



LAWRENCE, KANSAS PARKS, RECREATION, ARTS AND CULTURE DIRECTOR



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The City of Lawrence, Kansas is seeking to hire a Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Director with a proven track record to lead its highly regarded state and nationally recognized parks and recreation department. The successful candidate is an experienced, collaborative leader who communicates effectively, possesses solid business acumen, and demonstrates strong financial skills. The ideal candidate is also someone who is present, engaged, and approachable with community members, staff at various programs and events offered by the City of Lawrence Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Department.

Candidates should be strategic and collaborative leaders who understand how to achieve financial excellence and sustainability while looking ahead to changing programs and service needs. In addition, candidates must have excellent communication and people skills, an inclusive leadership style and the ability to build strong partnerships and consensus at all levels of the organization.

The ideal candidate will be able to combine vision, creativity, and innovation in the oversight and continuous improvement of the City of Lawrence Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Department. The successful candidate will possess a high degree of social and emotional intelligence and judgment necessary to create trust and influence a positive and inclusive culture while building relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders, including employees, appointed volunteer advisory boards, the City Commission, intergovernmental groups and community organizations, schools, local universities, and community residents. The successful candidate will be a team builder who can effectively delegate and empower employees to do their best to serve residents every day.

This recruitment is being conducted on a local, regional, and nationwide basis, encouraging applications from all individuals who meet the qualifications. All inquiries relating to the recruitment and selection process for the Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Director position are to be directed to the consultants listed below who are collaborating with the City of Lawrence and its designated Search Committee.

Charlene Stevens, Senior Vice-President or Joe DeLuce, Vice-President
GovHR USA
630 Dundee Road, Suite 225
Northbrook, IL 60062
TEL: 847-380-3240 Ext.130
Formal applications should be submitted to:
www.govhrjobs.com



THE COMMUNITY

Lawrence is a dynamic and vibrant city located in northeast Kansas approximately 20 miles from the Kansas City metropolitan area as well as the state capital, Topeka. Lawrence's location is ideal for taking advantage of the abundant amenities of the metro area including professional sports, world class museums and arts as well as easy access to the regional airport. Lawrence is home to the University of Kansas (KU) and Haskell Indian Nations University, an inter-tribal university of Native Americans representing more than 150 tribal nations. KU has over 28,000 students and is recognized for its leading academic and athletic programs and beautiful campus environment. Lawrence has a highly regarded public school system as well and the community ranks sixth in bachelor's degree attainment per capita by the U.S. Census.

As a college community, Lawrence boasts diverse arts and cultural amenities, including the Lied Center of Kansas, the University of Kansas' performing arts center. In addition, the city offers attractive parks, award-winning aquatics facilities and three well-regarded golf courses. Nearby Clinton Lake is listed as one of the "50 Great Boating Lakes" by Boating World Magazine. Massachusetts "Mass" Street is recognized as one of the most beautiful main streets in America and offers many unique retail and dining options.

Lawrence possesses all the aspects of a friendly, active, and culturally diverse community. With the perfect combination of small-town hospitality and big city attractions, Lawrence is one of the premier communities in Kansas and the Midwest.

DEMOGRAPHICS/ GENERAL INFORMATION

Population: **101,211**

Square Miles: **34.15**

Race and Hispanic Origin:

White, alone: **82.02%**

Black or African American Alone: **4.30%**

American Indian and Alaska Native: **2.28%**

Asian, alone: **5.45%**

Two or more races: **4.74%**

Other race: **1.21%**

Median Home Value: **\$216,700**

Median Household Income: **\$56,536**



THE CITY OF LAWRENCE

The City of Lawrence operates under a non-partisan Commission- Manager form of government. The City Commission consists of five officials, elected through a system of staggered and overlapping terms every two years. There are no term limits. The City Commission elects a Mayor and Vice Mayor annually. The City Commission is responsible for establishing policy for the city and hires the City Manager. The City Manager is the Chief Executive Officer who oversees all City departments and provides policy advice and recommendations to the City Commission. The department is also served by the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission.

Lawrence is committed to excellence in public service and management with a focus on continuous improvement and strategic planning and goal setting. The city has over 889 full time employees and the adopted 2023 fiscal year budget for Lawrence is just over \$472 million.

The City Commission's [Strategic Plan](#) identifies the following outcome areas:

- **Unmistakable Identity** – Lawrence is a welcoming community, synonymous with arts, diverse culture, fun, and a quintessential downtown. City parks and community events contribute to the vibrancy experienced by all people in Lawrence.
- **Strong, Welcoming Neighborhoods** – All people in Lawrence live in safe, functional, and aesthetically unique neighborhoods that provide opportunities to lead healthy lifestyles with access to safe and affordable housing and essential services that help them thrive.
- **Safe & Secure** – Lawrence is a community where all people feel safe and secure and have access to trusted public and community-based safety resources.
- **Prosperity & Economic Security** – The City of Lawrence fosters an environment that provides all people and businesses the opportunity for economic security and intentionally acknowledges, removes, and prevents barriers created by systemic and institutional injustice. Our community succeeds because of collective prosperity and a vibrant, sustainable local economy.
- **Connected City** — The City of Lawrence has well-maintained, functional, and efficient infrastructure, facilities, and other assets. Connectivity supports accessible, sustainable methods for safely moving people and information throughout the community and the region. Investment in these assets reflects the City's commitment to contribute to the well-being of all people.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITMENTS

The commitments of the adopted strategic plan that define how the City of Lawrence conducts its work are:

- **Community Engagement:** Listen, share, and engage with our community to drive action and build trust in City Government
- **Efficient and Effective Processes:** Intentional and consistent delivery of City services
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Fair and impartial delivery of services so that no group is disadvantaged or burdened along with having inclusive representation and participation for all
- **Sound Fiscal Stewardship:** Efficient use and sustainable management of resources that align with community priorities
- **Engaged and Empowered Teams:** People throughout the organization are trusted, supported, and cared for as we build community
- **Environmental Sustainability:** A deep respect for our place in relationship with the planet and environment.



CITY OF LAWRENCE MISSION STATEMENT:

We create a community
where all enjoy life
and feel at home.



CITY OF LAWRENCE VISION STATEMENT:

The City of Lawrence –
Supporting an unmistakably
vibrant community with
innovative, equitable,
transparent, and responsible
local government.



PARKS, RECREATION, ARTS AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT

Lawrence Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Department, established in 1946, has continued its commitment in providing excellent city services, enhancing the quality of life for the Lawrence community. Over the years, the department has developed many programs for the community, including hike/bike trails, recreation facility operations, golf, forestry, landscaping throughout the community and Downtown Lawrence, cemetery and other quality of life programs and facilities. The department currently offers more than 550 programs and activities each season for citizens to keep active.

Lawrence Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture has been recognized locally, statewide, and nationally for excellence in programs and services. These include local awards for the commitment to helping citizens live healthy, active lifestyles, state awards for programs, projects and the professional staff who create and implement programs. The department has also been recognized on the state level for its support of healthy lifestyle initiatives, including the State of Kansas Governor's Council on Fitness Health Champion Award in 2013. Nationally, the department has been a finalist three times for the National Recreation and Park Association's National Gold Medal Award for Excellence, the highest award an agency can receive in the field of Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture.

The Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Director's responsibilities include but are not limited to planning, directing, managing and overseeing the activities and operations of the Parks & Recreation Department including: development, operations and maintenance of parks and public areas, cemeteries, nature center, golf course, aquatics facilities/programs, forestry, landscaping, recreation centers, recreation programs, and community facilities; to coordinate assigned activities with other city departments and outside agencies, organizations and the general public; and to provide highly responsible and complex administrative support to the Assistant City Manager.

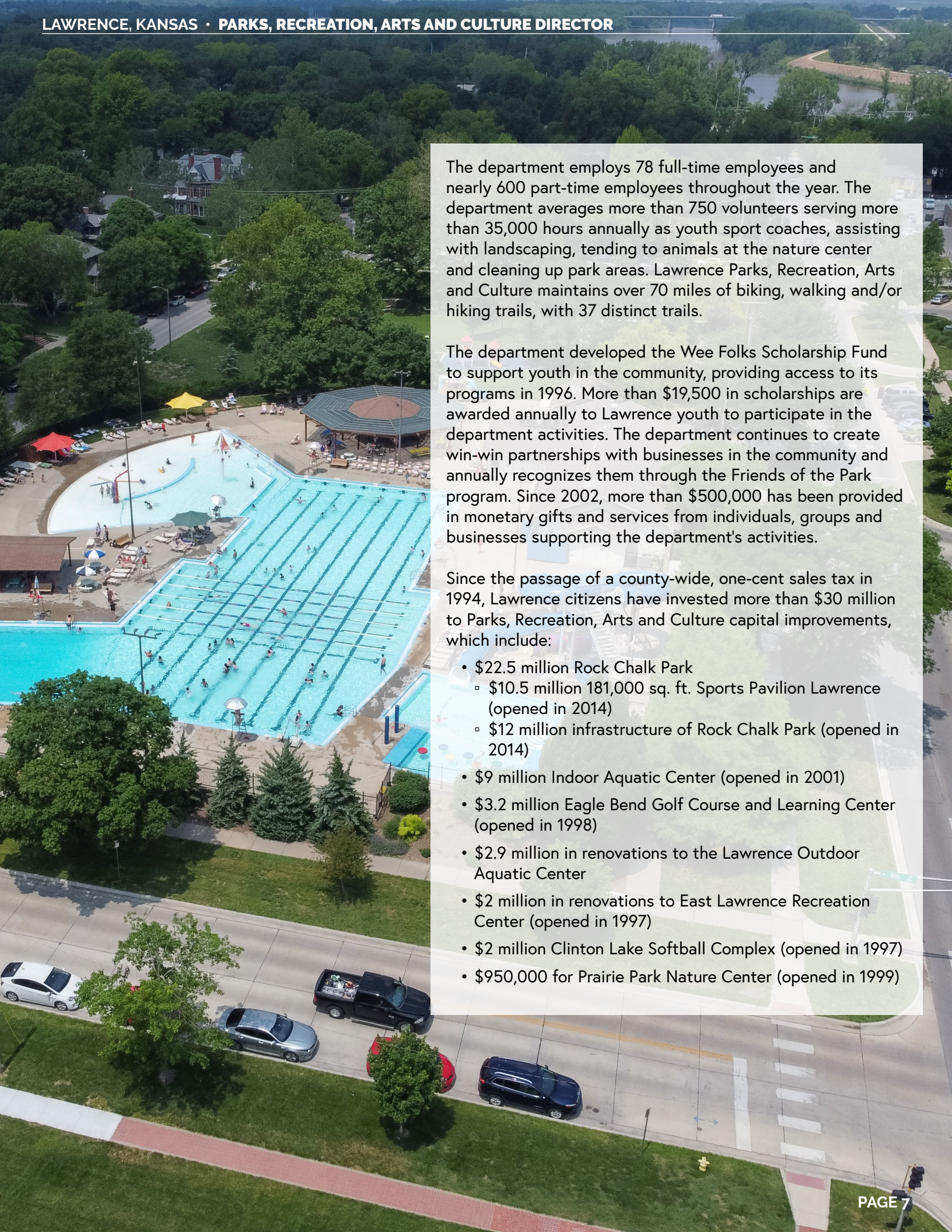


PARKS, RECREATION, ARTS AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT MISSION

To provide excellent city services that enhance the quality of life of the Lawrence community.

Lawrence Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Operates/Manages/Maintains:

- \$24 Million Annual Budget
- 55 parks and open spaces
- 4,000 acres of park space
- 3 recreation centers
- 1 sports pavilion
 - 8 full-size basketball courts double as 16 full-size volleyball courts
 - an indoor turf area
 - gymnastics room
 - aerobic/fitness room
 - cardio and weight areas
 - 1/8-mile indoor walking/jogging track
 - meeting rooms
- 2 community centers
- 4 swimming facilities
- 1 golf course
- 1 nature center
- 44 athletic fields
- 24 basketball/multi-use courts (indoor/outdoor)
- 19 picnic areas
- 3 cemeteries
- 30 playgrounds
- 15 tennis courts
- 2 skate parks
- 2 off-leash dog parks
- 2-disc golf courses



The department employs 78 full-time employees and nearly 600 part-time employees throughout the year. The department averages more than 750 volunteers serving more than 35,000 hours annually as youth sport coaches, assisting with landscaping, tending to animals at the nature center and cleaning up park areas. Lawrence Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture maintains over 70 miles of biking, walking and/or hiking trails, with 37 distinct trails.

The department developed the Wee Folks Scholarship Fund to support youth in the community, providing access to its programs in 1996. More than \$19,500 in scholarships are awarded annually to Lawrence youth to participate in the department activities. The department continues to create win-win partnerships with businesses in the community and annually recognizes them through the Friends of the Park program. Since 2002, more than \$500,000 has been provided in monetary gifts and services from individuals, groups and businesses supporting the department's activities.

Since the passage of a county-wide, one-cent sales tax in 1994, Lawrence citizens have invested more than \$30 million to Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture capital improvements, which include:

- \$22.5 million Rock Chalk Park
 - \$10.5 million 181,000 sq. ft. Sports Pavilion Lawrence (opened in 2014)
 - \$12 million infrastructure of Rock Chalk Park (opened in 2014)
- \$9 million Indoor Aquatic Center (opened in 2001)
- \$3.2 million Eagle Bend Golf Course and Learning Center (opened in 1998)
- \$2.9 million in renovations to the Lawrence Outdoor Aquatic Center
- \$2 million in renovations to East Lawrence Recreation Center (opened in 1997)
- \$2 million Clinton Lake Softball Complex (opened in 1997)
- \$950,000 for Prairie Park Nature Center (opened in 1999)

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Lawrence is poised to further its unmistakable reputation as a center in the Midwest for arts, diverse culture, fun and a quintessential downtown.
- A new departmental focus on Arts & Culture, in alignment with the Strategic Plan. An Assistant Director of Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture — Arts and Culture has just been created.
- The Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture Department will soon begin developing a comprehensive plan to fully integrate arts and culture into the Unmistakable Identity outcome from the Strategic Plan.
- Develop a plan to acquire Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) through the National Recreation and Park Association.
- Involvement and leadership in the Kansas Parks and Recreation Association
- Apply and win the National Gold Medal Award for as an outstanding parks and recreation agency.
- Establish a supportive work culture so employees are engaged and empowered to take the department to the next level, while growing and developing their qualifications, skills, and talents.
- Improve internal communications and information exchange for enhanced continuity throughout the organization.
- Enhance communications with the community and external partners to understand the department's commitment to their expectations.
- Seek out and implement the best practices from similar agencies across the state and nation.
- Develop extensive education and training programs, as well as a career development program, to develop great leaders, supervisors, and employees.
- Strengthen collaboration with a wide range of community partners.





QUALIFICATIONS

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a master's degree in Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture administration, public administration, business administration or a closely related field, or a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation administration, public administration, business administration, or a closely related field and five years of administrative experience.
- Seven years of increasingly responsible experience in Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture activities program development and implementation including five years of administrative and supervisory responsibility.
- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid driver's license.
- Possession of, or ability to become, certified by the National Park and Recreation Association.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$137,342 to \$203,008 with an expected hiring range of (\$137,342 to 166,941) DOQ. A generous benefit and retirement package is also offered by the city, details which are available at https://lawrenceks.org/hr/employee_benefits/.

HOW TO APPLY

Candidates must apply by Monday, January 8, 2024 with resume, cover letter and contact information for five work-related references to www.GovHRjobs.com to the attention of Charlene Stevens, Senior Vice President, or Joe DeLuce, Vice President, GovHR USA, 630 Dundee Road, #225, Northbrook, IL 60062. Tel: (847) 309-9403.

The City of Lawrence, Kansas is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

