

Peckham & McKenney  
"All about fit"



**Assistant Director – Open  
Space, Parks, and Golf**  
CITY OF PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA



## THE COMMUNITY

Palo Alto, known as the “Birthplace of Silicon Valley,” is home to 69,700 residents and nearly 100,000 jobs. The City is more than 100 years old and is named after a majestic 1,000-year-old coastal redwood tree along San Francisquito Creek where early Spanish explorers settled. The blend of business and residential areas anchored by vibrant commercial areas define Palo Alto’s unique character. A charming mixture of old and new, Palo Alto’s tree-lined streets and historic buildings reflect its California heritage and at the same time, Palo Alto is recognized worldwide as a leader in cutting-edge technological development. This mix of tradition and innovation makes Palo Alto an extraordinary place to live and work.

As the global center of technology and innovation, Palo Alto is the corporate headquarters for many world-class companies and research facilities such as HP, Tesla, Rivian, and Broadcom. Home to Stanford University and a top-ranked public school system, Palo Alto also features beautiful residential neighborhoods, and vibrant shopping and retail districts. Palo Alto has a highly educated and culturally sophisticated citizenry that is actively



engaged in making a difference both locally and globally.

The City of Palo Alto offers robust community amenities including 36 parks, 39 playgrounds, 5 community and youth centers, 5 libraries, and 41 miles of walking/biking trails. Palo Alto is an award-winning City recognized nationally as leading-edge and well-managed, one of a small number of California cities with a AAA bond rating. City services and performance also receive high marks from community members in the annual citizen survey conducted by Polco (previously National Research Center). To learn more about the City of Palo Alto, please visit [www.cityofpaloalto.org](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org).

## THE ORGANIZATION AND THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Palo Alto is a Charter City with a Council-Manager form of government and a seven-member City Council

elected at-large. The Mayor and City Council appoint the City Manager, City Attorney, City Auditor, and City Clerk. Unique among California cities, Palo Alto is a full-service municipality that owns and operates its own gas, electric, water, sewer, refuse, storm drainage, and fiber utility services at competitive rates for its customers. The City of Palo Alto has 1092 full-time equivalent employees and a **FY 2024/25 total budget** of \$1.1 billion which includes a General Fund Budget of \$306.9 million.

The **Community Services Department (CSD)** offers dozens of urban and neighborhood parks, outstanding classes for adult/seniors and kids, 40 miles of hiking trails, a municipal golf course, fascinating art exhibits, the Palo Alto Jr. Museum and Zoo, facility rentals, pools, and fields and gyms for fitness. The CSD is comprised of three Divisions: Arts & Sciences, Open Space, Parks, and Golf; and Recreation as well as an Office of Human Services. The CSD is staffed with 82.25 FTEs and 55.41 hourly employees and has a **budget of \$42.2 million**.

## THE POSITION

Reporting to the Community Services Director, the Assistant Director for Open Space, Parks, and Golf is a management level position with department-wide authority and division and/or technical responsibilities. Typical duties include developing and implementing department and City policies; developing and implementing the division’s budget; developing operational goals and priorities; overseeing complex projects; resolving inter-departmental and division issues; resolving the most complex customer service issues; supervising other division managers, managers, supervisors, and line employees; providing input on personnel decisions; evaluating performance, coaching and training, and administering discipline. The Assistant Director establishes effective and cooperative working relationships





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with other divisions and departments, representatives of the public, nonprofit partners, community and regulatory agencies, elected and appointed officials, the media, and others. The Assistant Director serves as the Department liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Incumbents serve in the absence of the Director.



Successful candidates will have a Bachelor's degree and eight years of experience overseeing parks and natural open spaces, including maintenance, capital improvement projects, golf course management, and community service or related experience, including five years at a management level.

### THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Palo Alto seeks a proven leader to guide the team to the next level of excellence. The ideal candidate will have experience with natural resources management and preservation, environmental laws and regulations, park maintenance and capital improvement projects, and passive recreational use of open space. Additionally, they will have experience with contracts and budgets, possess outstanding written and oral presentation skills, and have experience with collaboration, consensus building, and engaging with internal and external partners.

Key priorities for the next Assistant Director include:

- Continue to advance the **Parks, Recreation, Natural Open Space and Trails Master Plan**;
- Work closely with the Parks and Recreation Commission to advance the Commission's workplan;
- Finalize the turf study and bring to the City Council for direction;
- Oversee successful completion of parks and open space capital improvement projects;
- Finalize a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Baylands Nature Preserve; and
- Collaborate with partner organizations on community-led initiatives such as a skate park and recreation wellness center.

In addition, the next Assistant Director will be:

- Politically astute, flexible, and a big picture, "out of the box thinker" who solves problems by working to get to yes when possible;
- An experienced leader who is an engaged mentor and coach, building on individual's strengths and employing strategies to motivate and support a team of talented professionals. They will be compassionate, emotionally intelligent, and a people-focused leader who is respectful, values staff's experience and expertise, and can gain the trust and respect of the community, staff, colleagues, and elected and appointed officials;
- A skilled manager who is able to successfully manage and prioritize multiple projects to completion;
- A team player who works collaboratively with the leadership team to address issues, solve problems,

and execute the City's strategic objectives; and

- The successful candidate will be an effective delegator, place an emphasis on staff development and relationship building, and have a good sense of humor.

The Assistant Director is expected to demonstrate the **City's Leadership Skills and Abilities** including strong ethical, professional, and service-oriented leadership and interpersonal skills; a collaborative and partnering mindset; resilience, self-awareness, and accountability; leveraging the positive impact of diversity; and align with the organizational mission and established values.

### THE COMPENSATION

This is an at-will division manager-level classification with an annual salary range of \$172,890 - \$259,334. Appointment will be made depending upon the qualifications of the selected candidate. In addition, the City offers a competitive benefits package that includes the following:

**RETIREMENT** – CalPERS 2% @ 60 formula for Classic employees; 2% @ 62 formula for New Members

**MEDICAL PLAN** – City pays a flat rate contribution (in 2025, up to \$2,260 per month for family coverage) and employee pays in accordance with health plan option selected, between \$43.27 to \$1,641.03 per month.

**DENTAL AND VISION PLANS** – fully paid

**VACATION** – 120-200 hours annually depending on years of service, with option for cash out once a year



**LIFE AND AD&D INSURANCE** – fully paid up to annual salary

**GOLD STANDARD EAP PROGRAM**

– The City’s partnership with CONCERN EAP has benefited employees in all aspect of their life from financial planning to proactive meditation courses and countless more in-person and virtual offerings, 5 in person sessions available per area of interest.

**FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS** –

Daycare and Health Care

**COMMUTER BENEFITS** – Benefits

that allow you to deduct money pre-tax, match expenses in many cases and even receive fully subsidized transit in some cases. Starting May 1st, benefited employees will have access to unlimited travel on regional transit. The Clipper BayPass will allow access to bus, rail, and ferry services in the 9 -county San Francisco Bay Area that accept Clipper.

**ADDITIONAL BENEFIT** – an annual

benefit of \$2,500 for IRS Section 125 compliant uses such as Flexible Spending Accounts, Non-taxable Professional Development Spending Account, deferred compensation, or health club membership

**EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT**

**INDIVIDUAL FUND** –\$500 toward training, organization memberships,



## SEARCH SCHEDULE

- Filing Deadline:.....May 25, 2025
- Preliminary Interviews (telephonic): .....June 5 & 6, 2025
- Recommendation to City:.....June 12, 2025
- Panel Interviews (In-Person): .....June 25, 2025
- Finalist Interviews (In-Person):.....June 26, 2025

These dates have been confirmed, and it is recommended that you plan your calendar accordingly.

conferences, etc., plus a department wide training budget.

**DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN**

– allows employee to save money towards retirement in a 457 Plan through either Empower or Mission Square.

**PAID PARENTAL LEAVE** – up to 6 weeks of paid leave within 12 months of birth or adoption

**ANNUAL DAY OF RECOGNITION** – Floating holiday which can be used for individual days of cultural significance

**MANAGEMENT LEAVE** – 80 hours per calendar year, eligible to convert into vacation time, allocate to a deferred compensation plan or cash-out

**OTHER LEAVE** – 96 hours of sick leave per year; 12 paid holidays

**Pilot Childcare and Educational Benefits:**

The City offers an annual Pilot Childcare Assistance Benefit. Up to \$10,000 assistance for childcare costs at eligible childcare facilities located within Palo Alto City limits. [Find Childcare Resources.](#)

Through a new City of Palo Alto School District partnership, City employees are eligible to apply for their children to attend award-winning Palo Alto Unified District Schools. [Find Palo Alto Unified School District school information.](#)



## THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

To apply for this key position and exciting career opportunity, please submit a current resume and compelling cover letter through our website at:

**Peckham & McKenney**  
[www.peckhamandmckenney.com](http://www.peckhamandmckenney.com)

Resumes are acknowledged within two business days. Contact Roberta Greathouse at 831.998.3194, toll-free at 866.912.1919, or via email at [Roberta@PeckhamandMcKenney.com](mailto:Roberta@PeckhamandMcKenney.com) if you have any questions regarding this position or the recruitment process.



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