

Raleigh, North Carolina is seeking exceptional
candidates to serve as the next

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES DIRECTOR



Raleigh

City Profile

The City of Raleigh is the capital of North Carolina, home to several colleges and universities, with a vibrant performing arts community. Fueled by an impressive mix of education, ingenuity and collaboration, Raleigh has become an internationally recognized leader in life science and technology innovation.

(source: Raleigh Office of Economic Development)





About the Raleigh Community

The City of Raleigh, founded in 1792, is the second-largest city in North Carolina. It's both the county seat of Wake County (the largest county in North Carolina) and the capital of the state.

Driven by a strong economy and an outstanding quality of life, Raleigh is consistently ranked among the nation's best places to live and operate a business. Sustained population growth has created new development opportunities in Raleigh. The City has made strategic investments into new operational facilities, parks, transportation, transit and affordable housing, and is completing plans for a new consolidated Civic Campus. Similarly, reform of development standards has allowed more urban, transit-focused development and more diverse housing types to encourage housing choice and affordability.

Community Demographics

- Population growth: 467,655 (2020 Census), up from 291,141 in the 2000 Census.
- Educational attainment: 50.9% received their bachelor's degree or higher
- Median household income: \$67,266
- Unemployment rate: 2.9%

For more information about the City of Raleigh, please see our "[Welcome to Raleigh](#)" video.

Below are some recent national recognitions for the city:

- Raleigh is ranked the seventh best city to raise a family
- [American Home Shield](#), April 2022
- Raleigh is ranked No. 1 as Best City for Working Women
- [ApartmentList](#), March 2022
- Raleigh is 4th Best Large Metros for Families with Children
- [LendingTree](#), October 2021
- Raleigh and Durham collectively rank No. 2 Best Place to Live
- [U.S. News & World Report](#), July 2021
- Raleigh is ranked as the 11th best-run city in America
- [WalletHub](#), June 2021

Raleigh Parks and Greenway System Snapshot

The parks system of today has evolved from a plan that was initially proposed in 1791 by Senator William Christmas. The "Christmas plan" gave rise to the idea that every neighborhood (or ward) should have a public square at its center and each public square should have open spaces for the development of parks. Trees in these public squares were to be preserved for many years, and these wooded areas formed the beginnings of Raleigh's City parks. Private citizens for "green relief" donated land and money for park development as the City started to grow rapidly. Many parks were developed during this time including Pullen, Bloomsbury, Brookdale, Edna Metz Wells, Union, Nash and Moore Square. In the 1930s the City funded additional parks and founded the "City Parks Commission."



Spurred by citizen demand in 1969, Raleigh promoted itself as the “Park with the City in It.” This growth included the birth of the Capital Area Greenway Commission in 1979 to oversee the development of the system. Since 1982, the City of Raleigh has been responsible for funding and maintaining its own Parks and Recreation Department. The community has been supportive of ongoing capital investments with approved parks and recreation bond referendums in 2000, 2003, 2007 and 2014. The \$92-million 2014 Park Bond enabled key projects such as improvements at John Chavis Memorial Park, Walnut Creek Athletic Park and Pullen Arts Center.

Today our Parks and Recreation Department system boasts 205 parks; 119 miles of greenway trails; 31 staffed community centers; two art centers; two active-adult centers; nine historic sites, museums and cemeteries; 63 athletic fields; 106 tennis courts; two lakes; four nature preserves; and eight swimming pools. The department continues to grow while offering numerous services, programs, activities and special events year-round.

Throughout its history, Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department has been nationally recognized for superior work in the parks and recreation field. For example, our Capital Area Greenway System has served as a model for other communities around the country. Some of the awards and designations received by the department include: National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Parks and Recreation Management, National Gold Medal Award for Services to People with Disabilities, Governor’s Award for Health and Fitness, National Recreation and Parks Association Excellence in Aquatics Award and Tree City USA Award for Community Appearance. The department has also earned multiple Sir Walter Raleigh Awards for Community Appearance, the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau Hospitality Industry Award and a Biophilic Cities designation.

In the 2020 City-wide Citizen Satisfaction Survey, 82 percent of respondent rated the quality of parks and recreation programs and services as good or excellent, which was 19 percentage points higher than the national average.



City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Policies and Goals

The adoption of both “Arts and Cultural Resources” and “Safe, Vibrant and Healthy Community” as two of the six key focus areas in the City of Raleigh’s Strategic Plan demonstrates the level of City Council and community priority. Initiatives led or supported by Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources can also be found in three additional key focus areas.

The City’s Comprehensive Plan reinforces similar policy objectives to those in the Strategic Plan including the need for both passive and active recreation amenities; ensuring equitable investment and distribution of facilities and programming throughout the City and ensuring proactive management that maximizes environmental stewardship and benefit.

In addition, a series of community-directed planning documents provide direction and support to the department, including the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan, the City of Raleigh Arts Plan, the Capital Area Greenway Master Plan and the Dorothea Dix Park Master Plan.





Investments in the Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department

Investments continue to demonstrate the high priority that the community places on departmental operations and facilities. For the FY22 budget, the Raleigh City Council increased taxes by one cent to be dedicated to maintenance of existing PRCR facilities. In FY23, this will dedicate about \$7.5 million to maintenance needs. In addition, the City Council appropriated \$12 million of one-time funds to accelerate ground-breaking of the Gipson Play Plaza at Dix Park. A planned system plan update in FY24 will help prioritize and maximize this investment, with a particular focus on park equity and access.

The City Council is expected to soon finalize a general obligation bond referendum for this fall. While the projects and value of the bond have not been finalized, as discussed to date, it would significantly exceed the value of the 2014 bond and would continue momentum in the investments at John Chavis Memorial Park, at Dorothea Dix Park, in the greenway system and in strategic projects across the City.

The proposed FY23 General Fund budget includes significant hourly pay increases for part-time and full-time positions that should improve recruitment and retention outcomes.

These public investments are being complimented by strong support from community agencies and partners. The Dix Park Conservancy and the City of Oaks Foundation continue aggressive fundraising and grant writing on behalf of the City. The City has also seen tremendous investment opportunities emerge with foundations and public-private partnerships.





Department Profile

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources employs 435 full-time employees and an additional estimated 2,000 part-time employees across five divisions with a total operating budget of \$54.5 million. The department director is currently supported by four assistant department directors.

Some of the department's key service initiatives outlined in the PRCR FY23-25 business plan include:

- Recruitment, retention and professional development strategies to increase diversity and position the City as an employer of choice
- Pursuit of national accreditation through NRPA's Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies
- Continued implementation of the Dorothea Dix Master Plan, including the development of a business plan for the operation of the Gipson Play Plaza
- Environmental stewardship initiatives including invasive species elimination, investments in pollinators and community gardens, and investments in electric and alternative fuel equipment
- Improved data collection and targeted efforts to increase and improve the City's tree canopy
- Continued focus on private and community partnerships to increase access

Candidate Profile

The City is looking for an exceptional leader with 7-10 years of experience in a large, comparable public organization that includes significant management and supervisory experience, who can continue to build on the department's existing strength. Applicants may substitute an equivalent combination of education and relevant experience to successfully perform the essential duties and responsibilities of the job.

Qualified candidates will clearly exemplify the City's organizational values of responsiveness, integrity, respect, collaboration, honesty, diversity, stewardship and initiative. According to recent outreach to department employees and the City's Park, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Committee, the organization would value a leader who would:

- Articulate and personally commit to a long-term vision for the department
- Demonstrate broad knowledge skills across the department's diverse services
- Balance current operational strengths with opportunities for innovation
- Be visible, accessible and engaged with all employees, particularly front-line staff
- Establish strong working relationships and effective communication with peer department directors, the City Council and community leaders
- Advance the equity and inclusion efforts within the department and in its service delivery to our community
- Balance competing priorities for resources, including new needs for Dorothea Dix Park





Compensation and Benefits

The City of Raleigh plans to offer a competitive hiring range (\$95,600 - \$150,000) commensurate with the successful candidate's qualifications and experience. When you join the City of Raleigh's work family, your benefits are an important part of your "total rewards." The City provides a comprehensive benefits package as part of the total rewards program to support employees through important events in their life, to enhance their life outside work, and to help them plan and prepare for the future. The City participates in the North Carolina Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System (NCLGERS).

Application and Selection Process

Qualified candidates should complete a profile and submit their application, resume and cover letter online by visiting our website at www.governmentjobs.com/careers/raleighnc. This position will remain open until filled; however, interested applicants are strongly encouraged to apply no later than **May 27, 2022**. Following this date, applications will be screened against criteria outlined in this brochure. Onsite interviews with the City of Raleigh will be offered to those candidates named as finalists, with reference checks, background checks and academic verifications conducted after receiving candidates' consent. A pre-employment screening to include controlled substance tests will be conducted by the City.

For more information, please contact Danny Cook, Talent Acquisition Analyst, daniel.cook@raleighnc.gov or 919-996-4717.



Raleigh

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For more information about Raleigh, please visit:

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