

# VILLAGE OF WILMETTE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



**MGT**

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The Village of Wilmette seeks a new Community Development Director, offering a flexible work schedule, stable management environment, and a starting salary of \$200,000+/- DOQ. The current Director of Community Development is retiring after 20+ years as Director. The Deputy Director has served in the role for 24 years and has decided to remain in that position. There are no internal candidates.

This brochure provides background information on the Village of Wilmette as well as the requirements for the Director's position. Additional information about Wilmette can be found on the Village's website: [wilmette.gov](http://wilmette.gov).

Candidates interested in applying for the position should submit their résumé and cover letter, along with contact information for five (5) work-related references by December 6, 2024, at [www.GovHRUSA.com](http://www.GovHRUSA.com). Questions regarding this opportunity should be directed to the Executive Recruiter working with the Village of Wilmette:

MGT Impact Solutions, LLC  
Maureen Barry, Senior Consultant  
Phone: 847-380-3240



## THE COMMUNITY

Wilmette (pop. 28,170) is a vibrant, affluent, and family-oriented community located on Chicagoland's North Shore, 14-miles north of Chicago's loop with exceptional transportation access including the Metra, CTA and I-94 Edens Expressway. Wilmette has been ranked by Niche.com as the best place to raise a family in Cook County based on quality of schools, percentage of residents with higher level education, crime and safety ratings, walkability and access to parks and recreational facilities, among other assets. BusinessWeek also rated it as one of the "Top Ten places to Raise Your Kids" and Travel & Leisure recently rated Wilmette as the #1 "Best Places to Live in Illinois."

The Village has seven individual commercial districts, each with its own unique identity, that provide distinct shopping experiences (e.g., Plaza Del Lago (transforming into a luxury retail/restaurant center), Edens Plaza (location of Wayfair's first retail location), Ridge Road District, Linden Square). Downtown Wilmette is centered around the Metra Station (metropolitan Chicago commuter rail system, Union Pacific North line) and is the central business district, featuring a vibrant restaurant and retail scene.

The Village offers some of the best primary and secondary schools in the state, each challenging students to become creative thinkers, collaborators and responsible, compassionate and productive citizens of a global society. These include three (3) public school districts (Avoca Elementary School District #37, Wilmette Elementary School District #39, and New Trier High School District #203) and five (5) private schools (St. Francis Xavier School (elementary), St. Joseph's Catholic School (pre-K and K), Loyola Academy (High School), Regina Dominican High School (All Girls), Baker Demonstration School (K-8).



The Village's east boundary is the shoreline of Lake Michigan, with two beaches, the 59-acre Gillson Park, and the Wilmette Harbor. Maintained and managed by the Wilmette Park District, these incredible assets provide abundant recreational amenities for the community, along with more than 15 parks, green space, three recreation centers, a platform tennis club, and a golf course in the Village.

The Wilmette Public Library District has been recognized as one of the country's Star Libraries in Library Journal's annual statistical review of public library services. Their collections, services, and resources reflect the diversity of the community, while also providing new opportunities to engage with neighbors and learn about cultures and viewpoints.

Founded in 1872, the Village of Wilmette is well-positioned to continue to be a community of choice for all persons, as well as new or expanding businesses. Downtown Wilmette, once primarily an evening destination, has attracted new daytime businesses and continues to be a draw for new residents and major economic development activity, both of which are essential for a strong and healthy community.

## WILMETTE AT-A-GLANCE

Population: **28,170**

Land Area: **5.4** square miles

County: **Cook**

Median Home Value: **\$771,500**

Median Household Income (in 2022 dollars):  
**\$183,750**

Households: **10,398**

Bachelor's degree or higher, persons age 25+: **83.5%**

Public Transportation: Metra train, CTA rapid transit, and PACE Suburban Bus



## THE ORGANIZATION

A full service, 'Aaa' credit rated home rule community, the Village is governed by a Village President and six Trustees. A professional Village Manager, who has worked with the Village for 15 years, oversees a staff of 200+ employees supporting the following departments: Administration, Community Development, Fire/EMS, Police, Engineering and Public Works, Water Management, Finance, Historical Museum, and Cable. The 2025 budget calls for expenditures of \$100 million inclusive of planned capital and debt expenses, with a \$47 million General Fund.

Through a collaborative approach undertaken by the Village Board and Staff, the Village has been able to consistently maintain and improve its financial position. Sound and deliberate financial planning has provided the flexibility to invest heavily in the Village's infrastructure, implement new initiatives for residents, and limit the tax burden on residents and businesses alike.

Key priorities for the Village are economic development, historic preservation, sustainability, increasing affordable housing opportunities, public safety, and improving the quality of life in the community.



## THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Community Development administers all land use and zoning regulations, manages the Village’s economic development efforts, and implements various plans including the Comprehensive Plan, Housing Plan, and Historic Preservation Plan. Community Development is responsible for the enforcement of all building, property maintenance, tree preservation, and sanitation codes as well as zoning, sign, and subdivision ordinances.

The Department provides staff support to the Village Board and several citizen commissions, including: Appearance Review, Building Code Board of Appeals, Historic Preservation, Housing, Land Use (Village Board Committee), Plan Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

Community Development is responsible for the issuance of building permits for new construction and remodeling as well other miscellaneous permits. On an annual basis, the Department issues approximately 3,000 permits and conducts 7,000 inspections.

In recent years, the Village has made a firm commitment to economic development, including revitalization of downtown Wilmette, redevelopment along the Green Bay Road corridor, and major improvements at the Village’s two major shopping centers- Edens Plaza and Plaza del Lago; all of which helps generate economic activity, increases sales tax revenues and makes Wilmette an attractive destination for new residents and businesses.

With more development across the community than at any other time in recent decades, Wilmette’s recent projects include:

- Grand opening of Wayfair’s flagship store at Edens Plaza in May 2024.
- Planned grand re-opening of Plaza del Lago in 2025 as new owners, WS Development, are transforming one of the country’s oldest and most historical outdoor shopping centers into a regional retail destination.
- Continued vibrancy of the downtown restaurant and retail environment.





## THE POSITION

The Village is seeking a dynamic and collaborative Director to lead the Community Development Department. Reporting to the Village Manager, this position directs all activities of the Department, including supervision of all staff in the department (currently 13 full-time employees, including an Assistant Director, and several permanent part-time positions) and preparation of the department work program and annual budget.

Essential job functions of the position include:

- Plans and directs the activities of the Department in all matters relating to land use, zoning and business development; including analysis of, and recommendations relating to, all plans and/or proposals submitted for consideration by the Village.
- Maintains permanent and current records of the Zoning Ordinance and amendments thereto, and to initiate, direct and review, from time to time, the Ordinance and to make written reports of recommendations to the Land Use Committee.
- Serves as Secretary to the Plan Commission, and acts in the capacity of technical advisor to boards and commissions and to the Board of Trustees on matters related to planning, zoning, housing, historic preservation, and appearance matters respectively. This requires attendance at occasional evening meetings.
- Serves as a member of the Site Plan Review Committee which reviews site plans for new construction and substantial remodeling. Reviews traffic flow, landscaping, buffer treatments and building placement to determine if they are consistent with Village policies.
- Serves as one of the Village's point persons for economic development, assisting in the support of existing businesses, recruitment of new businesses and implementation of various plans to enhance economic development.
- Maintains and implements various Village plans including Comprehensive Plan of the Village, Housing Plan, Historic Preservation Plan and recommends necessary revisions to keep the plans current.
- Reviews plans submitted for structures within the Village, serves as the Building and Zoning Official, supervises inspections of buildings, structures and land use, both existing and under construction, to ensure compliance with and enforcement of, the Village's zoning, building, electrical, plumbing and housing ordinances, and keep all records as shall be required.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The new Director will lead a talented team in the CD Department in addressing the following challenges and opportunities:

- Recruitment and Retention of Department Staff – Provide training and development opportunities for CD Department staff so that their career development needs are fulfilled and they may be retained within the Village. Lead the recruitment process for several positions which will be filled in 2025 due to upcoming retirements.
- Implementation of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.
- Completing work on the nearly finished updates to the Village's Housing Plan; begin implementation of the plan.
- Working with consultants, staff and Historic Preservation Commission on the development of a historic preservation plan.
- Opportunity to make improvements to the Department's permitting process, including the implementation of an electronic permitting system.
- Identify opportunities and methods to ensure downtown Wilmette remains a premier dining, entertainment and retail destination on the North Shore.

## EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor's degree in planning, administration, architecture, or a related field.
- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification desired.
- Increasingly responsible experience in municipal planning and development, including administrative and supervisory responsibility.
- Knowledge of principles and practices of urban planning and zoning, with eventual mastery of departmental rules and regulations, pertinent codes, ordinances and statutes.
- The ability to communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, and have excellent public presentation skills.
- Knowledge of construction techniques and methods, and of the strength and use of construction materials and equipment.
- Knowledge of economic development principles and best practices.

## IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Village will welcome candidates who excel at customer service, process improvement, and mentoring and developing their staff. The successful candidate will also have:

- A track record of leadership of department employees, with the ability to encourage creative problem solving and innovation, and foster a thriving culture of teamwork within the Department.
- Strong problem solving, strategic thinking and planning skills to effectively manage complex department operations, craft policies and procedures, and interpret regulations, apply reasonable solutions, and preemptively address the information needs of key audiences.
- Ability to work effectively with Village officials, advisory boards, residents, new and existing businesses, and other public agencies, to organize meetings with the general public and to speak before various civic organizations.
- Skills in effective management and oversight of the operating budget.
- Ability to prepare and offer review and comment for clear, concise technical reports.
- Ability to utilize data systems used in municipal planning departments, enterprise resources planning (ERP) systems (MUNIS), networks, and systems, with experience and skills in their implementation and maintenance.





## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary range is \$167,130 - \$221,773, with an anticipated starting salary of \$200,000+/- DOQ along with flexible schedule/remote work opportunities. A comprehensive benefits package includes participation in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF), health insurance including medical, dental, and vision coverage (also available to dependents), flexible spending account (medical, dependent care, and public transportation), and life insurance.

The Village also offers a generous leave package including paid vacation (10 - 25 days per year, the Village will be flexible in determining the number of annual vacation days for the selected candidate), 13 holidays (7 floating, 6 scheduled), sick leave (1 day accrued each month), administrative time off (5 days annually), and merit time (up to 5 days annually).

The Village does not have a residency requirement. Occasional attendance at evening meetings is required.

## HOW TO APPLY

Apply online at once at [www.govhrjobs.com](http://www.govhrjobs.com) with a resume, cover letter and contact information for five professional references by December 6, 2024. Open until filled. Questions may be directed in confidence to Maureen Barry, Senior Consultant, MGT, at 847-380-3240, x116.

The Village of Wilmette is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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