



News Release

May 21, 2018

Contact:

Laura Maher, Strategic Communications Manager

Phone: 779-348-7331

E-mail: Laura.Maher@rockfordil.gov

Mayor McNamara Names New Community and Economic Development Director

ROCKFORD, III. – Mayor Tom McNamara has named Karl Franzen Community and Economic Development Director. Franzen currently serves as Economic Development Coordinator.

“Karl joined the City in 2016 and has been taking on additional roles and responsibilities from the very beginning,” said Mayor McNamara. “Several months ago, I appointed him Business Liaison for the entire city – making him the sole point person for anyone with questions or concerns about establishing or operating a business in Rockford.”

In his role as Business Liaison, Franzen leads the “Doing Business Task Force” and facilitates the “Business First” collaboration between the City, Rock River Water Reclamation District, Winnebago County and the Small Business Development Center.

Prior to coming to the City, Franzen worked as Economic Development Coordinator for the Rockford Area Economic Development Council; a Research and Legislative Assistant for the Wisconsin State Assembly; and the Director of Workforce Development at the Portage County Business Council Foundation in Stevens Point, Wis. He holds a bachelor’s degree in international relations from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh.

The Community and Economic Development Department is responsible for the City of Rockford’s development and re-development efforts including planning, neighborhood development, economic development, zoning and construction services. The department is directly responsible for oversight and programming of the City’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and HOME Investment Partnerships Program. The department also facilitates cost reduction tools for investment in the city, including the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts, Enterprise Zone and River Edge Redevelopment Zone.

Franzen's appointment is slated for approval by City Council during the June 4, 2018, meeting.

###