

Preston D. Cole
4808 West Woodlawn Court
Milwaukee, WI 53208
[REDACTED]
cole.preston@hotmail.com

EDUCATION

University of Missouri, School of Forestry, Fisheries, and Wildlife
Bachelor of Science, Forest Management
Minor, Agronomy

African American Fund Development Institute/Helen Bader Foundation
Certification, Fundraising

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Senior level manager with the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works (DPW), promoted into key leadership positions during twenty five years of service, each with greater span of control and responsibility:

- **Leadership**
 - Implement programs and services to Milwaukee residents, corporate and business community that are agreed upon by the Mayor (CEO) and Milwaukee Common Council (Board of Directors).
 - Oversee senior management team responsible for the Milwaukee Water Works, Infrastructure Services, DPW Administration, Operations Division (Sanitation, Fleet, and Forestry) and the Parking Fund.
 - Plan for and successfully implement DPW strategic planning initiatives directed towards healthy communities, service delivery, transportation, and neighborhood cleanliness.
 - Currently reorganizing the DPW around our “Service Excellence” concepts.
- **Land Management**
 - Program Management for sidewalk and alley encroachment inspections, tall grass and weed abatement, hazardous private tree abatement, city owned vacant lot and foreclosed home mowing and snow removal program, private property sidewalk snow abatement, and foreclosed home demolition program.
 - Successfully led the transfer of vacant lot and foreclosed home land management from the Department of City Development to the Department of Public Works.
- **Human Resources**
 - Oversee approximately 2,000 full-time and seasonal employees.
 - Created the *Public Works University* to develop field staff, supervisory and executive leadership training.
 - Develop workforce training initiatives that put Milwaukee residents to work.
- **Financial Oversight**
 - Manage complex financial budget and enterprise funds of \$485 million dollars.
 - Currently developing strategies for the DPW in response to the State of Wisconsin’s biennial budget, e.g., neighborhood services.
 - Created and oversee *Boulevard Signage “Home Of”* initiative which leverages our partnerships with Milwaukee’s corporate community.
- **Community Relations**
 - Collaborate with non-profit organizations, Business Improvement Districts (BID), state and local governments, and the development community by developing and implementing initiatives and programs.

- **Communications / Branding**
 - Employ communication strategies which increase public awareness of Public Works programs, emergency operations and departmental initiatives via traditional media methods, social media, texting and City Alerts (“Snow-Mobile”).
 - Develop and implement co-sponsorship programs that enhance the DPW brands, e.g., Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful (KGMB), “Recycle for Good” Campaign, Operation Clean and Green, Mayor’s Urban Agriculture Strategies with Growing Power, and Nike Reuse-A-Shoe.

WORK EXPERIENCE

City of Milwaukee, Department of Neighborhood Services (2016-Present)

Commissioner (2016-Present)

- Carryout the duties and responsibilities required by law of the Commissioner of Neighborhood Services.
- Plan and develop departmental administrative programs, policies and regulations.
- Plan and direct staff of the department in all matters concerning personnel, budgeting, public relations and inspectional activities.
- Maintain an effective work relationship with legislators, administrators of departments and other organizations that interact with the department.
- Oversight of approximately 280 employees with combined operating and capital budget of \$24 million dollars.

City of Milwaukee, Department of Public Works (1991 – 2016)

Director of Operations (2009 – 2016)

- Serve as Deputy Commissioner of Public Works for the Mayor, Common Council and Commissioner of Public Works.
- Lead senior level management team responsible for the Milwaukee Water Works, Infrastructure Services, DPW Administration, Operations, and Parking Fund.
- Lead the land management inspection, permitting and demolition programs for the Operations Division.
- Direct policy, planning and implementation strategies for the DPW.
- Manage complex budgets and financial data.
- Assure alignment with Mayoral and Milwaukee Common Council directives.

Environmental Services Superintendent (2003 – 2009)

- Responsible for the administration, planning and fiscal oversight of the Forestry and Sanitation sections within the DPW.
- Managed snow and ice control operations, garbage collection, recycling, urban forest management, streetscaping, and boulevard programs.
- Oversight of approximately 600 employees with combined operating and capital budget of \$50 million dollars. Hire, train and motivate.

City Forester (1998 – 2003)

- Directed and led the administrative, planning and fiscal oversight for the Nation’s most progressive municipal urban forestry organization.
- Managed an \$11 million dollar budget, 200 employees, 160 acre nursery, and forestry maintenance facility.
- Created *Greening Milwaukee*, a non-profit tree planting organization. Created *Greening Milwaukee Schools* tree planting program, removing asphalt surfaces from Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) playgrounds.

City Forestry Services Manager/Deputy City Forester (1994 – 1998)

- Directed the field operations for the Nation’s most progressive municipal urban forestry organization.

- Responsible for the human resource activities for the Forestry section.
- Developed Arbor Day programs for MPS and area-wide parochial schools. Coordinated outreach and educational programs featuring “Woodsy the Owl” and “Smokey the Bear.”
- Co-authored *National Research Council – Forested Landscapes in Perspective*.

Forestry Operations Supervisor (1991 – 1994)

- Directed and coordinated tree maintenance activities, e.g., tree planting, maintenance and removal, research and development.
- Created training manuals for Forestry employees related to storm damage response and tree protection during road construction projects. Developed factsheets for residents regarding insect and plant disease identification and treatment.

City of St. Louis – Department of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry

Parks Superintendent (1989 – 1991)

- Implemented area-wide youth recreational programs.
- Directed and coordinated the grounds and tree maintenance activities in city parks, boulevards, and medians.
- Managed budget preparation, justification and monitoring.
- Set area-wide priorities consistent with Mayoral priorities.

Missouri Department of Conservation, St. Louis, Missouri Forestry Division

Resource Forester (1987 – 1989)

- Developed and presented technical assistance programs to municipalities, businesses, homeowners, and loggers regarding urban tree, landscape maintenance and Forestry practices.
- Managed “Tree City USA” a City, Town and Village Urban Forestry outreach program fostered by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS

The Water Council (2015 – Present)

Serve as board member for The Water Council, a water sector business organization working to establish Milwaukee as the global center for freshwater research, innovation, education, and business development.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Board Member (2008 – Present) Board Chair (2013 – 2016)

Serve as one of seven board members who set guidance on statewide policies impacting forestry, fisheries, wildlife, air, water and stewardship programs. Ensure that departmental policies are implemented equally among residents, associations, businesses, and tribal governments. Appointed by the Governor of the State of Wisconsin to serve as Chairman of the Board for a three-year term.

Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), Commissioner (2000 – 2009) Commission Chair (2007 – 2009)

Served as one of eleven Commissioners responsible for the review and oversight of Wisconsin’s largest wastewater and storm water management agency, with a combined operation, maintenance and capital budget of approximately \$265 million.

Wisconsin Center District, Board of Directors (1997 – 2000)

Served as one of fifteen board members and contributed expertise in strategic capital development and construction of additional facilities. Our Board created the capital program for the construction of The Milwaukee Theater.

HONORS / AWARDS / MEMBERSHIPS

Wisconsin Conservation Leader of the Year, UW Stevens Point (2016)
Co-Chair, Mayor Tom Barrett's Green Team (2009 - Present)
Business Journal Forty under Forty Award Winner (1998)
Inaugural National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (1993 - 1996)
National Urban Forester Medal of Honor (1992)