

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RIVANNA AUTHORITIES

Recruitment Candidate Brief



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



rivanna.org
lbeard@rivanna.org
695 Moores Creek Lane
Charlottesville, VA

For more information about this opportunity, please email:
Leah Beard, Director of Administration & Communications

lbeard@rivanna.org www.rivanna.org

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

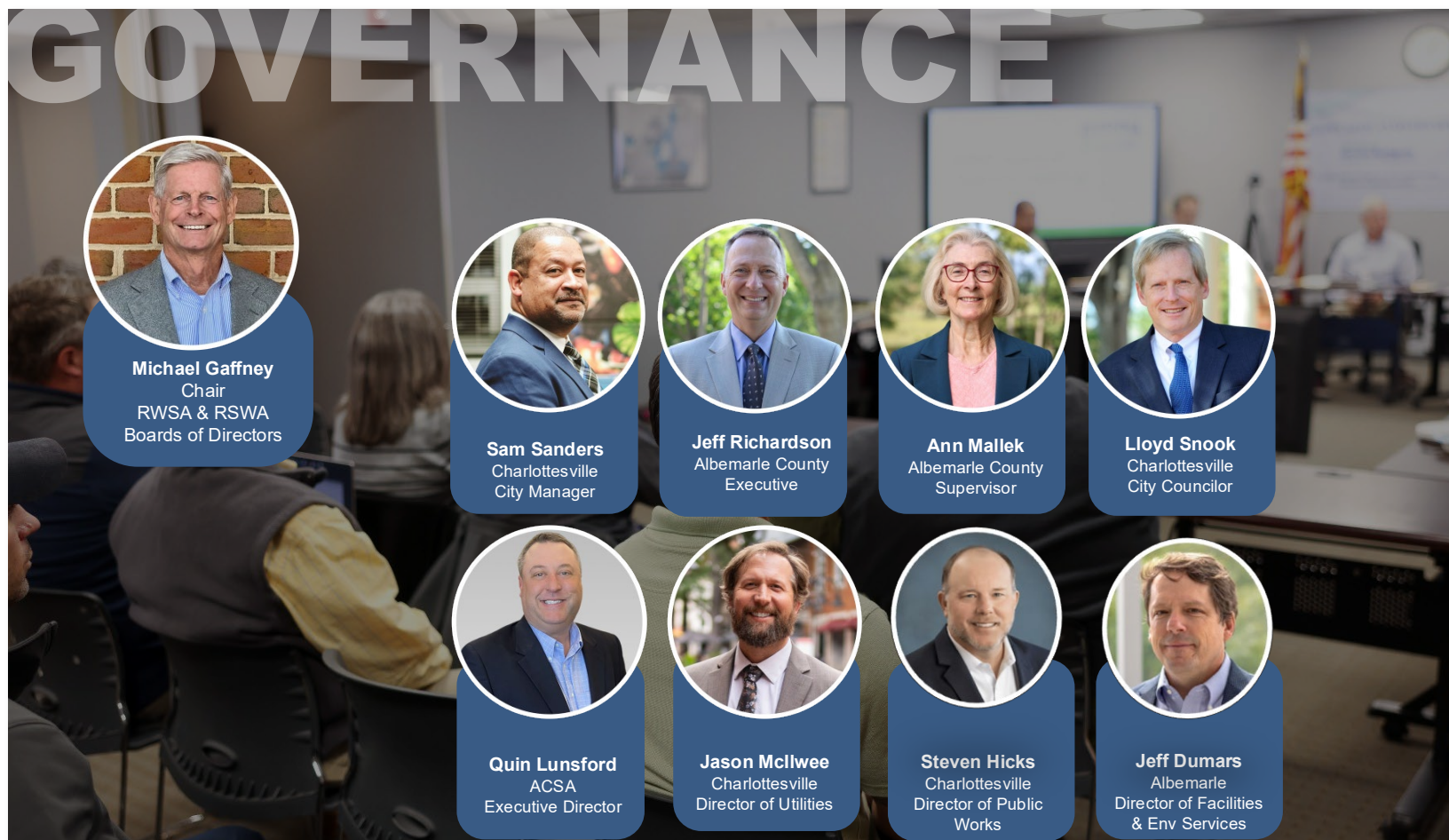
On behalf of the Boards of Directors of the Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority and the Rivanna Solid Waste Authority, thank you for considering this important opportunity. The Boards are seeking an accomplished public-sector leader to serve as the next Executive Director of the Rivanna Authorities, the organization responsible for the drinking water, wastewater treatment, refuse, and recycling services that sustain the Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and University of Virginia community.

This Candidate Brief contains an overview of the Rivanna Authorities, our strategic direction, the key opportunities facing our next leader, the position and candidate profile, information about our community, and the steps in our recruitment process.

This document is intended to provide you with information and is not a contractual document. Some of the material may be subject to change, and we will do our best to keep candidates informed of any significant developments over the course of the search. At any point in the process, should you have questions or require further information, we would be glad to assist.

Additional information about the Authorities, including our Strategic Plan, master plans, and Board meeting materials, is available at www.rivanna.org.

Thank you for your time and interest.



GOVERNANCE



Michael Gaffney
Chair
RWSA & RSWA
Boards of Directors



Sam Sanders
Charlottesville
City Manager



Jeff Richardson
Albemarle County
Executive



Ann Mallek
Albemarle County
Supervisor



Lloyd Snook
Charlottesville
City Councilor



Quin Lunsford
ACSA
Executive Director



Jason McIlwee
Charlottesville
Director of Utilities



Steven Hicks
Charlottesville
Director of Public
Works



Jeff Dumas
Albemarle
Director of Facilities
& Env Services

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

1972 RWSA established	137 Employees	6 Divisions	130,000 Residents & Business served	20,000+ Solid waste customers served monthly
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HISTORY

Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority (RWSA)

The Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority was created in 1972 by the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County to provide wholesale water supply, water treatment, and wastewater interception and treatment for the City and County. RWSA's responsibilities are defined by the 1972 Service Agreement, also known as the Four Party Agreement, among RWSA, the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and the Albemarle County Service Authority (ACSA). RWSA's two primary customers are the City and ACSA, which deliver retail water and sewer service to homes and businesses.

Rivanna Solid Waste Authority (RSWA)

The Rivanna Solid Waste Authority was created in 1990 by the City and County to assume operation of the Ivy Landfill, which closed in 1998. Under the 1991 Solid Waste Organizational Agreement with the City and County, RSWA today provides recycling, refuse, and household hazardous waste disposal services for more than 20,000 City and County residents and businesses each month, and is well known locally for community programs such as special collection days, the Oyster Shell program, and the annual Pumpkin Smash.

Construction of the Sugar Hollow Dam in 1947

The Authorities' 137 employees work across six divisions:

- Engineering & Maintenance
- Operations & Environmental Services
- Finance
- Administration & Communications
- Information & Operational Technology
- Solid Waste Operations

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Rivanna's strategic framework and the Executive Director job description point to a leadership agenda that is both operational and forward-looking. The successful candidate will be expected to preserve the organization's strengths while positioning the Authorities for changing community, regulatory, workforce, technology, and infrastructure demands.

People and Culture

- Build a collaborative, inclusive, and accountable culture that promotes effective project execution, values transparency, seeks innovation, and empowers employees.
- Attract, develop, and retain a highly skilled workforce; promote employee engagement, professional development, workplace safety, and continuous improvement.
- Set clear organizational priorities and expectations, promote collaboration across divisions, and ensure effective succession planning and leadership development.



ORGANIZATION & GOVERNANCE

Although legally distinct, the two Authorities, known collectively as the Rivanna Authorities, are led by a single Executive Director and share one executive team and workforce. Each Authority is governed by its own seven-member Board of Directors, and the Executive Director reports to both Boards.

The Executive Director is accountable to the Boards of Directors of both Authorities and serves as their principal executive advisor. The position also maintains strong working relationships with the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and the Albemarle County Service Authority under the 1972 Service Agreement, commonly known as the Four Party Agreement, and collaborates with the City and County under the Solid Waste Organizational Agreement.

Ivy Solid Waste & Recycling Center



OUR PARTNERS & PEOPLE

Essential services. Regional responsibility. Long-term stewardship.

The next Executive Director will lead through collaboration. Rivanna's work depends on productive relationships with its Boards, the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, the Albemarle County Service Authority, the University of Virginia, regulators, regional partners, employees, and the broader community. The role requires an executive who can connect technical and operational excellence with transparent public leadership and sound long-term decision-making.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

Investing in a Stronger, Safer Water Future
Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority is committed to providing clean, reliable water and wastewater services across Charlottesville and Albemarle County.

To support this, we're investing \$1 Billion over the next ten years in infrastructure upgrades.
These projects will expand pipeline capacity, improve system safety, and ensure consistent water pressure — keeping high-quality water flowing to the City, ACSA, and 130,000 customers.

Drinking Water Treatment Plants

Recycling & Refuse Facilities

Water Resource Recovery Plants

Recent Progress

The Rivanna Authorities' Strategic Plan was developed with input from the Boards of Directors, external stakeholders, and more than 85 employees. It provides the framework that guides investment, resource allocation, and annual reviews of progress. The next Executive Director will lead its implementation and the development of the plan that follows it.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

A clear framework for the next chapter.

Rivanna's Strategic Plan was developed with input from Board members, employees, and external stakeholders. The framework is intended to guide investment, allocate resources, and create accountability for long-term goals. The next Executive Director will be expected to keep this strategic direction visible in organizational decisions while working with the Boards and Senior Leadership Team to adapt priorities as conditions evolve.

OUR MISSION:

Our knowledgeable and professional team serves the Charlottesville, Albemarle, and UVA community by providing high-quality water and wastewater treatment, refuse, and recycling services in a financially responsible and sustainable manner.

OUR VISION:

To serve the community as a recognized leader in environmental stewardship by providing exceptional water and solid waste services.

OUR VALUES:

INTEGRITY

We are open and transparent, lead by example, and are committed to ethical behavior.

TEAMWORK

We work collaboratively to help each other succeed and serve the community.

RESPECT

We treat our fellow employees, customers, business partners, and stakeholders with dignity and respect by embracing their diverse backgrounds and experiences.

QUALITY

We deliver exceptional services and products, serve our community responsibly, and safeguard natural resources.

OUR IMPACT:

For more than half a century, the Rivanna Authorities have delivered the essential environmental services that keep the Charlottesville-Albemarle community healthy, safe, and growing. Our workforce operates around the clock, providing uninterrupted service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

OUR CULTURE:

We foster a dynamic and supportive work environment where dedication and passion are valued. Our team is comprised of talented professionals committed to our cause. We encourage continuous learning and professional development.

OUR STEWARDSHIP:

RWSA was created in 1972 by the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County to provide wholesale water supply, water treatment, and wastewater interception and treatment. RSWA was created in 1990 to assume operation of the Ivy Landfill and today provides refuse, recycling, and household hazardous waste disposal services.

RWSA's principal water and wastewater customers are the City of Charlottesville and the Albemarle County Service Authority. RSWA serves residents and businesses through regional solid waste programs and facilities. Together, the Authorities operate in a region where dependable public infrastructure, environmental protection, and thoughtful planning are central to continued community growth.

OUR PRIORITIES

Guided by successive five-year strategic plans, the Authorities have built a strong foundation on which the next Executive Director will lead. Highlights include:

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Build trusted relationships with both Boards; provide timely, accurate, and comprehensive information; implement Board-approved policies and priorities; and create clear organizational expectations and accountability.

SAFETY & RESILIENCY

Maintain a strong focus on safe, reliable, efficient, and cost-effective water, wastewater, refuse, and recycling services while strengthening preparedness and organizational resilience.

PLANNING & RELIABILITY

Guide long- and short-term infrastructure planning, capital delivery, asset management, and budgeting in a manner that balances reliability, growth, regulatory needs, and affordability.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Lead and develop the Senior Leadership Team and continue building a skilled, engaged workforce through recruitment, development, succession planning, knowledge transfer, and employee engagement.

TECHNOLOGY, DATA & CYBERSECURITY

Support thoughtful technology modernization, business-system resilience, data-informed decision-making, and risk mitigation as operational and information systems become more complex.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Strengthen partnerships with local governments, ACSA, UVA, regulators, community organizations, and regional stakeholders while communicating Rivanna's value and priorities clearly and transparently.

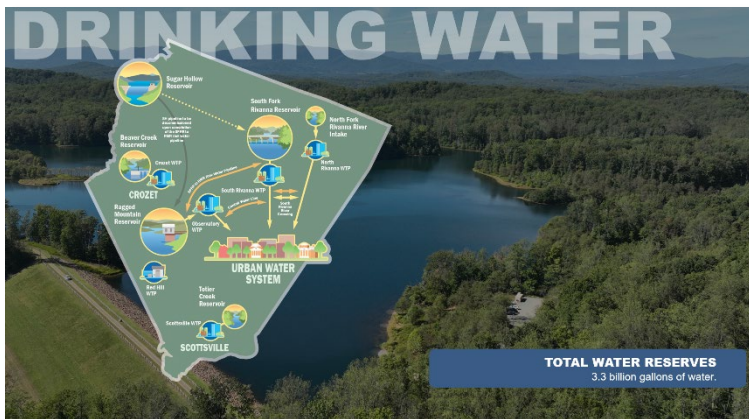
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Advance sustainability, resource conservation, climate resilience, environmental education, and proactive responses to changing regulatory requirements.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROLE

Lead a regional public-service organization built around reliability, stewardship, and partnership.

The Executive Director leads the organization, and is responsible for providing strategic leadership, operational management, and fiduciary oversight. This role requires a dynamic and experienced leader who can inspire staff, engage stakeholders, and drive the organization's mission forward.



This environment requires the ability to balance immediate operational priorities with long-range infrastructure planning, financial stewardship, regional coordination, and emerging community needs.

With a substantial portfolio of projects currently in research and planning, design, procurement, and construction, the next Executive Director will have an opportunity to help shape and deliver infrastructure investments that will serve the region for decades to come.



Governance and Board Relations

- Serve as principal advisor to the RWSA and RSWA Boards, providing strategic counsel on all issues affecting the Authorities.
- Implement Board-approved policies and strategic priorities, and keep Board members informed of significant organizational, operational, financial, regulatory, and community matters.
- Evaluate the operations and service levels of both Authorities and report to the Boards at monthly meetings.

Once in a Generation Projects

Financial Stewardship

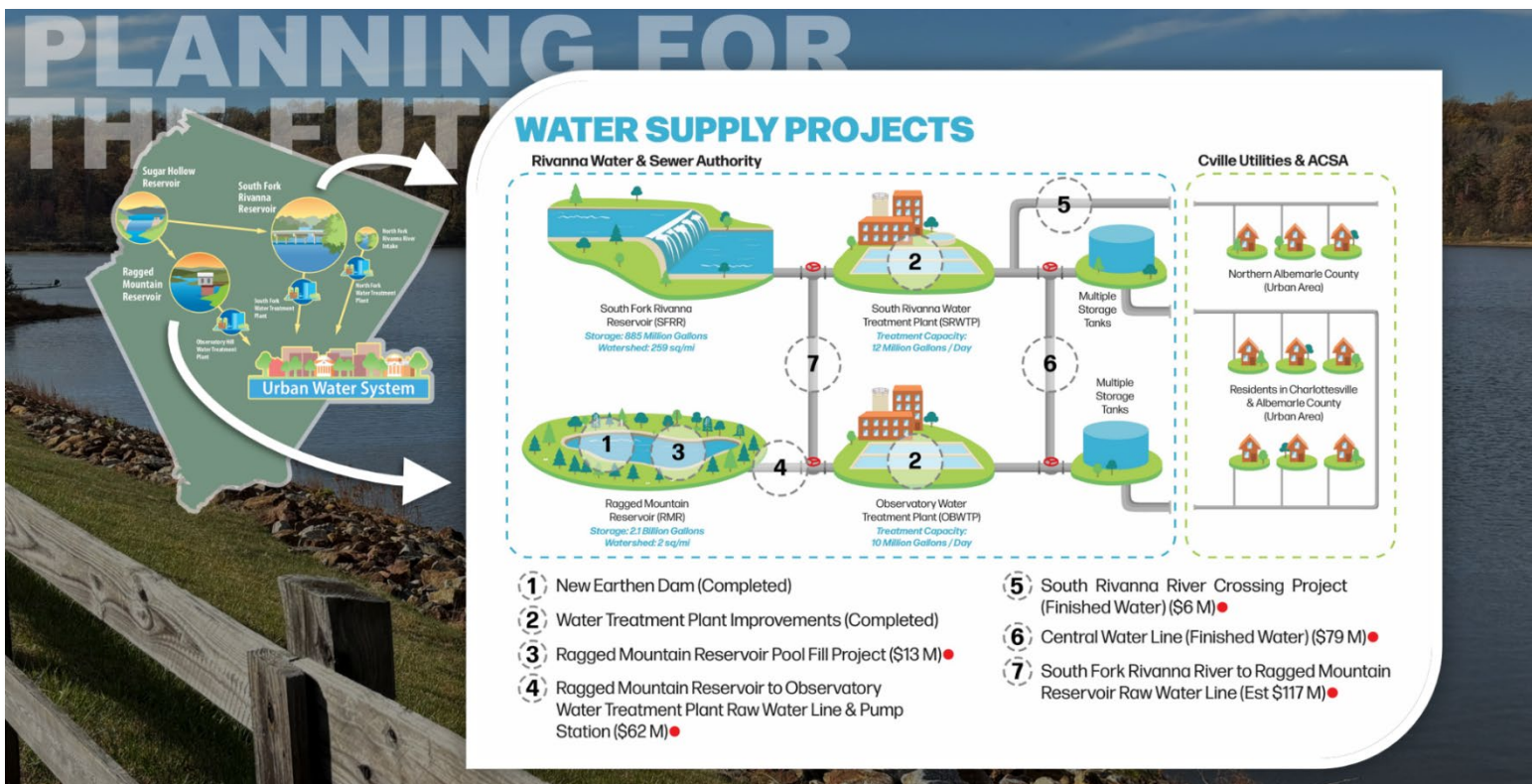
- Prepare the annual operating and capital improvement program (CIP) budgets for both Authorities.
- Promote accountability, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public resources, and ensure appropriate systems, policies, procedures, and internal controls are in place.

Take a look at our
Construction Projects

The next Executive Director will inherit a financially sound organization with a professional, knowledgeable workforce, excellent product quality, and a strong track record of long-range planning. The Strategic Plan's analysis of strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results identifies a clear ambition: for Rivanna to be a regional leader and a model for others. Realizing that ambition will require a leader who can navigate the following issues.



Investing in a Stronger, Safer Water Future: Planning for the Next Generation



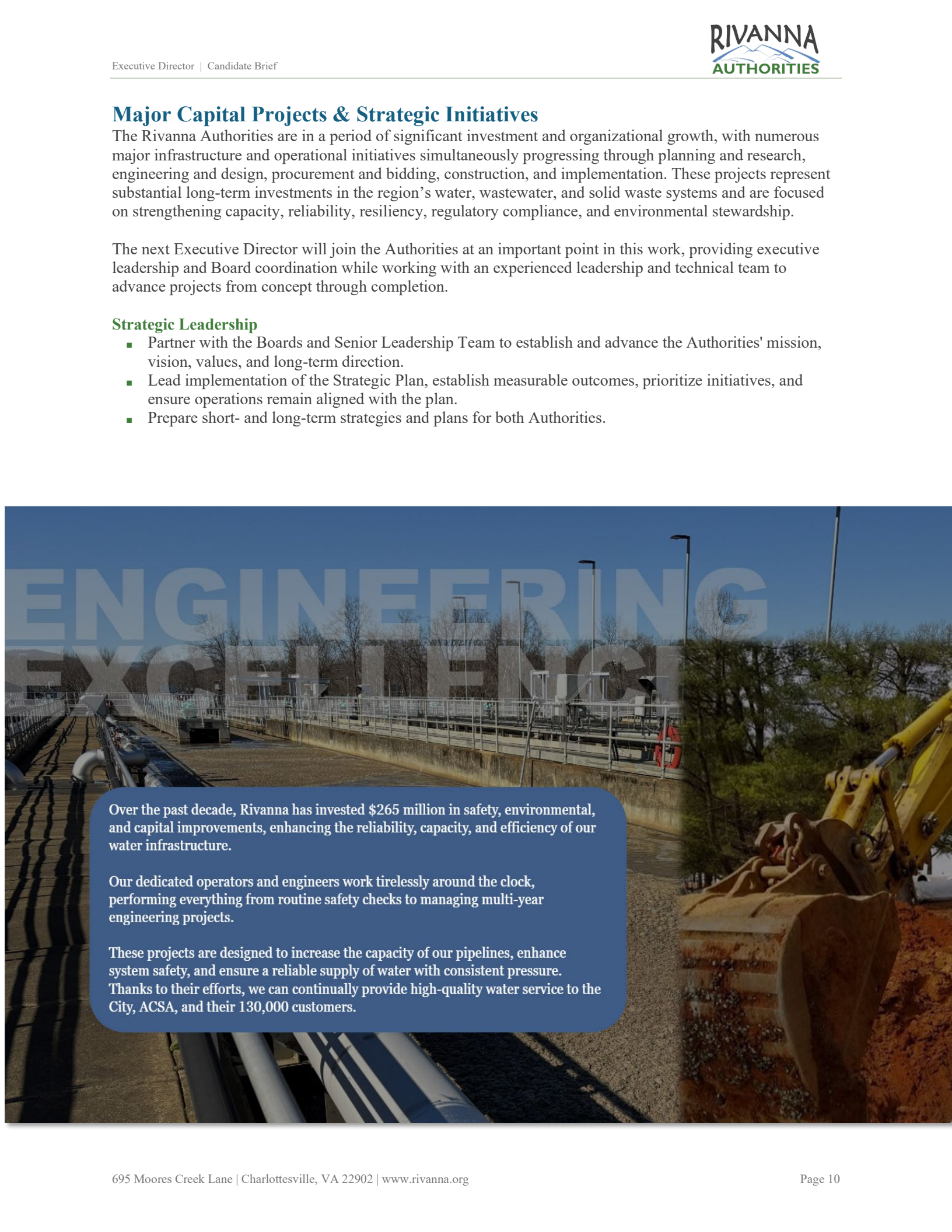
Major Capital Projects & Strategic Initiatives

The Rivanna Authorities are in a period of significant investment and organizational growth, with numerous major infrastructure and operational initiatives simultaneously progressing through planning and research, engineering and design, procurement and bidding, construction, and implementation. These projects represent substantial long-term investments in the region's water, wastewater, and solid waste systems and are focused on strengthening capacity, reliability, resiliency, regulatory compliance, and environmental stewardship.

The next Executive Director will join the Authorities at an important point in this work, providing executive leadership and Board coordination while working with an experienced leadership and technical team to advance projects from concept through completion.

Strategic Leadership

- Partner with the Boards and Senior Leadership Team to establish and advance the Authorities' mission, vision, values, and long-term direction.
- Lead implementation of the Strategic Plan, establish measurable outcomes, prioritize initiatives, and ensure operations remain aligned with the plan.
- Prepare short- and long-term strategies and plans for both Authorities.

A photograph of a water treatment facility. In the foreground, a yellow excavator is working on a pile of reddish-brown earth. In the background, there are several large, rectangular concrete basins or tanks, some with metal railings. The sky is clear and blue. The text "ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE" is overlaid in large, semi-transparent white letters across the top half of the image.

Over the past decade, Rivanna has invested \$265 million in safety, environmental, and capital improvements, enhancing the reliability, capacity, and efficiency of our water infrastructure.

Our dedicated operators and engineers work tirelessly around the clock, performing everything from routine safety checks to managing multi-year engineering projects.

These projects are designed to increase the capacity of our pipelines, enhance system safety, and ensure a reliable supply of water with consistent pressure. Thanks to their efforts, we can continually provide high-quality water service to the City, ACSA, and their 130,000 customers.

\$1Billion in investments over the next Ten Years

Infrastructure Investment & System Resiliency

The Rivanna Authorities are in a period of significant infrastructure investment, with numerous projects simultaneously progressing through research and planning, design, procurement and bidding, and construction. This work is focused on four key objectives: increasing system capacity, replacing aging infrastructure, ensuring long-term reliability, and building redundancy and resiliency throughout our systems.

These investments are intended not only to address current infrastructure needs, but also to prepare the region for future growth and changing demands. The next Executive Director will inherit a substantial portfolio of active and planned projects and will play an important leadership role in advancing these investments in partnership with the Boards, regional partners, Authority leadership, and technical staff.



The Executive Director provides strategic and organizational leadership over both Authorities, including water, wastewater, recycling, and refuse operations and services.

The Executive Director directs all activities of the Rivanna Authorities and is responsible for their overall administration, operations, financial stewardship, infrastructure planning, regulatory compliance, service reliability, safety, efficiency, and performance.

Serving as principal advisor to both Boards of Directors, the Executive Director provides the timely, accurate, and comprehensive information that supports informed governance, implements Board-approved policies and priorities, and reports to the Boards at their monthly meetings. The Executive Director leads, develops, and holds accountable a high-performing Senior Leadership Team.

Intergovernmental & Community Relations

- Foster strong relationships with the City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and ACSA as partners in the 1972 Four Party Agreement, and with the City and County as partners in the 1991 Solid Waste Organizational Agreement.
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships with national, regional, and local utilities and government officials, the University of Virginia, and regulatory agencies.
- Collaborate with the community to promote, protect, and enhance a reliable, sustainable, and resilient environment.

ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A collaborative executive with technical credibility and public-service judgment.

Regulatory Change & Rising Capital Needs

Rivanna's regulatory environment is shaped by federal and state policy and is expected to remain uncertain. National attention to PFAS, revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule, and updates to the Clean Water Act are driving local discussions. Capital improvement needs are expected to increase for the foreseeable future, and the Executive Director must anticipate regulatory change and position the Authorities to respond.

Growth, Affordability, & Financial Stewardship

Albemarle County has grown by roughly 65% over the past three decades, and the University of Virginia and the broader community continue to expand. As opportunities for additional utility efficiencies diminish, service demands are expected to rise. The Executive Director must balance the infrastructure investment needed to support growth with financial constraints and service affordability, working through budget and rate discussions with local government partners.

Regional Partnerships

The City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, ACSA, and UVA have been supportive of Rivanna's work and continue to collaborate on regional utility and solid waste issues. Turnover at partner organizations, however, has made coordinating long-term water, sewer, and solid waste initiatives more challenging. Building trust and continuity with elected officials, partner executives, and staff will be central to the role, as will advancing a cohesive, shared vision for regional solid waste services.

Technology, Cybersecurity, & Resilience

Cybersecurity risks are rising for public utilities nationwide. Rivanna's SCADA system has grown in scale and complexity faster than the resources available to support it, and severe weather events are occurring with greater frequency. The Executive Director will champion technology modernization, completion of a disaster recovery center for business systems, and climate and flood resiliency planning across the Authorities' facilities.

Workforce & Succession

Like utilities across the country, Rivanna competes for skilled operators, engineers, and technical staff in a tight labor market. The Authorities have met their retention goals by responding to employee needs, offering development opportunities, and maintaining competitive compensation. The next Executive Director will build on this progress by formalizing strategic workforce planning, leadership development, and succession management, and by promoting Rivanna as an employer of choice.

Visibility & Community Understanding

Public interest in sustainability and environmental impact continues to grow, and customers and stakeholders expect timely communication. The Executive Director will serve as a visible, credible ambassador for the Authorities, strengthening community understanding of the value of Rivanna's services.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Experience that prepares a leader for Rivanna's breadth and complexity.

The successful candidate will bring the breadth to lead a complex public-service organization and the judgment to work effectively in a regional governance environment. Rivanna is seeking a leader who can move comfortably between Board-level strategy, organizational leadership, technical and financial issues, employee engagement, community relationships, and long-term infrastructure decisions.

LEADERSHIP:

- The Executive Director is designated as an essential employee and must be available to respond to emergencies when needed. Travel to Authority facilities and meetings with regulatory agencies, regional partners, professional organizations, and other stakeholders is expected.
- The strongest candidates will pair technical and operational credibility with the ability to lead people, advise governing Boards, build regional trust, and translate long-term strategy into measurable organizational performance.

DESIRED ATTRIBUTES:

- Experience working with a Board of Directors.
- Demonstrated success in grant writing and management.
- Ability to navigate complex stakeholder environments.
- Innovative thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Strong network within the [Local Community/Relevant Sector].
- Cultural competence and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Adaptability and resilience in a changing environment.
- Excellent communication, interpersonal, and public speaking skills.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and manage a team effectively.
- Passion for our mission and values.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in Environmental Science, Engineering, Biology, Chemistry, Business Administration, and/or Public Administration.
- A minimum of fifteen (15) years of progressively responsible experience in public utilities, water and wastewater operations, engineering, infrastructure, environmental services, solid waste management, public administration, or a closely related field.
- At least five (5) years in a senior executive or leadership role.
- Knowledge and understanding of water and wastewater treatment processes, landfill management and remediation, pertinent environmental requirements, and government regulations.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Master's degree in Environmental Science, Engineering, Biology, Chemistry, Business Administration, Management, Public Administration, or a related field.
- Professional licensing or certification in Engineering, Water/Wastewater Treatment, Accounting, Project Management, or another relevant field.

Compensation

The Rivanna Authorities offer a competitive compensation package commensurate with experience and qualifications. The anticipated hiring range for this position is \$230,000-\$280,000 per year. Specific terms of employment will be set out in an employment agreement approved by the Boards of Directors.

As the ideal candidate, you are a seasoned executive with deep experience leading public utility or environmental services organizations and a record of reporting successfully to elected or appointed boards. You understand water, wastewater, and solid waste operations, and you bring the infrastructure planning and financial acumen to guide a growing capital program while keeping services affordable. Collaborative and diplomatic, you build trust across multiple local governments, a major university, regulators, and the public. You lead with integrity and humility, set clear expectations, delegate with confidence, and develop the people around you. You are forward-thinking about regulation, technology, and resilience, and you communicate clearly and transparently with Boards, staff, and the community.

Join the team at Rivanna Authorities
for a valuable career in public service.

Apply through our
Candidate Portal

We are guided by our Mission & Values.

Benefits:

Join the team at Rivanna Authorities and secure your financial future with the Virginia Retirement System Plan. Experience the peace of mind knowing that you're building a solid foundation for retirement while contributing to the success of our organization.

In addition to retirement benefits, full-time Rivanna Authority employees are able to enroll in affordable health insurance, life insurance, and disability coverage, ensuring comprehensive financial protection.

Join the team and enjoy opportunities for career growth and advancement through training and development programs. We also provide tuition reimbursement for continuing education and professional certifications.

We offer a generous paid time off policy including vacation, sick leave, and holidays. Gym membership assistance, resources for mental health, financial counseling, legal advice, and more.

We constantly strive to improve essential services in the
County of Albemarle and the City of Charlottesville.

A REGION THAT VALUES PARTNERSHIP

Rivanna's Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of regional collaboration and community understanding. The Executive Director will be highly visible and will represent the Authorities with local governments, utility partners, regulators, professional organizations, community groups, and the public.

Few public-service roles combine this level of operational responsibility with such a direct connection to environmental stewardship, community growth, infrastructure investment, and quality of life. The next Executive Director will inherit a professional organization with established strategic direction and will have the opportunity to shape its next chapter.



Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in central Virginia, Charlottesville and the surrounding Albemarle County offer an exceptional combination of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and intellectual vitality. The City and County are separate jurisdictions, with Charlottesville entirely surrounded by Albemarle County. In 2021, the City was home to approximately 45,700 residents and the County to more than 113,500. The region's economy is anchored by the University of Virginia and UVA Health, Albemarle County, the City of Charlottesville, Sentara Healthcare, and the U.S. Department of Defense. Unemployment in the area has consistently run below state and national averages, and Livability.com ranked Charlottesville the fifth best city to live in America in 2021.

The area's history is extraordinary. It was home to three U.S. Presidents: Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe. Jefferson's Monticello and the University he founded together form a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Charlottesville's historic Downtown Mall is one of the longest outdoor pedestrian malls in the country, lined with restaurants, shops, theaters, and music venues.

For those who love the outdoors, Shenandoah National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway are a short drive away, offering year-round hiking, cycling, and scenic recreation. The surrounding countryside is known for its vineyards, orchards, and farms. Washington, D.C. and Richmond are within an easy drive, and Charlottesville Albemarle Airport provides regional air service.



RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Our recruitment process is designed to identify the most qualified candidate who aligns with our organization's mission and culture. The process will include the following stages:

1. **Application Review:** Candidates will submit a resume, cover letter, and any other requested materials. Applications will be reviewed by the hiring committee.
2. **Initial Interviews:** Shortlisted candidates will participate in initial interviews with members of the Board of Directors.
3. **Reference Checks:** Thorough reference checks will be conducted for the finalist(s).
4. **Offer and Pre-Employment Contingencies:** A formal offer will be extended to the selected candidate, background check and drug screen to be conducted.
5. **Onboarding:** A formal comprehensive onboarding process.

The recruitment process is expected to include an initial review of applicant materials, evaluation by the Rivanna Authorities' Executive Director Hiring Sub-Committee, and interviews with selected candidates.

Rivanna's Administration & Communications Director is managing the process on behalf of the RWSA and RWSA Boards of Directors.

Final selection and appointment will be made through the Authorities' Board-led process. Specific dates and process details should be confirmed in the final recruitment announcement.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for the Executive Director position, please submit the following:

- A comprehensive resume detailing your relevant experience.
- A compelling cover letter outlining your qualifications, leadership philosophy, and vision for our organization.
- [List any other required documents, e.g., writing sample, list of references]

Please send your application materials to lbeard@rivanna.org with the subject line:

"Executive Director Application - [Your Name]".

The deadline for applications is October 21, 2026.

Confidentiality

The Rivanna Authorities respect the privacy of personal information provided by candidates. Application materials will be handled confidentially to the extent permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Va. Code § 2.2-3700 et seq.). References will not be contacted without the candidate's prior knowledge and consent.

Equal Opportunity

The Rivanna Authorities are an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law. Reasonable accommodation will be provided upon request throughout the recruitment, selection, and assessment process. Please contact Leah Beard via email at lbeard@rivanna.org to request an accommodation.

Thank you for considering this important opportunity. This document is intended to provide the reader with information and is not a contractual document; some of the material may therefore be subject to change. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Apply through our
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For any questions regarding this recruitment process or the position, please email:

LEAH BEARD

Director of Administration & Communications

lbeard@rivanna.org

NEXT STEPS

We encourage you to carefully review all the information provided in this packet. Should you have any clarifying questions, please do not hesitate to reach out using the contact information above. We look forward to receiving your application and learning more about how your leadership can contribute to our organization's continued success.