



**CHAMPAIGN
PARK DISTRICT**



CHAMPAIGN PARK DISTRICT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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CHAMPAIGN PARK DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Champaign Park District is seeking a forward-looking, strategic leader with a commitment to serving the community. The Director must have strong financial and operational acumen to effectively deliver high-quality parks, recreation and cultural arts services. This position requires the ability to listen effectively, communicate clearly, and make sound decisions. The ideal candidate will be a proven team-builder with the ability to attract, develop and empower talented employees. The Director must be a collaborative leader, able to combine vision, problem-solving and innovation in the oversight of the Champaign Park District. In addition, the Director must demonstrate a passion for parks, recreation, and cultural arts as well as a commitment to the preservation of park district assets by efficiently planning for and using financial resources, delivering operational efficiencies and effectively managing capital projects and on-going facility and park maintenance.

The Executive Director is responsible for planning, organizing and directing all of the operations, maintenance, programs, activities and facilities of the Champaign Park District. The Director provides leadership in advancing agency-wide initiatives, ensures financial responsibility and develops innovative strategies for program growth and on-going operational improvement. The Director creates short-term and long-term plans, sets goals, and develops budgets for the park district. The ideal candidate must possess well-developed oral and written communication skills and a record of success in building collaborative relationships with board members, city leaders and community organizations. The successful candidate will be expected to continuously demonstrate the personal demeanor, interpersonal skills and judgment to create trust, deliver results, and influence a positive inclusive culture.

This recruitment is being conducted on a local, regional, and nationwide basis, encouraging applications from all individuals wishing to compete for the position who meet the qualifications. All inquiries relating to the recruitment and selection process for the Executive Director position are to be directed to the consultant listed below who is working with the Champaign Park District and its designated Search Committee.

Charles Balling, 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 CITY

The City of Champaign is home to approximately 88,000 residents and is located nearly equidistant from Chicago, Indianapolis, Indiana, and St. Louis, Missouri. It is the tenth-most populous city in Illinois, and the fourth-most populous city in the state outside of the Chicago Metropolitan Area. Champaign is notable for sharing the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with its sister city of Urbana. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign serves more than 51,000 students and has earned a reputation as a world-class leader in research, teaching, and public engagement. Champaign is also the home of Parkland College which serves about 20,000 students during the academic year. Though surrounded by farm communities, Champaign is an integral part of what is known as the "Silicon Prairie" due to the University of Illinois and a number of technology start-up companies. Champaign is home to offices for Abbott, Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), Caterpillar, Deere & Company, Dow Chemical Company, IBM, State Farm, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), Sony, and Yahoo!, all Fortune 500 companies. Champaign also serves as the headquarters for several companies, the most notable being Jimmy Johns. In 2013, Champaign was rated fifth best place in the United States for a healthy work-life balance. The area's top employers are The University of Illinois, Carle, Champaign Unit 4 School District, Kraft Foods, Parkland College, FedEx and PlastiPak.





HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Organized in 1911, the Champaign Park District is a special district of local government with its own financial and legal responsibilities. It is governed by five elected residents of Champaign who give their services to the community for a six-year term. The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners meets twice a month to conduct the business affairs of the district. The Regular Board meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and Study Session meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

The award-winning Champaign Park District has an annual operating budget of \$22 million. The park district consists of more than 700 acres of community parks, playgrounds, and facilities that provide recreational services and educational opportunities to more than one million visitors annually. The district employs 80 full time staff and over 500 part-time and seasonal employees.

Recreational facilities include an outdoor aquatic complex, waterslides, four recreation centers with gymnasiums, two senior centers, a cultural arts center, the Virginia Theatre (a renovated historic theater featuring a 1,400-seat auditorium), indoor and outdoor tennis courts, pickleball courts, sports fields, playgrounds, children's petting farm, picnic shelters, skate parks, a dog park, lakes for fishing and over 30 miles of walking paths. The new \$11 million dollar Martens Community Center is scheduled to open October 2022. Partnerships between the park district and other local community groups are integral to the provision of innovative programming using its computer lab, robotics, recording studio, demonstration kitchen and high tech game-focused exercise and play areas.

The park district schedules more than 1,500 recreational and leisure programs and events each year targeting families and residents of all ages. A few of the Champaign Park District's special events include seasonal Concerts in the Park, Halloween Funfest, Flannel Fest and the West Side Arts Festival. The park district is also integral in providing support for well-attended community events like Street Fests in downtown Champaign, art exhibits at the Springer Cultural Center, EbertFest at the Virginia Theater, and fitness events like the Cupcake and Frozen 5k. The park district serves as the managing member of Champaign Urbana Special Recreation in partnership with the Urbana Park District, and in 2021, the Champaign Park District opened a recreation center entirely dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities.

The Champaign Park District has received several state and national awards such as the Distinguished Agency distinction from the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), the National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Parks and Recreation in 1979, 1990 and 1998, and is a finalist for the National Gold Medal Award in 2022. The District has also won numerous awards including the Government Finance Officers Association for the annual budget and International Platinum and Gold Aquatic Safety Awards.





MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Champaign Park District is to enhance our community's quality of life through positive experiences in parks, recreation, and cultural arts.

VISION STATEMENT

The Champaign Park District strives to be the leader in parks, recreation, and cultural arts by providing and promoting safe and outstanding experiences and facilities; generating outstanding value for all residents.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS:

- Customer and Community Focus
- Financial Strength
- Organizational Excellence
- Staff Excellence
- Quality Infrastructure Management

QUICK FACTS

Population Served:	88,000
Agency Budget:	\$22 million
Number of FT Employees:	80
Number of PT/Seasonal Employees:	500+
Number of Parks Locations:	64
Number of Acres:	700 acres
Playgrounds:	28
Aquatic Center:	1
Tennis Courts:	1 six-court indoor facility and 27 outdoor courts
Soccer Fields	21
Softball and Baseball Fields:	19
Outdoor Pickleball Courts	16
Community Center with gyms:	4
Senior Centers	2
Skate Parks	2
Lakes for Fishing	2
Performing Arts Theater	1
Petting Farm	1
Dog Park	1

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Executive Director can expect to work closely with the Board of Park Commissioners and staff members on the following opportunities and challenges:

- Cultivate relationships with community stakeholders, including volunteer organizations, businesses and City, County, and local legislators. Engage and develop strong working relationships with staff, Board of Park Commissioners and the community.
- Understand and assess current district-wide and department goals; quickly grasp the management of departments and any needs thereof.
- Assess organizational structure, staffing levels and areas of responsibility to maximize effectiveness and efficiency. Review and address staffing challenges.
- Evaluate the budget process with a focus on timeliness, Board input and the allocation of more time for review and analysis.
- Foster a positive, results-oriented team of employees all working toward common goals for the Champaign Park District.

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP STYLE

The ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

Results-oriented: Fair, firm and accountable in delivering desired results. Flexibility to adapt to changing social and economic conditions and recreation trends.

Active Leader: Lead by example and experience. Promote a team atmosphere. Demonstrate a professional demeanor and engaging communication style. Demonstrate honesty, transparency and integrity. Self-confident yet humble.

Team Builder: Cultivate and maintain positive, productive relationships with staff, Board of Park Commissioners, local government, civic organizations and community at large.

Effective Communicator: Must be an effective listener and comfortable talking with a variety of people including residents, elected and appointed officials, the business community, media and staff.

Strategic/Critical Thinker: Be a strong forward-thinking visionary with short-term and long-term views. Demonstrate strong financial and business acumen.

Community Involved: Engage in the community with the people, the city, the university, and legislators; responsive to citizen concerns. Be seen as a community leader.

Decisive: Ability to make tough decisions and lead others.

Politically Astute: Be politically astute yet non-political and non-partisan in behavior and actions.

Passion for Parks and Community Service: Conduct all park business with a commitment to the preservation, maintenance and continuous improvement of the park system while working in the spirit of intergovernmental cooperation.





ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Studies local conditions and develops immediate and long-range plans to meet the recreation needs of all age groups.
- Evaluates and assures the effective delivery of programs, services and general operations.
- Oversees all aspects of personnel management, including hiring, development and performance management.
- Oversees development of financial plans, annual operating budget, capital improvement budgets and tax levy.
- Develops and implements long-term strategic planning for all parks and park programs.
- Oversees marketing of park district services including the park district website, park brochure, social media and sponsorship opportunities.
- Assesses and plans for capital improvement needs; supervises acquisition, planning, design, construction, and maintenance of recreation facilities.
- Ensures facility maintenance schedule is followed; ensures inspections of buildings, grounds and equipment for cleanliness and safety in accordance with local, State and Federal health codes.
- Researches, applies, and manages grants related to programming and facility improvement opportunities.
- Oversees the administration of the general liability insurance programs and participation in risk management programs.
- Participates and becomes involved in organizations and/or community meetings whose purpose will be of benefit to the park district operation. Serves as spokesperson for the district at public meetings.
- Ensures District compliance with all City, State and Federal regulations and with all park district policies, procedures and protocols.
- Performs all other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree in Parks and Recreation, Business, Public Administration, or a closely related field from a four-year college or university is strongly preferred.
- Preference will be given to individuals with ten (10) years of experience in an upper-level management position, preferably in parks and recreation, municipal government or a not-for-profit.

COMPENSATION:

Starting salary range is \$135,000 to \$165,000, depending on experience and qualifications. The Champaign Park District offers a comprehensive benefit plan which includes a generous contribution to medical, dental, life insurance and a defined benefit retirement plan (Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund), optional 457 plan, optional Health Savings Account (HSA), car and phone allowances, paid vacation, sick and holiday time.

APPLICATION:

Submit resume, cover letter, and contact information for five professional references online by September 23, 2022, at www.GovHRjobs.com.

The Champaign Park District is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

