



# COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

City of Columbia, MO





## The Community

Located at the crossroads of Interstate 70 and U.S. Highway 63, Columbia, Missouri, offers the perfect blend of small-town charm and metropolitan amenities. With a population of just over 130,000, Columbia is the largest City in Boone County and serves as a regional hub for education, healthcare, culture, and commerce. Positioned midway between St. Louis and Kansas City, Columbia provides both accessibility and opportunity, making it an ideal location for residents and businesses alike.

Founded with education at its core, Columbia is home to several institutions of higher learning, including the University of Missouri, and continues to thrive as a center for innovation and lifelong learning. The City's strategic location, coupled with a vibrant economy and award-winning quality of life, attracts entrepreneurs, families, students, and retirees from across the country.

Whether you're looking to advance your career, raise a family, start a business, or simply enjoy a welcoming and well-connected community, Columbia offers an exceptional place to live, work, and grow.

## Government

The City of Columbia is a charter City with a council-manager form of government. The Council establishes policy and law and appoints a City Manager who handles the day-to-day management of the City organization.

The City prides itself on being a full-service City for its residents. It has a Fiscal Year 2026 total budget of \$608M, 18 departments and over 1,600 full-time equivalent positions across all funds. There are currently five active labor unions, four of which have collective bargaining agreements. The City has a self-funded benefits plan.

### **Our Vision**

Columbia is the best place for everyone to live, work, learn and play.

### **Our Mission**

To serve the public equitably through democratic, transparent and efficient government.

### **City Core Values**

Service, communication, continuous improvement, integrity, teamwork and equity.



## The Position

The Communications Director leads strategic communication and engagement initiatives that promote transparency and meaningful collaboration with community members and stakeholders. This position provides executive leadership for the City's communications and community engagement functions and reports directly to the City Manager. This position is responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive citywide communications strategy to ensure consistent, accurate, and transparent messaging across all City departments and platforms. The Director serves as the City's primary spokesperson and leads media relations, public information initiatives, and crisis and emergency communications while advising the City Manager and executive leadership on communication strategies that support City priorities and initiatives.

The Communications Director oversees a newly restructured department responsible for public information, digital communications, marketing, creative services, multimedia production, and community engagement. Working closely with elected officials, executive leadership, and departmental teams, the Director coordinates messaging across the organization, oversees public information campaigns, and ensures the community receives timely and accessible information about City programs, services, and initiatives while managing departmental operations, staff, and budget.





## Essential Functions and Responsibilities

- Manages the research, creation and implementation of citywide strategic communication plans and community engagement strategies including crisis and emergency communication plans.
- Collaborates with elected and appointed leaders to develop strategic vision for the department; plans, organizes, and directs the budget, operations, policy, and activities of the department.
- Leads initiatives that promote meaningful community engagement and two-way communication between the City and community members.
- Serves as the primary spokesperson for the City of Columbia.
- Serves as the primary point of contact for crisis communications.
- Oversees public relations and cultivates relationships with media and community partners.
- Serves as communications subject matter expert for City leadership.
- Partners with City departments and executive leadership to develop communication strategies, coordinate content, and ensure consistent citywide messaging across all communication channels.
- Oversees public information campaigns and ensures communications are accessible and responsive to community needs.
- Writes speeches, talking points and develops communication plans for leadership.
- Supervises and manages departmental staff, including hiring, performance management, scheduling, employee development, and disciplinary actions, while assigning work, addressing employee concerns, and serving as a liaison between staff and leadership.
- Establishes long-term goals and objectives to align with the city's strategic plan. Reviews performance management metrics and quality improvement plans to ensure goals and objectives are met.
- Plans, organizes, prioritizes, and directs activities of department to ensure operational effectiveness. Builds an enabling infrastructure that supports employee engagement.
- Ensures compliance with local, state, and federal ordinances, rules, and regulations. Monitors and analyzes legislative changes impacting department and city.
- Manages and/or delegates internal and external customer service requests.
- Reviews and implements policies.
- Attends meetings for City Council, and other meeting bodies; prepares reports and presentations.
- Responsible for department-wide financial decision. Assures that appropriate linkages exist between budget requests and departmental goals and objectives. Monitors budget plan and adjusts as necessary.

## Education and Experience

Qualified applicants will have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Communications, Public Relations, Public Administration, Marketing or related field, in addition to 9+ years' experience in strategic communications.

## The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate should be a strategic communications professional with the ability to lead a modern municipal communications program that supports transparency, community engagement, and organizational alignment. This individual should bring strong experience in strategic communications, media relations, and public information, along with the ability to translate complex municipal initiatives into clear, accessible messaging for diverse audiences and actively engaging with the public to foster understanding and trust. The successful candidate should be comfortable advising executive leadership and elected officials, serving as the City's spokesperson, and managing communications in both routine and high-profile situations.

The ideal candidate should also be a credible and collaborative leader who can build strong working relationships across departments and guide a multidisciplinary communications team. This individual should demonstrate excellent writing and presentation skills, sound judgment, and the ability to manage competing priorities while supporting communication strategies that strengthen trust and connection with the community.



# Salary

The City of Columbia is offering a salary range between \$110,240 - \$169,832, commensurate with experience, and a comprehensive benefits package. Relocation assistance will be available for the successful out-of-area candidate.

# How to Apply

Interested applicants should forward a cover letter and resume to:

**resumes@affionpublic.com**  
**Reference: CMOCD**

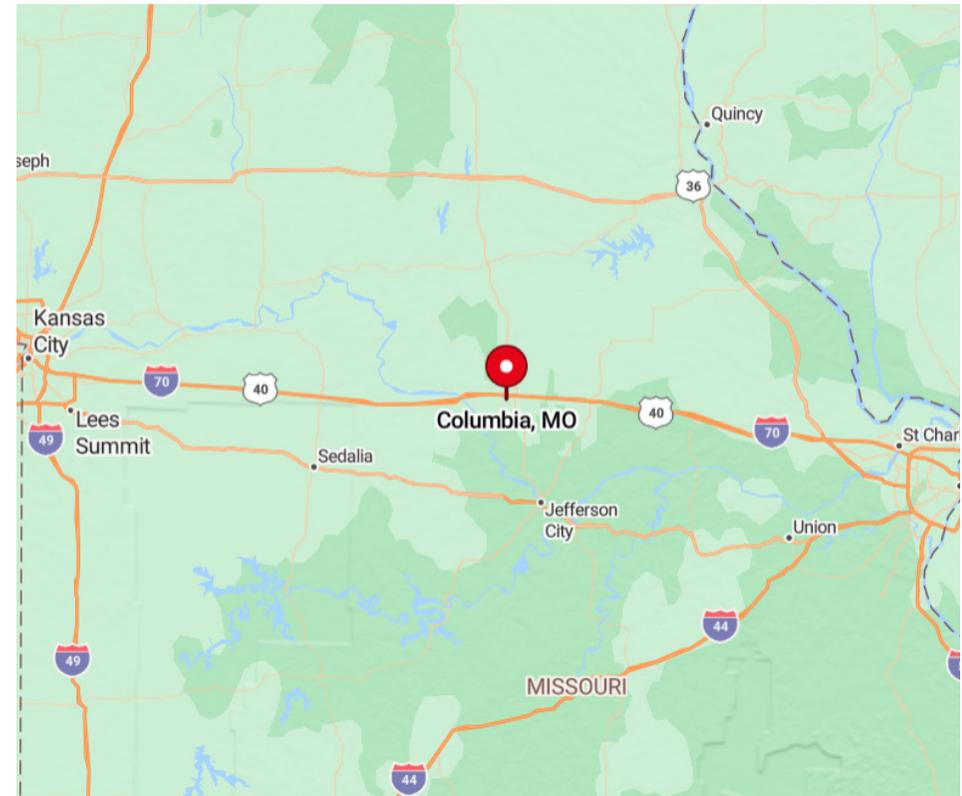
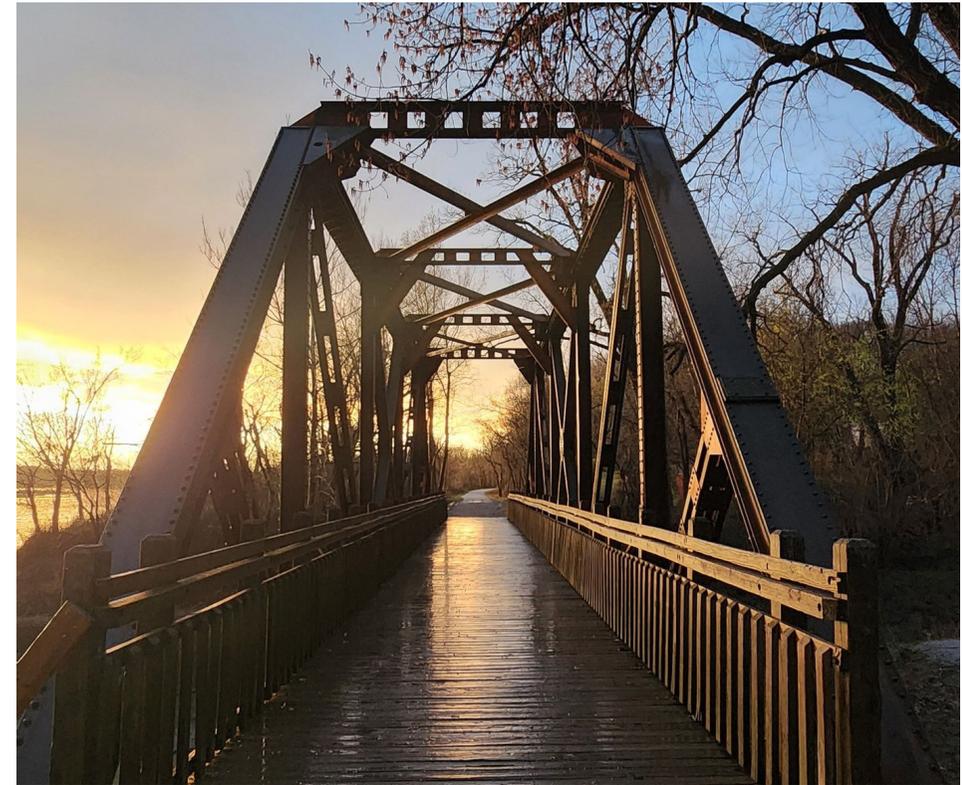
Affion Public  
PO Box 794  
Hershey, PA 17033  
717-214-4922  
www.affionpublic.com



 City of Columbia, Mo. Government

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