AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION OF

Community Development Director

APPLY BY August 30, 2019
About Skokie

The Village of Skokie, Illinois, is a diverse community with over 90 languages spoken, located 16 miles northwest of downtown Chicago and 12 miles east of O’Hare International Airport. The Village provides high-quality government services to the over 65,000 residents, 24,000 households and 2,400 businesses that call Skokie their home.

Accessibility to transportation is a key advantage in Skokie, with the Edens Expressway (I-94) spanning the community’s western edge, seven Chicago Transit Authority and 10 Pace suburban bus lines and the CTA’s Skokie Swift rapid transit line with two stations offering numerous options for public transportation.

Nestled between Chicago and the North Shore, Skokie covers over 10 square miles of land. The Village is bordered by the Villages of Glenview and Wilmette on the north, the Village of Lincolnwood and the City of Chicago on the south, the Villages of Morton Grove and Niles on the west and the City of Evanston on the east.

Skokie’s Community Development Department

Operating on a budget of approximately $8.1 million with 21 FTEs, the Community Development Department is responsible for economic development, land use planning, zoning administration, building, plumbing and electrical inspection, property code enforcement and nuisance abatement. Provides staff support to the Appearance Commission, Consumer Affairs Commission, Plan Commission, Economic Development Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Position

Under the direction of the Village Manager, the Community Development Director is a key member of the Village’s management team, leading the activities and operations of a comprehensive Community Development Department. This position oversees three department divisions: Planning, Economic Development and Building & Property Standards, providing leadership, direction and guidance in Community Development strategies and priorities. The Community Development Director is responsible for: meeting the goals and objectives of the Village’s comprehensive development plan including both long range and current planning activities; presenting development and redevelopment plans to Village officials; coordinating projects with private developers; interpreting, maintaining and implementing Village code, ordinances, policies and zoning maps to protect the health, safety and welfare of Village residents and businesses and maintain property values; administering the Community Development Block Grant; overseeing the Tax Increment Financing districts; acting as an ex-officio member of the Plan Commission; preparing department and program budgets; and conducting annual employee performance evaluations.
VILLAGE OF SKOKIE - Community Development Director

Skokie boasts many fine cultural and recreational attractions that are surrounded by high-quality housing and connected to numerous multi-use paths. A nationally-acclaimed community college is in Skokie, and some of the country’s finest universities also are in close proximity to the Village. Many exceptional public and private schools serve Skokie students.

The Village takes great pride in delivering excellent services, including twice-weekly refuse collection, a highly-engineered Storm Water Runoff Control System, sidewalk snow plowing and many other unique programs and services that enhance quality of life in the community.

Skokie was the first community in the United States with nationally accredited Fire, Police and Public Works Departments.

Superior municipal services, together with the nationally award-winning Skokie Park District with over 40 neighborhood parks, superb Skokie Public Library which was recognized with a National Medal for Library Services, preeminent North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Skokie, sculpture and murals throughout the Community and the beautiful Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park add to the Village’s rich, abundant cultural offerings.

The Village Board is committed to quality redevelopment and providing the community with superior programs and services while holding the line on property taxes. In 1991, the Village Board initiated a municipal property tax freeze while expanding and enhancing government services. The municipal property tax freeze remains in effect today, and is supported by a tandem commitment to economic growth. In addition, Skokie has some of the lowest user fees, such as those for vehicle registration, in the suburban Chicago area.

Candidate Criteria

The Village is seeking an effective leader that will build on the development success and ultimately achieve additional investment throughout the community further enhancing the quality of life. The hands on director will collaboratively lead the department that consists of talented experts in their respective fields. Skokie is recognized as a business friendly community and embracing and furthering this culture is a priority.

To be the successful candidate:

- Must be a creative, visionary leader and strategic thinker
- A high level of integrity, demonstrated effective leadership skills and sound administrative abilities
- Considerable skill in establishing and maintaining positive and collaborative working relationships
- Comprehensive, demonstrated skill in managing the overall activities of a Community Development Department while maintaining and fostering a positive, productive team environment
- Highly developed oral and written communication skills, excellent interpersonal skills and proficiency in standard office technology
- Extensive experience working with the public and business community on an individual basis and in public meetings
- Keep abreast of the latest trends in community development utilizing modern innovations of urban design

Exceptional Quality of Life

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A Thriving Community

Through thoughtful planning and an overall spirit of cooperation, Skokie has grown into a thriving center of commerce, with many vibrant retail centers, a strong industrial base and extensive professional services. Despite being a mature landlocked community, Skokie continues to grow through redevelopment. The Village’s partnership with the private sector resulted in the redeveloped Westfield Old Orchard Shopping Center - a beautiful outdoor mall that has one of the highest sales per square foot of all major centers in the Chicago region and the expansion of the NorthShore University Hospital in Skokie.

A tax increment financing (TIF) district, as well as the adoption of long-term redevelopment strategies, resulted in a rejuvenated Downtown area. Mixed-use developments, a fresh streetscape and commercial renovation program have given Downtown Skokie a new appearance and vitality that is attracting new retailers, services, and residents to the area.

The Illinois Science & Technology Park, which is the largest of its kind in Illinois, currently employs over 1,600 workers, boasts 550,000 square-feet of existing space and generates millions of dollars in local tax revenues.

Recent efforts focused on redevelopment opportunities in Downtown Skokie including 8000 North (mixed-use luxury apartments, restaurants and retail), proposed downtown hotel and conference center and traditional and live-work townhomes in a number of sites. Other development activity throughout the Village include Ignite Gaming-Skokie, Skokie Commerce Center (warehousing/distribution facility), and the Hampton Social, CMX Theatres, and MassVR at Westfield Old Orchard.

Candidate Criteria Continued

- A commitment to continual process improvement
- Experience in assessing community needs with an eye towards innovation
- Must be well versed and staying up-to-date in all applicable federal, state and local laws, codes and regulations
- Have proven administrative ability and skills in forecasting, reporting and budget preparation
- Ability to develop staff
- Aptitude to identify and implement opportunities to enhance services to the community
- Must be highly motivated, talented professional with a “can-do” attitude
- Committed to excellent customer service
- A minimum of seven years professional experience in urban or regional planning or community development with three years in a supervisory capacity
- A Master’s degree in Urban or Regional Planning, Public Administration, Architecture or closely related field is required
- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) or American Institute of Architects (AIA) certification is preferred
In 1957, Skokie residents voted overwhelmingly to adopt the council-manager form of municipal government that remains in effect today.

A council-manager government system combines the strong political and policy making leadership of elected officials, such as the Mayor, Clerk and six Trustees, with the strong managerial experience of an appointed Village Manager. There have been two Village Managers since 1987.

The Village of Skokie is a home-rule unit under the 1970 Illinois Constitution. The Village’s total Fiscal Year 2019 - 2020 budget is approximately $123 million, with a staff of nearly 500.

**Future Challenges & Opportunities**

- Continue the downtown redevelopment momentum
- Further enhance West Dempster Street
- Develop and implement a new vision for Main Street (Crawford Ave. to Skokie Blvd.)
- Facilitate growth at the Illinois Science & Technology Park
- Continued renewal of Westfield Old Orchard Shopping Center
- Complete Skokie Valley Trail project
- Ensure homes, businesses and property throughout the community are well maintained
- Further refine and streamline development review and construction oversight
- Comprehensive Plan update and implementation
- Economic Development Plan implementation
- Implementation of electronic plan review and field technology for inspection staff

**Compensation & Benefits**

The annual salary range for this position is $122,159 - $159,811; starting salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Village of Skokie offers a comprehensive benefits package including: medical and dental insurance for employees and their dependents with an 86% /14% Village / employee cost-sharing; Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) pension; 457 deferred compensation plans; life and AD&D insurance; paid vacation, holidays and sick days; flexible spending plan for eligible medical and child-care expenses; professional development assistance; and tuition assistance. Residency is not a requirement.

**Application Process**

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter, resumé and five professional references to: Village of Skokie, Personnel Department, 5127 Oakton Street Skokie, IL 60077 or by email to human.resources@skokie.org. The application deadline is August 30, 2019. Faxes are not accepted. The Village of Skokie is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Questions should be addressed to human.resources@skokie.org or (847) 933-8212.