

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WHAT WE DO



Community-powered moments in harmony with nature.

Elings Park makes Santa Barbara happier, healthier, smarter, and more inspired through recreation, the arts, and nature. Now celebrating our 40th year, Elings Park is the largest privately funded park in America. Our extraordinary journey began with a former landfill and a community vision for an athletic and recreational facility that would be built, maintained, and operated without public funding.

Each year, approximately 300,000 children, youth, and adults visit the Park. Admission is free, and we are open 365 days a year, providing access to 230 hilltop acres with breathtaking mountain and ocean views. Activities include softball, baseball, soccer, tennis, hiking, biking, BMX, disc golf, hang gliding, paragliding, picnicking, and playground fun. We also offer membership in the highly popular Elings Park Dog Owners Group (EPDOG), which allows off-leash exploration of the entire property. We are home to the Veterans Memorial Walk and Terrace of Remembrance, and serve as a premier venue for weddings, corporate events, family celebrations, memorials, concerts, theatrical presentations, and festivals.

Elings Park relies solely on private donors, with no city or county funding used for maintenance, improvements, or operations. Since 2019, the Elings Park Infrastructure Campaign (EPIC!) has led successful fundraising for infrastructure restoration and renovation. The Board initially identified \$20 million in necessary improvements, and \$17 million has been raised to date. An additional \$10 million has been identified to continue major investments in our facilities and natural environment.

LEADERSHIP & CULTURE

Elings Park Foundation is governed by 14 highly engaged and connected Board members from across the region. The City of Santa Barbara Parks and Recreation Director also serves as a non-voting advisory member. The new Executive Director will report to the Board of Directors and oversee the \$2 million operating budget. They will also guide and lead a team of 10 staff members who work tirelessly to support the daily operations of the Park.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

- Salary – \$180,000 - \$200,000 DOE/Neg.
- Medical and dental benefits
- Simple IRA retirement plan with employer match
- PTO: 10 paid days off, 40 hours of sick leave, 10 holidays
- On-site free parking and monthly cell phone reimbursement

LOCATION

This is an in-person role within an office located at Elings Park, 1298 Las Positas Road in Santa Barbara, California.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Executive Director will provide vision and strategic leadership for the Park, overseeing its long-term sustainability, fundraising, stakeholder and community engagement, and operations. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director is responsible for the financial growth, program enhancement, mission-focused brand building, and the stewardship of the Park's natural and recreational assets.

The Executive Director will build and develop a high-performing team, foster a culture of accountability and growth, and implement systems that strengthen the organization's long-term impact. The Executive Director will manage a team of 10, including 3 direct reports: the Director of Operations, the Director of Development (vacant position), and the Executive Assistant/Board Liaison. The Elings Park team also includes the Director of Programs & Events, Operations Manager, Facilities & Maintenance Manager, Maintenance Crew Members, and Tennis Center Manager. The Executive Director will also work with external vendors, including a 3rd party finance and accounting firm.

1st Year Priorities

- **Stakeholder Engagement and Relationship Building:** Build relationships with the Park's staff, donors, board members, visitors, constituents, and community partners and stakeholders.
- **Organizational Assessment and Infrastructure:** Evaluate Elings Park Foundation's current structure to ensure an efficient balance between administration and programming, while conducting a full audit of internal systems, staffing levels, policies, and procedures to modernize workflows.
- **Strategic Planning:** Work with the Board and staff to develop the Park's short- and long-term strategic vision.
- **Fundraising:** Lead and actively participate in fundraising efforts, including creating a development plan, donor cultivation strategy, and revenue growth initiatives, in partnership with the Board and EPIC! Committee. Recruit and hire a Director of Development (a direct report to the ED) to join the team.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Leadership & Governance

- Work with the Board and staff to develop and implement the Park's short- and long-term strategic plan and overall vision.
- Provide clear, timely information to support strong governance, sound decision-making, and fiduciary oversight.
- Anticipate challenges and opportunities, lead organizational change effectively, and translate strategy into measurable action.

Fundraising & Financial Stewardship

- Drive fundraising initiatives and oversee donor engagement.
- Work with the EPIC! Capital Campaign Leadership Team, including the Campaign Chair, Donor/Board Advisors, Director of Development, and Fundraising Counsel, and participate in its weekly meetings.

- Cultivate and steward authentic relationships with donors, prospects, community partners, and volunteer leaders.
- Prepare the annual budget, ensuring transparency and fiscal responsibility.
- Identify new and improved revenue streams while balancing philanthropic support with fee-for-service and facility-use revenue.
- Partner effectively with external financial management support and the Board Treasurer to ensure accurate reporting and informed oversight.

Organizational & People Leadership

- Recruit, retain, and continually develop a high-performing staff.
- Review current staffing structure and clarify roles, responsibilities, goals, and performance expectations across a small, highly interconnected organization.
- Develop and oversee policies, procedures, and safety standards.
- Build an environment where talented staff can thrive and leaders are developed.

Programs, Facilities & Park Stewardship

- Oversee all programs, facilities, and services to ensure a high-quality visitor experience, while prioritizing environmental stewardship and conservation.
- Balance current operational needs with long-term infrastructure, maintenance, and capital priorities.
- Use data, metrics, and community feedback to inform decisions and assess impact.

Community Engagement & External Relations

- Develop and strengthen authentic relationships with donors, volunteers, community leaders, staff, visitors, and stakeholders from all backgrounds.
- Communicate the Park's mission, impact, needs, and opportunities through compelling storytelling and authentic engagement.
- Represent Elings Park at community events and in public forums, including when issues are complex or perspectives differ.

BACKGROUND PROFILE

- Brings a strong connection to the mission, including a passion for outdoor recreation, parks, and conservation.
- 10+ years of demonstrated senior leadership and management experience, including strategy development, board engagement, change management, team leadership and collaboration, and talent development.
- Proven success leading fundraising efforts and growing revenue across multiple streams, including earned revenue, individual giving, events, grants, and partnerships.
- Demonstrated ability to drive growth while balancing entrepreneurial and innovative thinking with a mission focus.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, with exceptionally well-developed listening and communication skills, and the ability to connect with and inspire confidence among a wide range of stakeholders and diverse constituencies.
- A solid understanding of fiscal management with experience developing and managing budgets.
- Demonstrated experience building and leading high-performing teams.

- Experience working with boards, committees, and volunteer leaders, with a strong understanding of nonprofit governance practices.
- High emotional intelligence and self-awareness, with integrity, transparency, accountability, warmth, and the ability to manage conflict directly and respectfully.
- Experience with technology and CRMs, such as Google Workspace, QuickBooks, and Bill.com.
- Brings an appreciation for dogs and their special relationships with people.

TO APPLY, PLEASE SEND YOUR RESUME TO:

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