



President & CEO
Seattle, Washington

SEATTLE'S NEW WATERFRONT PARK

A dramatic transformation is taking place along Seattle's waterfront heralding a new, historic chapter for the city and its civic life. For 65 years, the Alaskan Way Viaduct separated downtown from the shoreline. With the Viaduct's removal and the completion of the SR99 Tunnel, civic leaders seized upon an unprecedented opportunity to reorient the city back to its roots and restore the waterfront through the establishment of a waterfront park. Set on historic Coast Salish land, Waterfront Park will renew 20-acres of greenspace, including several historic piers, and will serve as the "front porch" of the city in a Seattle-wide reawakening that connects visitors and residents through new pedestrian and business pathways to cultural landmarks as well as to transportation hubs and neighborhoods. Planning began in 2010 with more than 400 public meetings, visioning sessions, and environmental reviews resulting in an internationally acclaimed design team that led plans for the historically monumental, beautiful, and environmentally restorative park. The park was designed to expand an extraordinary greenspace that is to be built with upcycled materials and rain gardens that will filter huge levels of storm water runoff into the Puget Sound, improving water quality to the area and reviving marine life, including seawall developments that mimic natural salmon habitat. From dynamic open spaces with free, rotating activities, to coastline habitats for learning and exploration, Waterfront Park will have something for everyone. Its promenade and bicycle path will serve as tree-lined connectors for the park. Washington Street Boat Landing and Habitat Beach will restore direct access to touch the water for Pioneer Square and the South Downtown community. The elevated area of Overlook Walk will connect Pike Place Market to the waterfront and the new Ocean Pavilion of the Seattle Aquarium will offer magnificent views of the Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains, democratizing access for visitors to the most beautiful parts of the city. Finally, its piers will host dedicated play areas for children and open spaces for community events from live music and dance performances to soccer, yoga, and more. Pier 62 is already active with vibrant programming and the remainder of the park will open in phases with completion and full opening anticipated in 2024.

ABOUT FRIENDS OF WATERFRONT SEATTLE

Friends of Waterfront Seattle (Friends) was established in 2012 as the nonprofit partner to the City of Seattle to co-create, activate, and steward a vision for bringing community inspired arts, culture, and educational programming to the waterfront park. Founded by a dedicated team of volunteers who were both committed to the realization of the park's establishment and passionate about its potential to be a space of belonging and restoration for all who visit, Friends has already raised over \$90M toward its \$200M capital campaign which serves as the foundation for a thriving organization that harnesses the collective creative potential of Seattle communities in the activation of the park. In that work, Friends has the important opportunity to honor the site's tribal origins and center love of nature, love of the people of Seattle, and love of the city in a vision for programming that inspires joy, belonging, and healing. Centering joy and belonging in Friends' work means clarifying strategies for care, communication, healing, and collective reinvention among stakeholders and the Seattle community in the ongoing management of the

park. As the organization grows, its leadership will have the opportunity to design and bring to life a sustainable collective impact model for the organization to support the ongoing health and potential of the park. This will include values-aligned strategies for supporting safety in the park as well as the curation of programs and experiences that build financial opportunities to invite the vibrancy of Seattle’s thriving arts and culture community, businesses, and citizens to the park in new ways.

FRIENDS’ COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

Waterfront Park is situated on the land of the Coast Salish people, who have resided here since time immemorial and continue to thrive. With respect and humility, Friends acknowledges the history of the waterfront, the dispossession of land from the Coast Salish people, and most importantly, the strength and resilience of Native people and their culture through this history and to the present. This acknowledgment serves as only the first step in honoring the land we occupy and the first people on that land. Friends recognizes that the work to build and repair relationships with Native communities will be long and evolving.

Friends recognizes and acknowledges the historic and existing systemic racism embedded in the city of Seattle and is committed to prioritizing racial equity, diversity, and social justice within the organization and in the public spaces it operates. Friends seeks to continually cultivate inclusive spaces where all people – specifically Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) as well as underserved communities including refugee, immigrant, low-income, LGBTQ+, and disabled communities – are invited and welcome to enjoy Waterfront Park.

THE PRESIDENT & CEO SEARCH

Friends of Waterfront Seattle is seeking a creative and strategic leader to champion this historic and redefining project for the City of Seattle through the completion of its capital campaign to construct the waterfront park, co-design a vision for its phased activation and programming, and establish a sustainable and value-based organizational plan to ensure the park fulfills its potential to host community-driven cultural events, recreational activities, and environmental educational opportunities as an expression of the vibrant history and culture of Seattle. The next President & CEO (CEO) will harness the energy and momentum of the moment to realize the promise of a park with programming and opportunities that feel welcoming, safe, and joyful for Seattle families, citizens, and tourists alike. The CEO will be grounded in antiracist values and experienced in bringing to life diverse programming and initiatives to ensure the park is a place of belonging for the diverse communities of the Seattle region and Black and Indigenous people in particular.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The President & CEO will work closely with the board, staff, city partners, community partners, and the community at large to articulate and oversee the implementation of a collective vision of Friends as the cultural and experiential custodians of Waterfront Park. The CEO will become a central figure in Seattle civic leadership and in that capacity will bring a shared leadership orientation to both stakeholder relationship building and effective team management. The CEO will be supported by the COO and leadership team internally and effective partnership externally across all key constituencies to accomplish the fundraising goals of the current capital campaign and the ushering of a new, operational era of the park. The CEO will engage immediately in the following opportunities for impact:

Strategic Visioning: The President & CEO will champion a vision of a beautiful, joyful park activated through diverse leaders, businesses, and the rich Seattle Arts and Culture community. The activation of the Waterfront Park will herald the revitalization of post-pandemic Downtown Seattle and will connect visitors from the waterfront to Seattle landmarks, neighborhoods, and transportation hubs. The CEO will lead the design and build of programming that employs strategies to engage in Waterfront Park conservation, community safety, and community-driven programs that reflect the beauty of the park, the diversity of Seattle communities, and the vibrancy of the city. The CEO will integrate mission-vision-values refinement and alignment, fundraising plans, organizational culture, organizational purview, programmatic goals, and commitment to equity in leading the development and implementation of a bold, next-phase strategic plan for Friends.

Fundraising and Communications: The President & CEO will steward forward the next stage of the \$200 million capital campaign, nearing the halfway mark, in partnership with the Chief Philanthropy Officer by engaging individuals, corporations, and the resources of the broader public more fully in the vision of the park from fundraising and activation standpoints, collective impact strategies, and by strengthening and clarifying the value proposition of Waterfront Park to donors through effective external communication including media and communication strategies. The CEO will be the face and guiding force for external communications as Friends' chief storyteller and will shape and guide a communications plan to cement Waterfront Park in the hearts and minds of Seattleites. The CEO will also lead, connect, and engage with constituents including staff, board, businesses, and community partners to strategically develop and transition from a successful capital campaign to a continuing sustainable business and funding model.

Board Partnership and Development: The President & CEO will lead board development by fostering a culture of continued learning, engagement, transparency, and accountability to drive the sustained leadership and organizational effectiveness of Friends. The CEO will work closely with the board to identify current and future leadership needs and cultivate relationships with others regionally and nationally who may support next level board membership and development. The CEO will also leverage the experience, relationships, and wisdom of the board to harness and mobilize the support of Friends' passionate and engaged board, which has led an extraordinary and successful fundraising effort still underway to achieve the goals of the capital campaign.

Organizational Management: The President & CEO will inspire, unite, and mobilize the heart and driving force of Friends – a talented and diverse staff. In partnership with the COO and senior leadership team, the CEO will foster a culture of shared leadership across all levels of the organization, grounding processes and decision-making in shared values, clarifying roles, responsibilities and accountability, and prioritizing inclusion and equity to ensure a thriving internal culture.

City, Stakeholder, and Community Engagement: The President & CEO will become a key figure in the civic infrastructure of Seattle, building and nurturing alliances within city leadership and across the community, particularly with historically underrepresented groups and communities. The CEO will ensure Friends is consistently assessing how it can better represent and serve the city of Seattle through active community engagement strategies that inspire new and representative programming and space use. The CEO will elevate awareness and enthusiasm of the Waterfront Park by building a positive reputation of credibility and welcoming.

QUALITIES, ATTRIBUTES, AND CRITICAL COMPETENCIES OF THE NEXT PRESIDENT AND CEO

Success in the President & CEO role will require a deep commitment to the mission, vision, and values of Friends and its transformational impact on the people, architecture, and culture of Seattle. The ideal candidate will first and foremost be a:

- **Culture Builder and Inclusive Leader.** The President & CEO will have experience leading an organization through growth and transformation with expertise facilitating participatory decision-making in organizations at the intersection of community and civic infrastructure. The CEO will have a shared leadership orientation and will hold accountability for Friends achieving its goals while nurturing and empowering leaders at all levels of the board, staff, and community to make their greatest contribution to the work. This requires a commitment to transparency, authenticity, and values-discipline in all aspects of management. The CEO will be equity fluent and able to clearly articulate their equity journey, with demonstrated experience bringing equity values into organizational practices and systems.
- **Design-Thinker and Changemaker.** The President & CEO will have the capacity to effectively support the completion of a major public infrastructure project and the political savvy to steward public-private partnerships, with demonstrated success leading an organization in bringing initiatives from concept to implementation, to reality, while continuously refining and adapting approaches to stakeholder needs and feedback.
- **Effective Fundraiser and Steward of Resources and Relationships.** The President & CEO will have the capacity to inspire and cultivate new and existing donors and business partner relationships, and a compelling voice with a demonstrated ability to have authentic dialogue around complex issues including funder expectations, strategic direction, and community priorities. They will be a media savvy communicator with external relations skills and demonstrated ability to serve as a spokesperson for the organization at high-level functions and across media platforms.

Additional skills and attributes that will be important to the President & CEO's success include:

Professional Experience

- Demonstrated leadership skills and at least 10 years of professional experience working in a field relevant to reimagining and revitalizing public spaces.
- Ability to master a diverse and demanding workload and to manage projects successfully.
- Strong experience leading or working in public-private partnerships.
- Proven management skills including the ability to partner with a COO to oversee the recruitment, retention, management, and development of a highly skilled, values-based team.
- Experience working effectively in a variety of professional settings with diverse groups of people who may have divergent interests.

Personal Attributes

- A demonstrated passion and a vision for the role that Arts and Culture can play in elevating urban spaces and communities and a commitment to the underlying importance of the role of community revitalization in improving social and economic wellbeing.
- Equity fluency and commitment to reimagining inequitable systems and practices in alignment with Friends' values and commitment to antiracist work.

- Experience collaborating with organizations and individuals who are creative, visionaries and transformational.
- The personal balance and confidence necessary to maintain a learning posture while still contributing as a leader in a national dialogue about transformative urban spaces.
- The wisdom, initiative, and humility to co-create with and build alignment across staff, board, and stakeholders toward a vision and plan for the park that inspires all.

COMPENSATION

The President and CEO role is a full-time, exempt position. Friends is committed to pay equity and transparency internally and externally and will pay commensurate with demonstrated experience leading significant public-private partnerships and their fundraising needs. The target range is between \$250,000 - \$300,000. Paid time off, health care and dental coverage, and transit pass are provided by the organization. Defined contribution retirement plan with 3% match by the organization is available.

TO APPLY

More information about **Friends of Waterfront Seattle** may be found at: www.waterfrontparkseattle.org

This search is being led by [Katherine Jacobs](#) and [Sharon Gerstman](#) of [NPAG](#). Candidates may submit their cover letter, outlining their interest and qualifications, along with their resume via NPAG's [website](#).

If you need assistance and/or accommodation during the application or recruiting process due to a disability, please note that in your submission.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.