

THE PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK, ILLINOIS



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Voorhees Associates, LLC is pleased to announce the recruitment and selection process for the Park District of Oak Park's Executive Director. This brochure provides background information on the Park District of Oak Park, its organization and service area. Candidates interested in applying for the position should submit their résumé and cover letter along with contact information for five work-related references, by February 10, 2012 to: www.VoorheesAssociates.com/current-positions.

Importantly, this Profile will be used as a guide in the recruitment process, providing specific criteria by which applications will be screened and individuals selected for final interview and appointment consideration. This recruitment is being conducted on an open, impartial, local, regional, and nationwide basis, encouraging applications from all persons wishing to compete for the position. All inquiries relating to the recruitment and selection process for the Executive Director position are to be directed to the attention of the consultants working with the Park District of Oak Park:

Gregory Ford, Vice President
Terrence Porter, Vice President



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Deerfield, Illinois 60015

TEL: 847-580-4246

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Formal applications should be submitted to:
voorheesassociates.com/current-positions

PROFESSIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Park District of Oak Park (population 53,000) is an independent suburban community located nine miles west of downtown Chicago. It is a fully developed, four-square mile, mature, historically significant, multi-cultural community. A five-member elected Park Board governs the Park District. The Park Board of Commissioners is seeking a highly qualified Executive Director to lead its organization of over 50 full-time employees and 300 seasonal and temporary employees. The Park District has a \$13.24 million operating budget and a current capital budget of approximately \$6.5 million. Numerous recreational facilities, including two outdoor pools, an indoor ice rink, the Oak Park Conservatory, Cheney Mansion, Pleasant Home, a gymnastics center, eight recreation centers, an administrative center plus 13 parks totaling 80 acres of parkland. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Commissioners and is responsible for the management and operations of all departments of the District. The Board of Commissioners seeks an Executive Director with a proven track record in the management and operation of a market driven recreation service portfolio. The Executive Director must also possess excellent leadership and strong management and human resources skills, public finance ac-

men, as well as demonstrated oral and written communication abilities. The ability to work in partnership with the citizens, a dedicated community of volunteers, and other local governments is essential. Experience with managing complex capital projects and utilizing strategic planning is desirable. Successful candidates will possess a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation administration, public or business administration or related field. A Master's degree along with professional certification as a park and recreation professional is highly desirable. Candidates should have a minimum of ten years increasingly responsible management and operations experience. Starting Salary: \$135,000+/- plus excellent benefits, negotiable dependent on qualifications and experience. Residency is desirable. Submit résumé, cover letter with salary history and five references to our online application system by February 10, 2012 to Gregory F. Ford or Terrence Porter, Voorhees Associates LLC, www.VoorheesAssociates.com/current-positions. TEL: 847/580-4246; An Equal Opportunity Employer. Visit the Park District website at www.oakparkparks.com.

PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Oak Park is an inner-ring, independent suburban community located nine miles west of downtown Chicago. It is a fully developed, four-square mile, mature, multi-cultural community of 53,000 that offers a distinctive urban/suburban lifestyle in a pleasant setting of tree-lined streets and well-kept homes that present interesting variety in style and price. Housing in Oak Park is heterogeneous with a variety of single- and multi-family homes.

Oak Park is a residential community of choice, centrally located in the Chicago metropolitan area, connected by modern commuter rail and auto transportation routes throughout the region and convenient to local and regional high quality retail, arts, and cultural attractions. Oak Park is bounded on the east and north by the City of Chicago, on the west by River Forest and Forest Park, and on the south by Cicero and Berwyn.



Pleasant Home

The people of Oak Park have a strong sense of community. A key ingredient in the quality of life in Oak Park is the diversity of the residents, including a broad representation of various occupations, professions, lifestyles, age and income levels, and a stimulating mixture of racial, religious, and ethnic groups. Such diversity is Oak Park's strength. The community also has proud traditions of citizen involvement and accessible units of local government and school system, giving Oak Park citizens a unique opportunity to participate in activities affecting their lives, families, and way of life.

Ernest Hemingway grew up in Oak Park, Edgar Rice Burroughs wrote his Tarzan books there, and Frank Lloyd Wright built his home and studio there. The latter is a national landmark and a mecca for architects, students, and tourists from all parts of the globe.

In addition to the home and studio, Oak Park has the largest collection of Wright-designed homes of any community in the world, including Wright's famed Unity Temple. Oak Park houses many architecturally significant structures from the Prairie School, stately Victorians, and imposing apartment buildings, including architect George W. Maher's Pleasant Home which is also a national landmark and owned by the Park District. The District also owns and operates the Cheney Mansion, which is used for public and private events.

Additional information can be found at the following web site: www.oakparkparks.com.

PARK DISTRICT HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The Park District of Oak Park, created in 1912, serves the recreational needs of the 53,000 residents of Oak Park, providing over 3,000 recreation programs and special events annually. The District owns two outdoor pools, an indoor ice rink, the Oak Park Conservatory, Cheney Mansion, Pleasant Home, a gymnastics center, eight recreation centers, an administrative center plus 13 parks totaling 80 acres of parkland. Extensive programming also includes utilization of community schools. The District employs a full-time staff of 50 and an additional 300 on a part-time/seasonal basis. In addition, the Park District staff members work closely with hundreds of volunteers who work with the Park District to enhance its connection to the community and to its users. The District contracts for some park maintenance and landscaping services. The building and grounds staff are members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

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The District has a five-person independent Board of Park Commissioners elected on an at-large basis. The Park District has the authority to levy property taxes on all taxable property in the District. The President is selected from among the Commissioners and serves a minimum one-year term. There are no term limits for the elected members of the Park Board. The President and Members of the Board of Park Commissioners select and appoint the Executive Director, who carries out the policy directives of the Board and directs the daily operations of the Park District. The current Executive Director is retiring after 12 years of service with the Park District.



PARK DISTRICT FINANCES

The District's operating budget for the 2012 fiscal year is \$13,240,000 plus \$6,560,000 for capital improvements/replacements. In addition, the District has an annual levy of \$800,000 for debt repayment. Approximately 60% of the annual revenue is derived from property taxes while user fees represent 40% of total revenue.

The Park District has an Aa2 rating from Moody's investor services, the same rating as the Village of Oak Park. The Moody's rating rationale states the "assignment reflects the district's sizeable and stable tax base located just west of Chicago, sound financial operations with healthy reserves and revenue raising flexibility, and low debt burden with future planned borrowings." The District's fund balances for operating funds are at or above target levels. Generally, the District targets reserves to be four months of operating expenses.

As a result of a successful referendum in 2005, the District received strong community approval to raise the corporate fund rate. This guaranteed source of ongoing tax revenue has allowed the District to develop an aggressive five-year capital plan. Recently, the District received a \$1,600,000 PARC grant for the redevelopment of Scoville Park.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Executive Director can expect to work closely with the community, Board of Park Commissioners and professional staff on a wide variety of issues and projects, some of which are highlighted below:

- Implementation of plans for renovation of the Ridgeland Common Pool, Park and Paul Hruby Ice Arena
- Expansion/replacement of building and grounds building
- Expansion/replacement of the current gymnastics center
- Updating of the 2011-2015 capital improvement plan
- Completion of construction projects currently in progress
- Implementation of Park District 100th Anniversary plans



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- Continuation of green initiatives throughout the entire park system
- Continue to investigate and implement intergovernmental cooperation initiatives
- Continue to improve/implement information technology and GIS systems
- Continue to develop an effective communications plan including positive press relations
- Develop a comprehensive financial assistance program

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CANDIDATE QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

The Executive Director of the Park District of Oak Park is a highly visible position requiring well-developed leadership abilities and management skills that are based upon consensus building and problem solving as well as a strong desire to work in a collegial, team-oriented environment. The successful candidate must be a highly motivated, self-starting and confident individual with excellent interpersonal skills.

The following factors of education, experience, management style, and professional traits have been identified by the Park District of Oak Park as ideal attributes for the Executive Director to possess in order to function effectively in the position. Residency within the Park District of Oak Park is not required but candidates should be willing to live within a reasonable driving distance. The proposed starting salary range for this position is \$135,000+/-, depending upon qualifications and experience.

Education and Experience *(Not in order of importance)*

Must possess a bachelor's degree in Parks and Recreation, Public or Business Administration or related field. A Master's degree is highly desirable along with certification as a Park and Recreation Professional.



Candidates should possess seven to ten years increasingly responsible management and operations experience in both parks and recreation, preferably in a park district of comparable size and character to Oak Park.

Have a demonstrated ability to provide strategic leadership and long-range planning practices, which anticipate future opportunities, issues and concerns.

Have experience interacting with a directly-elected Board in a cooperative and respectful manner, recognizing the interactive roles played by the Board, the Executive Director and Staff.

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Have experience in proactively fostering a management environment that is collegial, collaborative and cooperative, ensuring that staff members work together for the common goals of the organization, supporting one another and assisting one another at all times.

Have experience in directing the preparation and presentation of a multi-faceted District budget and understanding the principles of government budgeting; recognizing the long-term cost implications of proposed new programs; have familiarity with business-oriented systems which measure the success and effectiveness of programs.

Have experience in the development and administration of long- and short-range capital improvement budgets, including the ability to recommend financing mechanisms as a part of the budget process.

Have experience in the implementation of large scale complex capital projects.

Have experience in dealing with unique historic facilities such as the Cheney Mansion, Pleasant Home, and Oak Park Conservatory.

Have experience in seeking new and expanded revenue sources including state and federal funding and related grants-in-aid programs.

Have proven verbal communication skills, both one-on-one and in a public speaking venue, and strong public relations experience and skills, dealing with individuals and groups in a professional and respectful manner; have the ability to make effective presentations before the Board of Park Commissioners and other elected bodies and citizen groups as necessary.

Have a demonstrated record of understanding and utilizing technology systems and procedures, with a commitment to furthering the use of new technology throughout the organization.

Have a proven record of outreach and participation with other units of local government in the community, creating meaningful partnerships with other public entities that can better utilize shared resources and ensure a constant exchange of information, both formally and informally.

Have experience in interacting with a variety of community volunteer groups that functionally and financially support the District's mission.

Have a record of continuous professional training and education for self and departmental staff as well as keeping up to date and abreast of industry 'best practices' and 'cutting edge' management techniques, current trends and tools.



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Have a demonstrated record of success in employee supervision and management, treating employees in an open, fair, and supportive manner; be comfortable working in a collegial environment, knowing when to provide assistance to employees and when to permit employees to work independently.

Have experience in modern personnel management systems that include the establishment of goals and objectives for employees throughout the organization, regular performance evaluation, and appropriate coaching and discipline when necessary; have experience in identifying and successfully addressing employee morale issues as they surface.

Have experience in a racially, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse environment.

Have experience with at-risk youth programs and neighborhood park conflict resolution.

Have experience with risk, safety, and human management programs.

Have experience with labor relations including contract negotiation and administration; have demonstrable experience in creating a positive labor/management environment.

Management Style/Personal Traits

(Not in order of importance)

Have complete personal and professional integrity, inspiring the confidence of elected and appointed officials as well as the general public.

Be a highly motivated, visionary leader with the proven ability to gain cooperation and communicate clear direction.

Be proactive, anticipatory and innovative, and be able to think creatively when dealing with issues, challenges and opportunities involving the Park District; be someone who can make difficult decisions and stand behind those decisions.

Have the maturity and professional stature to project a strong professional and personal presence that will quickly establish credibility and gain respect within the organization, the Village and with the community as a whole.

Have a passion for parks and recreation from both an environmental and program standpoint and for service to the community.

Have an understanding of and appreciation for recreational activities.

Practice a direct communication style of candor and diplomacy; be able to say "No" when circumstances warrant it.

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Believe in and practice participative, collaborative “team management” with the ability to empower others; value the contributions of employees at all levels and in all job occupations.

Have the ability to work with the employees throughout the organization in an effective, harmonious manner.

Have an “open door” management style and approach that is founded on being accessible, caring, visible and approachable to all staff, employees, elected officials, and residents.

Have the ability to delegate while requiring accountability from all personnel in the organization with regard to quality, accuracy and timeliness of services and programs, for both internal and external customers.

Have an open, friendly personality and communication style and be one who can establish trust quickly with others.

Have the ability to attract, develop, motivate and retain highly qualified professional staff; be a mentor.

Be able to lead and motivate by personal example, encouraging high standards of performance and productivity from all department personnel.

Be willing to keep the Board of Park Commissioners apprised of major activities and operations of the organization in a consistent and timely manner, passing on to the Board both “good news and bad news;” understand how to work effectively with an elected Board in a tactful yet self-confident and professional manner.

Be an advocate for the Park District who clearly represents the needs of the organization to the elected officials, the Village government, and to the community.

Be willing to interact with employees in their own work places and involve them in decision making when appropriate.

Have a high level of community involvement, personally taking part in civic and community activities and events.

Have a sense of humor.





Park District of Oak Park Organizational Chart

