



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MCDOT)

# Strategic Communications Manager

## THE COMMUNITY

Montgomery County, located adjacent to Washington, DC, has over one million residents and is the most populous county in the State of Maryland. The County is also the most diverse in the State and ranks among the top ten most diverse counties in the nation. Montgomery County is home to many major U.S. government offices, scientific research and learning centers, and business campuses.

On the border of the nation's capital, Montgomery County is Maryland's most populous and one of its most affluent jurisdictions. Located on the western border of the nation's capital and encompassing 507 square miles, Montgomery County has a 2018 estimated population of 1,052,567. With a variety of cities, towns, and urban districts, several incorporated communities are located within Montgomery County, including Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Gaithersburg, Germantown, Potomac, Rockville (the county seat), and Silver Spring.

Many families seeking a high quality of life and excellent schools are attracted to the County for its employment offerings, livable neighborhoods, safe communities, inclusion, and diversity. The population of Montgomery County is diverse, well-educated, and affluent, with a median household income of \$99,763. The County's workforce is the most educated in the nation with the highest percentage of workers over age 25 holding advanced degrees. Higher education is exemplified within the County by John Hopkins University's Montgomery County campus, Montgomery College, and the University of Maryland – University College Shady Grove, creating a thriving center for advanced educational opportunities. Advanced medical centers include Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the National Institutes of Health.

The most rapid growth within the County's population is in the minority community, increasing from 27 percent of the total population in 1990 to 42 percent in 2010. Almost half of Maryland's Hispanic and Latino residents reside in Montgomery County and 30% of its residents are foreign-born.

The County's public school district is the largest in Maryland and in the top 20 largest school districts nationwide. Its 199 schools, 32 of which are National Blue-Ribbon Schools, serve 165,000 students.



### A More Equitable and Inclusive Montgomery County

Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich has outlined seven priority outcomes for the county's future:

- Thriving Youth and Families
- A Growing Economy
- A Greener County
- Easier Commutes
- A More Affordable and Welcoming County
- Safe Neighborhoods
- Effective, Sustainable Government

To learn more, go to: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov)

## COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The County Government is composed of the Executive and Legislative branches. The Executive Branch implements and enforces Montgomery County's laws and provides executive direction to the government. Its chief executive officer is the County Executive. There are over 30 executive branch departments and agencies that help to deliver services to more than one million county residents. Montgomery County is proud of the services it offers. The County Council members and the County Executive serve four-year terms.

Montgomery County has a strong tradition of prudent fiscal management and holds the highest bond rating from each of the three major credit rating agencies. The County has a mandatory balanced budget and develops a six-year financial plan as part of its annual operating budget development process. For FY2021, the Montgomery County Government operating budget, including debt service, is \$2.61 billion and has a \$13.0 billion capital budget. The total budget including the school district is \$5.8 billion.

## THE DEPARTMENT

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is committed to delivering a first-rate, multimodal transportation system that Montgomery County needs. We ensure that the County has a well-functioning, balanced transportation system that uses our roads more efficiently and supports more walking, bicycling and transit use. We build and maintain the transportation infrastructure; reduce traffic congestion; increase mobility; improve pedestrian, bicyclist and vehicle safety; provide transit and alternative transportation services; and promote access to our central business districts. MCDOT's mission is to move people and connect places with the best transportation choices and services.

To learn more visit:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot/>

## THE POSITION

MCDOT is seeking a Strategic Communications Manager to oversee all aspects of the department's strategic communications for internal and external audiences. The Manager proactively keeps MCDOT in the public's eye by promoting the department's accomplishments in a variety of ways; proactively and reactively advises senior managers on high profile and sensitive issues; and manages communications responses with the media, social media, and the public. The Manager will develop and implement a short-term and long-term strategic communications plan with the goal of further refining MCDOT's brand, messaging and marketing and take the Department's efforts to the next level.

This is a senior level staff position with the MCDOT Director's Office that reports to the department's Deputy Director and provides direct support to the Department Director and Deputy Directors, Division Chiefs and senior staff. The successful candidate must possess tact; political acumen; creativity in problem solving; a highly collaborative style that positively builds relationships; high energy and maturity. The Manager should have the ability to lead, serve as a unifying force and position communications at both the strategic and tactical levels. This position supervises up to 3 staff positions who work on a variety of public outreach programs and community-service events, MCDOT's website redesign and maintenance, and other related duties.

### Key responsibilities for the Strategic Communications Manager:

- Works closely with MCDOT's senior management group to establish and implement a strategic communications plan that will guide consistent communications and public relations messages that articulate the County Executive's and MCDOT's vision, mission, and strategic goals for transportation.
- Establishes and fosters productive relationships with key internal and external stakeholders, such as policymakers, the media, advocacy groups, the public and others, as well as tap into existing talent and identify new strengths on the team.



- Manages MCDOT's brand and image by implementing a communications strategy to proactively create a more positive image of the Department by preserving MCDOT's brand and aggressively enhancing MCDOT's reputation when responding to incidents or crises.
- Enhances MCDOT's community and public relations, social media presence and department education/outreach campaigns to include developing print and electronic marketing and promotional materials including, newsletters, brochures, press releases and annual reports.
- Oversees and maintains the departmental website to include a redesign and creating new content to ensure the website remains user-friendly, timely and comprehensive. Coordinate with division staff to develop and implement a consistent "one MCDOT" message on all social media platforms.
- Manages departmental media relations by working closely with the County's Public Information Office and serves as the media spokesperson for the department to include writing all press releases, speeches and talking points; identifying press-worthy activities; helping organize press events; and establishes and maintains relationships with local reporters and media representatives.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate shall have a strong understanding of local government and successful experience developing and implementing communications strategies. This visionary leader must have proven strategic planning, decision making, analyzing, and problem-solving skills; excellent written, verbal, social media and website content communication skills; demonstrated public relations, community, strategic and media communications success in a complex and dynamic environment; and exceptional collaborative and interpersonal skills. This role requires a candidate to advocate a positive and pro-active message and presence on behalf of MCDOT, along with prior experience presenting policies and rationales for action, including high-profile, politically sensitive issues, to stakeholders, community leaders, business groups, the general public, elected officials and others. Experience in transportation programs, projects and issues, while not a requirement, is highly preferred.



As a manager/supervisor of unionized employees, this position has a responsibility for fostering a positive labor relations environment based on mutual trust, respect, and cooperation. This position requires the ability to attend meetings or perform work at locations outside the office, which occasionally occur on weeknights or weekends.

## EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university. An equivalent combination of education or experience may be substituted. At least five years of progressively responsible professional experience in communications and outreach/public engagement. Experience in Communications including developing and implementing communications strategies, marketing/outreach, and written, verbal, social media and website content communication skills is imperative for this role. Experience working in the field of transportation is highly desired.

Candidates considered for this position, may be required to provide a portfolio of writing samples, including strategic communications plans, press releases, social media posts, annual reports, policy statements, responses to inquiries on controversial topics, marketing campaign plans and/or materials and other appropriate work samples.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The annual salary range for this position is **\$79,196 - \$144,751** and is complemented by a comprehensive benefits package, which includes a wide variety of health and wellness plans, life insurance, flexible schedules, and time off for work-life balance.

## APPLICATION PROCESS AND RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE

First review of resumes will begin on **January 29, 2021**. To be considered for this exceptional career opportunity, please submit your resume, cover letter, and a list of six work-related references (who will **not** be contacted without prior notice). To apply visit: <https://executivesearch.cpshr.us/JobDetail?ID=1735>.

For additional information about this position please contact:



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Resumes will be screened in relation to the criteria outlined in this brochure. Candidates deemed to have the most relevant qualifications will be invited to interview with the consultant in mid-February, with subsequent interviews with the County. Media checks will be performed on all screened candidates, and a comprehensive reference and background check will be performed on final candidates.

