



OAKLAND
PARKS AND RECREATION
FOUNDATION

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Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation

Executive Director

The Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation seeks a strategic, community-engaged Executive Director to grow its impact and investment in Oakland's 130+ city parks and expand equitable access to recreation and civic culture citywide.



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Organization Background

This is the Moment

OPRF and Oakland Parks are at an important moment of opportunity, urgency, and momentum. There is vital work to be done!

The Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation (OPRF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports parks and recreation for everyone in Oakland. As a trusted nonprofit partner to the City of Oakland, OPRF works with local groups, neighbors, civic and cultural leaders, and donors to expand equitable access across a system of more than 130 city parks, grounded in a simple conviction: when parks are well maintained and inclusive, they bring joy, connection, and safety to every Oakland neighborhood.



All Image are Courtesy of Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation

OPRF traces its roots to 1981, when residents were spurred into action by the sharp decline in public park funding following California Proposition 13. Since then, various leaders and organizations have worked together to keep Oakland parks open, beautiful, and accessible.

After the passage of Prop 13, Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation stepped in to help the city develop new parks and renovate tot lots, playing fields, and recreation centers. The Friends went on to raise millions of dollars for Oakland's park system. In 2002, a second group of residents formed the Oakland Parks Coalition to surface emerging park issues and advocate for improved standards of maintenance in city parks. The two organizations merged in 2015 to become OPRF, adding park stewardship and maintenance advocacy to a portfolio of capital projects and fiscal sponsorship, and creating a single citywide voice for Oakland's parks.

Today, OPRF works across four program areas—partnerships and fiscal sponsorship, advocacy, youth scholarships, and community stewardship and capital projects—in close partnership with Oakland’s Parks, Recreation and Youth Development (OPRYD) and Public Works departments, raising private funds that leverage public investment while the City continues to operate the parks.

OPRF is a lean, nimble organization with an outsized impact. It is grassroots at its core, with a team of seven employees and several fractional contractors, a 12-member board, and recent annual budgets above \$2M. OPRF enters its next chapter with deep community trust, a proven programmatic platform, and significant room to grow the resources flowing into Oakland’s parks.



Focus Areas

- ◆ **Partnerships and fiscal sponsorship.** Fiscal sponsorship, back-office support, and park activation assistance for more than 25 community groups producing athletic, cultural, and arts programming citywide, a primary vehicle through which grassroots park energy becomes funded, sustained work.
- ◆ **Advocacy.** Amplifying community voices for clean, safe, well-funded parks and supporting civic engagement around bond measures and inclusive public planning, informed by the citywide parks user survey.
- ◆ **Youth scholarships.** Equitable access to OPRYD camps and enrichment for up to 600 children annually, including Town Camp and school-break scholarships, STEAM enrichment, the Anne Woodell Swim Fund, and the Counselor-in-Training program, a teen leadership track leading to paid counselor and lifeguard roles.
- ◆ **Community stewardship and capital projects.** Hundreds of trees planted in deep East and West Oakland advancing the City’s Urban Forest Plan, plus park improvements including playground renovations at Lincoln Square, Lafayette Square, and Holly Mini Park, the Courtland Creek restoration, the Brookdale Park community design, and a fully funded renovation at Tyrone Carney Park.

Position Overview

The Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation seeks a strategic and community-focused leader with a proven track record in fundraising, financial oversight, organizational capacity building, and strategic communications. The Executive Director will build on OPRF's history and standing in Oakland and secure OPRF's next chapter of impact across parks, recreation, and civic culture citywide.



Reporting to the Board Chair and accountable to the full Board of Directors, the Executive Director oversees a team of seven staff with three direct reports across program, development, and operations, as well as fractional staff supporting the areas of human resources and bookkeeping. The role provides strategic leadership across all operational areas, aligns day-to-day activity with OPRF's mission, stewards resources, cultivates partnerships, and advances impact across OPRF's program areas. This role serves as both the public face of OPRF and the internal leader responsible for building a strong, mission-aligned team and a sustainable, well-run organization.

The next Executive Director will inherit a culture built on care, accountability, and deep community trust, and will be expected to steward and strengthen it. Success in this role depends on strong relationships with the Board, City

agencies and elected officials, as well as the more than 25 community groups OPRF sponsors fiscally, donors and institutional funders, and residents who know their neighborhood parks better than anyone. The Executive Director must be equally comfortable making the case for a major gift, weighing a strategic revenue opportunity, testifying at a City Council meeting, and standing in a park on a Saturday morning with a volunteer crew.

The Opportunity

This is an opportunity for a leader who believes parks are essential public infrastructure, and who wants to translate four decades of grassroots credibility into a larger and more durable flow of resources for Oakland's parks and the people who use them.



Responsibilities

Leadership and Organizational Strategy

Provide visionary leadership that aligns OPRF's strategy, programs, and operations with its mission to support Oakland's parks, recreation, and civic culture.

Partner closely with the Board of Directors to develop, refine, and execute OPRF's long-term strategy and annual operating priorities.

Build and sustain a collaborative, inclusive, and high-performing work environment grounded in equity, accountability, and shared purpose.

Translate organizational strategy into clear goals, plans, and decisions across program, development, and operations functions.

Champion organizational learning and adaptive leadership in response to community needs and shifting civic priorities.

Fundraising and External Relations

Lead OPRF's overall fundraising strategy, including major gifts, institutional and foundation giving, government funding, individual donors, and event-based revenue.

Cultivate, steward, and grow relationships with donors, foundations, public agencies, and corporate partners.

Hire, support, and grow development staff; provide direct leadership on revenue strategy and execution.

Serve as OPRF's primary spokesperson with media, civic leaders, partners, and the broader Oakland community.

Strengthen OPRF's role as a connector across its program portfolio, bringing private resources to leverage public investment in parks.

Collaboration is Essential

OPRF staff and board collaborate with the City and partners to leverage resources and create more together.



Financial Oversight

Develop and manage OPRF's annual budget in partnership with the board, finance team, and program leadership.

Ensure timely, transparent, and accurate financial reporting; oversee the annual audit and engagement with audit partners.

Steward long-term financial sustainability through reserves planning, revenue diversification, and risk management.

Ensure compliance with all applicable financial, tax, and regulatory requirements, including those tied to fiscal sponsorship.

Provide the board with the financial information and analysis needed for sound governance and strategic decision making.

Program Management and Impact

Oversee OPRF's program portfolio, ensuring strategic coherence and impact across all initiatives.

Ensure programs are well designed, well resourced, and aligned with mission, grant requirements, and community priorities.

Support program leaders in measuring outcomes, refining strategy, and elevating community-driven impact.

Champion innovation in program design and delivery while maintaining strong operational discipline.

Maintain alignment between OPRF programs and the City of Oakland's planning and policy frameworks where relevant.

Communications and Advocacy

Lead OPRF's external communications strategy, including brand voice, public messaging, and community engagement.

Represent OPRF at public events, City Council meetings, community forums, and coalition spaces.

Partner with the Board and staff to advocate for parks, recreation, and equitable public space across Oakland.

Ensure consistent, values-aligned messaging across newsletters, social media, press, and donor communications.

Keep the Board, staff, and key partners informed of significant decisions, opportunities, and risks.

Team Development and Culture

Lead a small, high-performing team across program, development, and operations functions.

Advance OPRF's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice (DEIBJ) through policy, practice, and program leadership.

Invest in staff growth through mentorship, professional development, and clear performance frameworks.

Cultivate a workplace culture rooted in equity, belonging, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Model collaborative leadership and clear, consistent communication across all levels of the organization.

Establish and refine operational systems, goal-setting processes, and feedback structures that strengthen staff performance, consistency, and accountability across the organization.

We Need You!

OPRF's next leader inherits an incredible legacy, with room to create, evolve, and ensure impact across the city.

The Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation seeks an exceptional leader who pairs strategic vision with the agency to pursue it, along with strong relational skills, and a deep commitment to Oakland. This is an extraordinary opportunity for someone who thrives at the intersection of philanthropy, public agency partnership, and grassroots community work, and who wants to grow the resources and reputation of an organization that punches well above its weight.



The ideal candidate will be able to look at OPRF and see what it is ready to become, and then take the initiative to build toward it. A credible fundraiser and a trusted convener, they can sit with a major donor, a City department head, and a neighborhood park steward in the same week and be equally at home in each conversation, deepening those relationships to fuel OPRF's next stage of growth. They are politically savvy without being political, and able to advocate effectively with elected officials while maintaining OPRF's standing as a partner to the City. They bring disciplined financial and operational judgment to a lean organization, and they lead with the care and accountability that OPRF's staff, board, and community partners have come to expect.

Desired Experience



Baseline Qualifications

Ten or more years of progressive leadership experience in the nonprofit, public, or philanthropic sector, including five or more years in senior leadership or executive roles; experience in nonprofit management, public administration, urban planning, public policy, or a related field is preferred.

Proven fundraising track record across major gifts, institutional giving, and individual donor cultivation, with experience leading or supporting development staff.

Experience reporting to and partnering with a Board of Directors, including governance, strategic planning, and committee work.

Strong financial management experience, including annual budgeting, audit oversight, and long-term sustainability planning.

Demonstrated commitment to equity, environmental justice, and community-centered leadership; experience in Oakland is strongly preferred.

Excellent communication and public representation skills with the ability to engage diverse stakeholders, including donors, public officials, community leaders, and partner organizations.

Leadership and Strategic Thinking

Ability to set and communicate a clear organizational direction, then translate it into priorities, plans, and decisions a small team can execute.

Experience leading an organization through a period of transition, growth, or repositioning.

Entrepreneurial mindset with the judgment to identify opportunities, sequence them realistically, and say no to the ones that do not serve the mission.

Comfort operating at both altitudes, strategic leadership and hands-on engagement, as a lean organization requires.

Sound instincts for risk, reputation, and the stewardship of long-held community trust.

Demonstrated ability to build the operational infrastructure a growing organization needs, including clear roles, workflows, and performance accountability, without adding unnecessary bureaucracy to a lean team.

Skilled at building trust and alignment with a governing board, including committee structures, board development, and evolving governance practice, while maintaining clear lines of accountability between board and staff.



Fundraising and Development

Demonstrated success raising significant funds for mission-driven organizations, including major gifts, foundation grants, corporate partnerships, and government funding.

Experience diversifying revenue and reducing dependence on any single source or one-time gift.

Ability to make a compelling case for philanthropic investment in public infrastructure and to leverage private dollars against public commitments.

Comfort serving as the organization's primary relationship manager with major donors and institutional funders.

Experience building or strengthening development infrastructure, including pipeline, systems, and stewardship practice, alongside development staff.

Experience with government, institutional, foundation, and private grants and grant writing.

Financial and Organizational Management

Strong financial management skills and fluency in nonprofit fiscal accountability, including budgeting, audit, reserves planning, and board-level financial reporting.

Understanding of fiscal sponsorship and the compliance, service, and relationship obligations that come with hosting community projects at scale.

Track record of designing and implementing operational systems, workflows, performance metrics, decision making structures, and accountability frameworks that measurably improve staff effectiveness and organizational output, particularly within small or resource-constrained teams.

Experience recruiting, developing, and retaining staff, and building a culture where people grow and stay.

Working knowledge of public-private project delivery, grant compliance, and government contracting or agency agreements.

Community Engagement, Partnership, and Advocacy

Exceptional relationship builder able to cultivate authentic, lasting partnerships with city agencies, elected officials, community organizations, funders, and residents.

Strong track record as a convener and connector who brings stakeholders together and facilitates productive collaboration across differences.

Experience with advocacy, civic engagement, ballot or bond measure campaigns, or public policy work at the local level.

Skill as a public communicator with the ability to speak persuasively to donors, City Council, press, and in neighborhood meetings alike.

Demonstrated commitment to equity and belonging in practice, and cultural competency in working across diverse communities.

Knowledge of parks, recreation, urban greening, youth development, and/or public space, or the curiosity and humility to learn the field quickly.

Change is Happening Everywhere

OPRF is helping catalyze change in parks big and small.
See some of our recent work at oaklandparks.org!

Compensation

This is a full-time, exempt, benefit-eligible position. The anticipated annual salary range is \$150,000–\$165,000. The range provided is an estimate and will be evaluated on an individual basis, taking into consideration the candidate’s knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and education.

OPRF offers a competitive benefits package, including:

- ◆ Health, dental, and vision coverage through Kaiser Permanente paid 100% for employee; dependents can be added at employee expense
- ◆ 403(b) retirement account via Human Interest
- ◆ 41 days time off accrual inclusive of sick time, vacation/PTO, federal and California mandated holidays, and personal days
- ◆ Learning and development allowance
- ◆ Professional meetings and society membership dues and registration reimbursement

Location and Requirements

OPRF is based in the Adams Point neighborhood of Oakland, California, near Lake Merritt. This is a hybrid position and the Executive Director will be based locally, with regular in-person presence required for meetings with City staff and elected officials, donors, community partners, board members, and staff.

The role requires consistent presence in Oakland’s parks and neighborhoods and the flexibility to attend evening and weekend events, including City Council and commission meetings, community forums, volunteer workdays, and donor and fundraising events.

Oakland offers an exceptional quality of life. It is a diverse and civically engaged city with a strong cultural identity, a system of more than 130 parks, and a regional setting that pairs urban vitality with immediate access to natural spaces, shoreline, and open space.

To Apply

Please visit potrerogroup.com/oprf and select “Apply Here.” Applications should include a resume and a cover letter describing your qualifications that match the position criteria and what you will bring to the role.

Interested and qualified candidates should apply by October 16, 2026, for priority consideration. The position is open until filled.





Additional Information

More information on the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation can be found at oaklandparks.org.

For additional information regarding this opportunity, please contact Andrew Leider, Potrero Group Managing Director and Search Lead, at aleider@potrerogroup.com.

OPRF encourages you to apply even if your experience doesn't align perfectly with every qualification listed. Research shows that qualified candidates, including women and people from underrepresented backgrounds, may hesitate to apply unless they meet every stated requirement. If you are excited about this position and believe you are qualified and could contribute to the organization's future, we want to hear from you.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace. We welcome and encourage applications from candidates with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. As an equal opportunity employer, we will consider all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or any other legally protected status.



Potrero Group is honored to coordinate this search on behalf of the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation. We support innovative leaders and organizations making a difference in the world with strategic planning, facilitation, organizational development, and board and executive search services. We are committed to equitable and inclusive practices in all of our work.

To join our mailing list or for more information, please visit PotreroGroup.com.