

CITY MANAGER

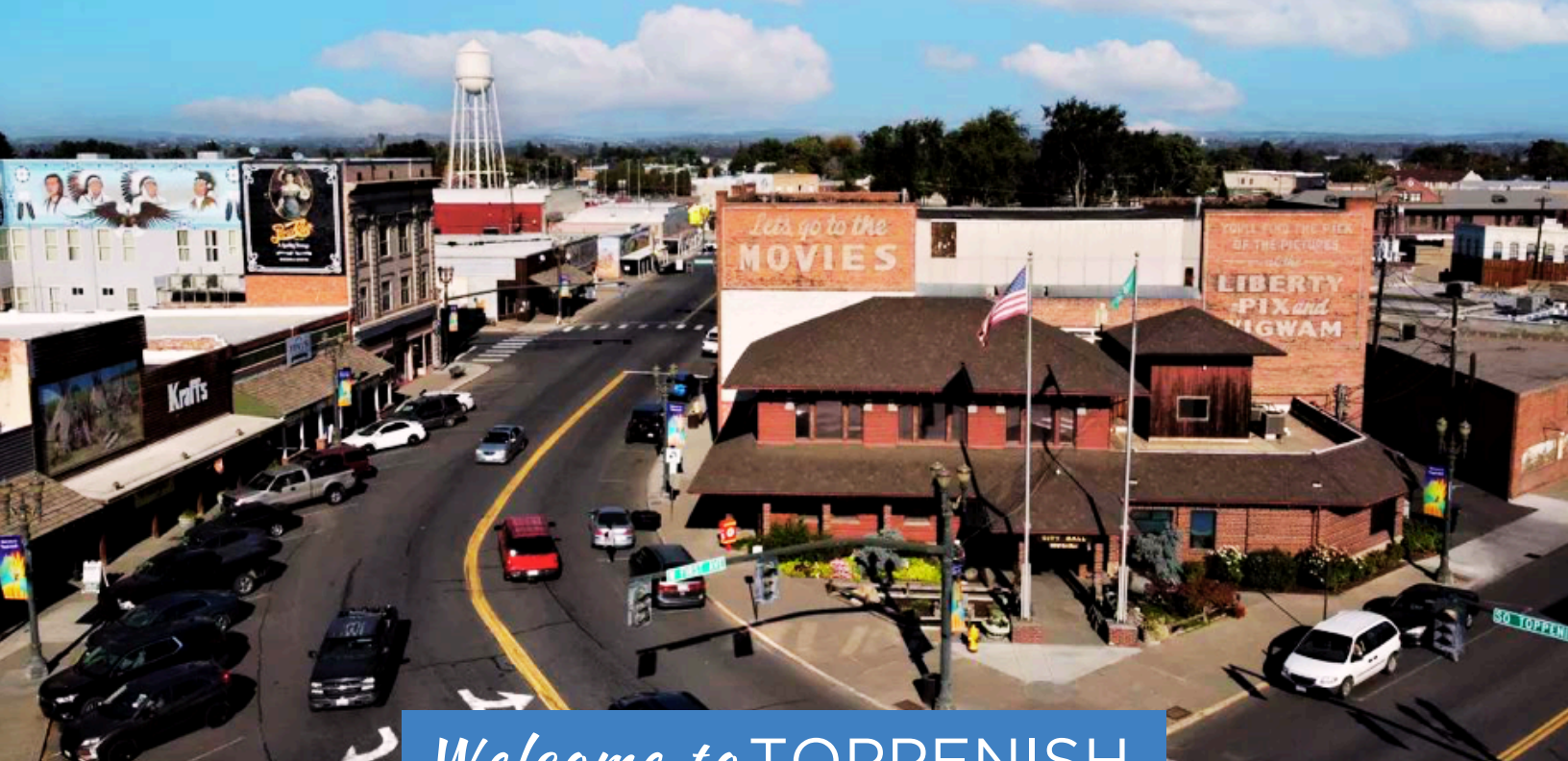
TOPPENISH *Washington*



Why Apply?

This is a unique opportunity to lead a full-service municipal organization that, through disciplined financial stewardship and a willingness to make challenging decisions, has established a solid foundation and is poised for its next chapter. With strategic planning underway, a collaborative City Council, and an organizational culture that values creativity, innovation, and practical problem-solving, the next City Manager will have the opportunity to help shape the City's future while leading a dedicated, cross-trained workforce.

Toppenish offers the breadth of responsibility sought by municipal leaders, with opportunities to strengthen municipal services, support economic development and tourism, and build on recent successes in public safety and financial stability. Beyond City Hall, Toppenish provides an outstanding quality of life, blending small-town accessibility, rich history and culture, engaged residents, excellent schools, a supportive business community, and convenient access to the diverse recreation and amenities of Central Washington. If you are excited by the opportunity to work for an organization that is no longer simply overcoming yesterday's challenges—but is truly positioning itself to seize tomorrow's opportunities—this might be the right position for you.



Welcome to TOPPENISH

Toppenish is a community of approximately 8,945 residents in the fertile Yakima Valley, about 20 miles southeast of Yakima. Located within the Yakama Nation Reservation and surrounded by orchards, vineyards, and farmland, the city serves as an important commercial and service center for the Lower Yakima Valley, swelling its daytime population by as much as 25 percent.

Known as the “City of Murals,” Toppenish has transformed its downtown into an outdoor gallery celebrating the people, industries, and events that shaped the region. Since 1989, artists have created nearly 80 historically themed murals, which visitors can explore on a self-guided walking tour. Toppenish’s rich history is also reflected in three local cultural institutions: the Yakama Nation Cultural Center and Museum, the Northern Pacific Railway Museum in a restored 1911 depot, and the American Hop Museum, which explores the valley’s agricultural heritage.

Agriculture remains central to Toppenish, supported by food processing, manufacturing, healthcare, and education. The Yakama Nation is one of the area’s largest employers and economic partners, with government operations, enterprises, and Legends Casino contributing substantially to the local economy. Other major employers include Washington Beef, Heritage University, Astria Toppenish Hospital, and the Toppenish School District.

Community traditions reflect the city’s agricultural and Western heritage. The Toppenish Rodeo and Wild West Parade are among its best-known annual events, while livestock shows, junior rodeo competitions, holiday celebrations, and the Northern Pacific Railway Museum’s Toy Train Christmas bring residents together throughout the year.

Toppenish also offers convenient access to the wider Yakima Valley, including its wineries, farm stands, and outdoor destinations, from the Yakima River and Yakima River Canyon to the Rattlesnake Hills and Simcoe Mountains. Just six miles outside the city, the Toppenish National Wildlife Refuge protects nearly 2,000 acres of wetlands and creek habitat, offering opportunities for birdwatching, wildlife viewing, and nature exploration.



THE CITY OF TOPPENISH

The City of Toppenish serves a population of approximately 8,945 across 2.1 square miles in Yakima County with a team of 45 FTEs and a 2026 budget of \$27.7 million. Incorporated in 1907, the City operates under a Council-Manager form of government with a seven-member City Council elected to four-year terms. The Mayor is appointed by the Council to serve a two-year term. The Council appoints a City Manager who serves as the City's chief executive officer and oversees daily municipal operations.

Municipal services include administration, finance, police, community and economic development, code enforcement, information technology, communications, community television, parks and recreation, and public works. The City operates its water and wastewater systems and provides residential solid-waste collection, while commercial and large-container collection is provided by Yakima Waste Systems.

Fire protection and emergency response services are provided through a recently adopted interlocal agreement with Yakima County Fire District No. 5. The City also contracts with the City of Sunnyside for municipal court services.

Toppenish lies within the Yakama Nation Reservation and maintains an important relationship with the Yakama Nation. The City is also supported by community members serving on boards and commissions such as the Planning Commission, Civil Service Commission, and Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. The City has also invested in state and federal lobbying efforts and has secured more than \$3 million in recent appropriations for major infrastructure and public safety projects.

THE CITY MANAGER

Under the general direction and authority of the City Council, the City Manager serves as the City's chief executive officer and oversees the effective administration of municipal operations. The City Manager leads citywide operations, budgets, policies, programs, and strategic initiatives; represents the City with regional and community partners; and directly supervises department directors, program managers, and the City Clerk.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Building on Financial Stability

Over the past several years, Toppenish has made significant progress in restoring its financial stability through disciplined fiscal management and difficult policy decisions. The next City Manager will have the opportunity to build upon that foundation by balancing community expectations with available resources, identifying new revenue opportunities, pursuing grants and strategic partnerships, and ensuring the City's long-term financial sustainability while continuing to invest in essential public services.

Renewing Infrastructure and Supporting Community Investment

Like many mature communities, Toppenish faces ongoing challenges associated with aging public infrastructure and older private development. The next City Manager will play a key role in prioritizing infrastructure investments, supporting redevelopment and economic revitalization, and ensuring that public improvements help encourage private investment while minimizing the financial impact to residents.

Strengthening Community Safety and Quality of Life

The City has made measurable progress in improving public safety and addressing community concerns, but important work remains. Continuing proactive policing, maintaining momentum in code enforcement, addressing homelessness through collaborative and practical strategies, improving the safety and usability of parks, and identifying a sustainable path toward reopening the municipal pool will all require thoughtful leadership, strong partnerships, and meaningful community engagement.

Building Strong Community Partnerships

Toppenish's long-term success will depend on strengthening relationships with key community partners, including the Yakama Nation, Toppenish School District, neighboring agencies, businesses, and community organizations such as Farm Workers Clinic and Catholic Home Charities. The next City Manager will have opportunities to foster collaboration, expand partnerships, pursue outside funding, and engage residents through proactive outreach, surveys, and meaningful public involvement.

Sustaining Organizational Momentum

The City has made significant progress in recent years and has positioned itself for continued success. The next City Manager will be expected to preserve that momentum by providing stable leadership, strengthening organizational capacity, supporting employees, implementing the City's strategic priorities, and ensuring the organization continues moving forward while preserving the gains already achieved.





IDEAL CANDIDATE TRAITS

- An experienced local government executive with a strong background in municipal administration, strategic planning, organizational leadership, labor relations, and financial management.
- A transparent, honest, and approachable leader who communicates openly, shares information consistently with all members of the City Council, staff, and the community, and builds trust through accessibility and authenticity.
- A humble, confident leader who values the expertise of others, is comfortable saying "I don't know," and seeks out the knowledge of staff and subject-matter experts before making decisions.
- A servant-minded leader who is visible, present, and engaged—someone who genuinely enjoys interacting with employees, elected officials, and community members and is approachable in both City Hall and out in the community.
- A collaborative professional who understands and respects the distinct roles of governance and administration, supports the City Council, and strives to build productive relationships with partner agencies, labor groups, and community organizations.
- A strategic, forward-thinking executive who anticipates challenges, thoughtfully evaluates risks and opportunities, and develops practical, innovative solutions to complex issues.
- A politically astute and emotionally intelligent leader who demonstrates diplomacy, empathy, patience, and grace under pressure while navigating difficult situations, competing interests, and challenging conversations.
- A resilient and steady leader who remains composed under criticism, earns respect through professionalism, and can navigate the inevitable pressures of local government without becoming defensive or discouraged.
- A responsive communicator and resourceful problem solver who tailors communication to the audience, evaluates the broader impacts of decisions, and balances creativity, innovation, and pragmatism.
- An energetic, positive, and hardworking professional who is committed to becoming part of the Toppenish community, establishing long-term relationships, and providing the stable leadership needed to guide the City through its next chapter.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree in public administration or a related field and 8 years of experience working in a government agency, including at least 4 years in a management position in a municipal management role. An equivalent combination of education and experience demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the position may also be considered.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The City of Toppenish offers an annual salary range of \$145,000 to \$185,000, based on qualifications and experience, along with a comprehensive benefits package:

- AWC medical, dental, and vision insurance
- \$20,000 life insurance policy
- 11 holidays and 1 floating holiday
- Paid vacation, with a minimum accrual of 16.67 hours per month
- Vacation and sick leave credited at time of hire
- 80 hours of vacation cash-out per year
- Annual executive leave
- Washington PERS retirement
- Deferred compensation
- Vehicle allowance
- Longevity pay
- Bilingual pay



RESOURCES

[2026 Budget](#)

[Org Chart](#)

[Visit Toppenish](#)



**CITY OF
TOPPENISH**



**TO
APPLY**

Apply Online: gmphr.com

First Review: September 20, 2026

More Info: Dave Zabell, GMP Consultants
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