



**OLMSTED
PARKS**
CONSERVANCY

Search Conducted By



President & Chief Executive Officer

Olmsted Parks Conservancy seeks a dynamic, visionary President and CEO to lead the organization into its next chapter of partnership, impact and success.



Organization Background

Olmsted Parks Conservancy restores, enhances, and forever protects Louisville's Olmsted-designed parks and parkways, connecting nature and neighborhoods while strengthening the community's well-being. Its vision is to elevate its parks to bring the restorative power of nature to all.

Olmsted Parks Conservancy stewards a system of 17 parks and a network of 6 parkways in Louisville, KY, designed by the great American landscape architect Fredrick Law Olmsted. Olmsted Parks are special because of their intentional and thoughtful design and connection to the urban communities in which they exist. The parks give residents a sense of peace that comes from being wholly enveloped by nature and create a sense of belonging through everyday community connections.

Since 1989, Olmsted Parks Conservancy has been the strategic nonprofit partner of the City of Louisville and Louisville Parks and Recreation to care for these public treasures. Olmsted Parks Conservancy raises funds and advocates for investment, supports biodiversity and sustainability, and builds community in the parks. In its 35 years, the Conservancy has overseen more than \$60 million of

investment into Louisville's public parks and parkways. It has become a model for the rest of the country in what a successful public-private partnership can accomplish.

With a generous \$8 million donation, Olmsted Parks Conservancy acquired about 25 acres of land in December 2021. This acquisition marks the first significant expansion of Cherokee Park in Louisville, now called the Beargrass Preserve. With this acquisition, Olmsted Parks Conservancy will protect the property as park land in perpetuity, expanding the scope and impact of the Conservancy's strategy. The President and CEO will be instrumental in identifying a path forward on behalf of the Conservancy and the communities of Louisville.

What We Do



Stewardship: Protect, restore, and enhance natural areas in the Olmsted Parks system through ecological restoration, woodlands management, and horticulture.



Community Programming: Deepen connections between parks and people through thoughtful and intentional community programs.



Outreach and Advocacy: Center community voices through feedback from park users, neighborhood groups, and other key constituents on important park matters, allowing the Conservancy to better understand and address community needs.



Park Projects: Help fill a critical gap in funding for the Olmsted Parks system by providing an independent and dedicated source of strategic support and leadership.

Olmsted's Parks

Known as the "father of American landscape design," Frederick Law Olmsted professionalised landscape architecture and designed some of the most celebrated landmarks in the United States, including Central Park in New York, the Emerald Necklace in Boston, and the U.S. Capitol Grounds in Washington, D.C.

Through his work, Olmsted advanced the democratic value of public spaces. He believed that parks are for all people, and that nature has the capacity to unite communities and improve public health. His artistic parks offer beautiful and restorative scenery that are conducive to mental and physical well-being. His designs enhance and respect the natural scenery of a place while creating a respite from "the bustle and jar" of modern life.

Commissioned in 1891, Louisville's system of Olmsted-designed parks and connected tree-lined parkways represent the ultimate realization of the design principles that Olmsted had refined over his career, beginning with his winning design for New York City's Central Park. They incorporate graceful topography and alignments, ease and accessibility, balance of uses, expression of native character and use of native materials, separation of traffic modes, and subjugation of built elements to nature. Today, as in the past, these parks offer relaxation and promote physical health while providing spaces where people can come together to connect and create a stronger community.



Position Overview

The President and CEO will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Olmsted Parks Conservancy and advancing this already high-functioning nonprofit to new heights. This position will lead the execution of the Conservancy's strategic and master plans, upholding the organization's past while charting a vision for its future. This position will oversee a talented team of 15 staff and report to a diverse and engaged Board of Trustees. They will cultivate and maintain strong, supportive relationships with funders and government partners.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership

- Advance a strategic vision that aligns with the organization's mission and master plan to preserve, enhance, and maintain Olmsted-designed parks.
- Unify the community, park partners, and funders around a shared vision for the Olmsted park system through active listening and communication that builds trust, collegiality, and strong working relationships.
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant developments and trends in the field.

Staff Management

- Manage staff to ensure strategic goals are met through mentorship, staff development, metric development and tracking, and accountability for results.
- Build an inclusive, collaborative, and mission-driven organizational culture that reflects the values of the Conservancy.
- Recruit, retain, and mentor high-performing staff, providing opportunities for professional growth.
- Ensure sound human resources practices, including updated job descriptions and regular performance evaluations.



Fundraising

- Serve as the face of Olmsted Parks Conservancy's fundraising efforts and inspire support for its mission, including at fundraising events, conferences, and donor meetings.
- Work with the development staff, the board, and the Development Committee to create and implement a comprehensive fundraising plan to identify and deploy innovative fundraising practices that make the Conservancy a national leader in securing funds for public parks.
- Build and maintain relationships with high-net-worth individuals, foundations, and corporations.
- Support board members to leverage their networks and secure significant philanthropic gifts.



Government Relations and Public Partnerships

- Exhibit passion, vision, and accountability in relationship-building with key constituents and partners in public and private sectors—including, but not limited to Louisville Parks and Recreation, Metro Council, the Mayor's office, and various neighborhood organizations.
- Advocate for public policies and funding priorities that support the maintenance and enhancement of Olmsted-designed parks.
- Engage with local, state, and federal officials to promote the organization's mission and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.
- Foster a collaborative partnership with Louisville Parks and Recreation to align goals, priorities, and resources.
- Work closely with neighborhood groups, friends-of-parks organizations, volunteers, and other community organizations to ensure their voices are included in Conservancy initiatives and to advance shared goals.
- Foster relationships with historically underrepresented communities to promote equitable access and involvement by engaging respectfully and understanding their diverse cultural and historical ties to the parks.



Organizational Oversight

- Provide leadership in developing program, organizational and financial plans with the Board of Trustees and staff, and execute plans and policies authorized by the board.
- Identify, prioritize, and deliver high-impact park projects in a timely manner and in collaboration with key park partners.
- Ensure that restoration projects, educational initiatives, and community programming align with the Conservancy's mission and values.
- Oversee the development and execution of sound financial practices to ensure financial sustainability and transparency.
- Prepare an annual budget with input from the staff, Finance Committee, and the Board of Trustees and ensure the organization operates within budget guidelines.
- Ensure that adequate funds are available to permit the organization to carry out its work.



Public Communication

- Serve as the spokesperson and champion for the Conservancy.
- Effectively communicate with diverse constituents, including policymakers, funders, and community leaders and adapt messaging to resonate with the audience.
- Prepare and deliver professional and informative presentations and engage audiences at public events, community gatherings, and fundraising galas with clarity and enthusiasm.



Board Relations

- Collaborate with the Board of Trustees to ensure the organization fulfills its mission and complies with all legal and ethical standards.
- Foster trust and open communication with board members, ensuring alignment and partnership.
- Keep the board fully informed on the condition of the organization and all pertinent issues, including compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
- Collaborate with board members to leverage their expertise, networks, and resources for the Conservancy's benefit and help them understand and fulfill their governance responsibilities, including legal and fiduciary duties.
- Work with the board to identify, recruit, and orient new members who align with the organization's mission and needs.



Desired Experience and Competencies

Olmsted Parks Conservancy seeks a strategic, relationship-driven leader, advocate, and spokesperson. The ideal candidate will be skilled at driving nonprofit operational excellence and have demonstrated success in fundraising. They will have experience building trusted relationships with local government, connecting with the public, and fostering collaborative partnerships with other nonprofits. They will be able to inspire staff, work effectively with board members, and unify the community around a shared vision for the Olmsted park system. Above all, they will be dedicated to the mission of Olmsted Parks Conservancy and have a passion for public parks.

Fundraising

- Successful track record of designing and implementing a fundraising strategy that aligns with the organization's mission and long-term goals
- Experience in identifying, cultivating, and maintaining productive relationships with diverse funding streams, including foundations, government grants, individual donations, corporate sponsorships, and earned income
- Demonstrated success in building and sustaining relationships with high-net-worth individuals to secure transformational gifts



Leadership and Operational Oversight

- Positive, optimistic, personable, charismatic, and transparent
- Strong leadership skills to inspire, motivate, and mentor a diverse team, fostering a culture of collaboration, accountability, inclusion, camaraderie, and mutual respect
- Proficiency in managing day-to-day operations, overseeing budgets, staff, and programs to ensure alignment with the organization's strategic goals
- Strong financial acumen with the ability to oversee budgeting, forecasting, and financial planning to ensure fiscal responsibility, sustainability, and effectiveness

Strategic Vision

- Able to articulate a compelling and inclusive long-term vision for the organization that aligns with the legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted and the mission of preserving and enhancing parks
- Strategic foresight to identify opportunities and challenges, and drive innovation while maintaining a commitment to core values
- Demonstrated understanding of the needs, concerns, and priorities of diverse community members who use and value Olmsted parks
- Able to tactfully mediate competing interests with empathy, fostering a shared sense of ownership and stewardship among constituents while addressing disputes by focusing on mutually acceptable solutions
- Loves public parks and is deeply committed to the mission of Olmsted Parks Conservancy



Public Communication

- Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills
- Inspirational and motivating. Able to articulate the organization's vision, goals, and strategies in a way that resonates with diverse audiences
- A storyteller who can clearly convey the significance of the parks as historical, ecological, and cultural treasures, igniting passion and commitment in others



Government Relations and Public Partnerships

- Skilled at advocating for parks and public spaces as vital community assets, with experience influencing policy at local, state, or national levels
- Strong ability to build trusting relationships and work effectively with partners and constituents to achieve shared goals, including government officials, donors, staff, and community members
- Actively listen to feedback from partners, park users, and funders to guide decision making
- Experience in handling sensitive or controversial topics with tact, transparency and composure, ensuring relationships remain positive and productive



Compensation

This is a full-time, exempt, benefit-eligible position. The anticipated annual salary range for this position is \$175,000–\$190,000, commensurate with experience. Total compensation consists of a base salary plus a performance bonus.

Olmsted Parks Conservancy provides a comprehensive benefits package including 12 days of PTO, paid staff holidays, employer-supplemented health benefits package including 100% coverage of employee medical benefits, and a 401(k) retirement plan with up to 2% matching.

Location

This position will work from Olmsted Parks Conservancy's office in Louisville, KY. Periodic remote work from home is possible.

Start Date

May 2025

To Apply

Visit potrerogroup.com/opc to apply. 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 candidates should apply by **January 19, 2025** for priority consideration.



Additional Information

More information about Olmsted Parks Conservancy can be found at
olmstedparks.org

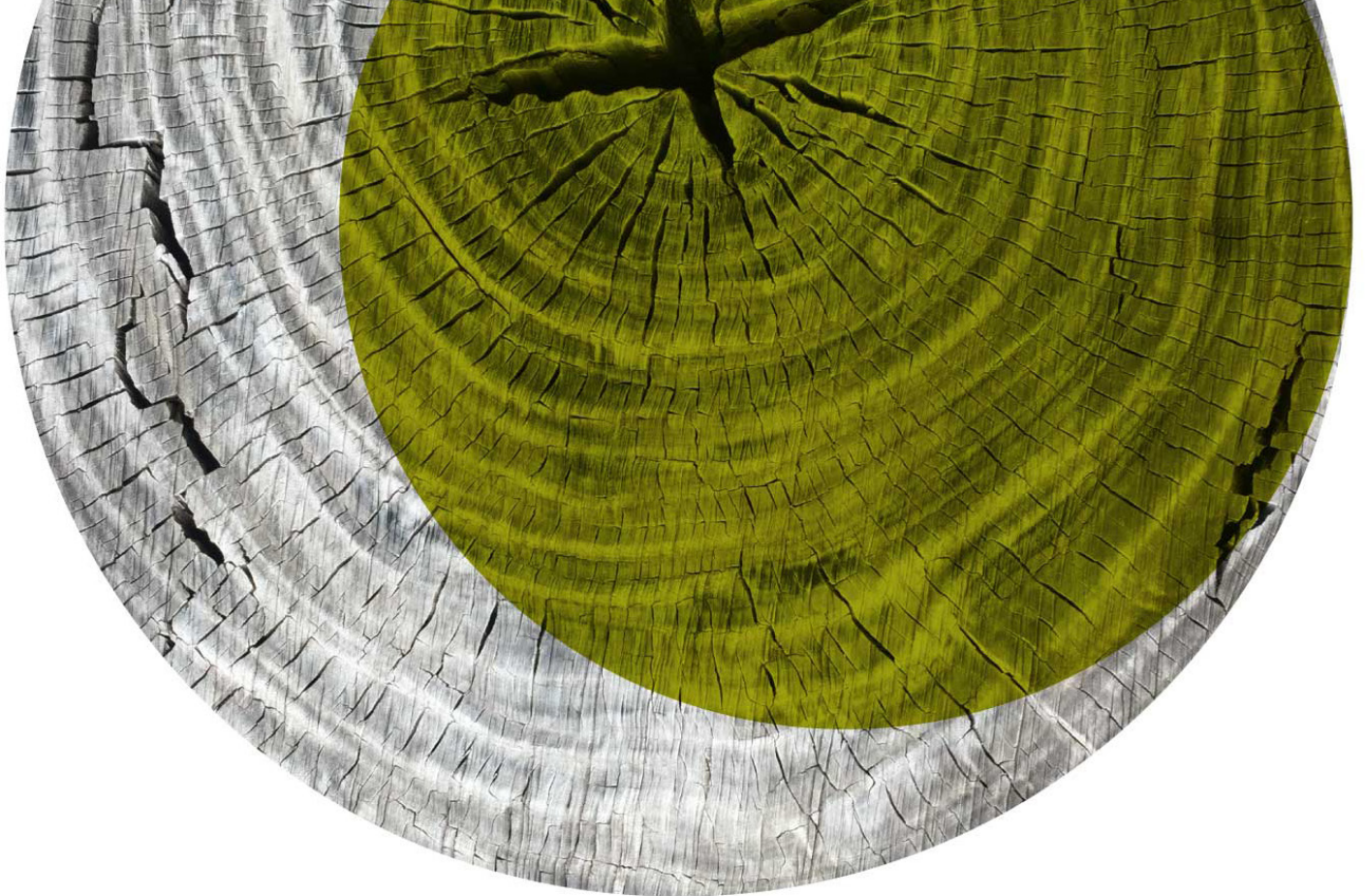
**For additional information regarding
this opportunity, please contact:**

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Olmsted Parks Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer

At Olmsted Parks Conservancy, we value diversity in all its forms for the same reason we value biodiversity in our parks: it makes us more resilient, sustainable, and vibrant. Olmsted Parks Conservancy provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits, discrimination and harassment of any type, without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.



Potrero Group is honored to coordinate this search on behalf of Olmsted Parks Conservancy. We support innovative leaders and organizations making a difference in the world by providing rigorous strategy and business planning, organizational effectiveness, and nuanced search services to mission-driven organizations. We are committed to equitable and inclusive practices in all of our work.

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