



Economic Development Director

City of Grand Rapids, Michigan



About Grand Rapids, MI

Home to one of the fastest growing economies in the U.S., Grand Rapids is the second-largest city in Michigan, and the largest city in West Michigan. It is on the Grand River about 30 miles east of Lake Michigan and three hours from Chicago. The City's population is 198,829 and covers an area of 45 square miles. The combined statistical area of Grand Rapids-Muskegon-Holland has a population of 1.3 million. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport transports two million passengers worldwide each year via six carriers. Grand Rapids is also connected to Chicago and Detroit by Amtrak.

The strong economy and low cost of living make this an ideal place to focus a career and raise a family. No matter where you live in the region, you're just a quick drive from gorgeous white sand beaches, premier hiking and biking opportunities, and the thriving cultural and arts scene in downtown Grand Rapids. Blue waters, pristine beaches, craft breweries, delicious eateries, miles of trails, top-notch museums, charming shops, and professional sports will keep you busy throughout the four seasons.

Grand Rapids provides a full range of services to a multicultural group of residents, students, and visitors. The Grand Rapids metropolitan area hosts fifteen institutions of higher learning. Grand Rapids has 67 parks with year-round sports and recreation activities and is just 35 minutes from West Michigan beaches in the summer and 20 minutes from area ski facilities in the winter.

**Budget:
\$643 million**

1,687 FTE's

**Home to
Over 11,000
Employers**

**S&P: 'AA'
long-term
rating**



Recognitions

- #2 - 10 Most Beautiful & Affordable Cities to Live in the U.S., Travel + Leisure
- #10 - Top 10 Cities for Young Female Professionals, Pheabs
- #14 - Best Places to Live for Quality of Life, U.S. News & World Report
- #2 - Best Cities in Michigan to Live and Visit, Touropia
- #5 - Best Neighborhoods to Buy a House in America - Eastgate, Grand Rapids, Niche
- #3 - Best Business Climate (Mid-Sized), Business Facilities
- #1 - Best Manufacturing Hubs (Large) - Grand Rapids-Kentwood, Business Facilities

City Government

The City of Grand Rapids operates under the Commission-Manager form of government with an elected City Commission and appointed City Manager as the Chief Executive Officer. The Commission consists of an at-large Mayor and six Commissioners representing the city's three wards in staggered four-year terms.

Vision

Grand Rapids will be nationally recognized as an equitable, welcoming, innovative and collaborative city with a robust economy, safe and healthy community, and the opportunity for a high quality of life for all.

Mission Statement

To elevate quality of life through excellent City services.

The Economic Development Department

The City boasts a diverse economy, hosting major industries such as health services, manufacturing, professional and support service, accommodation and food services, and education. Top employers in West Michigan include: Corewell Health, Meijer, Mercy Health, Gentex Corporation, Amway, Gordon Foods, Herman Miller, Steelcase, Perrigo, and Grand Valley State University.

The city enjoys a robust, committed group of regional and civic partners that have a long history of public/private partnership to create best in class civic facilities. Building on that history, the Economic Development Department has a robust practice focused on strategic use of the state's variety of tax incentive programs. Through various incentive programs, in 2022 (latest reported year) the Department supported 17 development projects with over \$245million in private investment. The Economic Development Department is responsible for all business retention, expansion, and attraction projects for the City of Grand Rapids. Follow this [link](#) to view the [Equitable Economic Development and Mobility Strategic Plan](#). The ED office administers several different boards and authorities that help oversee the department's work.

Education and Experience

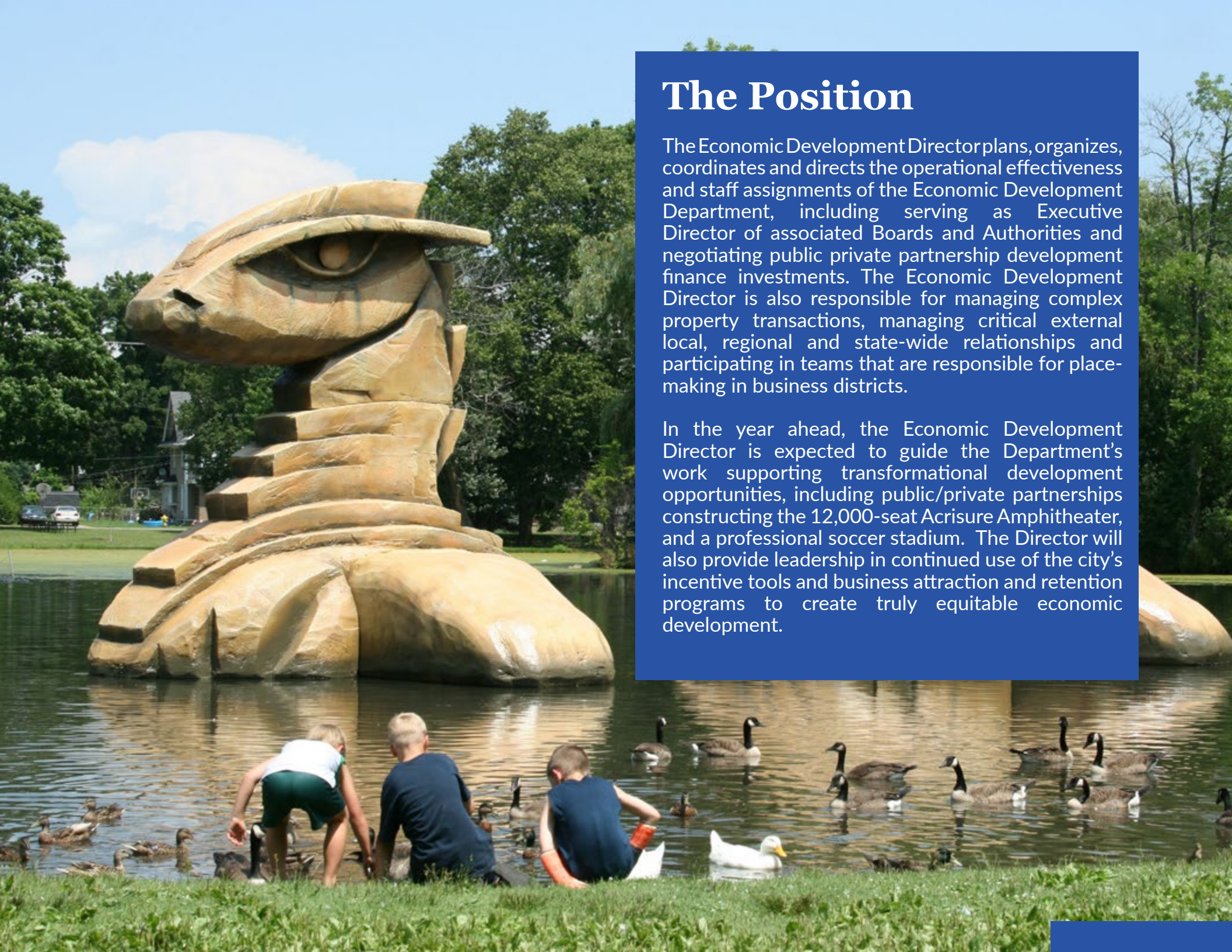
A Bachelor's degree in business or public administration or a related field is required in addition to a minimum of 7 years of experience managing economic development programs. An equivalent combination of training, education, and experience that provides the required skills, knowledge and abilities may be considered.



The Position

The Economic Development Director plans, organizes, coordinates and directs the operational effectiveness and staff assignments of the Economic Development Department, including serving as Executive Director of associated Boards and Authorities and negotiating public private partnership development finance investments. The Economic Development Director is also responsible for managing complex property transactions, managing critical external local, regional and state-wide relationships and participating in teams that are responsible for place-making in business districts.

In the year ahead, the Economic Development Director is expected to guide the Department's work supporting transformational development opportunities, including public/private partnerships constructing the 12,000-seat Acrisure Amphitheater, and a professional soccer stadium. The Director will also provide leadership in continued use of the city's incentive tools and business attraction and retention programs to create truly equitable economic development.



Duties, Functions, and Responsibilities

- Plans, organizes, prioritizes and directs the work of the Economic Development Corporation, Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, SmartZone Local Development Finance Authority, Neighborhood Business Corridor Improvement Authorities (5) and Business Improvement District
- Establishes and implements operational policies, goals and objectives for the department; assures operations and programs are carried out according to federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations
- Develops long and short range planning and needs assessment for the improvement of programs and services
- Oversees preparation of, and presents the annual department budget; determines resource needs and financing requests; oversees budgetary administration
- Supervises the work of assigned personnel; participates in hiring, training and disciplinary actions; delegates work assignments; conducts performance evaluations
- Negotiates complex real estate and financing transactions between private/public sector entities and the City
- Represents the City on economic development legislative, program and policy matters presenting the City's position on economic development issues; provides information on City economic development programs
- Collaborates with and manages relationships with local businesses and stakeholders, including neighborhood leaders, business district representatives, private businesses and the general public
- As a member of the City's Cabinet, develops and maintains collaborative relationships with other City department directors and executives to further the overall City mission and vision





Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Knowledge of economic development programs and associated statutes
- Knowledge of budget preparation and analysis
- Skill in public speaking and presentation
- Skill in building and managing relationships with business owners and developers of all level of experience and expertise
- Skill in building a team and leveraging team-member strengths
- Ability to negotiate contracts and investment commitments
- Ability to review and analyze financial information such as proformas, sources and uses and cash flow analysis statements and provide recommendations to senior management
- Ability to review and analyze legislative bills or policy proposals
- Ability to develop and recommend policy direction/language to the City Commission or other boards and authorities

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate should possess a record of accomplishment in economic development, real estate, and place making. Experience in fiscal planning, budget preparation, complex property transactions and financial investments is required to be successful in this position.

The ideal candidate should have proven experience in building and maintaining a broad and diverse spectrum of partnerships with City Officials, Boards and Authorities, public private partnerships, business leaders, non-profits, financial institutions, developers, citizen groups, and city departments.

The ideal candidate needs to be a strategic leader with strong collaboration and negotiating skills to be successful; advanced written and oral communication skills are imperative.

Salary

The City of Grand Rapids is offering a competitive salary commensurate with experience and a comprehensive [benefits package](#). Relocation assistance will also be available for the successful out-of-area candidate.

How to Apply

Applicants should forward a cover letter and resume to:

resumes@affionpublic.com

Reference: GREDD

Affion Public

PO Box 794

Hershey, PA 17033

888.321.4922

www.affionpublic.com

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