A FUN AND EXCITING OPPORTUNITY
The City of Oakland, California is conducting a national search for the position of Director of Parks and Recreation. A proven parks and recreation professional with top-notch administrative skills and a sense of humor will thrive in this large, complex organization. This creative and resourceful Director will have successful experience leading a large organization and operating high-quality programs that meet the broad needs, demands and lifestyles of a diverse and dynamic community. The Director will join a newly energized executive leadership team committed to providing excellent services to the entire Oakland community.

Oakland’s Parks & Recreation Department (OPR) believes that communities thrive when they play with a purpose. Our purpose is to Expose, Enlighten, Empower and Encourage Educational Excellence through Recreational Experiences. The successful candidate will have an abiding commitment to this philosophy, enthusiasm for parks and recreation programs and a deep appreciation for the value of these services to all communities throughout Oakland.

THE CITY AND COMMUNITY
OF OAKLAND
The City of Oakland is a dynamic city with 50 distinct and eclectic neighborhoods, 17 commercial districts, an increasingly vibrant downtown, a strong economic base, world-class arts and entertainment venues, superior cultural and recreational amenities, and a rich multicultural heritage. Oakland is the eighth largest city in California with an estimated population of 413,775 (2014 U.S. Census Bureau). The city serves as the administrative seat of Alameda County and the center of commerce and international trade for Northern California. Oakland is one of the most diverse and ethnically integrated urban cities in the nation, with major representation from Hispanic and Latino, Asian, African-American, and Caucasian residents speaking over 125 languages and dialects. The city is also home to the third-largest LGBT community among the 50 largest U.S. cities. Oaklanders love their city and Oakland enjoys a tradition of working closely with the entire community, and truly represents an ideal place in which to live, work and play.

Oakland’s landscape is a picturesque mix of coastline to the west and rolling hills to the east, which provide unparalleled views of the San Francisco Bay. Oakland has more parks and open space per capita than any other city in the Bay Area. Oakland is at the heart of the East Bay Regional Park District, a splendid system of 65 parks covering more than 119,000 acres and 29 regional hiking trails stretching 1,200 miles in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Jack London Square, the waterfront area, and beautiful Lake Merritt are destinations enjoyed by both residents and tourists. Sports enthusiasts enjoy year round professional events including the Raiders, Warriors, and A’s.

Oakland has emerged as a major economic force in the region. As a center for international trade, the Port of Oakland is the nation’s fifth busiest container port. The Oakland International Airport is served by 12 major domestic and international airlines. Oakland is home to several corporate headquarters including Clorox, Kaiser Permanente, Pandora, Sungevity, Cost Plus World Market, Dryer’s Grand Ice Cream, and Revolution Foods. Uber recently announced its purchase of an office building and will locate 2,000-3,000 employees in Oakland. High quality educational opportunities abound as six major universities, including U.C. Berkeley, are within a 40-mile radius.

CITY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE
The Mayor is elected at-large for a four-year term, and is head of the executive branch. Oakland’s legislative body is the City Council and is comprised of eight Council members. One Council member is elected “at-large” while the other seven Council members represent specific districts. All Council members are elected to serve four-year terms.

The Mayor appoints the City Administrator who is responsible for all city operations and is supported by two Assistant City Administrators. The City Administrator has overall responsibility for day-to-day administrative and fiscal operations of the city including hiring of Department Directors.

OAKLAND PARKS & RECREATION (OPR)
OPR is a 105-year old organization that operates a 2,500 acre park system of 140 parks representing 10% of the city’s land area and 36 recreation facilities. Additionally, OPR has contractual relationships with the Oakland Zoo, Children’s Fairyland, Peralta Hacienda, Chabot Space and Science Center and three golf courses. The FY 2015-16 operating budget of approximately $26 million includes 229 full-time equivalents (FTE) as well as pass-through monies to partners. The City of Oakland’s Public Works Department provides for the maintenance of the OPR parks and facilities. Capital improvement projects are funded by a variety of sources and generally managed by Oakland Public Works. OPR has an eleven

140 Parks
66 Ball Fields
44 Tennis Courts
38 Recreation Facilities
  24 Recreation Centers
  5 Pools
  2 Boating Centers
  2 Discovery Science Centers
  The Studio One Art Center
  The East Oakland Sports Complex with Indoor Water Park
  Digital Arts and Culinary Academy Center
  Malonga Casquelourd Center
  An Inclusion Center with 3 Extension Programs
14 Rental Venues
17 Community Gardens
5 Fenced Dog Play Areas,
  22 Dog Friendly Parks
3 Golf Courses
2 Skate Parks

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member Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) appointed by the Mayor and City Council. PRAC serves in an advisory capacity and makes recommendations to the Mayor and Council regarding policies, planning and program priorities, usage of city’s parks, recreation facilities, and open space, as well as providing an opportunity for community input.

OPR is fortunate to have the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation. The foundation is a registered non-profit that supports the department financially and with in-kind services, providing scholarships for youth programs and leveraging private funds and grants for capital improvement projects. The foundation serves as an advocate for recreation programs and parks in Oakland, as well as a source of volunteers.

OPR takes pride in its world famous Wildlife Refuge, beautiful gardens at Lake Merritt, the Morcom Rose Garden, and the 50-acre Dunsmuir Hellman Historic Estate with its landmarked Historic Mansion Carriage House and stunning grounds. Oakland residents and visitors are able to discover an array of other hidden jewels ranging from OPR’s largest park – the 500-acre Joaquin Miller Park where joggers enjoy 10 trails featuring spectacular views of the entire Bay Area – to the smallest 0.1 acre Lazear Park where energetic neighborhood children find solace in play. OPR is also home to the Digital Arts & Culinary Academy Center and the Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts with 72 single room occupancy apartments available for rent to local artists. OPR offers fun for everyone.

OPR’s goal is to create a culture of innovation, best practices, and service excellence in all aspects of its operations. Services offered citywide and year-round include dance, cultural arts, healthy snacks, and after-school study hours. In addition to the traditional youth-focused after-school programs, an abundance of captivating opportunities is available for adults and families. OPR is committed to extending recreation beyond just physical activity by focusing on programs which cultivate personal growth and skill development in a safe and healthy environment while simultaneously fostering community ownership. OPR offers a multitude of special events, job training programs, hiring fairs, youth workshops, and healing centers. OPR services over 95,000 enrolled participants and over 900,000 drop-in users annually.

**DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

The Director of Parks and Recreation is an at-will management-level position reporting to the City Administrator with day-to-day reporting to an Assistant City Administrator. The Director has responsibility for the overall management of the department and the parks and recreation system for the city. The Director is the key city official charged with ensuring that Oakland’s parks and recreation program, services, and facilities are “best in class” and meet the varied needs of the Oakland community.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Director of OPR is responsible for planning, organizing, and administering a large complex and diverse urban parks and recreation system. The Director is committed to delivering quality services to all residents in a fair and equitable way that enriches the quality of life for Oakland residents.

Specific responsibilities include:

1. Develop and implement long and short range strategic plans and system-wide goals that are inclusive, equitable, and based on accountability and performance measures.
2. Stress public safety as a core value. Ensure that all parks, facilities, and open spaces are safe, well-maintained and inviting while being accessible to a broad array of constituents.
3. Inspire and create an internal culture of creativity and accountability, and enhancing effective relationships with a wide array of public and private partners.
4. Develop and manage the department budget, ensuring implementation of proper internal controls and sound fiscal management.
5. Direct the priorities, work plan, people, and resource allocation within the department including hiring, staff development and training.
6. Work closely with the Oakland Public Works Department to ensure that capital improvement projects, parks maintenance, and facilities maintenance efforts are properly coordinated and completed.
7. Develop a comprehensive long range capital improvement program for parks and park facilities.
8. Identify and build upon non-General Fund revenue sources through public-private partnerships, sponsorships, and grant opportunities.
9. Develop a comprehensive training program for employees at all levels.
TOP PRIORITIES

• Assess, recommend, and implement strategic organizational changes that will take the department’s management infrastructure and operations to an enhanced level of service.

• Foster a collaborative and innovative department culture that effectively engages other city departments and stakeholders.

• Develop fund raising strategies aimed at securing programmatic and capital improvement project funding from new and existing sources.

• Begin an OPR strategic planning process that engages all segments of the community in establishing a blueprint for future OPR programs and services, prioritizes the needs of the community, and optimizes the department budget.

IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will be a bold visionary leader with outstanding people and management skills. The ideal candidate will be able to build and maintain an effective team, as well as have the skills to develop, mentor, motivate and hold people accountable. The successful candidate will possess the sophistication in government finance and operations to maintain a fiscally responsible department, be committed to diversity, possess excellent oral and written communication skills, and be quick to understand how the city functions and the department’s role within the city. The ideal candidate will be a confident, collaborative, and decisive leader with good judgement, strong professional presence, and an inspiring demeanor.

The candidate will have:

• A passion for parks, recreation, and play;

• A set of values characterized by a commitment to innovation, equity, compassion for people, service excellence, and responsive leadership;

• Extensive knowledge in parks and recreation operations in a large, complex urban environment;

• Experience directing park and recreation programs, park and open space planning, and park and facility maintenance;

• Political savvy and sensitivity to the interests of a wide-range of stakeholder groups, strategic partners, elected officials, and administrative colleagues;

• Organizational and fiscal management skills noted for transparency, fairness, and clarity;

• A leadership style that is decisive yet flexible and authentic; and

• Emotional maturity, personal and professional integrity, and a sense of humor.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Any combination of education and experience that is equivalent to the following minimum qualifications is acceptable:

Education:
Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in public administration, social science, recreation, park management, urban planning or closely related field. A Master’s degree is highly desirable.

Experience:
Five years of responsible management experience in parks and recreation administration, conservation, planning or other community focused services, or a closely related field including two years of supervisory experience. Public sector experience is highly desirable.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The salary for this position is $125,185 to $187,778 depending on experience and qualifications. (A salary ordinance authorizing a 4% increase is on the City Council agenda for December 8, 2015).

The City of Oakland also offers an attractive benefits package that includes participation in CalPERS (California Public Employees’ Retirement System) with a pension formula of 2.5% at 55 (for Classic PERS members) and 2% @ 62 for new PERS members. Employees currently contribute 8% of pre-tax wages.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To be considered, please submit your resume and cover letter with current salary information electronically to dir.opr@thehawkinscompany.com by January 18, 2016. Resumes received by January 18, 2016 will receive first consideration. The position is open until filled.

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For additional information or questions, please contact Bill Hawkins at 310-348-8800, bill@thehawkinscompany.com or Ms. Brett Byers at 323-403-8279, brett@thehawkinscompany.com

The City of Oakland is an equal opportunity employer, values workforce diversity and seeks to create an environment and culture that embraces employee differences. All qualified applicants are considered in accordance with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination on the base of race, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, marital status or veteran status or any other legally protected status.

Select photos by Greg Linhares, City of Oakland.