

# DETROIT FUTURE CITY | <sup>TM</sup>

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT

Conducted by



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*Executive Search Consultants  
Connecting Leaders; Affecting Change*

## **THE CITY OF DETROIT**

Detroit has been at the forefront of urban development and urban issues for the past century. In the past 10 years, its economic challenges have been reported everywhere, culminating in the City's emergence from bankruptcy in late 2014 with a fresh start for revitalization and growth. It is a new day in Detroit.

Today **Detroit is ....**

- A city of 700,000 people in one of the largest metropolitan regions in the nation. The city's population is very diverse based on its rich history of welcoming people from around the nation and around the world to put down roots in its industries and neighborhoods.
- A key city in the global economy based on the strong presence of the auto industry, connections to Canada, Mexico and the rest of the world through the Great Lakes.
- A city with a growing reputation for innovation in "making things" and developing models of creativity and ingenuity.
- The home of a strong civic network of committed, proactive, community-based, business and philanthropic organizations that is growing its public-private sector partnerships.
- A land-rich environment that can accommodate growth and innovation without displacement.
- The centerpiece of an exciting and impressive rebirth in its downtown and Midtown core through several billion dollars of investment, new workers; coupled with an acute awareness of the need and opportunity to translate that rebirth to the residential areas that form the backbone of the City.
- A city poised to position itself as one of America's leading urban centers again.

To learn more about the transformative development efforts happening in Detroit right now, take a look at the following links:

*M1 Rail:* <http://m-1rail.com/>

*Riverfront Redevelopment:* <http://www.detroitriverfront.org/>

*New Red Wings Stadium District:* <http://www.districtdetroit.com/>

*Dan Gilbert's Rock Ventures:* <http://www.rockventures.com>

*New Economy Initiative:* <http://neweconomyinitiative.org/>

*Kresge Foundation:* <http://kresge.org/programs/detroit>

*Data Summary of Changes in Downtown and Midtown:* <http://detroitsevenpointtwo.com/>

Detroit has a strong and large concentration of health, educational, cultural and entertainment institutions. It is the busiest international border crossing in North America for international trade and hosts 19 million annual tourists and visitors. It is a city of beautiful historic neighborhoods and commercial areas, including 245 sites or districts on the National Register of Historic Places and 8 National Historic Landmarks; and it has the second largest theater district in the country, second only to New York City.

Detroit's impressive talent base includes:

- Business leaders who forever changed the culture of industrial production and music;
- Pioneers in new forms of transportation, infrastructure, and community food production;
- Civic leaders who have organized and empowered community residents to exercise their voices and actively participate in the fate of their futures;
- Community organizations that are anchored in neighborhoods and advancing resident led community engagement strategies;
- Faith leaders who have held up Detroit communities by tending to their spiritual and human needs.

In its emergence from bankruptcy and fiscal distress, Detroit's stakeholders recognize a mandate to address and solve deep disparities in the economic status and living conditions across various segments of its population and to create a new model of inclusive recovery that truly can become a new template for American cities.

## **DETROIT FUTURE CITY**

### **History & Background**

Every City has its challenges and Detroit certainly has urgent and long-standing ones. But not every city has the physical and human assets of Detroit. In light of the crushing economic recession that followed years of economic decline, the City of Detroit committed itself forward. In 2010, an ambitious effort to re-imagine a better future for one of the world's most important and storied cities was launched. Through robust civic engagement, the entire community began a process of reinvention. After hundreds of meetings, 30,000 conversations, connecting with people over 163,000 times, over 70,000 survey responses and comments from participants, and countless hours spent dissecting and examining critical data about the city, a document was produced: Detroit Future City: 2012 Detroit Strategic Framework. This document represents the framework for the city and articulates a shared vision for Detroit's future growth and development over the next 50-100 years, and recommends specific actions for reaching that future.

To access the Detroit Future City Strategic Framework and more information please visit: <http://detroitfuturecity.com/framework/>

### **Current Situation:**

Today the city is poised for extraordinary results and Detroit Future City (DFC) will be an essential key contributor to its future. To accomplish this undertaking, the Detroit Future City Implementation Office was established in 2013 and has more than 50 initiatives underway or already completed to encourage implementation of the strategies and recommendations included in the Strategic Framework. The role of Detroit Future City Implementation Office in each of the efforts is to serve as the convener of key stakeholders and to work in partnership with organizations like the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation and the City of Detroit to lead each effort to conclusion. The DFC Implementation Office identified priorities to ensure that resources were strategically leveraged and deployed. To guide DFC's actions, five implementation priorities were identified that outlined broad near-term goals. They include: *employing more Detroiters, fulfilling regulatory reform, renewing city systems strategically and innovatively, stabilizing neighborhoods and transforming vacant land into an innovative open space network*. The DFC Implementation Office coordinates and convenes diverse stakeholders to help inform

decision-making, build capacity, take action and fulfill the objectives and realize specific outcomes within the DFC Strategic Framework.

To learn more about DFC's 5 key priorities elements including: Economic Growth, Land Use, City Systems, Neighborhoods, Land and Building, visit: <http://detroitfuturecity.com/priorities/>

As Detroit Future City Implementation Office shifts from a principally planning posture to an operational/implementation framework, the organization is now transitioning to an independent nonprofit with a long-term mission of being the most credible source for information and planning about land-use and infrastructure development in the city of Detroit. Initially incubated under the aegis of the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, DFC is now establishing its independence, as a nonprofit organization.

### **DETROIT FUTURE CITY MISSION**

***Detroit Future City exists in order to initiate, catalyze and support innovative actions, participation, and policy reform to continuously improve our quality of life in Detroit.***

### **A Snapshot of Current/Ongoing Initiatives:**

**A Field Guide to Working with Lots:** The Guide will provide construction-ready specifications for professionals and general information to help communities make decisions about vacant land treatments. Following the launch of the Guide this fall several catalytic implementation projects will be triggered with partners utilizing the treatments in the Guide. This work will provide a positive demonstration of how such treatments are brought to fruition.

- **Impact:** The Field Guide provides a tool to improve quality of life by improving the physical condition of vacant lots, creating a stronger sense of community, improving safety in our neighborhoods, improving the environment by providing habitat, managing storm water, and cleaning the air.

**Great Lakes Restoration Initiative: Shoreline Cities** – DFC is contributing to the overall coordination, research, and contract management of the GLRI project and its partners.

- **Impact:** Research, design, and coordination for large-scale innovative vacant land reutilization to mitigate flooding, and to contribute to larger reductions in environmental harm to the Great Lakes due to combined sewer system overflows. Quality of life improvements include health, environment, physical condition, and public services.

**Mt. Elliott Employment District** - Reinvestment Strategy –The reinvestment strategy will be substantially complete in 2015 and will help to prioritize investment opportunities within and around the district (services, infrastructure, real estate, etc.) that are needed to fully activate the district and fulfill the DFC Strategic Framework. AECOM is the lead consultant, and Michigan Community Resources (MCR) is serving as a subcontractor to oversee the community engagement work.

- **Impact:** Jobs for longtime Detroiters, improved physical conditions and quality of life along the district's edges

**Industrial Sites and Facilities Adaptive Reuse Competition** – Through research and collaboration forged between DFC and the Van Alen Institute, this multi-site adaptive reuse competition is being developed with a range of prospective partners across the city.

Born at the intersection of the catalytic Opportunity Sites event (authored by the German Marshall Fund of the United States and DFC), the University of Michigan 2015 Social Impact Challenge, and research completed by DFC's acting executive director prior to joining DFC, the competition will contemplate new potential futures for some of Detroit's industrial sites while also testing temporary site activations to demonstrate what is possible.

- **Impact:** The competition will be comprehensive in scope, moving beyond design, to include finance, economic development, engagement, and legal facets endemic to such complex urban initiatives. The result will be fundamentally new ways to view Detroit's 6.1 square miles of vacant industrial land and facilities, engendering new redevelopment concepts, and testing new forms of site activation.

### **THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION**

The Executive Director will lead a staff of 11, manage an operating budget of \$2 - \$2.5 million and report to the Board of Directors. An entrepreneurial leader with solid nonprofit organization management skills and an understanding of urban planning and community development is required to lead DFC to the next level. This individual must have a vision of a prospering city and be capable of working with a team of experienced and passionate employees and diverse stakeholder groups to transform vision into action and ultimately results.

The new DFC leader has the tremendous opportunity to contribute to the ongoing rebirth of one of the most important and storied cities in the United States. While some people may look at Detroit through a lens of decline, our next leader will see a rich set of human, social and physical assets on which to build an equitable, just and sustainable future for generations to come.

The Executive Director's priorities include:

- Expand and strengthen engagement with all key stakeholders including (but not limited to):
  - Executive and legislative branches of Detroit city government as well as state and federal government partners
  - Residents
  - Community Based Nonprofit Organizations
  - Philanthropic supporters
  - Businesses - large, medium and small
  - Implementation partners
- Develop a strong, mutually beneficial working relationship with the City of Detroit to support select planning initiatives to benefit Detroit residents and businesses over both the short and long term.
- Lead staff, programs, and budget of DFC, helping to shepherd the organization to an independent nonprofit. Work with the Board to operationalize the new governance structure while recommending revisions as necessary.
- In conjunction with the Board, initiate a strategic planning process that clarifies who DFC is, defines clear areas of focus and strategic direction that guide the work of DFC over the next five years.
- Ensure high quality fulfillment of projects, grants and contracts and seamless continuation of existing initiatives.
- Lead the development of plans and strategies to create a more inclusive, equitable,

resilient and sustainable environment where residents and businesses thrive and the appeal is so compelling that new residents and businesses relocate to the City.

- Build a culture of operational excellence and community accountability including developing an efficient/effective internal leadership team of doers who know how to collaborate and balance many competing demands.
- Cultivate and maintain an effective, inviting, and mutually supportive office environment that allow staff to thrive and advance the objectives of DFC Strategic Framework for the benefit of current residents, businesses and those attracted to relocate to Detroit.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Works with Board of Directors to define the strategic and tactical plans and priorities; leads the organization with a clearly defined direction and purpose while serving as a role model for the DFC vision.
- Manages staff and projects in a way that cultivates ongoing staff development and ensures high-quality project outcomes and results.
- Identifies and continually manages expectations of key stakeholders including project funders and contractual partners.
- Manages and builds external relationships to the benefit of DFC. and its stakeholders; ensures ongoing, meaningful engagement with community representatives from each sector and geographic areas of the city, as necessary to implement plan components.
- Establishes and manages the budget; develops, in conjunction with the board, fund development plans to ensure financial sustainability.
- Establishes a strong communication strategy utilizing best practices across a broad spectrum of communication platforms including interactive social media programs to ensure transparent and proactive communications that promotes the work and accomplishments of DFC and its partners.
- Ensures compliance with all legal, reporting and contractual requirements including completing all existing grants and contracts of DFC Inc. in a professional and timely manner.
- Serves as DFC's primary spokesperson to all stakeholders including, government, foundations, non-profits, business, media, scholars and community groups; speaks on behalf of the organization publicly, understanding the importance of upholding the image and mission of the DFC.
- Establishes and fortifies DFC's unique position in the planning and development ecosystem of Detroit, Michigan, the United States and internationally.
- Explicit commitment to racial equity and social justice in all projects and organizational efforts.

### **THE CANDIDATE**

#### **Experience, Skills and Qualifications**

A Bachelor's degree in business administration, public policy, public administration, urban planning, architecture, or engineering along with seven to ten years of related and substantive work experience is a minimum requirement. A Master's degree or equivalent professional certification in the aforementioned fields is preferred. Exceptional people/relationship building skills, expert oral and written communication skills and strong analytical and problem-solving skills are required. The Executive Director position requires the ability to lead a team, strategically, successfully and collaboratively to drive outcomes and achieve results. Additionally, the Executive Director will need to have the skills and flexibility to direct and

conform to shifting priorities, demands, and timelines, have some knowledge of both theoretical and practical aspects of urban planning, and have experience in contract administration and risk management.

***The successful candidate*** will bring a variety of skills and expertise to DFC including:

#### *Leadership and Influence*

- Past success in an executive level leadership capacity.
- A servant, mission driven leader who possesses a leadership style sufficient to gain the trust and confidence of all stakeholders. The candidate must be comfortable interacting and maintain a highly visible role with all levels of the leadership structure of the city and the business/political environment.
- Has demonstrated the ability to move a concept to completion with a number of parties in highly political waters.

#### *Management Skills*

- Attracts, retains and develops top talent.
- Establishes clear performance expectations, including results to accomplish, metrics to achieve and processes to follow.

#### *Analysis and Decision-Making Skills*

- Understands urban planning strategy, implementation, and performance. Has executive, strategic, and big picture critical thinking capacity.
- Is flexible and open to ideas, opinions, and perspectives.
- Integrates own and others' ideas into a cohesive perspective and plan of action.
- Decisive and skilled at implementing projects quickly.

#### *Technical Expertise*

- Experience working with public or governmental entities; Understands public and social policy relative to urban areas.

#### *Governance Skills*

- Experience in managing, nurturing, developing a Board and advisory groups.
- Experience establishing positive and proactive communications with and among boards with regard to strategic plans, policies and programs.
- Listens to opinions of board members and helps develop consensus and forward movement.

### *Industry Vision*

- Develops deep insight into the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the city of Detroit from a land use planning, economic development, and community development perspective. Leads staff in maintaining facts, figures, trend data, etc. to articulate this insight.
- Thinks creatively, strategically and in an entrepreneurial fashion.

### *Relationships and Teaming*

- Proven ability to navigate complex public sector relationships and connect the dots across the City.
- A track record of working with City government and planning professionals to develop and design land use plans, finance complex developments and build urban infrastructure.
- Understands the needs, goals and motivations of external stakeholder groups (i.e., the community, City of Detroit, etc...)

### *Responsibility and Achievement (Self-Management, Ethical Integrity)*

- A history of unwavering professional integrity.
- Demonstrates strong personal commitment to the organization and its long-term success.
- Has a high level of personal energy.
- Conveys confidence, passion, poise and personal assertive strength.
- Bold and courageous with the ability to stand on their feet when unpopular and think independently.
- Politically savvy but apolitical.

### **COMPENSATION & HOW TO APPLY:**

Detroit Future City offers a competitive salary and employment benefit package commensurate with qualifications and experience.

The position is open until filled. First consideration will be given to applications received by **September 10, 2015**. To apply for this outstanding opportunity, please submit your resume and letter of interest, electronically, as soon as possible to [ed.dfc@thehawkinscompany.com](mailto:ed.dfc@thehawkinscompany.com). Preference is for electronic submissions however materials may be mailed to:

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*All applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, veteran status or sexual orientation.*