



— POSITION AVAILABLE —

Deadline Extended - Looking for a Few More Great Candidates

## CITY MANAGER

*Apply ASAP but no later than January 31, 2025*

Located on Alaska's western tip, and overlooking the Bering Sea, Nome is a critical hub for the Seward Peninsula. The Bering Strait region is the historic and contemporary home of 20 Native Alaska tribes whose members share a rich culture of Inupiaq, Central Yup'ik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik Peoples. This City is enriched by traditional culture and the history of North America's last and greatest gold rush. The City was incorporated in 1901 in response to the influx of people who flocked to Nome after gold was discovered in 1898. Nome continues to draw visitors through its yearly events, unique lifestyle, and wild, natural surroundings. While living on the edges of civilization is not easy, residents couldn't imagine living anywhere else. For those who crave dramatic mountains, unrivaled wildlife, northern lights, and total immersion in nature, Nome is your final destination.

Nome is an outdoor adventurer's dream. No other place in rural Alaska has a road system like Nome. Three gravel highways, each around 75 miles long, showcase remarkable and very different terrain. In June, wildflowers bloom, making the landscape come alive where magnificent colors paint the hills and valleys. Berries ripen and locals pick them for a delicious snack on a summer hike. Observing wildlife is a guaranteed experience in Nome. Muskox,



reindeer, moose, brown bears, arctic foxes, beavers, wolves, and wolverines all live in this part of the world. Birders literally flock to Nome to view songbirds and falcons, as well as many other species can be seen swooping through the sky. Bird watching in Nome offers an opportunity to view multiple species not seen anywhere else in mainland North America. The ocean and rivers are another place where animal life is observed. Whales are often spotted off the coast of Nome, and salmon swim against the river's currents to spawn.

There is no shortage of opportunity for adventure in Nome. For those who enjoy fishing (including ice fishing for Alaska king crab), the Bering Sea and 14 rivers are nearby. Fishers can catch many local species, including salmon, pike, and large arctic grayling. Fishers can go on solo adventures, or you can go on guided trips, where the guides often know where the best fishing spots are. Nome's local pastime consists of hunting, camping, hiking, snowmachining, berry picking, cross-country skiing, and exploring the vast terrain of Alaska's wilderness. For a more relaxed hobby, beachcombing is another popular activity where locals find unique driftwood and beach glass.

Historical activities and festivities teach the history of Nome and the region. Tour companies offer gold-panning experiences for all ages. Another significant part of life in Nome is the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Taking place in March, the 1,000-mile race starts in Anchorage and finishes in Nome. Festivities in Nome continue as the mushers, and their dogs complete the toughest sled dog race in the world. During this time, the population of the city grows by about 1,000 people celebrating the race. The Iditarod has been the setting for many stories, featuring unforgiving weather, unpredictable injuries, and triumph through adversity. The event is integral to the culture and history of Nome.

Life in Nome, Alaska can be very different from the Lower 48. Even though many people move to Nome for its solitude, the community is closely connected. Residents rely heavily on one another because that is the culture in Nome, and its residents wouldn't have it any other way. Living in Nome is more simple, more calm, and more relaxing than most people are used to in the rest of the country. Most residents walk to local restaurants, or one of the two grocery stores in town. If the trip is longer, locals get around using snowmobiles, 4 wheelers, or ATVs.

Native residents are proud of their traditions and heritage. As previously mentioned, the Bering Strait region is home to three culturally distinct groups of Alaska Native people including the Inupiaq, The Central Yup'ik, and the St. Lawrence Island Yupik Peoples. Nome acts as the nucleus to 20 surrounding villages and is the main depot for circulating supplies. The region hosts a total population around 10,000 people. Visitors can learn about Alaska Native culture at the Katirvik Cultural Center. Displays of photographs and art at the Carrie M. McLain Memorial Museum help people to understand the ancient history of the Bering Strait people. Nome's public library connects residents to the accumulated knowledge of the world, placing an emphasis on Alaska and the Bering Strait region. Gift shops offer a variety of local art that include ivory, jade, and soapstone carvings.

Locals also enjoy organized activities through the Nome City Parks and Recreation Department. These activities include Little League, volleyball, track and field, basketball, softball, skateboarding, cultural presentations, and child enrichment camps. Adults can join leagues for multiple sports, including basketball, volleyball, and bowling. There are several parks and playgrounds around the city where residents come together for picnics, impromptu sports games, neighborhood events, and playdates. Other venues provided by the City include the ice rink, the Golden Strike Bowling Alley, the Nome Recreation Center, and the Nome Swimming Pool.

The real estate market in Nome offers homes built for the area's harsh weather. Outside of the downtown area, most homes have a generous amount of land, giving the city a rural feel. The median home listing price in 2024 is \$152,000. The median rent in Nome is \$1,626. If you prefer to build your own home in the dramatic landscape of northwestern Alaska, there is also an abundance of land available to purchase.

For its small size, Nome has a robust educational program. Nome Public School District is made up of the Nome Elementary School, Nome-Beltz Middle High School, and Anvil City Science Academy. Anvil City Science Academy is a tuition free, public, parent-run charter school. The curriculum is for grades 5-8 and emphasizes technology and scientific research methods. When Nome students graduate high school, many choose to stay in the area and attend the University of Alaska Fairbanks Northwest Campus. Conveniently located in Nome, this

campus provides an affordable education to all its students. There are many programs available, including Applied Business, Facilities Maintenance, Supervision and Personnel Management, Elementary Education, Nursing, Rural Development, and Social Work.

Since Nome has a small population, the crime rate, which has an overall B- rating, seems more concerning than it is. Those who live here consider crime to be low to moderate and feel that the more serious crimes are exceptionally low. It is important to recognize that overall crime in Nome is on a downward trend, with crimes decreased by 25.6% from previous reports. The efforts of the community and the local police department have worked to make Nome a safer place for everyone.

Nome is certainly removed from mainstream, crowded cities. The largest metropolitan City, 540 miles away, is Anchorage. Nome residents visit Anchorage to partake in amenities such as shopping, dining, and the arts. The only accessible route to and from Nome is via air and sea, since the City is not connected to the Alaska Road System. Not to worry, Nome is equipped with an airport (OME) that provides two-daily flights to Anchorage aboard a 737. Nome also has a bustling Port where cruise ships make occasional stops in Nome as they venture through the Northwest Passage.

Nome, Alaska is a unique City, with unique needs and challenges. It is a community that endures a harsh climate to live in one of the most boundless and breathtaking areas Alaska has to offer. It is a place brimming with history and native culture, where vigorous Alaskan adventure abounds, and yet, Nome still maintains that small-town, friendly feeling. There really is “no place like Nome,” so dust off your resume and apply to be Nome’s next City Manager!

## HISTORY

Long before people came here to find gold, Inupiat, the native people, lived and worked with the land for thousands of years. The settlement in the Nome area specifically was called Sitnasuak.

In the summer of 1898, three travelers, the “Three Lucky Swedes,” Jafet Lindeberg, Erik Lindblom, and John Brynteson (one of

whom was actually Norweigan), discovered gold on Anvil Creek. News of the discovery spread through the frontier and reached mainstream by that winter. By 1899, Nome had a population of 10,000. Then, also in 1899, gold was found in the beach sand for miles along the northwestern coast of AK. Thousands more people flooded the area in spring 1900 on steamships from Seattle and San Francisco

During the period from 1900 to 1909, Nome’s population reached 20,000. At the time, Nome was the largest city in the Alaska Territory. By 1910, however, the population fell to 2,600. In the 1930s it was less than 1,500. After the initial population boom left the area, the infrastructure was left to the elements. Much of Nome’s gold-rush era architecture was destroyed in fires and violent storms throughout the 1900s.

Table 1: Nome Demographics

Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	26.8%	0 to 19	33%
Black	1.8%	20 to 29	16%
Asian	3%	30 to 49	28%
Native People	53.6%	50 to 69	20%
Some Other / Two or More Races	14.8%	70 to 79	2%
Total	100.0%	80+	1%
Hispanic (all races)	5%	Estimated Population: 3,695	

Educational Achievements (25 & Over) and Other Statistics	
High School or Higher	59.25%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	26.88%
Median Age—Nome, AK	31
Median Age—U.S.	38.5
Median Household Income Nome, AK	\$68,653
Median Household Income—U.S.	\$59,384
Poverty Rate	6.12%

Source: U.S. 2020 Census Bureau

Table 2: Principal Employers, Nome, AK

Employer	Industry
Norton Sound Health Corp.	Healthcare
State of Alaska (excludes U of A)	Government
Nome Public Schools	Education
Kawerak Inc.	Government
City of Nome	Government
Bering Air Inc.	Air Transportation
Alaska Commercial Company	Retail and Grocery
Nome Joint Utilities System	Utility
Safeway Inc.	Grocery
Bering Straits Development Corporation	Construction

Source: Nome, AK 2020 CAFR



Figure 1: Location of Nome, AK

In 1925, Nome was the destination for the Great Race of Mercy, when sled dogs played a pivotal role in transporting the diphtheria antitoxin serum to Nome under severe conditions. The movie *Balto* tells the story of Balto, the lead sled dog and his musher, Gunnar Kaasen, who guided his dogs through violent storms and harsh temperatures to provide aid to Nome. In 1973, Nome became the official ending point for the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

In World War II, Nome was the last stop on the ferry system for planes flying from the US to the Soviet Union for the Lend-lease program, transporting supplies to the United States, then ally, across the Pacific Ocean.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

See Table 1 for information on Nome demographics.

## CLIMATE

Nome’s climate is quite extreme. The area is in a subarctic climate, very similar to tundra. This climate experiences long, subzero winters and short, cool summers. The Bering Sea moderates the weather. Nome’s coldest month is January. There are usually about 75 days each year that experience subzero temperatures. Snow averages about 83 inches per season, usually falling between early October and mid-May. Summers in Nome are usually about 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Historically, temperatures rarely reach 80 degrees.

## GEOGRAPHY

Nome, AK is 21.6 square miles. 12.5 square miles are land and 9.1 square miles are water. It is part of the Nome Census Area. Nome was built on the south coast of the Seward Peninsula, facing Norton Sound, part of the Bering Sea. Interestingly, Nome is closer to the eastern coast of Russia than it is to Anchorage.

## COMMERCE

Nome is the supply, service, and transportation center of the Bering Strait region. Government services provide the majority of employment. Retail services, transportation, mining, medical, and other businesses provide year-round income.

## THE GOVERNMENT

The City of Nome is a first-class city within Alaska’s unorganized borough. Nome follows a Council/Manager form of government. The elected body is comprised of a Mayor and six Councilmembers (elected at large). The Mayor is elected every two years by the citizens of Nome, is the head of the City Council, and only has voting powers in the case of a tie. The

Council members serve three-year terms with staggered elections. Presently, three Councilmembers have served two terms, and three other Members are serving their first term. The Mayor is serving a third term and served as Mayor from 1985-2000. All Councilmembers care about their community and have the best interests of the City at heart. They work well together and quickly resolve any misunderstandings.

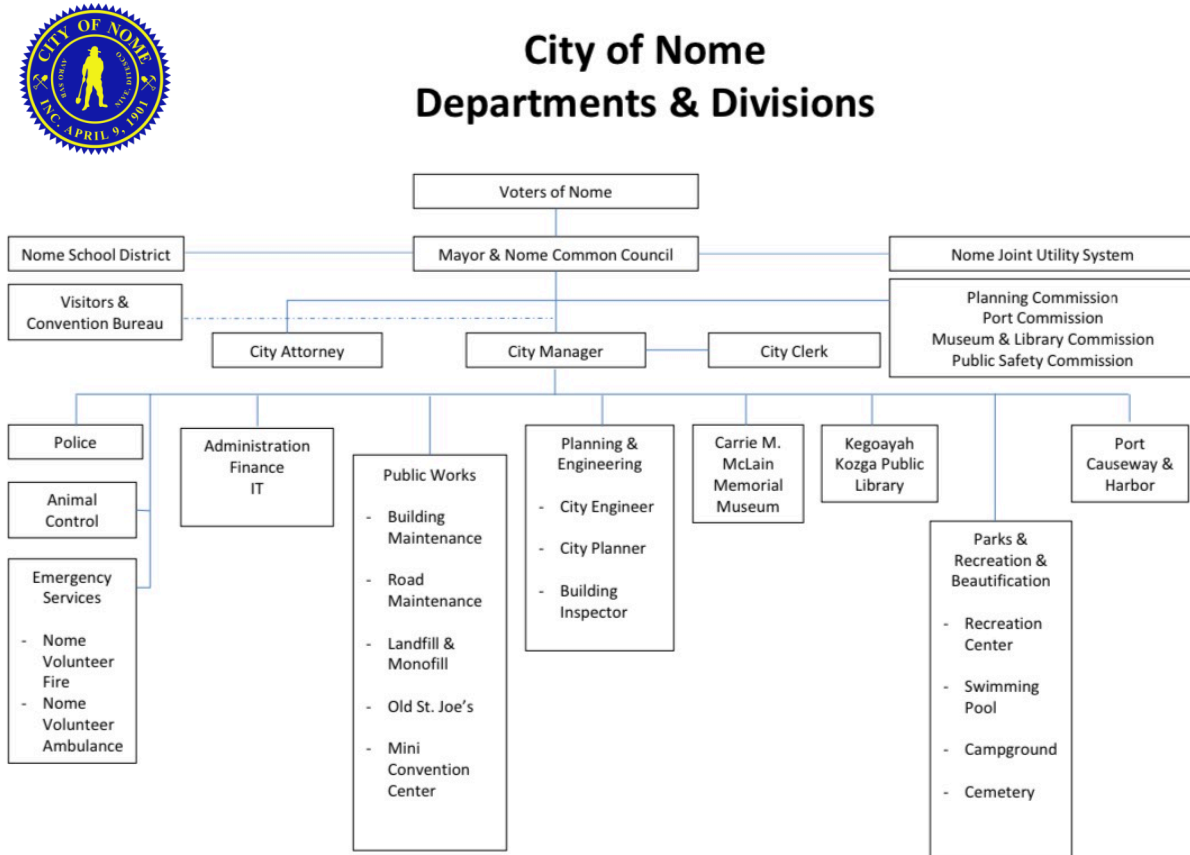
The City Council appoints the City Manager, the City Clerk, the City Attorney/Firm, and the City Treasurer/Finance Director. Citizens also elect the Nome School Board and the Nome Joint Utility System (NJUS) Board of Directors. Although these bodies act independently from the City, the Nome City Council approves their budgets.

The City Manager is responsible for carrying out policies and programs established by the City Council. The Manager supervises the City's day-to-day operations, including

departments and employees, either directly, or indirectly. The City Manager appoints several public service positions, including the Police Chief, HR Director, Port Director, and the Executive staff. The City Manager reports to Nome's City Council, who in turn answers to the citizens of Nome.

The NJUS, which operates through enterprise funds, provides water, sewer, trash disposal, and electrical services to the Nome area. Services that the City provides include Police, the Port of Nome, Public Works; snow removal, road maintenance, Parks and Recreation, and fire protection through a volunteer fire department. The City has one union. The City of Nome Employees Association Local #6141 APEA/AFT (AFL-CIO) covers all non-exempt employees of the City. The City's total adopted budget (including significant grant funding for a planned expansion of the Port) is \$121,331,467 and the general fund budget is \$17,813,567.

FIGURE 2: NOME ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While the City has numerous challenges, they are manageable and indeed are opportunities for a City Manager to leave a lasting legacy.

First, as often happens in many U.S. cities, Nome's infrastructure has not always kept up. Significant parts of the City's infrastructure are older and approaching the end of their useful life. Remedying these issues will require money and a plan to find and/or commit to the required resources. A good financial understanding, creativity, long term vision, and the ability to secure grants, partnerships, and outside funding sources will be crucial.

In a related issue, there is a significant deficit in the budget. Simply stated, Nome's expenses have exceeded their revenue, and reserve funds are being used to combat the issue. The City will need to promptly look for opportunities to increase revenue, decrease spending, or explore other avenues before the deficit becomes an unmanageable debt, posing long-term financial challenges for the City.

Second, as previously mentioned, there are 20 villages in the region. As such, there are also 20 federally recognized tribal governments. This means that the U.S. government recognizes each tribe as a sovereign government in the same way that it does all other federally recognized tribes throughout Alaska and the Lower 48. There are 3 entities that function within most of the villages. This would include the Native Corporation, the City government, and the Tribal government. Succinctly, it is essential for all entities to have beneficial diplomatic relations with one another. These relationships have suffered in the past, but moving forward will not only build trust among the parties, but will also increase the financial stability for all the included organizations.

Third, understanding the culture of Alaskan Natives is essential to being successful in Nome. The native culture is not just history, but rather a way of life. As a native people and as citizens, residents are involved with the local government. They have a strong voice, and the next City Manager should give consideration to those voices. Similarly, applicants will need to do their homework to understand the relationships between

corporations established by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and Tribal governments.

Finally, Nome experiences many (as much as 20) hours of darkness from late November to late January. On the other side, Nome also experiences nearly perpetual daylight ("Midnight Sun") from late May to late July. Both are fascinating experiences, but also an important aspect to be aware of.

Similarly, Nome's winter season is characterized by extreme cold, heavy snow, and persistent cloud cover, making it a challenging season to endure. The winter months are not for the faint of heart.

On the brighter side of things, Nome has projects underway that will help solve many issues and may create a few along the way. Just 30 miles north of Nome, along the Kigluaik mountain range, you'll find one of the largest known graphite deposits in the world. Currently, Graphite One, a Canadian mining company is extracting core samples for analysis to determine if the area is suitable for a mining operation. If plans proceed forward, the mine will create jobs for locals, increase the population, and thereby, boost the economy.

Additionally, the Port of Nome is hoping to soon move forward with the help of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to expand the Port. This expansion will provide much needed additional capacity to serve the Arctic region, as well as to alleviate congestion at the existing port facilities. The proposed project will extend the existing causeway by approximately 3,500 feet, in an L-shape, as well as provide approximately 2,030 feet of additional dock space. This incredible undertaking will bring more business, more tourists, and connect Nome to the growing shipping commerce via the Northwest Passage.

The pieces are in place, but much remains to be done. The potential for growth and development is significant. With the right leadership, Nome has an encouraging future.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Nome City Council is seeking a seasoned Manager and leader to work as a partner, a supporter, and a trusted advisor. The individual will be a consensus-builder who knows how to help



everyone get to yes and will work closely with the Council to implement its priorities.

The next Manager will need to have demonstrated achievement in developing and implementing strategic, long range and annual plans. Being able to work with a City Council to establish a vision, identify goals, strategies, tasks, and measures to monitor progress will be critical. They will be proactive and anticipate what information the City Council needs to make the best decisions for the community. The individual will then pursue that information, organize it into a coherent narrative, and present it, along with well researched options, for the elected body to consider.

The City Manager will be someone who believes in integrity, transparency, and establishing trust in the community. The individual will be one of the City's primary representatives. As such, the Manager will be an outstanding communicator, an expert in public relations, and someone who realizes diplomacy and listening are important parts of communicating. Of particular importance will be keeping the Council, the public, and the staff fully informed. For example, everyone needs to know and be shown that the City's money is being spent wisely.

The ideal candidate will not be a micro-manager but rather someone who delegates and promotes creativity while excelling in motivating, mentoring, and training staff. At the same time, it will be necessary to hold the staff accountable. In other words, the individual will have a demonstrated pattern of leadership. City employees are very talented, and they work very hard. The next Manager will understand the direction the elected body has set and establish goals and objectives to implement

that policy. They need to be adept at hiring talent that will fit into the community-minded organization that Nome is. The desired candidate will believe strongly in continuous improvement and will constantly seek to make processes more efficient and effective. They will also believe in providing unmatched customer service and lead by example.

The next City Manager should be comfortable in putting their business attire in storage and come to work in jeans and a Carhartt hoodie because that is the ethos in Nome. The Manager will be part of the community, which includes being visible, conversing with residents, and interactive at City events. A great City Manager will understand the culture, customs, behavior, and lifestyle of the residents they serve. The Manager will know that a city resident could not only be a tribal member, but also a shareholder of a Village corporation and regional Native corporation.

The Council would like someone who is personable, good natured, intelligent, friendly, fair, honest, outgoing, patient, ethical, organized - someone with a "can do" attitude. The ideal candidate will not be easily discouraged, and will be optimistic about the future, positive, and resilient. The City is looking for someone who will solve problems and build consensus without being controversial. Hence, common sense and strong people skills will be necessary, as will strongly believing in having an open-door policy with residents, staff, and the Council. A sense of humor is a plus.

The ideal candidate will be familiar with the use of both traditional media and social media. They will recognize both the good and the harm social media and naysayers can do. When confronted with negativity, the Manager will stand up politely and correct the record.

The City is looking for someone with experience in municipal management as well as budgeting, finance, land use and planning, public works, and redevelopment. Demonstrated experience in intergovernmental relations is important as Nome needs to build coalitions to solve some of its more significant longer-term issues. Thus, the ideal candidate will understand the benefits that arise from alliances and partnerships across the region.

Given that the possible projects coming to Nome are those on a large and significant scale, the ideal candidate will be someone who can visualize the impact of these projects, foresee how the developments can be encouraged to incorporate elements that will improve the quality of life of the City's residents, and then implement ways to achieve the City's goals.

The ideal candidate must have a minimum of five to ten years of progressive senior management experience as a City Manager, Assistant City Manager, or Department Head. A bachelor's degree in public administration, public policy, or a related field is expected. While not mandatory, a master's degree is highly desirable. Knowledge of Alaska and its laws are pluses, but not requirements.

The Council will make a commitment to its next manager's success and wants a candidate who will embrace Nome's enormous potential. The next City Manager should view this position as a destination and stay at least five to ten years.

## COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$185,000 to \$210,000. The final salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The City Manager will be part of the Alaska Public Employees Retirement System.

## THE MOST RECENT CITY MANAGER

The previous City Manager served for five years, and left Nome to be closer to family on the East Coast.

## RESIDENCY

The City Manager is expected to live in Nome.

## HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to [Recruit35@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit35@cb-asso.com) by January 31<sup>st</sup>. Questions should be directed to Scott Krim at (801) 628-8364 and then Colin Baenziger at (561) 707 3537.



## INTERNAL CANDIDATES

We are not aware of any internal candidates, but if one applies, the City Council is committed to a level playing field.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

This recruitment is very unlikely to draw scrutiny from the media until the City selects the finalists for the position. Under the Alaska Public Records Act, once an application is submitted, it is deemed a public record; however, contact information is typically redacted.

## THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between January 18th and February 24th. Finalists will be selected on March 10th. A reception and interviews will be held on March 20th and 21st. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The City of Nome is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the city, visit:

[nomealaska.org](http://nomealaska.org)

[alaska.org/destination/nome](http://alaska.org/destination/nome)

[visitnomealaska.com](http://visitnomealaska.com)

[visitnomealaska.com/chamber/home](http://visitnomealaska.com/chamber/home)

[kawerak.org/](http://kawerak.org/)

