



CARLSONBECK

EXECUTIVE SEARCH FOR PHILANTHROPY & NONPROFITS

Position Specification



Executive Director, Imagine Housing

12 May 2022



Carlson Beck advises **Imagine Housing** on the basis of an exclusive consulting assignment. The following details are for your information and should be shared with discretion.



POSITION SPECIFICATION

IMAGINE HOUSING

THE POSITION:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
REPORTS TO:	BOARD OF DIRECTORS
LOCATION:	KIRKLAND, WASHINGTON

A Compelling Executive Leadership Opportunity

This affordable housing crisis is impossible to ignore. In most US cities, low-income housing options are vanishing and more households are suffering the impacts of becoming housing cost-burdened. At the same time, we agree that everyone deserves a safe place to live; a place to call home.

We know we need more housing units... but that is only part of the solution. And this is where Imagine Housing wrote the playbook; we saw what was needed 35 years ago and took action in some of the wealthiest cities in King County; Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Sammamish, Mercer Island, and Issaquah.

Individuals and families **need community** just as much as they need a roof overhead.

- Children need a place where they can just be kids,
- Families need a place to set down roots,
- Elders need a place to age in place with grace,
- A woman exiting homelessness can find the support they need to start a new life indoors.

Imagine Housing is expert at providing both affordable housing and integral resident services. Many households who are living at Imagine Housing communities are coping with stress, anxiety and trauma and we are the place where they can begin to heal and pursue life-changing goals. Grounded in its history and mission, guided by a professional, high-caliber staff, and situated in the technology capital of the Pacific Northwest, Imagine Housing is championing, convening, and partnering in the meaningful work of advocating for and developing safe and supportive affordable housing.

By engaging in dialogue with community partners and electeds to create solutions and awareness for the housing crisis in the region, Imagine Housing is having an impact and creating communities where people can live safely and thrive in their communities. The last few months has been a time of reflection, transformation, and evolution for Imagine Housing and today Imagine Housing is poised to



meet this pivotal moment. The Imagine Housing (“IH”) Board of Directors seeks a bold, strategic, and culturally competent leader to create meaningful social impact by developing affordable housing and fostering vibrant communities.

THE POSITION

The **Executive Director** (“ED”) provides strategic vision, executive leadership and support to the Board and staff of Imagine Housing and the subsidiary CHDO Board, Imagine Housing Communities. The ED will be responsible for leading the overall operation, management, and administration of the organization to advance the organization’s mission and achieve its financial objectives. They will serve as the primary spokesperson and champion for the organization and for affordable housing on the Eastside. The Executive Director will lead and direct the work of others and will be responsible for operating according to the policies established by the Board.

The Profile

The Board of Directors of Imagine Housing is seeking an Executive Director who is a proven executive leader with a track record of solid and progressive experience in leadership and management roles, preferably in community development, affordable housing development, asset management, and/or tenant services. The Board is seeking visionary, strategic executive leadership while empowering operational excellence at Imagine Housing. The ED will be a passionate champion of equity and equality for all communities.

The ED will leverage the expertise, as well as inspire the confidence and trust of Imagine Housing’s entire staff, from the headquarter staff to the staff working in the communities. The ED will work in partnership with the Boad of Directors to ensure that projects and programs are sustainable and in alignment with the mission and vision of Imagine Housing. They will ensure good governance practices. They will be responsible for enthusiastically engaging with the residents with authenticity and humility.

The ED will bring and effectively deploy a high level of political acumen to build and strengthen relationships with elected and appointed government officials, policy makers, industry leaders, community leaders and representatives, nonprofit executives, funders, as well as philanthropic leaders. They will be diplomatic and highly adept at nuanced community leadership and communications.

The ED will serve as the spokesperson and public “face” of Imagine Housing, representing the organization to external audiences, stakeholders, parties of interest, and community members. They will be articulate, highly communicative, and transparent in external relations.

The ED will have experience in community development that aligns with Imagine Housing’s strategic and operational work on the Eastside, as well as bring an understanding of affordable housing development and the financial mechanisms of this real estate type. This could include knowledge and experience with specific financing instruments, tax credit finance, relevant financing sources as well as ownership structures. Ideally, the ED will have the demonstrated ability to make timely and appropriate risk decisions on real estate project matters.



The ED will work in partnership with the Board and Director of Finance on the strategic and operational financial management of Imagine Housing, bringing the executive leadership lens to the financial operations to ensure sustainability, appropriate and accurate risk identification and management, as well as sound financial management policies and procedures.

The ED will support the strategic HR initiatives of Imagine Housing including recruiting and retaining best-in-class talent, offering professional development, and leading the organization with a lens of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging policies and practices. The ED will model confident and competent team building with staff and Board.

Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Lead the organization, in collaboration with the Board of Directors and staff, on strategies to advance Imagine Housing’s mission, vision and brand as a leader on the Eastside for affordable housing development and resident services.
- Articulate organizational goals and objectives pursuant to Imagine Housing’s mission and vision.
- Nurture high levels of engagement with the Board of Directors in advancing Imagine Housing’s mission and work while fulfilling organizational objectives.
- Embody integrity and commitment to achieving organizational goals and priorities externally and internally.
- Nurture an organizational climate reflective of the organization’s values.
- Ensure alignment of staff and Board on organizational priorities; ensure internal culture and dynamics with staff which includes active listening, flexibility, cross functional communication, trust, and transparency.

Community and Affordable Housing Development

- Lead strategic thinking, in partnership with Board and staff, on Imagine Housing’s continued and expanding community development.
- Bring knowledge and understanding of the affordable housing development field and work to decision making, business planning and risk assessment.
- Center Imagine Housing on resident and tenant needs with an eye towards harnessing the power of its residents to lead the community.

Community Building and Advocacy/External Relations

- Serve as the primary spokesperson for the organization.
- Understand the deep roots of systemic inequity and seek to elevate equity as a focus throughout Imagine Housing; activate diversity through a process of recognizing and engaging differences while leading with inclusion of all of Imagine Housing’s stakeholders.
- Convene, build and promote strong and productive relationships with community members, residents, local governments, peer organizations, partners, and electeds.
- Cultivate, maintain, and strengthen relationships with current and prospective donors and their advisors.



Financial and Organizational Management

- Lead and ensure the financial and overall health of the organization, working in collaboration with staff as well as the Board.
- Develop a culture that seeks to understand different perspectives and embraces equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging.
- Adopt key performance metrics to track operational effectiveness and make data informed decisions.

Organizational Culture

- Ensure Imagine Housing is an organization with high morale, collaborative actions, and shared purpose.
- Recruit, develop (via coaching, mentoring, guidance, feedback), and retain the best people at every level of the organization. Understand the nuances and complexities of leading and motivating a diverse staff with different personalities and work styles.
- Nurture high levels of Board and staff engagement; lead a culture of empowerment, outcomes, data, and accountability.
- Create space and allows for open conversations and healthy debate across the organization.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS / EXPERIENCE / ATTRIBUTES

Education: A Bachelor’s degree is preferred. An advanced degree in Public Administration, Public Policy, Business Administration, City or Urban Planning, Public Health, is welcome.

Experience: Previous experience as an Executive Director is strongly preferred. Minimum five years of experience serving in senior leadership positions of increasing responsibilities in executive leadership, in for-profit or nonprofit affordable housing.

Experience working with local municipalities and county government. Knowledge of King County and Puget Sound is preferred.

Experience working with stakeholder organizations, resident advocates and with diverse communities.

Management experience in one or more areas: commercial or residential real estate development, affordable housing development, portfolio and investment management, property and/or asset management, and community land use and/or economic development, supportive services, board development or fundraising.

Working knowledge of affordable housing, specifically: resident services, property management, asset management and development.

Experience with housing development and its financing mechanisms is preferred.

Minimum five years of progressive fiscal and administrative management experience (nonprofit agency preferred), including budgeting, variance reporting, financial oversight, and loan portfolio and investment portfolio management.



Demonstrated track record of creating a high performing organizational culture where staff feel heard, inspired, supported, and mentored, including effective delegation of responsibilities and management thereof.

Track record of success in fundraising, including individual donors as well as institutional support (foundations, corporations), and government grants or contracts.

Experience with policy and advocacy, specifically working as a convenor for and partner with peer community development organizations, government agencies and affordable housing organizations.

Demonstrated track record of bringing a social justice lens to the work of an organization in its mission and the execution thereof; this would include successful Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging initiatives and practices incorporated into organizational leadership and management.

The successful candidate will **be**:

- **Passionate** about Imagine Housing’s mission
- **Skilled leader and collaborative manager** of staff and partner to the Board
- **Strategic thinker and planner** and **experienced implementer**
- A **relationship builder**, skilled in artfully managing external relations with stakeholder groups
- **Culturally competent**, with a commitment to and comfort level working with a wide array of diverse individuals; an **advocate for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging**
- **Embracing of technology**
- **Collegial, respectful, supportive and empowering** of IH’s staff while holding to standards of excellence and accountability
- Skilled at the **art of prioritizing and managing competing objectives and demands** while maintaining IH’s position and best interests
- Appropriately **transparent with impeccable integrity** in communication and information sharing
- **Collaborative, patient and persistent**
- **Authentic and humble**

The successful candidate will **have**:

- **High emotional intelligence (“EQ”)**
- Demonstrated **accessibility**, internally to staff and board members and externally to community members
- Demonstrated **management experience**, including **staff supervision and financial oversight**
- A **trust-based relational style** of interaction, reflecting **openness and transparency**, an ability to truly hear people
- Strong **convening** abilities
- Demonstrated ability to effectively **address community and policy issues**
- **Strong verbal and written communication skills**
- **Compelling interpersonal communication skills** including excellent **listening, facilitation and conflict resolution skills**

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- Strong **attention to detail, excellent organizational skills**, and an ability to work well under pressure while managing conflicting priorities
 - Ability to **collaborate and develop consensus**, both internally and externally
 - Unquestionable professional **integrity and ethics**
 - A **sense of humor** and a **containable ego**

THE ORGANIZATION

The Mission of Imagine Housing

To develop affordable housing, build welcoming communities, and foster vibrant communities.

Founded in 1987, Imagine Housing is the leading nonprofit developer of affordable rental housing in East King County, Washington. With 15 properties in five cities, Imagine Housing provides 639 households – over 1,400 individuals – with high quality affordable housing in one of the most expensive housing markets in the country. Residents include veterans, seniors, survivors of domestic violence, young adults aging out of foster care, individuals coming out of homelessness, and low-income working families. Fifty four percent of the residents identify as people of color, 61% of the households have annual incomes below \$20,000 and more than 120 units are reserved for individuals and families exiting homelessness.

Organizational Structure and Finance

The current Imagine Housing staff is comprised of 27 full-time employees. The **Executive Team** is comprised of the:

- Executive Director
- Director of Finance
- Director of Real Estate
- Director of Asset Management
- Director of Resident Programs
- Director of Fund Development
- Director of Human Resources and Administration

IH has a \$4.4 million annual operating budget and a ten-person Board of Directors.

For additional information on Imagine Housing, please visit <https://imaginehousing.org/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Imagine Housing is an equal opportunity employer and encourages the candidacy of professionals with diverse lived experiences.

For additional information regarding this opportunity, please contact:

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