

Town of Preston, Connecticut Public Works Manager Search

**We Invite Candidates to Apply
for the Public Works Manager Position**



Old State Hospital Property - Purchased by the Town of Preston

[See more details in this Profile](#)

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town of Preston is located in New London County in the southeastern region of Connecticut. This semi rural town is 31.3 squares miles in area, with commercial activity centered on a few small retail centers along the major roads. The population was 4,788 at the 2020 census. The town includes the villages of Long Society, Preston City, and Poquetanuck. Preston has successfully retained the small-town charm that is missing from most modern suburbs, including keeping its working farms and plentiful open space. Pride is inherent in New England and Preston is no exception. It's a special place with a special way of life.

Local government has been actively involved in projects to enhance the quality of life for the citizens, that share the commitment to the future. This includes the plan for the large Preston Riverwalk Project planned for across the Thames River from Mohegan Sun. This development will be a non-gaming destination and is planned to include outdoor and indoor attractions, hotel and retail space, restaurants, housing, a marina, RV Park and more.

Preston finds itself dealing with modern issues, including traffic. The town finds itself between two large casinos, Foxwoods, located in Ledyard, and Mohegan Sun, in Uncasville. The pressures on the highways and roads, as well as fire and emergency services, have been great. In addition, the loss of farmland to development continues to change the character of the town. Mohegan Sun Resort & Casino, located just across the Thames River, attracts 11 million visitors annually. In addition, Foxwoods Resort & Casino only 8 miles away from Preston Riverwalk via Routes 2a and 2 attracts over 13 million visitors annually. Connecticut College and the Coast Guard Academy are located just 20 minutes outside Preston and Eastern Connecticut State University is 40 minutes away. Mystic Seaport, also a short 20-minute drive away, attracts 300,000 visitors per year. Preston is within an hour to Providence, RI and Hartford, CT and less than an hour to beaches in CT or RI.. Addendum has Preston History—See last page

Town Government—Selectman Form of Government

The First Selectwoman is the Chief Elected and Chief Administrative Officer of the Town. She works with the Board of Selectmen to develop policy direction and approve the budget that is then sent to the Board of Finance and finally to the Town Citizens.

The Town of Preston has been working on a Strategic Planning Process for the last year, including surveys, public forums and interviews with community stakeholders.

The Collaborative Goals include:

- ⇒ **To create and implement an economic development plan that creates new energy and revenue while preserving the town's rural character**
- ⇒ **To create and implement a plan to improve the quality of schools and municipal services**
- ⇒ **To conduct a study and implement a plan for the best use of all town and school buildings**
- ⇒ **To invest in technology for residents (broadband) and schools/town (cybersecurity/technology needs)**
- ⇒ **To validate and reinvigorate civic pride through communication and community events**



Town and Public Works Projects

The 20th century also witnessed the arrival of state institutions in Preston. In 1904, Norwich State Hospital was established on a large tract of land, part of which was in the Laurel Hill area of Norwich, the rest in Preston. Norwich State Hospital quickly grew to a large institution with several thousand “inmates”. A self-contained facility, the hospital had relatively little impact on the town, although staff and service personnel often established their place of residence in Preston. Presently, this area, now known as Preston Riverwalk, is owned by the town of Preston and the Preston Redevelopment Agency is working to market the property.

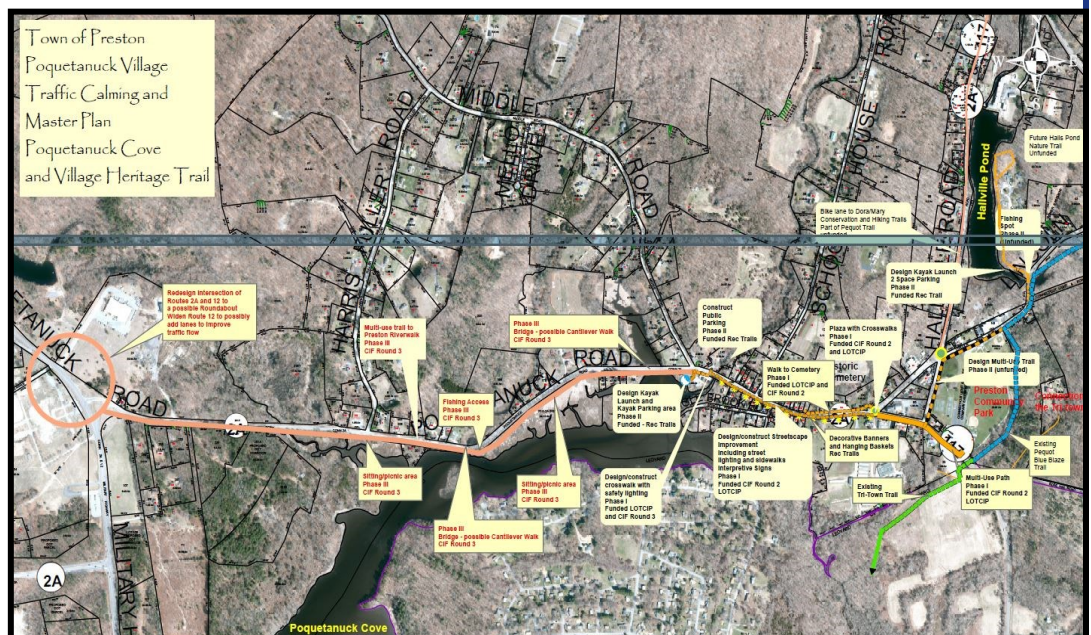
Preston Riverwalk

Preston Riverwalk is a high-profile development campus consisting of six (6) unique parcels totaling approximately 393 acres ranging from 25 to 189 acres. This riverfront campus offers a stunning overlook of the Thames River with long views to Long Island Sound. More than half the property is undeveloped, and a pristine forested hillside surrounds a former reservoir. The Riverwalk is conveniently located just off the I-395 highway connector at the intersection of Routes 2a and 12 with access to 27.5 million people within a 2.5-hour drive. Nearby Points of Interest include the Mohegan Sun Resort & Casino, Foxwoods Resort & Casino, Mystic Seaport, Mystic Aquarium, and US Naval Sub Base. The clean-up of the Preston Riverwalk is nearly complete and conveyance to Mohegan Gaming Enterprises is expected to happen in Fall 2024. This is a unique and exciting opportunity for the Town of Preston, its employees and community in terms of development, infrastructure, and recreational and cultural activities.



Poquetanuck Village Traffic Calming Project

This vital, multi-phase project is centered around the need to control traffic traveling through historic Poquetanuck Village while helping to increase connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists. While Phase I of this project focuses on the Village, traffic calming and mixed-use development, additional attributes will extend sidewalks, period lighting and multi-use trails west to the Norwich State Hospital property (now known as Preston Riverwalk) and east towards the Community Park and the Tri-Town Trail. The town will be seeking additional funding to continue phases to the Preston Riverwalk and upgrades to the Route 2A and Route 12 intersection extending to the Mohegan Pequot Bridge. In addition, infrastructure needs including sewer and water are being evaluated by utility companies.



Town and Public Works Projects (Cont.)

Transfer Station Improvement Project

The Town has received grant funding to complete a full renovation of the Preston Transfer Station. The renovation is centered around the need to provide residents with a safe and efficient way to dispose of trash, recyclables, and bulky waste while allowing the Transfer Station to operate more efficiently. A comprehensive study of the Transfer Station was completed last year, and this project is currently in the design phase with construction anticipated to begin this summer. The Transfer Station is managed by the Public Works Department.

Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIP)

The Town has received a TRIP grant for the rehabilitation of Mathewson Mill Road through the Connecticut DOT. This project addresses a variety of safety, drainage, road conditions, and hazardous tree issues on Mathewson Mill Road. Currently, the project is in the preliminary design phase.

Parks Road and Cooktown Road Bridge Replacements

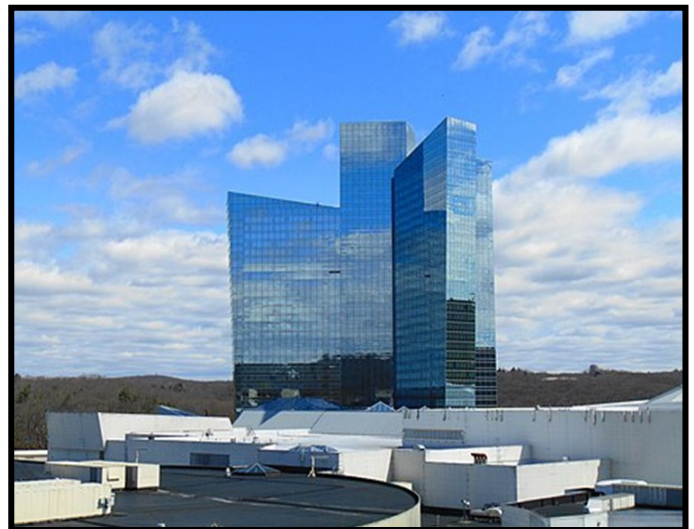
The Town is working with the Connecticut DOT to complete two full bridge replacements in Preston. Both bridges are being funded 100% by the CONN DOT which will also handle most aspects of the project including design, construction, inspection, and project management.

Town Hall Parking Lot Renovations

The Town has funding set aside to reconstruct the Town Hall parking lot and front entry steps/ramps. The project included reclaiming the existing parking lot, drainage improvements, the addition of parking stalls, and the replacement of deteriorating concrete front entry steps, ramp, and sidewalks. The design plans for this project are currently complete.

Road Management Plan

A Road Management Plan has been developed and will be included as part of the Town's Capital Plan for funding. This plan addresses repair categories, backlog, road surface ratings, and cost benefit values.



Public Works Manager—Job Responsibilities

The Public Works Manager is responsible to develop, manage, supervise, and direct the programs and activities of the Public Works Department in the functional areas of road, sidewalk, bridge construction and repair; transfer station management; vehicle equipment maintenance; building repairs, storm water drainage/flood control management; emergency storm and snow removal by public works staff and contractors. The Manger supervises crews on assigned projects or activities of a public services nature. The Public Works Manager is required to exercise considerable independent judgment and is responsible for maintaining and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under his/her direction and control.

- Exhibits a service orientation toward customers, maintain productive working relationships, and carries out the department's overall mission.
- Develops short-term and long range comprehensive departmental plans including capital projects and capital budget. Estimates project costs. Serves as Project Manager for the Public Works Projects.
- First point of contact for public works routine and emergency matters. Inspects roads and bridges to ensure that driving conditions are safe.
- Functions as Town Tree Warden. Maintains proper licenses and certifications with the State.
- Oversees the Transfer Station (bulky waste, trash and recycling) and coordinates the Town recycling program.
- Coordinates vehicle maintenance and repair of Town equipment with neighboring town.
- Prepares specifications for all public work projects, vehicles, materials, and capital purchases. Tracks expenses for planning purposes.
- Manages grant research for department and prepares grant applications. Administers grants received.
- Assures safe working conditions for employees through training programs.
- Develops department policies and procedures and assigns, trains, and supervises staff.
- Consults with First Selectperson on such personnel actions as hiring, termination, and discipline.
- Prepares and administers operating budget for the department; presents budget to the First Selectperson, Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance.
- Assists staff as necessary with operations, including use of CDL vehicles and equipment and snow removal.
- Responds to emergencies after normal working hours and mandatory winter snow



CHARACTERISTICS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

- ◆ A leader who inspires ethical, professional, honest, dedicated, and loyal behavior.
- ◆ Excellent communication skills with staff, Town agencies, public, state, and federal agencies.
- ◆ Ability to manage the day-to-day operations/budget of the department.
- ◆ Self-starter who takes initiative to move projects forward and develop new ideas.
- ◆ Excellent management and organizational skills, with the ability to change hats quickly.
- ◆ Ability to meet deadlines, prioritize the work of staff and manage projects.
- ◆ Thorough knowledge of the methods, materials and equipment used in the maintenance and construction of municipal projects, roads and drainage systems.
- ◆ Ability to read, interpret and comment on engineering plans and maps in an office setting and in the field.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- * The Town is experiencing growth in certain sections, which will entail new public works type projects, requiring innovative leadership.
- * Opportunities to be involved in the design and construction of diverse transportation and bridge projects.
- * Development of the Preston Riverwalk and the Poquetanuck Village Project.
- * Opportunity to help create and build the vision of this charming New England town.
- * Challenges of working with the State and on various grant projects, such as the rehabilitation of Mathewson Mill Road, the Transfer Station Improvement Project, as well as the Parks Road and Cooktown Road Bridge Replacements.
- * The Town has just implemented a new Classification and Compensation Plan for all Town Employees.
- * Working in a community that has developed a strategic plan for the Town.

Qualifications:

Education, Training and Experience:

The qualifications required would generally be an Associate's Degree or Advanced Technical Education with 5-10 years of construction, highway maintenance, project management and Municipal Public Works experience especially winter operations, and supervision; or any equivalent combination of education, experience and training.

Special Requirements:

- Must have and maintain: CDL B License.
- Must get and maintain: Transfer Station Operators Certificate within 6 months
- Must get and maintain: American Traffic Safety Services Association Flagger Certification within 6 months
- Must obtain and maintain: Tree Warden Certificate within 6 months



Compensation and Application Process

The Town of Preston offers a competitive salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Town provides a generous benefits package which includes health insurance with only 6% employee contribution for employee and family, dental and life insurance, vacation and sick leave as part of Paid Time Off. Additionally, the Town provides a defined benefit pension plan through the State of Connecticut known as MERS.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Ms. Randi Frank (Contact information below). If you have more questions about the position and salary, please contact Ms. Frank. To apply now please submit your cover letter and resume to Ms. Frank. The position will remain open until filled; the first screening date is April 15, 2024.

Residency is not required but should be within 30 minutes commute due to on call nature.

Preston is an AA/EOE Employer

More information is available on the following website:
<https://www.preston-ct.org/>



Ms. Randi Frank
Randi Frank Consulting, LLC
7700 Hoover Way
Louisville, KY 40219
203-213-3722

randi@randifrank.com
www.randifrank.com

Addendum-Preston History & Settlement

Settlement

At the time of the first European exploration, the Pequot tribe controlled most of Eastern Connecticut. In 1646, New London was settled by colonists from Massachusetts. The first English settler within the bounds of modern Preston was Jonathan Brewster who acquired land from the Mohegan Chief Uncas at the mouth of Poquetanuck Cove on the Thames River, later called Brewster's Neck. The remainder of the Pequot territory, including the present towns of Norwich and Preston, was retained by the Mohegan's. Although Connecticut's major centers of Native American population in the historic period were outside Preston, a small number continued to live in the area into the 20th century.

1600s Settlers Journey

Norwich was founded in 1659 at the mouth of the Connecticut River by settlers from Saybrook. The original territory, purchased from Uncas, was roughly square in plan, with each side about 9 miles long. This included a strip of land on the east side of the Thames, Shetucket, and Quinebaug Rivers, part of which is now in the town of Preston.

As Norwich settlers moved eastward across the Shetucket River, a number crossed the boundaries of Norwich to land farther east, still in the possession of the Mohegan's. In October 1686, 19 persons petitioned the General Court for the incorporation of a new town. This was granted in January 1687. On March 17 of that year, Owaneco, son of Uncas, deeded the area of the new town to the English inhabitants. Preston received its name from the English home of the Park family, early settlers. The town then included most of the present town of Griswold and the eastern half of the present town of Preston. The settlers of Preston were English colonists who migrated from already established towns, the most prominent of which was Norwich.

Preston City prospered in its early years when the town of Preston was an important supplier of agricultural products to the port of Norwich on the Thames River, from which local farm goods were shipped to other ports on the east coast. The period of greatest prosperity was between the American Revolutionary War and about 1830 and is reflected in the architecture of the homes built by successful local farmers and merchants.

Origins of Long Society

A second village within the town of Preston, Long Society, had its origins in the beginning of the 18th century. As early as 1698, the residents of Norwich living east of the Thames, Shetucket, and Quinebaug Rivers petitioned the General Assembly for permission to establish a new Congregational society. In 1786, Long Society was transferred from Norwich to Preston by act of the General Assembly. Long Society was now nearer both the center of population and the geographical center of the town. Town meetings, which had been held at Preston City, were moved to the Long Society meetinghouse in 1856. In 1889, town meetings were moved across the street to the former district school, a small brick schoolhouse. This building functioned as the Town House until the construction of the present Town Hall off Route 2 in 1974.

With the annexation of Long Society to Preston in 1786, the village of Poquetanuck became part of the town of Preston. Unlike Long Society and Preston City, Poquetanuck developed around industrial activities centered on the two brooks that flow into the head of Poquetanuck Cove. A gristmill was established here in 1685. In 1725, Walter Capron established an ironworks facility on Poquetanuck Brook in the town of Norwich. Other activities soon followed. Shipbuilding, the export of potash and other products of the countryside, and a variety of handcrafts flourished. The Frigate *Confederacy*, a Revolutionary warship was built at Preston.

