



City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City of Duluth selects Ben Van Tassel as director of planning and economic development department

BY: Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

City of Duluth selects Ben Van Tassel as director of planning and economic development department

[DULUTH, MN] The City of Duluth is announcing that, pending city council confirmation, it has selected Ben Van Tassel as its next director of its planning and economic development department.

“Ben is one of the most reflective system thinkers we have in the organization,” said Mayor Reinert. “I’m thrilled he is taking on this leadership role. Ben knows how to work with his department to manage the system and processes to ensure the city is a good partner for our business and development stakeholders.”

City Administrator David Montgomery began his tenure with the city at roughly the same time as Van Tassel. “I’ve known and worked with Ben for 15 years,” he said. “I’m confident he has the vision to continue the work to enhance the department’s capacity to serve and support development and improvements to the City’s economic base.”

Van Tassel began work with the City of Duluth in 2009 as a city planner after previously working with the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission. He rose through the ranks to Manager of Planning and Development, and eventually took the position of Director of Administrative Services in the city in early 2022. He’s been serving simultaneously in that role and as interim director of Planning and Economic Development for a few months.

“I know I’m joining a great team,” said Van Tassel. “I’m really excited to officially start in this role, and to collaborate with businesses and our department’s partners in this work.”

Van Tassel's educational background includes a bachelor's degree in Urban and Regional Studies and an MBA in Business Administration with an emphasis in leadership and change.

The Planning and Economic Development department's work includes construction and building services, inspections, permitting, planning, zoning, community development, housing development, and economic development. You can find the department's section of the website here: <https://duluthmn.gov/planning-development/>

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Ben Van Tassel