



Akron, Ohio

Chief Facilities & Planning Officer

Join the Leadership Team at the University of Akron, a leading institution committed to lifelong learning, flourishing people, and social impact, invites applications for the position of Chief Facilities and Planning Officer (CFPO).

This is an exciting opportunity for a forward-thinking and strategic leader to shape the physical campus and support our mission of education, research, and service. The CFPO is responsible for the overall leadership and strategic vision of the Division of Capital Planning and the Facilities Management department, which includes approximately 200 employees managing over 8 million gross square feet across more than 200 acres and two locations, with an annual budget exceeding \$20 million. The CFPO provides full lifecycle stewardship of University facilities—including project prioritization, infrastructure maintenance, and sustainability—in accordance with University priorities and State of Ohio regulations. A key focus is right sizing the campus footprint to align with enrollment trends and long-term institutional needs.

Key Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in architecture, engineering, or a related field.
- Minimum of 6 years of progressive experience in facilities or building management, including direct oversight of master planning, capital improvement projects, and large-scale construction activities within a complex physical environment. Must include experience leading cross-functional teams involved in design, construction, and facilities operations.
- Strong expertise in budget development, financial analysis, and strategic planning.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The University of Akron, located in Akron, Ohio, is a vital urban research university inspired by its people, its promise and its place. We are firmly anchored in a great American city, and driven by collaboration, partnership and a steadfast determination to provide opportunity and success to all learners. True to its vision and mission, the university is dedicated to providing opportunities for all types of learners that pursue excellence in undergraduate education and distinction in selected areas of



graduate instruction, inquiry and creative activity. The University of Akron strives to be a leading public research university with an unsurpassed commitment to community engagement with a great American legacy city, Akron. The University boasts strong job outcomes, with high percentage of graduates finding employment or continuing their education shortly after graduation. A significant 89% also participate in experiential learning opportunities like internships and research.

An intelligently managed organization with a new team of talented leaders, The University of Akron embodies its mission to transform students' lives and make a significant impact on the community it serves. Within six months of graduation, a substantial 94% of spring 2023 undergraduate degree recipients were either employed full-or part-time, participating in a program of voluntary services, serving in the program of voluntary services, serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, or continuing their education.

The History of the University of Akron

The institution now known as The University of Akron was founded as Buchtel College in 1870 by the Ohio Universalist Convention, which was strongly influenced by the efforts, energy and financial support of Akronites, particularly industrialist John R. Buchtel. By 1907, Buchtel College's emphasis on local rather than denominational interests led it to become a private, nondenominational school.

From the outset, the college and the surrounding community were closely tied, with the college addressing the needs of the region as well as those of the Universalist Church and local entrepreneurs assisting the fledgling institution time and again.

The college's strong ties to the community and its challenging financial situation prompted Buchtel College trustees to transfer the institution and its assets to the city of Akron in 1913. For the next 50 years, the municipal University of Akron, assisted by city tax funds, brought college education within the reach of many more young people. During those years, enrollment swelled from 198 to about 10,000.

THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF FACILITIES & PLANNING OFFICER

Reporting directly to the University President, the CPFO provides leadership and oversight of institutional capital planning, construction, real estate acquisition, property disposition and facilities operations to support The University of Akron's physical footprint, institutional mission and strategic roadmap. With direction over the Division of Capital Planning and Facilities Management, the CPFO is responsible for an annual budget exceeding \$20 million. Together, the departments managed by the CPFO comprise approximately 200 employees, managing 200+ acres and over 8 million gross square feet across two locations.

This position plays a key role in ensuring that campus facilities align with the University's long-term goals and evolving needs of master planning, project prioritization, infrastructure maintenance, sustainability and energy management, in compliance with both University and State of Ohio regulations. A key focus for this position is right sizing the campus footprint to align with enrollment trends and long-term institutional needs.

The CPFO's duties include:

- Lead strategic planning and execution over capital improvements, facilities operations, real estate, sustainability and space utilization across university campuses.
- Oversee all functions of the Capital Planning and Facilities Management divisions, including financial management, personnel oversight, construction, maintenance, energy operations and additional needs.
- Direct campus master planning, design, and construction; coordinate current projects with long-term capital and academic planning priorities.
- Lead efforts to optimize space utilization and rationalize the real estate portfolio, ensuring the environment supports current and projected enrollment and programmatic demand.
- Establish best practices and systems for units, including energy and utility management, custodial and grounds services, trades and maintenance, fleet and moving services.
- Drive sustainability initiatives, including recycling, waste reduction, and energy efficiency, aligning such endeavors with institutional goals and benchmarks.
- Manage departmental budgets and pursue cost-optimization strategies, including shared services, strategic sourcing and performance-based contracting.
- Ensure compliance with collective bargaining agreements and collaborate with Human Resources to maintain positive labor relations.

- Liaise with Wayne College on facility operations and planning.
- Coordinate with academic and administrative leaders to meet space and infrastructure needs; prepare and submit capital budgets and funding requests.
- Maintain compliance with state and federal regulations related to facilities and construction; monitor legislative developments and advise on policy impacts.
- Collaborate with public safety and environmental health teams on emergency preparedness and regulatory compliance.
- Represent the university in external partnerships and regional planning efforts; serve on internal committees and work groups to advance institutional goals.
- Communicate effectively with stakeholders across all levels, including trustees, faculty, staff, and community leaders.
- Perform additional duties as assigned.

LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The CPFO will assume a pivotal role during a period of significant transformation at The University of Akron, presenting both substantial challenges and promising opportunities to shape the institution's future.

- **Campus Footprint Optimization:** Aligning the University's physical infrastructure with evolving enrollment patterns and academic program needs, ensuring efficient use of space while preserving institutional identity.
- **Infrastructure Modernization:** Addressing the complexities of updating aging facilities across a diverse campus environment, balancing deferred maintenance with strategic investments in high-impact projects.
- **Resource Allocation:** Prioritizing capital investments within budgetary constraints to maximize returns in mission fulfillment, value, and functionality.
- **Polsky Building Transformation:** Overseeing a \$30 million renovation of the historic Polsky Building. The project will create a vibrant downtown hub featuring a bookstore, a café with outdoor seating, retail spaces, meeting areas, and expanded community amenities. More university employees will be based in the building, contributing to a livelier year-round downtown presence. This initiative is crucial to reconnecting the campus with the city and fostering deeper engagement with the Akron community.
- **Campus Master Planning:** Developing and implementing a comprehensive master plan that aligns the University's physical development with its strategic goals, academic priorities, and community engagement objectives.

The CPFO will report directly to the President and serve as a key strategic partner in shaping a campus environment that reflects the University's mission and fosters academic innovation, student engagement, and community impact.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate for the role of Chief Planning & Facilities Officer will be a strategic, collaborative, and forward-thinking leader with a deep understanding of facilities management and planning in a complex institutional setting. Candidates should demonstrate the following qualifications and characteristics:

- **Leadership:** The CPFO will be a proven leader capable of guiding and inspiring a large, diverse team of approximately 200 employees across capital planning and facilities functions. They will bring a commitment to professional development, service excellence, and operational integrity.
- **Capital Planning & Real Estate Strategy:** The ideal candidate will have significant experience leading campus master planning, large-scale construction, and capital improvement projects from initial concept to completion. They will be skilled in aligning long-term capital investments with organizational priorities and in developing strategies for real estate acquisition, disposition, and portfolio optimization that strengthen the university's physical and financial position.
- **Management:** The ideal CPFO will be an experienced administrator with a strong track record of managing both unionized and non-unionized staff. They will bring a deep understanding of workforce dynamics, labor relations, and performance management. They will understand how to balance management responsibilities with broader leadership priorities.
- **Financial Acumen:** The candidate must demonstrate success in developing and managing complex budgets—both operating and capital—and in conducting financial analysis.
- **Facilities Management Expertise:** The ideal candidate will bring deep technical and operational knowledge of facilities lifecycle management. This includes maintenance and infrastructure renewal, custodial and grounds operations, utility and energy systems, and the optimization of campus spaces. They will also demonstrate experience implementing sustainability initiatives such as recycling, waste reduction, and energy conservation.
- **Higher Education Context & Compliance:** The CPFO will possess an understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities within a university environment. They will be skilled at aligning physical infrastructure with institutional goals, evolving academic programs, and enrollment trends. They

will possess a strong working knowledge of regulatory frameworks—especially those relevant to the State of Ohio—and the ability to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations related to construction, procurement, and facilities.

- **Strategic & Collaborative Mindset:** This role requires a visionary leader who can translate long-term strategic goals into practical, phased plans and operational actions. The CPFO must be highly collaborative, able to work closely with academic, administrative, and community stakeholders to support both campus and regional development efforts. Success in the role will require adaptability and a demonstrated ability to manage complexity while remaining focused on mission-driven outcomes.

APPENDIX A

Vision, Mission, Core Values and Strategic Initiatives Statement

Vision:

The University of Akron will be a leading public research university with an unsurpassed commitment to community engagement with a great American legacy city, Akron.

Mission:

The University of Akron, a publicly assisted metropolitan institution, strives to develop enlightened members of society. It offers comprehensive programs of instruction from associate through doctoral levels; pursues a vigorous agenda of research in the arts, sciences and professions; and provides service to the community. The University pursues excellence in undergraduate education and distinction in selected areas of graduate instruction, inquiry and creative activity.

Strategic Values:

The University of Akron empowers our people to flourish by delivering an applied and community-connected educational experience and cultivating research excellence. Leveraging our passion and expertise, we create innovative academic opportunities, support the well-being of our students and employees, and prioritize community embeddedness and engagement to impact lives through transformative experience. Through this focus, UA aspires to be the leader in community-focused higher education.

- **Lifelong Learning** through transformative and creative academic experiences integrating traditional programming with industry certification and micro-credentialing.
- **Flourishing People** through growth and development, inclusivity and belonging, and meaningful experiences.
- **Social Impact** through community leadership, programming, learning, and reciprocity.

APPENDIX B

PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

Credential review will begin on June 30, 2025. A completed application, resume' with cover letter must be submitted to the University's career board at [Careers at UA.](#)

Final candidates will be asked to provide three professional references.