

# 2025 Community Input Survey

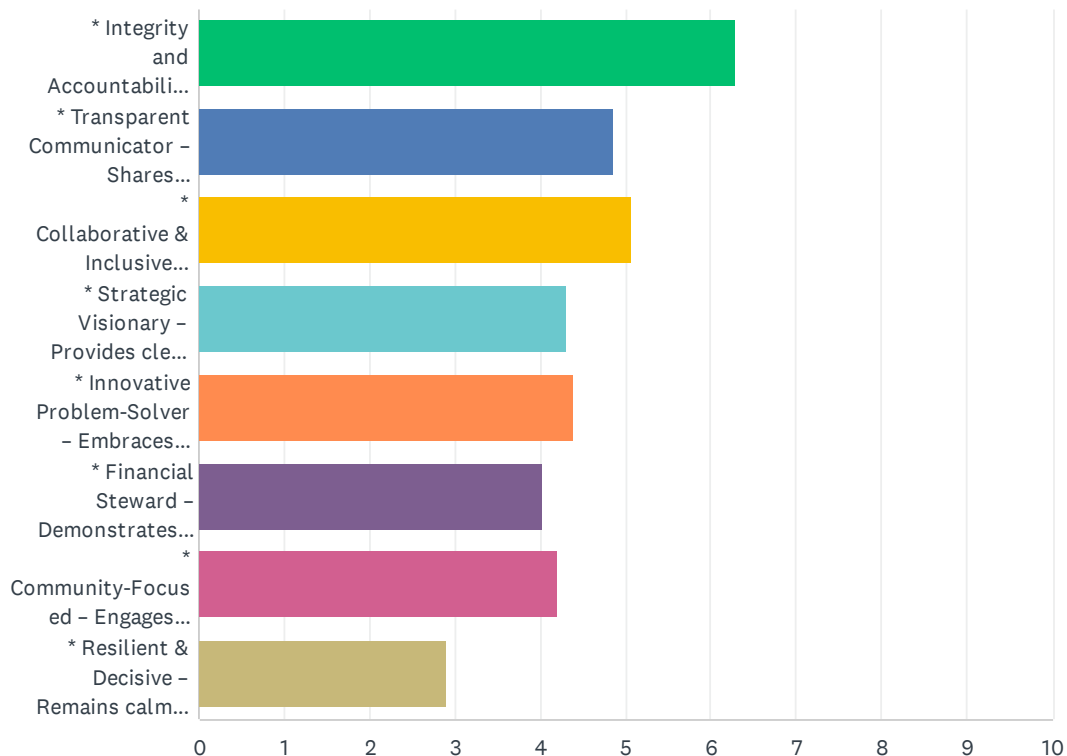
## - Expectations for Helena's Next City Manager -

Collected and compiled by:



Q4 Which leadership qualities are most important for Helena’s next City Manager? Please rank the following traits in order of importance from 1 (most important) to 8 (least important). These traits reflect priorities from Helena’s strategic plan and job profile – such as strategic leadership, collaboration, transparency, and equity. If a quality you value isn’t on the list, you may write in up to two additional traits below.

Answered: 136 Skipped: 51



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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	TOTAL	SCORE
* Integrity and Accountability – Is open, transparent, and takes responsibility (builds public trust).	36.76% 50	20.59% 28	16.18% 22	7.35% 10	5.88% 8	7.35% 10	2.94% 4	2.21% 3	0.74% 1	136	6.30
* Transparent Communicator – Shares information openly and listens to the community.	11.76% 16	17.65% 24	11.03% 15	15.44% 21	16.91% 23	9.56% 13	9.56% 13	7.35% 10	0.74% 1	136	4.87
* Collaborative & Inclusive Leader – Builds partnerships, works well with others, and values equity and diverse perspectives.	13.97% 19	20.59% 28	13.97% 19	14.71% 20	11.03% 15	5.15% 7	7.35% 10	11.76% 16	1.47% 2	136	5.07
* Strategic Visionary – Provides clear long-term vision and proactive, strategic planning for Helena's future.	13.97% 19	12.50% 17	9.56% 13	11.76% 16	5.88% 8	11.03% 15	16.18% 22	16.91% 23	2.21% 3	136	4.31
* Innovative Problem-Solver – Embraces creativity, modernization, and sustainability in addressing challenges.	2.94% 4	12.50% 17	16.18% 22	15.44% 21	19.12% 26	14.71% 20	11.03% 15	7.35% 10	0.74% 1	136	4.39
* Financial Steward – Demonstrates strong financial management and responsible budgeting.	8.82% 12	4.41% 6	10.29% 14	14.71% 20	16.18% 22	17.65% 24	19.12% 26	8.09% 11	0.74% 1	136	4.04
* Community-Focused – Engages with residents, is responsive to	7.35% 10	7.35% 10	16.91% 23	14.71% 20	11.03% 15	16.91% 23	13.24% 18	11.76% 16	0.74% 1	136	4.21

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local needs, and encourages public participation.												
* Resilient & Decisive – Remains calm under pressure, adapts to change, and makes timely, well-informed decisions.	3.68% 5	3.68% 5	5.15% 7	5.15% 7	13.24% 18	16.91% 23	19.12% 26	31.62% 43	1.47% 2	136	2.90	

**Q5 If a quality you value isn't on the list, you may write in up to two additional traits. If N/A was selected, write in up to two additional traits you would like to seen in a City Manager.**

Answered: 42   Skipped: 145

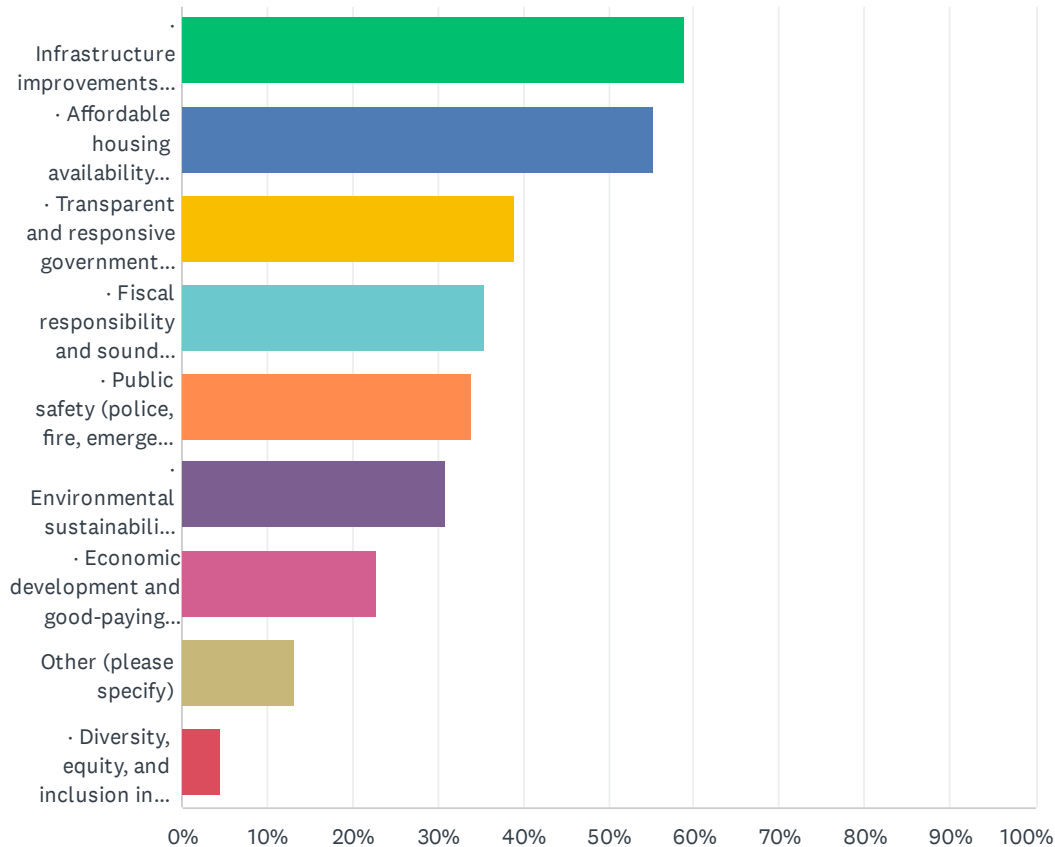
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Decision maker	11/4/2025 4:00 PM
2	I would like to see a City Manager with extensive and successful experience outside the state of Montana. We are a small city in a small state and don't want to become inbred.	11/4/2025 2:29 PM
3	Is already a city manager elsewhere. This isn't a training position.	11/3/2025 8:29 PM
4	N/A	11/3/2025 7:57 PM
5	Environmental stewardship	11/3/2025 6:18 PM
6	 There is a lot of frustration with the lack of transparency and open communication to/from the current City Manager and there is a dominant 'culture' of non-responsiveness led by the City Manager. This needs to change and that is why I ranked Integrity and Accountability (building public trust) as #1. I think the Vision and Strategic Thinking can be set by the Commission and then the City Manager directed to proactively implement that vision and strategic pathway for Helena.	11/3/2025 4:28 PM
7	Understands their job is ultimately paid for by the citizens and for the citizens. Prioritizes listening to, partnering with and implementing knowledgeable input from neighborhood citizen council members and citizen advisory groups. Building clear direct access from these groups to their elected officials — mayor and commissioners rather than obstructing it.	11/3/2025 10:30 AM
8	 # 1 through #7 are ALL High priority for me. I don't like the way this survey is structured.	11/3/2025 9:43 AM
9	The courage to change the status quo only after understanding the history of why things were done a particular way.	11/2/2025 11:10 AM
10	#1 is a manager who focuses on Assertive Staff Management. The goal should be to make city staff less insular and much more open and communicative with the public. Many city staff have been in their positions for a long time, act jaded and dismissive of public input and opinions, and go through the motions of public engagement.	11/1/2025 8:06 AM
11	Not self-serving. For example re-zoning for your personal commercial properties.	10/31/2025 6:36 PM
12	 Why are you ranking these qualities? Ranking leadership qualities may to set up a false sense of some qualities being more or less important when they may actually be of equal importance. The way in which you have set up this question will provide you with misleading information on what leadership qualities are most important to the community and calls into question the competence of the survey designer.	10/31/2025 6:06 PM
13	Able to address staff resistance to change and direction	10/31/2025 5:49 PM
14	  I want to mark number one for each one of these qualities but that was not an option unfortunately the way some one set up this survey	10/30/2025 6:21 PM
15	I would value someone with an outside perspective that could bring new and innovative practices to Helena.	10/30/2025 3:37 PM
16	 Follows the policy set by the city commission, including when it comes to major expenditures on infrastructure (eg, roundabouts).	10/30/2025 1:00 PM
17	Experienced manager comfortable working with large numbers of diverse employees	10/30/2025 9:43 AM
18	Values respect in relationships with City staff	10/30/2025 9:05 AM

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19	  Ranking each of the qualities above is not a great way to identify the most important attributes of a city manager. Each of these qualities are important.	10/30/2025 8:09 AM
20	 works with current city partners like PPLT to maximize thoughtful development and maintenance of our open spaces	10/29/2025 8:11 PM
21	Effective Staff Management - Ability to address and resolve issues between staff and strategic partners Facilitator - Lead initiative for improving outdated standards and policies	10/29/2025 4:53 PM
22	 Understands that the City Manager takes direction from the Helena City Commission, not the other way around.	10/29/2025 4:42 PM
23	 Follows the guidance and direction of elected officials.	10/29/2025 2:34 PM
24	 Hands on experience as a City Manager is essential to having someone in the position who has all of the above listed abilities. Could you ask the Montana League of Cities and Towns for suggestions of possible candidates?	10/29/2025 12:35 PM
25	Holding people in the city accountable for these traits too.	10/29/2025 8:15 AM
26	is respectful and communicates well with staff	10/29/2025 7:11 AM
27	Data-Driven Decision Maker (Evidence-Based Governance) Sustainability & Resilience Advocate	10/28/2025 5:13 PM
28	These are all values that should be equally considered instead of ranked by importance. Without any one of these the individual would be an ineffective leader	10/28/2025 11:38 AM
29	Citizen of Helena proper	10/28/2025 6:44 AM
30	Public Service dedication Planner - considers short-term and long-term goals.	10/27/2025 3:57 PM
31	 " You should ' NOT DISCRIMINATE Against The HANDICAPPED and / or DISABLED INDIVIDUALS ' ... which ' I am ' !!!!	10/25/2025 7:41 PM
32	 Knows Helena - it's past and current issues	10/25/2025 10:21 AM
33	Decisive AND Inclusive Leadership: they are often posed against each other, but they are not. We need someone who will act with urgency AND be open and transparent.	10/25/2025 9:31 AM
34	 Experience managing a similar sized entity	10/24/2025 4:02 PM
35	It is hard to rank these, I would hope a successful professional candidate would hold all of these qualities equally.	10/24/2025 1:44 PM
36	 Encourage feedback from citizen committees such as HCC and the CCB.	10/24/2025 11:41 AM
37	 has lived and worked in Montana. no more round-about and tearing down our history	10/24/2025 11:38 AM
38	 Provides guidance to commissioners in public commission meetings on staying committed to the budget. Fit.. how does the managers personality and communication traits fit in with the city staff who have to work with him/ her.	10/24/2025 8:10 AM
39	Na	10/23/2025 9:25 PM
40	Supportive of city staff	10/23/2025 9:17 PM
41	External, non City employee.	10/23/2025 8:43 PM
42	*Leads without fear of conflict, facilitates a productive relationship between elected officials and city staff. *Is a role model for direct reports in leading with integrity, acknowledging their own mistakes, and creating a safe environment to for others to do the same.	10/23/2025 5:49 PM

## Q6 What are the most important community issues or priorities the next City Manager should address in Helena? (Select up to 3 options.):

Answered: 136 Skipped: 51



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
· Infrastructure improvements (roads, water, utilities)	58.82%	80
· Affordable housing availability and homelessness	55.15%	75
· Transparent and responsive government (community engagement)	38.97%	53
· Fiscal responsibility and sound financial management	35.29%	48
· Public safety (police, fire, emergency services)	33.82%	46
· Environmental sustainability and climate resilience	30.88%	42
· Economic development and good-paying jobs	22.79%	31
Other (please specify)	13.24%	18
· Diversity, equity, and inclusion in city services	4.41%	6
Total Respondents: 136		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
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1	Partnerships	11/4/2025 4:00 PM
2	The next City Manager should make sure that staff follow exactly the wishes of the City Commission.	11/4/2025 2:29 PM
3	Decacreation and improving treatment facilities	11/3/2025 8:50 PM
4	Smart, targeted growth and infill development (i.e., Strong Towns approach)	11/3/2025 4:28 PM
5	All of the above are important. By asking for the '3 most important' the survey diminishes the value of the others. A good city manager (and a valued city commission) must have the capability of addressing all the issues. al	11/1/2025 8:06 AM
6	Accountability for political and medical malfeasance public health organizations and St.Petes have been pushing vaccines that have directly harmed individual health RICO prosecutions are necessary to regain public trust in the government <a href="https://www.midwesterndoctor.com/p/the-century-of-evidence-vaccines?fbclid=IwDGRjcANwfNVjbGNrA3B80GV4dG4DYWVtAjExAAEeMWkk50dQHfXGzd-g0HADjzDjpe65Szv_OJpDEKC92v9GG95LNUJMd-U1KRE_aem_bLjlw2KKINvKn_74MFQjsw&amp;brid=b0uWKnseqJn8vQGil0_MeQ">https://www.midwesterndoctor.com/p/the-century-of-evidence-vaccines?</a> fbclid=IwDGRjcANwfNVjbGNrA3B80GV4dG4DYWVtAjExAAEeMWkk50dQHfXGzd-g0HADjzDjpe65Szv_OJpDEKC92v9GG95LNUJMd-U1KRE_aem_bLjlw2KKINvKn_74MFQjsw&brid=b0uWKnseqJn8vQGil0_MeQ	10/30/2025 6:21 PM
7	Employee pay equitable and comparable to other Montana cities	10/30/2025 9:43 AM
8	Public Transportation	10/29/2025 4:53 PM
9	Public lands and trails	10/29/2025 3:50 PM
10	active transportation: safer, more accessible walking and bicycling and rolling	10/29/2025 7:11 AM
11	Historic preservation	10/28/2025 10:20 AM
12	All SIDEWALKS with ' HANDICAP ACCESS ' for WHEELCHAIRS, PLUS * HATS TRANSPORTATION DISCRIMINATES against ME ...PLUS some Drivers HOOK UP MY WHEELCHAIRS & HATS DRIVERS getAGITATED	10/25/2025 7:41 PM
13	Muscle-powered transportation infrastructure (bikes and pedestrians, NOT more car infrastructure.)	10/25/2025 9:31 AM
14	More helpful permitting department	10/24/2025 2:54 PM
15	Quality of life (parks and rec facilities)	10/24/2025 2:30 PM
16	PRIORITIZATION OF DOWNTOWN	10/24/2025 10:59 AM
17	Helena as a community of choice: Encourages and supports community-wide events and activities through strong community partners like Downtown Helena/BID and race organizers.	10/23/2025 5:49 PM
18	Retention of City staff	10/23/2025 2:43 PM



**Q7 What kind of leadership style or professional background do you believe Helena's next City Manager needs to be successful? For example, you might comment on whether the person should be collaborative, have experience in local government, be a strong financial manager, a community-oriented facilitator, etc., in line with the qualities the City Commission is seeking.**

Answered: 136 Skipped: 51

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Experienced, adaptable, intelligent, a good listener to more than just moneyed interests.	11/5/2025 9:46 AM
2	The next City Manager should be someone who takes the time to get to know employees at all levels, not just department heads. Some departments experience challenges and don't always feel comfortable or confident bringing concerns to HR, which can make it hard for issues to surface. Having a City Manager who is visible, approachable, and truly open to listening would help rebuild trust and communication across departments. Frontline employees are often the ones interacting most with the community, so ensuring they feel heard and supported is essential to how the City operates and serves the public.	11/4/2025 8:40 PM
3	A strategic and innovative problem solver that considers the long term future of building an inclusive and sustainable community.	11/4/2025 6:58 PM
4	We need a strong leader, and decision maker	11/4/2025 4:00 PM
5	Collaborative and future oriented	11/4/2025 3:00 PM
6	As mentioned above the next City Manager should have extensive and successful experience in a city or cities outside the state of Montana.	11/4/2025 2:29 PM
7	Strong financial manager	11/4/2025 11:34 AM
8	Definitely should have experience in government and managing staff.	11/4/2025 10:10 AM
9	All of the above	11/4/2025 8:23 AM
10	*	11/3/2025 10:05 PM
11	Transparency.	11/3/2025 8:50 PM
12	Needs to have already performed the job as a city manager elsewhere. This isn't a training position.	11/3/2025 8:29 PM
13	Transformational leadership style: inspires through shared vision and fosters growth	11/3/2025 8:09 PM
14	experience as a leader in city govt. calm. thoughtful. not party affiliated.	11/3/2025 8:01 PM
15	I would expect the next city manager to have budget experience, be able to manage a diverse and complex work force, comprehensive education background and work experience that would be expected for a city manager candidate.	11/3/2025 7:57 PM
16	Someone with diverse background. We want someone who can be innovative and I think that comes when you have worked outside of just this community with new ideas on how to make Helena a sustainable community now and into the future.	11/3/2025 7:55 PM
17	Have experience with local government. ALREADY an active member of the Helena Community.	11/3/2025 7:39 PM
18	Work well and collaboratively both with City staff and community	11/3/2025 6:46 PM
19	Needs to have experience and depth working within Montana communities on both sides of the	11/3/2025 6:18 PM

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	isle.	
20	They need to be an experienced leader that can help strategically lead the growth of a Helena.	11/3/2025 6:18 PM
21	Have strength in fiscal responsibility, growth mindset, open and honest with the public. Supportive of small businesses!	11/3/2025 6:00 PM
22	Community oriented, experience with diversity	11/3/2025 5:54 PM
23	Experience in navigating complex multi-stakeholder disputes and a demonstrated track record of consensus building	11/3/2025 5:52 PM
24	Someone with experience in bringing together diverse stakeholders, engaging with the community, and being open is a must. I think of the city manager position as someone who can bring amazing, qualified people together and take expert opinion with community responses to make a plan for Helena.	11/3/2025 5:48 PM
25	Leadership style - an open and responsive leadership style with a proven track record of successfully leading innovative and collaborative teams, successfully engaging the public, and setting a standard for responsiveness to city residents' needs and concerns. A successful candidate should have a proven track record: 1) managing smart, strategic economic development to optimize density and resources (ideally, following a Strong Towns kind of approach); 2) collaborating with partners to take advantage and leverage opportunities for Helena; 3) Leading and addressing housing affordability and availability, through ADUs, infill development, and strategic partnerships; 4) Managing City revenues and seeking other funding sources such as grants for capital improvements; 5) building upon the City sustainability resolutions and efforts; and 6) focusing on keeping what is unique and valued by our community (e.g., open space, parks, arts, history) and making improvements where needed to build an even better City. I would want to see a Candidate who: has strong leadership skills and experience leading large organizations and budgets; exhibits a proven and collaborative approach and openness to new ideas and programs/policies, tempering that with the discipline to research and evaluate before proceeding. During the interview process, I would hope the responses of the candidate would be: thorough; relevant; specific; informative; fresh; and inspiring. I would also hope the candidate would impress us with their energy and commitment to building public trust through effective communication.	11/3/2025 4:28 PM
26	The next City Manager should be collaborative, have experience in local government, have strong management skills and experience, and should have lived in Montana if at all possible.	11/3/2025 3:46 PM
27	Collaborative but fiscally responsible. If we need a city manager at all.	11/3/2025 12:48 PM
28	Demonstrates expertise in collaborative government with strong citizen input maximizing citizen expertise contributing to city leadership (such as but not limited to citizen councils and advisory groups , high integrity and accountability to the citizens as well as mayor and commissioners, prior experience in successful and ethical city management strongly desired.	11/3/2025 10:30 AM
29	Demonstrate commitment to maintaining and strengthening Helena's mid-size city "feel", access to open space, walkability, etc. Less emphasize on encouraging growth and development so as not to become like Bozeman or Missoula.	11/3/2025 9:58 AM
30	The City Manager should actively seek out public comments on city proposals; and should be responsive, to the maximum extent possible, to community concerns.	11/3/2025 9:43 AM
31	They should have a diverse background that demonstrates their ability to lead a large team, collaborate with the public, understand the unique needs of different sectors (business, housing, environment, public health) while ensuring that Helena remains a city that supports working class and middle class families. Sustainability is my biggest concern- how can we build a climate resilient city that my kids will be able to afford a house in?	11/3/2025 8:17 AM
32	Proven experience in building coalitions to grow a community in a sustainable meaningful way	11/3/2025 7:47 AM
33	Someone who knows how to be fiscally responsible and isn't afford to cut spending, reduce services and cut staff positions.	11/3/2025 7:29 AM
34	<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">REDACTED</span> The next City Manager needs to have an outward community focus. The City Commission has said it favors Downtown, affordable housing, walkability, collaboration with partners like prickly pear and habitat. Yet the City (led by the manager), ignores those areas and does whatever city staff want. The next manager needs to work for the Commission, which represents the people, not city staff.	11/3/2025 7:04 AM

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35	Someone who understands how bureaucracy is necessary for good governance. That is bureaucracy is institutionalized equality and fairness.	11/2/2025 8:52 PM
36	A city manager must manage up, and down, and also serve as a liaison. At the core, a city manager works for the commission. Helena's recent string of city managers seems to favor they type of person who project that they serve to educate the commission on what is important, and why, and why commission ideas won't work. The role of a city manager is to shape the commission ideas into policy and implement those policies.	11/2/2025 11:10 AM
37	Integrity is most important. Being able to negotiate solutions to divisive matters.	11/1/2025 11:43 AM
38	Cross municipality collaboration. This has been missing from this specific office for decades and would be welcomed. The commission, mayor, police, etc have often been collaborative with East Helena, but a City Manager with this in mind would benefit residents from both cities.	11/1/2025 9:01 AM
39	1. Recognition that they work for the people of Helena and answer to the City Commission. In other words, 2. A motivator of city staff to be open and responsive to Helena citizens. Manage city staff around set goals of productivity and responsiveness.	11/1/2025 8:06 AM
40	Community oriented facilitator, collaborative, problem solver	10/31/2025 8:58 PM
41	Someone experienced and strong in financial management	10/31/2025 6:36 PM
42	Be responsive the commissions direction and work with the community. Be proactive about managing intransigence of staff.	10/31/2025 6:06 PM
43	Collaborative and willing to engage with community	10/31/2025 5:49 PM
44	A professional background in city management, esp a successful city. Leadership style should include hiring creative problem solvers and people who think outside of the box, allow them to lead and use your logic and strategy to help them bring visions to life.	10/31/2025 3:52 PM
45	The next city manager needs to have municipal leadership qualifications and experience. Additionally, the individual needs to have experience preparing and following a budget and be a skilled leader and manager.	10/31/2025 9:25 AM
46	Be strong financial manager Open to community input Customer service for community tax payers	10/31/2025 3:55 AM
47	<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">REDACTED</span> Experienced leader of a sizable organization (300+ employees), engaged leader who works through and engages his/her staff, a strong communicator, must enjoy being out in the community with the people and have experience in government.	10/30/2025 10:07 PM
48	All the above listed in the question.	10/30/2025 6:47 PM
49	Some one with moral comprehension that will uphold the constitution and existing laws putting personal health and prosperity for everyone over profit and hold malfeasanc accountable with RICO guidelines!	10/30/2025 6:21 PM
50	<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">REDACTED</span> I think the person should have prior experience as a city manager in an town larger than Helena. I also think a background in economic development would be beneficial. To be clear - candidates from outside current city government - and outside of Helena - should be considered. This brings a fresh perspective and ability to improve current culture within city government.	10/30/2025 3:37 PM
51	Decisive leadership with a customer service orientation	10/30/2025 3:34 PM
52	Good, moral character with an engaging communication with all.	10/30/2025 3:16 PM
53	<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">REDACTED</span> Someone who understands Helena's unique characteristics. Also - someone who will ensure city staff get things done and are responsive to the public!	10/30/2025 2:55 PM
54	<span style="background-color: red; color: black;">REDACTED</span> Experience as a permanent city manager or other local government executive. Ideally, in a community where the residents feel like the city government is responsive to their needs and it is easy and transparent to understand how government works. The applicant should be able to show how they have worked WITH the community and key stakeholders to facilitate planning public events, open space/trails, biking/walking, addressing climate change, opening businesses, receiving permits, completing development, and generally making the city and its infrastructure work for everyone of us (people with disabilities, children, elderly, etc).	10/30/2025 1:00 PM

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55	The background is not as critical as someone who is honest and forward thinking.	10/30/2025 12:27 PM
56	Fair and just, not a dictator. Takes all factions of the city into account when making decisions. Experience managing large numbers of people, strong experience with budgets and government.	10/30/2025 9:43 AM
57	Level-headed, professional, respectful, excellent communicator	10/30/2025 9:29 AM
58	Respectful, professional, experience in local government	10/30/2025 9:05 AM
59	 Helena's next City Manager needs to quickly get up to speed, and work with the Commission, and community to assess the current limitations in city government for getting things done. They need to prioritize making government work better for the people of Helena. The ideal candidate would have a strong background in leading a community during a transition of growth. Helena is on the cusp of becoming a really vibrant community for residents and visitors alike. The next City Manager needs to be energetic and excited about Helena's future, and ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work for the community.	10/30/2025 8:09 AM
60	Experience in management of large organizations is critical.	10/30/2025 7:38 AM
61	Experience working in or with government (vs just "business" background). Skills in human communication. Knowledge about innovative approaches used by other communities.	10/29/2025 8:37 PM
62	ability to communicate and collaborate with others; willingness to engage and communicate with residents	10/29/2025 8:11 PM
63	Open minded Successful Experience in Transforming Community to Adapt to Change Facilitator Ability to Champion Better Practices	10/29/2025 4:53 PM
64	 I think it should be someone who sees their role as working for the people of Helena. Someone who knows how to encourage people with opposing views to come together and work toward common solutions.	10/29/2025 4:46 PM
65	Team builder and collaborator.	10/29/2025 4:46 PM
66	 See above ranking. Also, its important that the City Manager understands that it is his/her role is to lead the staff, not the City.	10/29/2025 4:42 PM
67	Have experience in local government, listen to the citizens in the community and city employees, be accountable and hold city employees accountable, lead by example, focus on building confidence and trust within the community, and be accessible.	10/29/2025 4:09 PM
68	Community-oriented, able to take feedback and operate off of community needs, not personal policy preferences	10/29/2025 3:50 PM
69	Someone who seeks to include public input instead of discouraging it.	10/29/2025 2:34 PM
70	 Ideally, our next city manager will have experience in government with a focus on collaborative planning and sustainability. We need a future-facing leader who will listen and be accountable to the community. This individual should be able to demonstrate their commitment to accessibility, equity, sustainability, and economic development. Helena's leadership is still living in the 90s. Please hire someone with a vision for the future.	10/29/2025 2:04 PM
71	Experience in local government	10/29/2025 1:39 PM
72	Previous military or coaching experience	10/29/2025 1:35 PM
73	 Helena's next City Manager should have experience in management of local government, and should be a strong financial manager. A person who has worked in management in a community the size and make-up of Helena would likely be more successful as our City Manager than a person from a major metropolitan area.	10/29/2025 12:35 PM
74	Be a strong leader and can take charge, take direction, and hold the employees accountable to their actions	10/29/2025 8:15 AM
75	 The city manager should have experience outside of Helena so that they can bring a fresh leadership style to the position: collaborative, inclusive, able to bring together the values of the city and the policies of the Commission and encourage, inspire staff to implement the policies	10/29/2025 7:11 AM
76	 This person needs to have experience in local government, but I feel that hiring from	10/28/2025 6:45 PM

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within is a BIG mistake. We need to hire from outside. We need new perspective and a leader who wants change and responsible growth, not somebody who says "no" to everything.

77	A track record of successfully moving other communities forward.	10/28/2025 6:22 PM
78	 Lead with a balance of innovation, transparency, and grounded community vision. They should approach city planning with a systems mindset that integrates sustainability, green infrastructure, and human-centered design into every decision. A collaborative and data-informed leader can help Helena evolve toward walkable, mixed-use, and resilient neighborhoods while maintaining the integrity of its small-town character. The ideal candidate would empower teams, foster interdepartmental cooperation, and engage residents early and often. They should bridge civic strategy and ensure fiscal responsibility while also investing in long-term initiatives like climate resilience, public space revitalization, and equitable access to services. In short, a leader who can think like a planner, act like a facilitator, and listen like a neighbor.	10/28/2025 5:13 PM
79	Quality leader with vision to streamline services and improve efficiencies. Develop and attract new businesses to Helena.	10/28/2025 3:24 PM
80	 I've lived in Helena for 7 years, I did not grow up here. I've lived in many different places around the country. I am often frustrated by the lack of progress in this city on what seem to be basic issues: fixing sidewalks, cars driving too fast in residential areas, the dangerous 'malfunction junctions', and the lack of roundabouts and streets that are safer for biking. I don't understand why we can't make any substantive progress on these types of issues. As I understand the structure of our city governance, the city manager has more power to effect change in these areas. I've also understood that in the past, there has been a lack of progress due to friction among city staff, the commission, and the city manager. I would love to have someone visionary and enthusiastic about our ability to actually make lasting improvements to our city. Still, I realize that in this town (with many lifelong residents and long-serving city staff), to be effective, a city manager will have to balance visionary leadership and a willingness to be bold with the ability to build effective relationships and not be seen as an "outsider." For the record: I'm an "outsider" here and I think we could use a shot of ingenuity from outside Helena and Montana, but I understand why people are resistant to that approach.	10/28/2025 2:21 PM
81	I think the professional should have public service experience in Montana and a firm understanding of Montana's right to participate and the right to know. They should understand the importance of open meetings and make extra effort to solicit public comment prior to when decisions are made. I think someone who has experience managing teams in a collaborative style is important instead of a top-down chain-of-command style leadership.	10/28/2025 11:46 AM
82	Evidence based decisions!	10/28/2025 11:38 AM
83	Supports implementing city long-range plans (I.e. Growth Policy; Transportation; Sustainability); improves & maintains intergovernmental relationships instead of "us vs. them" mentality throughout the city system	10/28/2025 10:20 AM
84	The challenges Helena faces aren't unique, and we don't need to reinvent the wheel. I'd like to see a city manager with proven experience helping a growing community navigate similar issues. Someone who has contributed to real, successful solutions elsewhere (not necessarily in Montana) and can bring those ideas forward while facilitating collaborative conversations that lead to practical, evidence-based outcomes for Helena. We need a brave leader who's willing to have tough conversations, think innovatively, and pursue creative funding strategies, including public/private partnerships. They should trust and empower experts, seeing them as partners in problem-solving. Most importantly, they must be able to balance fiscal responsibility with smart risk-taking, maintaining a sound budget while investing strategically for long-term community benefit.	10/28/2025 9:44 AM
85	Has a vested interest in Helena, I.e. is from here or has lived here 5+ years, Helena business owner, kids in Helena schools	10/28/2025 7:33 AM
86	Strong financial manager	10/28/2025 6:44 AM
87	Being fiscally conservative is important during this time of apparent government waste and high taxes. Economic development to create more jobs. Fundraising and creating partnerships to accomplish certain goals when it is prudent to do so. Work with community to prioritize projects -- please no more \$650,000 tennis courts when there are higher priority needs.	10/28/2025 6:15 AM
88	 Our new city manager should be a strategic thinker and a motivator. They need to be	10/28/2025 5:43 AM



## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey

decisive yet flexible. They should be trustworthy and have a public service mindset. And above all they need to be accountable. And we should NOT rush this process - it is too important to try and wrap this up by the end of the year. Slow down and take your time.



89	Able to follow directions from city commission - they are elected to direct the city functions.	10/27/2025 8:12 PM
90	The next City Manager should be from Montana or worst case, a neighboring state. This person should be independent politically and ideally would have experience in government.	10/27/2025 4:20 PM
91	Manager should be a dedicated public servant, that should have a proven track record of positive results within a municipal government organization, initiates, plans and completes major projects, strong fiscal record, demonstrates the ability to motivate and inspire an organization and is able to work successfully with varying groups of people.	10/27/2025 3:57 PM
92	Diplomatic skills and the ability to work with a commission as well as pushback and say no. Financial and budgeting background.	10/27/2025 2:47 PM
93	The next city manager needs to have a background in actually building things, not talking about it. They must have demonstrated team building skills, ability to juggle competing priorities while encouraging transparency and communication between affected parties. A strong background in project management, preferably related to developing services, will be critical to unpacking and resolving the issues with permitting in the city. An entrepreneurial background would be helpful in understanding how good city services can support the local economy. A liberal arts education is more important than technical degree(s) to ensure a creative, broad, inclusive mindset. Helena has a smart, engaged population and we deserve an executive who can acknowledge and openly balance competing visions of how local government should work. Most importantly, the candidate must demonstrate they know how to build trust among diverse groups of people: without trust, the next city manager will fail.	10/27/2025 1:02 PM
94	Community-oriented facilitator	10/27/2025 12:24 PM
95	The individual who accepts the role of City Manager should be financially literate. They should have a background of reading budgets and spreadsheets. The individual should also be competent in basic technology, including social sites. We need someone who can convert a word document to a PDF without assistance and knows the reach of Meta for use of PR for the City.	10/27/2025 12:02 PM
96	Should have experience in local government in a municipality that has experienced effective growth.	10/27/2025 11:09 AM
97	City manager should possess experience with an entity of same or greater scale of Helena city government, i.e. \$121 million annual budget or greater, similar number of employees, departments, etc. Ability to listen to & weigh input of variety of voices: employees, citizens, non-profits, partners, etc.	10/27/2025 10:36 AM
98	I would like to see an innovative and collaborative leader	10/27/2025 9:46 AM
99	I believe the next City Manager should have a background in local government, and be able to bring the Commission and the public together on divisive issues.	10/27/2025 9:21 AM
100	Experience as a city/county manager/administrator, collaborative, innovative/think outside the box, community focused, data driven	10/27/2025 9:14 AM
101	***** NO ALCOHOL on the JOB *****	10/25/2025 7:41 PM
102	A good listener and an imaginative mind.	10/25/2025 11:38 AM
103	Community oriented and a good honest communicator. One who collects input from a variety of sources and is transparent about the conclusions- and can implement the decisions.	10/25/2025 10:21 AM
104	The City Manager needs to be able to TAKE ACTION while also being a transparent communicator. It seems like every action in Helena is the opposite of both of those: secrecy and opacity in the decision-making that generally leads to indecision and inaction. Instead of city leaders deliberating in secret and then deciding to do nothing, we need open communication, innovation and ACTION!	10/25/2025 9:31 AM
105	Our new manager should be experienced, honest willing to listen to a diversity of opinion to help mould plans	10/25/2025 6:13 AM
106	Strong financial manager, exceptional communication skills	10/24/2025 8:52 PM

## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey

107	Being a strong financial manager while also managing a large complex team and willing to be adaptable to ever-changing circumstances.	10/24/2025 4:02 PM
108	The City Manager should be completely bipartisan and open to feedback and collaboration.	10/24/2025 3:57 PM
109	We need a leader that is loyal to the people in the community not the people on the pay roll. So I would hope the new city manager has a strong leadership style and vision for the future of Helena. I hope the person is not overly persuaded by other city council members who are stuck in their way of doing things and have no creativity of flexibility of doing things a new or better way,	10/24/2025 2:54 PM
110	I am looking for someone who is a "doer." The city talks a lot about vision and what not, but hasn't delivered on many of the plans developed through collaborative processes.	10/24/2025 2:30 PM
111	I feel the city has had a difficult time finding and holding a city manager. I hope this time around there will be a great candidate that not only is able to do the job but also has an environment where the new manager can come in and manage. I do remember when the pipes froze in the many houses around town a few years ago there seemed to be in-fighting between the city manager at the time and the directors with no solution for the citizens.	10/24/2025 1:44 PM
112	Style: Conflict literate, kind, collaborative, understanding of systems and systemic conflict, local government, grants, tax base understanding, transparent	10/24/2025 1:11 PM
113	<span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span> The manager should be collaborative and willing to assist and enable elected citizen groups (e.g. HCC) and commission-appointed groups in efforts to communicate with the Commission.	10/24/2025 11:41 AM
114	The person needs to realize that Helena is historic and we want it that way. new people want to change it. We need a leader who listens to the constituents, fights for what will make the City more welcome to those that live here and a place where we want to shop, dine and walk. Right now many people have not been downtown in years.	10/24/2025 11:38 AM
115	Collaborative as nd local gov. Exp.	10/24/2025 11:35 AM
116	The next city manager must be community-oriented. City staff loved Tim Burton, but he was completely inaccessible to/dismissive of the community. He did not respond to emails, return calls, attend community events, or demonstrate any respect towards engaged members of the community. The next manager must understand modern technology, be an engaged member of the community, and be skilled at developing and implementing a longterm vision with community input. Experience in local government is a plus, but not necessarily a requirement.	10/24/2025 10:59 AM
117	Aspirational, understanding of complexities of local government, resilient, team approach, fosters trust and collaboration.	10/24/2025 10:53 AM
118	Strong financial manager	10/24/2025 9:22 AM
119	They have experience in helping people out	10/24/2025 9:03 AM
120	Strong leadership skills as shown in prior work experience. Collaborative , work well with staff and community. Strong communication skills.	10/24/2025 8:10 AM
121	have experience in local government with accompanying references of doing a fine job	10/23/2025 10:17 PM
122	Innovative, able to move the city forward. It feels stuck and a financial manager and brings in business people want. Like restaurants and clothing stores.	10/23/2025 9:25 PM
123	Well, judging from our experiences with last two city managers hired, seems perhaps time to examine the hiring process because staff moral plummeted after the loss of these hires. I want a collaborative leader, respectful of staff and their skills, willing to think creatively while maintaining a balanced budget, interested in citizen involvement and planning ahead for the anticipated growth while maintaining the Helena lifestyle and character that we all so love.	10/23/2025 9:17 PM
124	Project management, community oriented, strong communication to public.	10/23/2025 9:08 PM
125	Community oriented, engage and direct staff, responsive to citizens.	10/23/2025 8:43 PM
126	Someone who works well collaboratively and trusts the department heads.	10/23/2025 8:31 PM
127	Appropriate experience.	10/23/2025 6:27 PM
128	As a former employee of the city, I believe the biggest challenge the city manager faces is to	10/23/2025 5:49 PM

## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey

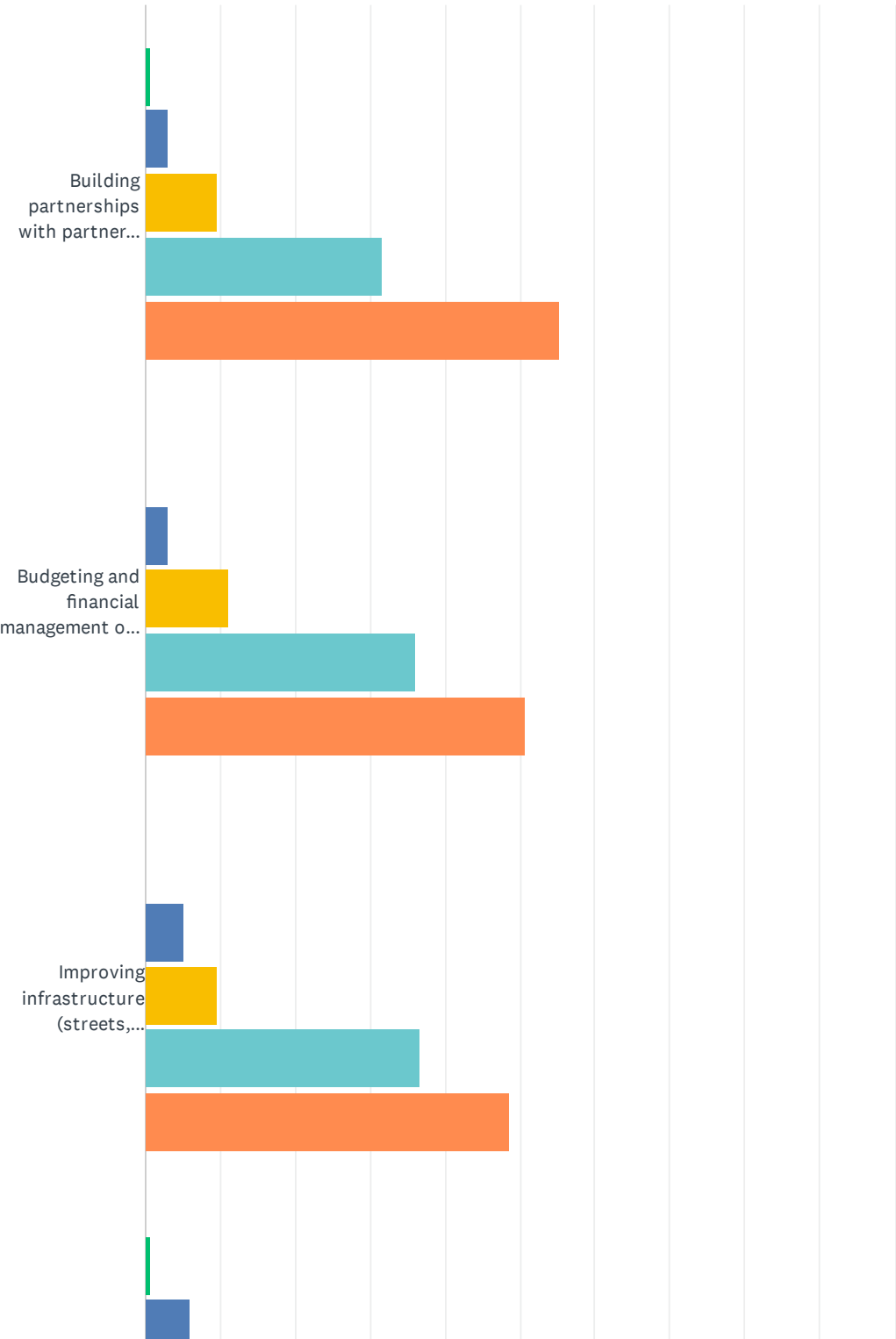
bridge the relationship among city employees and elected officials. Trust must be established among these two groups, and that's been missing for at least 10 years. The city manager must lead by example, modeling integrity, conflict-resolution, and active listening. Our city needs to be an employer of choice - and the city manager has to encourage professional development, especially for managers/supervisors. The biggest obstacle for great service and servant leadership in our city is crappy managers not valuing employees who truly want to do good work and who care deeply for their community.

129	Someone who has managed a budget before. Someone who is personable and engages with their employees. I know many employees who worked for the City of Helena who never met the previous manager, and it at the very least made the impression that they were not cared for and are strictly a line item on a budget.	10/23/2025 4:54 PM
130	I believe we should have a city manager younger than 50 who plans to be in the role as long as possible.	10/23/2025 3:38 PM
131	Strong fiscal conservative who will use our taxpayer money wisely while focusing on primary functions of city government and reducing tax/fee burden on the already burdened citizenry.	10/23/2025 3:05 PM
132	 The next City Manager needs to be a collaborative financial manager. In the last 5 years, inflation has ballooned costs across all categories, some by 50%. Those increases have put a strain on available funding for essential services. The City Manager needs to work with the Commission to prioritize the city's needs over programmatic wants. Once identified, those needs can then be funded and implemented through collaboration by the Manager and other staff in leadership positions, relying on their expertise. Then the Manager can work with the Commission to prioritize community programs and how to fund them.	10/23/2025 2:44 PM
133	Leadership style needs to be firm but communicative and collaborative. There needs to be a focus on future planning for City growth in not just housing, but all the services needed to go with the expansion.	10/23/2025 2:43 PM
134	They should be a Montana native with clear understanding of what our community needs for present and future. They should have some experience in government accounting and be practical in their goals.	10/23/2025 2:23 PM
135	 Slow down this process and wait for a new council to be elected!	10/23/2025 2:15 PM
136	Deep understanding of local government and local government financial management. Experience balancing the needs of staff and the public.	10/23/2025 1:20 PM

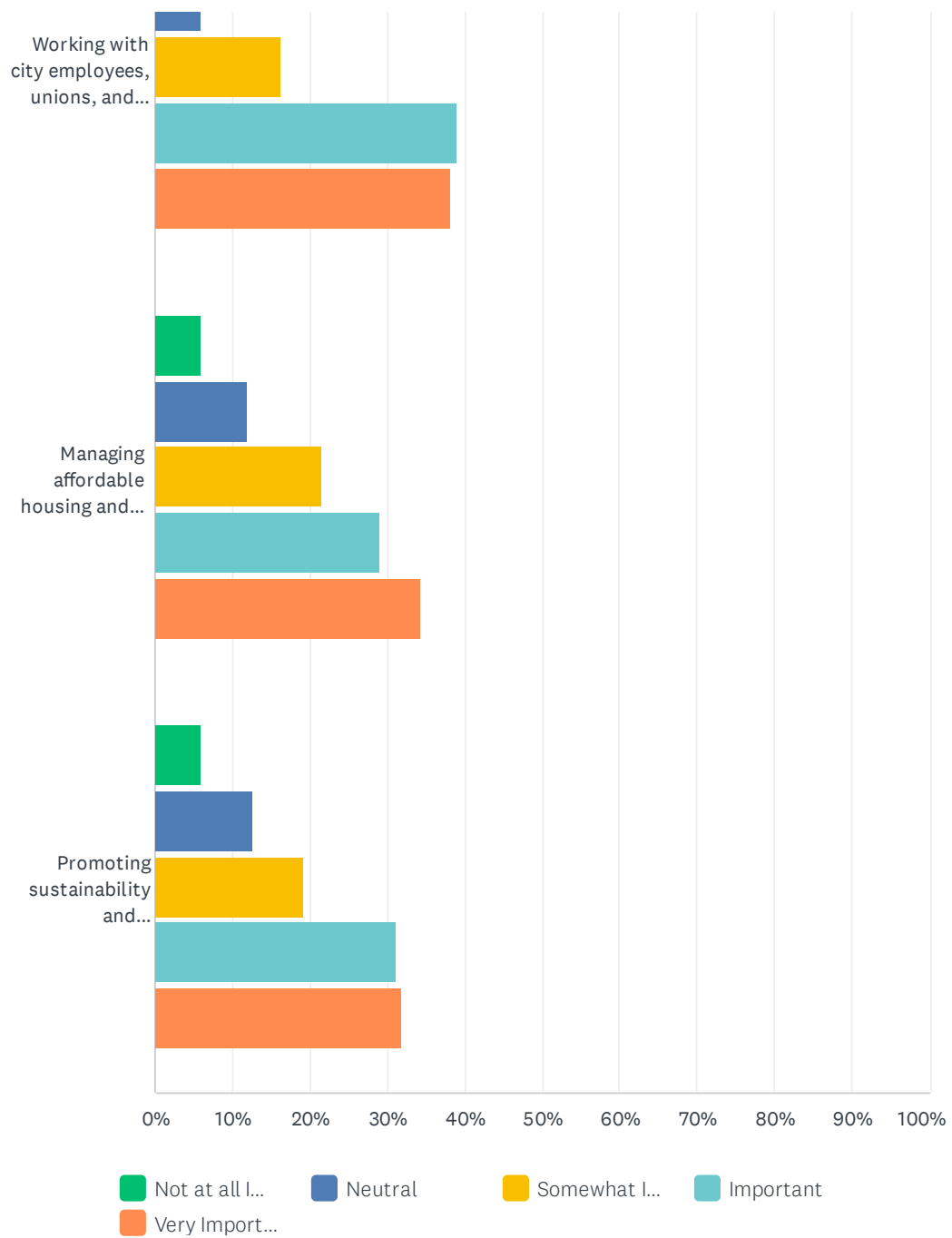


Q8 How important is it for the next City Manager to have experience in the following areas? Please rate each area on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Not Important and 5 = Very Important. Your ratings above will help Helena prioritize the expertise most valued by our community.

Answered: 136   Skipped: 51



## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey



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	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Building partnerships with partners e.g., community organizations, non-profits, governments (county, state, federal), etc.:	0.74% 1	2.94% 4	9.56% 13	31.62% 43	55.15% 75	136
Budgeting and financial management of the City:	0.00% 0	2.94% 4	11.03% 15	36.03% 49	50.74% 69	136
Improving infrastructure (streets, utilities, capital projects):	0.00% 0	5.15% 7	9.56% 13	36.76% 50	48.53% 66	136
Working with city employees, unions, and labor relations:	0.74% 1	5.88% 8	16.18% 22	38.97% 53	38.24% 52	136
Managing affordable housing and homelessness initiatives:	5.97% 8	11.94% 16	21.64% 29	29.10% 39	34.33% 46	134
Promoting sustainability and environmental initiatives:	5.93% 8	12.59% 17	19.26% 26	31.11% 42	31.85% 43	135

**Q9 Do you have any other thoughts or suggestions about what Helena needs from its next City Manager, or any ideas about Helena's future you'd like to share? (Open-ended.) For instance, you can highlight any other qualities, hopes for specific initiatives, or general advice to city leaders as they make this hiring decision.**

Answered: 80 Skipped: 107

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Helena is a diamond in the rough - and could be a powerful city that is probably going to be the next Bozeman - but it appears as a 8 year resident that there is no vision for this city and like its streets - the leadership has been all over the place. The vision is here - but we just need someone to listen and pull it together.	11/5/2025 9:46 AM
2	We need someone open to all voices. Someone who will not close doors and meetings. Someone who will set agendas to meet the needs of the City, not themselves. Someone focused on the future.	11/4/2025 3:00 PM
3	<span style="background-color: orange;">[REDACTED]</span> I'm disappointed that this survey comes so late in the process. As I understand it, the job description is already written and review of candidates could start as early as tomorrow. Also I'm curious why we have to pay so much for a City Manager. The (strong) mayor of Boise, also a capitol city of an adjacent state and 5 or 6 times as large as Helena, will earn less after her raise next year than the bottom of the scale we are offering. Her responsibilities are surely greater than those of the Helena City Manager.	11/4/2025 2:29 PM
4	Ability to explain complicated engineering projects and that can match commission and community values.	11/4/2025 8:23 AM
5	Improving the info structure of our treatment facilities	11/3/2025 8:50 PM
6	<span style="background-color: purple;">[REDACTED]</span> This position needs to be filled with someone who has already been successful as a city mayor as evidenced by changes in that city for support by the community for that individual in the job that they are doing.	11/3/2025 8:29 PM
7	N/A	11/3/2025 7:57 PM
8	Ability to work with staff who may not want to change. We can't let our city government get stagnant.	11/3/2025 7:55 PM
9	Helena is on the cusp of a water crisis and the ideal candidate would be focused on working with stakeholders to revise outdated laws and recognize climate change needs to be a significant component in planning and strategic decision making.	11/3/2025 6:18 PM
10	The City Commission needs to be far more transparent and seek more community input into the hiring of a new city manager rather than the truncated and rushed process that certain members of the current commission seem to be committed to forcing down our throats. That sort of hiring process will create an immediate trust deficit for a new city manager (and the holdover commissioners who support this rushed process) that will do no one any favors.	11/3/2025 5:52 PM
11	Helena needs someone who will listen to what ALL of the community wants.	11/3/2025 5:48 PM
12	I continue to have serious concerns about the poorly designed hiring process for selecting a new City Manager. This is a very important decision and the process laid out by the Manager Relations Committee with CMS is entirely inadequate and does not provide for meaningful opportunities for community engagement. I would expect a consultant to have provided better suggestions about how to effectively engage the community and set up a process that works. Instead, whether by design (or incompetence), we have a completely unacceptable process for making the most important hiring decision by the Commission. In the previous three hiring processes for City Manager, there were additional opportunities for the public to be involved. Yes, of course, the Commission will decide who to hire but I truly believe that getting	11/3/2025 4:28 PM

## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey

meaningful input from the community can help the Commission make the best hiring decision – hiring the best candidate for City Manager. Also, the Helena Citizens Council was involved in each of the three previous hiring processes and I was one of 3 HCC Reps who interviewed the 3 finalists when City Manager Burton was ultimately hired. It was a positive process with better and more meaningful opportunities for community engagement. Finally, the new Commission should make the final decision about who to hire. With the holidays (Thanksgiving and Christmas), and an election on 11/4, the decision should be pushed back until after the new Commission and Mayor take office, that is into 2026. A well-designed public engagement process helps everyone feel better about and accept the eventual decision. A poorly designed process (as we have in this case) can result in even those who agree with the decision feeling trod upon and dismissed by City Leadership. Helena deserves the best City Manager possible and deserves a Commission willing to look out for, listen to, and stand up for our community.

13	The City Manager needs to value the outstanding attributes of Helena including our parks and open spaces and our trail systems. We need to ensure long term protection of these community assets.	11/3/2025 3:46 PM
14	If Helena actually needs a city manager, which is debatable, they absolutely NEED to be from Montana. Not living here for a couple of years or from WA, CA or TX. Ideally it would be someone from Helena. That would ensure that our city keeps it MT roots and values.	11/3/2025 12:48 PM
15	Since the 2025 election is this month for new mayor and commissioners who will have to work with the city manager closely to implement what they were elected in 2025 by the citizens to do — this city manager search and hire SHOULD NOT be a legacy decision by the elected officials who are leaving. It should be completely deferred to 2026 and involve the new mayor and any newly elected commissioners. Any attempt to rush this through on the older elected outgoing team appears very unwise, if not frankly generates unnecessary suspicion. That is not what we vote and pay taxes to enable.	11/3/2025 10:30 AM
16	I have already sent an email to all existing City Commissioners, saying that the hiring process feels rushed. Please don't rush this; its too important.	11/3/2025 9:43 AM
17	Green infrastructure and sustainability is very important as we consider how to approach growth, the liveability of our city and build a vision for What Helena will look like in 2075. I'd like a 50 year plan.	11/3/2025 8:17 AM
18	Forward thinking who can actually implement changes and won't just let 10 year master plans die on a shelf.	11/3/2025 7:47 AM
19	Someone who can stand up to all the liberals in Helena that constantly ask for more services.	11/3/2025 7:29 AM
20	It's no secret that the manager runs the City and allowa City staff do do generally what they want, even if that is contrary to Commission direction. This has stalled out everything from big projects (Cruse Avenue, long-term housing strategy) to smaller projects (sidewalks around schools, Le Grande vacation). The Commission needs to think about whether the person they select is concerned with Helena as a City, composed of people and businesses or merely the City as an organization.	11/3/2025 7:04 AM
21	The city manager must understand that the buck stops their office door. However, that does not mean the city manager makes all decisions unilaterally. What is needed is the ability to know the difference between sole decision making scenarios and those that require more work and input. For example, the decision was made to change the Vigilante Parade route before seeking any input. The commission was informed only after news leaked out on social media. The parade happens once a year. Why was this issue put off until a few weeks before the next scheduled parade? That is the sort of heavy handed, and short sighted decision making that makes people lose faith in leadership.	11/2/2025 11:10 AM
22	In my view as a city of Helena resident for 40 years with direct experience working with multiple city agencies and staff over that time, in recent years the city - at both the staff, management and to some degree commission level - has increasingly treated their obligation to work with residents on their needs and concerns dismissively. I would like to see a city manger who is dynamic and willing and able to usher in a new era of openness, communication, and responsiveness. Our new city manager should also tackle a bureaucracy in city hall that in my view is in need of higher standards of productivity, efficiency and openness. Lastly our new manager should be an individual who understands the importance of working closely with the Commission on city priorities and needs and not treat the position as	11/1/2025 8:06 AM

## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey

a sole proprietorship with just passing acknowledgement of the role of the public and the elected leadership,

23	The city of Helena needs to hire outside the current commissioners. There has been too much self-serving acts from former commissioners (from 2020). An outside hire with expertise in prioritizing infrastructure within a budget and selecting projects that make sense.	10/31/2025 6:36 PM
24	Wait until the new commission to be seated before hiring a new city manager.	10/31/2025 6:06 PM
25	Hiring should include input from new commissioners to take office in January	10/31/2025 5:49 PM
26	The next city manager needs to create an initiate to create more bike friendly paths around town so people can commute via bike and be safe. The Custer Ave traffic problem needs to be planned to be solve sooner than later. I also hope that they have along term plans to secure clean water for the city - everyone saw the ten mile dry up this summer, even with all the rain we had.	10/31/2025 3:52 PM
27	Must live in the city treatment city employees with respect and treat community with respect	10/31/2025 3:55 AM
28	Manager must be comfortable working with businesses and recruiting new ones to grow the city's tax base.	10/30/2025 10:07 PM
29	The medical and political malfeasance that has been exposed in the last 5 years needs accountability with RICO prosecution guidelines currently every one has been literally aiding and abetting money laundering and racketeering with biological weapons fraudulently presented as safe and effective vaccines harming everyones personal health. The Fauci dossier was released to public record and has exposed over a century of criminal violations and racketeering with a emergency injunction to cease and desist allopathic fraud and deceptive marketing practices further harm to everyone's personal health can be prevented and we can rebuild a community for everyone to flourish in a healthy environment of prosperity for every one! Every one in public office and the allopathic medical community is a huge disappointment! I can't even get good medical care the last two doctors I saw at St. PETER'S ignored my allergy list and the last one prescribed two medications that have warnings not to use together and that they could cause permanent damage even after taking them, ciprofloxacin has been banned in several countries and has warnings not to be used with corticosteroids which he prescribed ciprofloxacin also had warnings not to use for people who are allergic to penicillin antibiotics which is on my allergy list. They both denied me access to effective and safe medication! While pushing vaccines that have proven to be more dangerous than any benefit whatsoever and actually do the opposite of what they have claimed! Political and medical malfeasance is unacceptable and needs to be prosecuted with RICO prosecution guidelines! City leaders should have moral comprehension and be well informed and not put profit before personal health!	10/30/2025 6:21 PM
30	 Helena needs a fresh perspective and someone who is able to accept that the city is growing and needs outside the box thinking for leadership. The applicant should have economic development experience and prior experience as a city manager. The most important thing for the city manager in my opinion is to modernize city government (Why are we still sending checks for water payments??), update HR standards to protect the city from lawsuits and ensure employees are treated fairly, and work with all city commissioners (not play favorites).	10/30/2025 3:37 PM
31	Thanks!	10/30/2025 3:34 PM
32	 The new city manager should facilitate a culture of yes and building on what we love about Helena and what makes it special (historic downtown, open space, downtown events, walking malls). The city manager should be prepared to guide city staff in innovation and better customer service and implementing the policy if the commission.	10/30/2025 1:00 PM
33	  The next city manager needs to be hired before the current city manager retires. Experience learning from the current city manager is critical, an interim will be detrimental to the flow and transition of the next manager.	10/30/2025 9:43 AM
34	I would like to have a city manager that builds on the health and vitality of people who call Helena home. Whether that is working to provide safe, accessible and affordable transportation for all abilities or a deep appreciation for our natural environment that our community takes great care to preserve and protect.	10/30/2025 9:29 AM
35	Maintain focus on all transportation modes	10/30/2025 9:05 AM

## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey

36	 The hiring process needs to be extended ot more fully involve our community and vet candidates. A new City Commission and Mayor will be elected next week, and will get to work in January. It is important to me that the hiring process be extended to allow for those duly elected city officials to be the ones making a decision on the next City Manager, with robust community engagement. Thank you.	10/30/2025 8:09 AM
37	Communication and collaboration with existing city partners like PPLT to help manage and further develop our open spaces like the area to the west of Andy's trail on MT Helena	10/29/2025 8:11 PM
38	Lead City in Creating and Implementing Design Standards	10/29/2025 4:53 PM
39	Please consider DEI in the hiring process.	10/29/2025 4:46 PM
40	 The Hiring decision should be delayed until the new City Commission is in place.	10/29/2025 4:42 PM
41	 Please do not rush this process. It should follow all the proper steps and the newly elected mayor and commissioners should get to have a say. They are the ones who will be the "boss" of the City Manager. It is very concerning that the City would rush the process.	10/29/2025 2:34 PM
42	We need sidewalks and bike lanes, a progressive parks department, responsible zoning and development, and a city recreation center.	10/29/2025 2:04 PM
43	 Don't take risky move. Take the safe bet	10/29/2025 1:35 PM
44	that they care about small businesses. So far most just want the big businesses and could care less about us small businesses.	10/29/2025 8:15 AM
45	  I appreciate this opportunity to comment but I'm confused because the job description has already been written and sent out. Please!!! extend the time frame into the new year! This process seems unnecessarily rushed and the decision is too critical for this very short public input. The listening session is the day before Halloween and the exact time as HMS choir concert.	10/29/2025 7:11 AM
46	It's time that the city starts saying "yes" to responsible growth and development. The future of our city depends on it.	10/28/2025 6:45 PM
47	We need leadership that prioritizes walkability, green infrastructure, and equitable access to public spaces so that every resident feels a sense of belonging. Investment in community spaces, neighborhood design, and sustainable transit can help Helena thrive as both a mountain city and a model for livable, forward-thinking governance. My hope is for a leader who recognizes that economic health, environmental stewardship, and community well-being are interconnected.	10/28/2025 5:13 PM
48	I would love to see candidates who have ties to the community and see the job a long-term career opportunity, not a stepping stone to a bigger city or a final project before retirement.	10/28/2025 11:46 AM
49	Long term vision for the sustainability of Helena community	10/28/2025 11:38 AM
50	Implementing long-range plans and creating new long-range plans not currently adopted (historic preservation; housing; energy - which should be included in sustainability)	10/28/2025 10:20 AM
51	Creating partnerships is important to help problem solve and create solutions for the cities needs. However, care should be taken to use these partnerships to work on cities priorities and value-add only when additional finances can be brought to the table.	10/28/2025 6:15 AM
52	 Please do NOT rush this decision. We should wait until we have a new mayor and the new commissioners in place before this decision is made.	10/28/2025 5:43 AM
53	The next City Manager would ideally be able to keep the City running smoothly and help current department heads/employees find innovative ways to approve new businesses and housing solutions, all without onerous red tape requirements.	10/27/2025 4:20 PM
54	Manager must be willing to dedicate himself/herself to making the community a better place after their service than what they found in the first place.	10/27/2025 3:57 PM
55	 Slow down the process, find the most qualified candidate. If that takes additional time please take the extra time. Mayor Collins does not need to be in process. It's more important to take the time and get the most qualified candidate.	10/27/2025 12:24 PM
56	 The city of Helena is experiencing a PR crisis. Over the last few years, the city has improved department efficiency. However, no one in the general public knows about the	10/27/2025 12:02 PM

## Helena City Manager Community Input Survey





changes that happened - good and bad. The city manager needs to be able to better oversee the use of social media, press, and printed materials in order to be more transparent about the city's actions. In a recent AARP pole that seems to be quoted in every mayor debate, 46% of people in Helena feel like they are not being heard or listened to. I would argue that they are being heard and listened to, but when action is taken to address their comment, there is no follow up. They don't know that their comment was addressed in a committee; that a policy was put in place; that their comment couldn't be addressed because of something else being a factor. Instead they are left to wonder where their comment went or if they were screaming into the void.

57	Collaboratively build a strategic plan driven by data and aligned with other community improvement plans. Fund the initiatives outlined in the strategic plan. Support city staff and community partners as they operationalize the plan.	10/27/2025 9:14 AM
58	***** NEW and IMPROVED ALL 'CITY TRANSPORTATION and LICENSED DRIVERS with ETTICATE towards * ALL HANDICAPPED PEOPLE with Electric & Regular Wheelchair's * PLUS... They NEED better CUSTOMER SERVICE and PROFESSIONALISM." Sincerely, James F. Herzog, Handicap /Disabled VETERAN ~ October 25,2025 Time: 7:28 PM	10/25/2025 7:41 PM
59	For the sake of those who don't have a car or can't drive; for the sake of increasing frustration with dense city traffic, for the sake of city visitors/tourists, for the sake of general convenience, Helena needs to provide a fixed route & scheduled bus system, with posted bus stops. Consider the expected ridership and size the bus to fit. Rather than a large capacity bus, perhaps a van would be more appropriate.	10/25/2025 11:38 AM
60	I would love to see the downtown corridor (including Walking Mall) have more priority as the main tourist and unique shopping destination (after the new museum, of course).	10/25/2025 10:21 AM
61	Experience and leadership with "infrastructure" is definitely important but it doesn't mean we want someone who has experience with sprawl and road construction. We want someone who is experienced with smart, innovative and effective infrastructure to support the community. Not just widen roads and build more sprawl, but someone who has experience with neighborhood-focused, pedestrian-safe and community-building infrastructure!	10/25/2025 9:31 AM
62	 The city manager should only manage the city through policies and procedures provided by the mayor and commissioners. The city manager is not elected by the people and should not have sole control without direct oversight of the elected members of the city commission.	10/24/2025 8:52 PM
63	 Give regular updates on the progress and steps taken during the hiring process. The city manager is arguably the most important position in Helena even more important that the Mayor so keep that in mind. Real experience managing tiered, complex teams and being adaptable are very important in my opinion.	10/24/2025 4:02 PM
64	I truly hope that the new city manager will turn and eye to what is going on in the citys building and permitting department. I and countless others are trying with little success to build new and beautiful houses inside the city. We are trying to renovate old homes here to make them safe and attractive. So many of the homes around the capital are very old and are desperately in need of renovation. However...the building department is so so difficult to work with that it is nearly impossible to make major changes with their blessing. It is such a drawback to modernizing this city. I really hope the new city manager will address this issue. So those of us who would like to revitalize the homes here can do so!	10/24/2025 2:54 PM
65	 I prefer the city hire a new manager now as opposed to bringing in another interim manager. Helena is in a unique place in it's history, but needs to move fast and with clear vision.	10/24/2025 2:30 PM
66	Approachability is important	10/24/2025 1:44 PM
67	The ability to listen to those who don't usually speak, from maintenance/janitorial and clerical to 'professionals'. Institute a true 360 evaluation, offer transformative conflict coaching if needed.	10/24/2025 1:11 PM
68	Please do not choose someone who has never lived in Montana. They usually have bad ideas and want to change just to change.	10/24/2025 11:38 AM
69	Someone who keeps deadlines and can find and utilize grants!	10/24/2025 9:22 AM
70	Every item on the agenda should not end up being voted unanimously. Speak up what are the	10/24/2025 8:10 AM



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issues. The public should be able to have questions answered when brought to meetings. Ask city manager to ensure this happens. Acknowledge the public's concerns.

71	 I am of the opinion that the elected officials should be the ones who build the partnerships.	10/23/2025 10:17 PM
72	 I watched the last city commission meeting where I learned that our mayor and Commissioner Logan were working together with the consultant company and ready to move the hiring process forward without sharing information with the other commissioners. I REALLY think there should be NO HURRY in this hiring process. Look at the last two hires for city manager. Both ended so poorly. Aren't we using the same consulting firm we used for at least one of the prior city managers? Just seems like this type format of hiring has not worked, plenty of damage to our staff and moral across the city. The last thing I want is a hurried, hiring process with minimal input from all commissioners, many staff and hearing citizens' concerns. Doesn't it make sense to slow down and rethink hiring this go round? No jamming the wrong type person into the middle of our city managing. The goal is for this person to learn who we are, staff, commission, citizens and then move the city forward to meet the upcoming challenges. Feels like that goal has been missed in the prior hirings. Please stop the rush. Examine the hiring process. Thank you for this opportunity to express concerns. Helena is a good place to live and work. We deserve a competent, confident, creative city manager with solid communication skills.	10/23/2025 9:17 PM
73	Project management background	10/23/2025 9:08 PM
74	Leadership skills to direct staff and be responsive residents. Able to manage personnel. The past issues with several City Managers is indicative of staff issues, not the attributes of the City Manager. Need someone with the ability to align staff with common and consistent interests. Be able to take direction from the Commission.	10/23/2025 8:43 PM
75	Legal background would be useful.	10/23/2025 6:27 PM
76	It's not the city manager's job to manage projects. It's their job to surround themselves with competent people with experience in those areas and trust them and make sure they have the resources to do their jobs. The manager's job is to facilitate the relationships among stakeholders, ensure the city is financially sound and sustainable, and make sure our city directors and employees have the resources they need to do their jobs. Having a laundry list of required experience like this isn't helpful because it's far more important that the manager understands their role as a leader of people who have the experience necessary to manage the projects, not to micromanage what they hired experts to do.	10/23/2025 5:49 PM
77	Concentrate on providing adequate and sufficient essential services before prioritizing feel good programs/efforts.	10/23/2025 4:54 PM
78	 This survey is overly simplistic. Obviously I want a city manager who values and has experience in ALL of these things.	10/23/2025 3:38 PM
79	The city does not need a quasi-elected official as City Manager. The City Manager is meant to abide by and implement the policies and goals of the Commission, the actual elected officials.	10/23/2025 2:44 PM
80	 Slow down this process and wait for a new council to be in place. The lack of transparency and accountability of our current Mayor has left so many citizens with a lack of trust for our government and this fast process is not helping in any way.	10/23/2025 2:15 PM