommendations are made
- Able to analyze situations quickly and prepare options and solutions
- Timely and responsive
- Willing to take responsibility for actions; can admit mistakes
- Committed to the community he/she serves
- An instinctive partnership builder
- Passionate
- Effective and efficient; stays on task; outcome driven
- Shares credit
- Can facilitate best possible options from conflicting points of views



# ▶ APPLICATION PROCESS

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## APPLY BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS OCTOBER 11, 2016

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Please submit resume, cover letter, salary history, consent form, and five professional references to:

execsearch@mml.org, Subject Line: Durand Search  
OR mail to: Michigan Municipal League,  
ATTN: Durand Search,  
1675 Green Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Questions can be directed to MML Executive Recruiter Kathie Grinzinger (989.289.1084)

Candidates desiring confidentiality of their interest, as allowed for and provided by Michigan law, must indicate such in a separate subject line above the body of the cover letter.

This search is conducted by an Equal Opportunity Employer.

