CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY







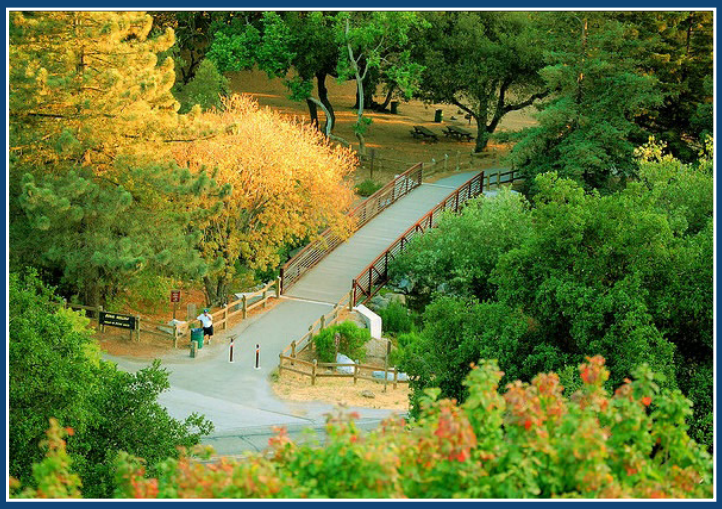
CITY OF SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Director of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services



THE OPPORTUNITY

A national search is underway to attract an inspiring, innovative, and experienced leader to serve as the City of San Jose's next Director of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. This position provides an incredible opportunity to lead one of the nation's largest municipal park and recreation systems and to work with community members, policymakers, and City administration to connect people through parks, recreation, and neighborhood services for an active San José.



San José is one of the most diverse large cities and has one of the largest municipal park and recreation systems in the nation with:

200 neighborhood parks
10 regional parks
65 miles of trails
83 sports fields in 47 parks
3 municipal golf courses
+ A network of community centers and civic spaces

Signature destinations:

Happy Hollow Park & Zoo
Emma Prusch Farm Park
Alum Rock Park
Lake Cunningham
San José Family Camp



THE CITY OF SAN JOSE



Known as the "Capital of Silicon Valley," the City of San José plays a vital economic and cultural role in anchoring the world's leading innovation region. Encompassing approximately 181 square miles at the southern tip of the San Francisco Bay, San José is Northern California's largest city and the 13th largest city in the nation. With nearly one million residents, San José is one of the most diverse large cities in the United States. San Jose's transformation into a global innovation center has resulted in one of the largest concentrations of technology companies and expertise in the world, including major tech headquarters like Cisco, Adobe, Zoom, Samsung, and eBay, as well as start-ups and advanced manufacturing. The City of San José has twice been named "The Most Innovative Large City in America" by the Center for Digital Government.

San Jose's quality of life is unsurpassed. Surrounded by the Diablo and Santa Cruz mountain ranges and enjoying an average of 300 days of sunshine a year, residents have easy access to the beaches along the California coast, including Santa Cruz, Monterey, and Carmel; Yosemite and Lake Tahoe in the Sierra Nevada; local and Napa Valley wine country; and the rich cultural and recreational life of the entire Bay region. San José has received accolades for its vibrant neighborhoods, healthy lifestyle, and diverse attractions from national media, including Business Week and Money magazines. For more information about the unparalleled quality of life in San José, please visit https://www.sjeconomy.com/why-san-jose.

In 2011, the City adopted Envision San José 2040, a long-term growth plan that sets forth a vision and a comprehensive road map to guide the City's anticipated growth through the year 2040. The Plan embodies the City's "more urban future," proactively directs significant anticipated growth in new homes and workplaces into transit-accessible, infill growth areas, and supports evolution toward a more urban landscape and lifestyle. The San José area is powered by one of America's most highly educated and productive populations. More than 40% of the workforce has a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 25% nationally. Forty percent of San José residents are foreign-born, and 50% speak a language other than English at home. San José is proud of its rich cultural diversity and global connections, as well as the essential role the City plays in connecting residents and businesses to the nation and the world and, in March 2026, San José announced that it has been recertified as a 4-star Certified Welcoming Community.



THE CITY GOVERNMENT



The City of San José is a full-service Charter City and operates under a hybrid Council-Manager form of government. The City Council is comprised of 10 Council Members elected by district and a Mayor elected at-large. The City Manager, who reports to the Council, and her executive team provide strategic leadership that supports the policy-making role of the Mayor and the City Council and motivates and challenges the organization to deliver high-quality services that meet the community's needs. The City actively engages with the community through Council-appointed boards and commissions.

The City's priorities are guided by five City Council Focus Areas which bring greater organizational emphasis, resource prioritization, and regular governance-level reporting to make notable progress on a limited number of strategic areas impacting the community. The current City Council Focus Areas are Increasing Community Safety, Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness, Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods, Growing Our Economy, and Building More Housing.

In addition to providing a full range of municipal services including police and fire, San José operates an airport, a municipal water system, a regional wastewater treatment facility, some 200 neighborhood and regional parks, and a library system with 25 branches. The City also oversees convention, cultural, and hospitality facilities that include the San José McEnery Convention Center, Center for the Performing Arts, California Theater, Mexican Heritage Plaza, and the SAP Center San José – home of the National Hockey League San José Sharks.

City operations are supported by 6,928 full-time equivalent positions and a total operating and capital budget of $6.0 billion for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. San José is dedicated to maintaining the highest fiscal integrity and earning high credit ratings to ensure the consistent delivery of quality services to the community. Extensive information regarding San José can be found on the City website at www.sanjoseca.gov.



ABOUT THE CITY OF SAN JOSE'S PARKS, RECREATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE POSITION



Guided by its mission – Connecting People through Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services for an Active San José – the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department (PRNS) stewards one of the largest municipal park and recreation systems in the nation. The Department maintains and operates more than 200 neighborhood parks and many other civic spaces, 10 regional parks, 65 miles of trails, 83 sports fields in 47 parks, and a network of community centers that serve residents of every age and ability. Signature destinations include Happy Hollow Park & Zoo, Emma Prusch Farm Park, Alum Rock Park, Lake Cunningham, three municipal golf courses, and San José Family Camp, a 51.2-acre campground in the Sierra Nevada.

PRNS delivers its work through five core services:

- Animal Care and Services promotes and protects the health, safety, and welfare of animals and people in the City of San José;
- Community Facilities Development creates uniquely San José places that foster relationships with people and nature and offer a civic presence;
- Community Services empowers and supports residents, schools, and local organizations to make the City more livable, safe, and clean;
- Parks Maintenance and Operations ensures the proper maintenance and operation of City parks, trails and open spaces that provide opportunities for residents to connect to nature and lead active, healthy lifestyles; and
- Recreation Services promotes play and health, strengthens communities, and enriches lives.

The Department's long-range strategic plan, ActivateSJ, organizes this work around five guiding principles: Stewardship, Nature, Equity & Access, Identity, and Public Life.

The Director provides executive leadership and strategic direction for the Department, overseeing its administration, priorities, partnerships, and a diverse full-time and part-time workforce. Serving as a key advisor to the City Manager and a member of the City's Senior Staff, the Director plays a central role in shaping citywide policy on parks, recreation, neighborhood livability, and animal care; advancing the City Council Focus Areas of Cleaning Up Our Neighborhoods and Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness; and ensuring high-quality, equitable service delivery in every San José neighborhood. The Director collaborates extensively with City departments and offices, community stakeholders, school districts, nonprofit partners, County of Santa Clara, and City Council, and frequently serves as a liaison on behalf of the City Manager.

The Department is supported by approximately 930 full-time equivalent positions and an annual operating budget of approximately $190 million, in addition to a multi-year parks and community facilities capital program.



THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of San José seeks an inspiring, innovative, results-driven executive who brings both a bold vision and a pragmatic approach to leading a large, complex, and highly visible parks, recreation, and neighborhood services organization. The ideal candidate understands that great public spaces and programs require not only a passion for community, but measurable impact – translating vision into well-maintained and reimagined parks, vibrant programs, clean and safe neighborhoods, and improved outcomes for residents.

This leader will be adept at navigating evolving challenges, including caring for aging park infrastructure in a resource-constrained environment, balancing cost recovery with affordability and access, addressing the impacts of unsheltered homelessness on parks and trails, reducing wildfire and vegetation risk in open spaces, and ensuring a well-run Animal Care and Services Shelter. They will be equally comfortable shaping policy at the executive level and driving operational excellence across a large, geographically dispersed, and largely field-based workforce.

Successful candidates will bring a combination of strategic leadership, subject matter expertise, and strong execution skills, along with a collaborative and resilient leadership style suited to a high-profile, fast-paced, and politically dynamic setting.



Executive success in the City of San José is defined by an ability to model and sustain work that delivers on the City Manager's One Team Leadership Values and Expectations. In addition, the ideal candidate will:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of parks, recreation, and neighborhood services operations, including park maintenance, capital project delivery, recreation programming, community-based services and animal care and shelter services.
- Have a track record of delivering clean, safe, and well-maintained parks, trails, and facilities, with clear, measurable outcomes and strong asset management practices.
- Bring experience leading large, unionized, field-based workforces and building a culture of safety, accountability, and service.
- Be skilled in using data, performance metrics, and evaluation frameworks to drive accountability and continuous improvement.
- Have experience engaging and building trust with diverse communities and neighborhood associations, then translating community voice into programs and services.
- Possess the ability to lead organizational change at scale by championing innovation and reimagining parks programs and services to meet evolving community needs, including integrating new service lines, modernizing systems, and operationalizing ActivateSJ's principles of Stewardship, Nature, Equity & Access, Identity, and Public Life.
- Serve as a trusted advisor and thought partner to executive leadership and the City Council, with the ability to navigate complex stakeholder environments and competing priorities.
- Be an effective bridge-builder internally across departments and offices and externally with school districts, nonprofit partners, the County of Santa Clara, regional park agencies, and elected officials, with a demonstrated ability to leverage grants, partnerships, and philanthropy.
- Demonstrate a commitment to cultivating an inclusive, high-performing workforce and advancing equitable access to parks and recreation across every San José neighborhood.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Education: A bachelor's degree in parks and recreation management, public administration, business administration, or related field. A master's degree in parks and recreation management, public administration, business administration, or related field preferred.

Experience: Ten years of progressively responsible professional experience demonstrating proficiency in the management and policy-making functions of a public- and/or private-sector organization responsible for a complex range of programs and activities. This experience must include at least five years in a management-level position with policy-making responsibilities, preferably within a parks, recreation, or similar large public-service organization in local government.

Form 700: This position is designated under the City's Conflict of Interest Code and/or California Government Code Section 87200 and requires disclosure of certain financial interests through the Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700). Upon hire and annually each spring, the incumbent must also file the Family Gift Reporting Form with Form 700, as required by the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

COMPENSATION

The annual salary range for this position is **$217,940 - $353,022**. Placement within this range will be dependent upon the qualifications and experience of the individual selected. This salary includes an approximate five percent (5%) ongoing non-pensionable compensation. The salary is supplemented by an attractive benefits package that includes, but is not limited to:

- **Retirement** – Competitive defined benefit retirement plan with full reciprocity with CalPERS.
- **Health Insurance** – The City contributes 90% towards the premium for the lowest-priced non-deductible plan. Several plan options are available.
- **Dental Insurance** – The City contributes 100% of the premium of the lowest-priced plan for dental coverage.
- **Personal Time** – Vacation is accrued initially at the rate of three weeks per year with amounts increasing up to five weeks after 15 years of service. Vacation accrual may be adjusted for successful candidates with prior public service to reflect a vacation accrual rate commensurate with total years of public service. Executive Leave of 40 hours is granted annually and depending upon success in the Management Performance Program, could increase to up to 80 hours. Sick Leave is accrued at the rate of approximately 8 hours per month.
- **Holidays** – The City observes 15 paid days annually.
- **Deferred Compensation** – The City offers an optional 457(b) plan.
- **Flexible Spending Accounts** – The City participates in Dependent Care Assistance and Medical Reimbursement Programs.
- **Insurance** – The City provides a term life insurance policy equal to two times annual salary. Long-term disability and AD&D plans are optional.
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** – The City provides a comprehensive range of services through its EAP.

Executive Management Benefits – https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=21323

Health Benefits – https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/human-resources/benefits

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

This recruitment will be handled with strict confidentiality. References will *not* be contacted until mutual interest has been established. The "first resume" review deadline is **Monday, December 14, 2026**. Please submit your materials to: https://www.cpshr.us/recruitment/2707. Screening interviews are tentatively scheduled with the short list of candidates in mid-December 2026, with additional interviews and assessments scheduled to begin in mid-January 2027. The City of San José is an equal opportunity employer.

For additional information about this position, please contact:

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Your Trusted HR Advisor For 40 Years

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