

# MUSKEGON • MICHIGAN

## President and CEO

recruitment opportunity for a visionary leader



**GREATER MUSKEGON**  
economic development



# A VISIONARY LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

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Muskegon County is experiencing an exciting period of growth, earning recognition for its revitalization efforts and working diligently to become a premier destination for businesses, residents, and visitors alike.

As the county's leading private-public economic development organization, Greater Muskegon Economic Development is seeking a visionary and collaborative leader to serve as its next Chief Executive Officer.

GMED seeks to build strong collaborative relationships among private and public partners as we collectively identify and implement an economic vision to guide Muskegon through the next several decades. Our CEO serves as the key liaison for a business-focused platform that includes local businesses, civic leaders, developers, educational institutions, and the broader community.





# GREATER MUSKEGON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Greater Muskegon Economic Development (GMED) was founded in 1999 and is the countywide economic development agency dedicated to supporting local business.

GMED's focus is to leverage public and private investment to accelerate business growth while creating of high-quality employment opportunities in Muskegon County.

Appreciating the importance of our local business community, GMED serves as a clearinghouse of information on programs and incentives available to your business.

We value our local business community. GMED's Economic Strategy recognizes the importance of business retention. Through utilization of our in-house and partner resources, GMED is uniquely positioned to help local businesses meet their economic objectives.

## Board Leadership



**Rich Houttleman**  
Chair



**Randy Lindquist**  
Vice Chair



**Katie Mason**  
Treasurer



**Jillian Meloche**  
Secretary

# ABOUT MUSKEGON COUNTY

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Muskegon County is a dynamic and diverse region located along the shores of Lake Michigan, known for its rich history, economic opportunities, and exceptional quality of life. With a population of approximately 175,800, Muskegon County is a hub for business, education, outdoor recreation, and cultural attractions. The County and its communities collectively provide a full range of essential public services aimed at enhancing the well-being of its residents.

Muskegon County offers an abundance of recreational and cultural attractions. The region is home to stunning beaches, sand dunes, and numerous parks, including the renowned Muskegon State Park and Pere Marquette Park. Residents and visitors enjoy outdoor activities such as boating, fishing, hiking, and camping, along with winter sports like cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. The county also boasts a vibrant arts and entertainment scene, with institutions like the Muskegon Museum of Art, the West Michigan Symphony, and the Trinity Health Arena.

The Muskegon County conomy is driven by a diverse group of stable and growing industries, including agri-business, life sciences, aerospace, automotive, education, tourism, and more.

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# OUR NEXT CEO

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Our next CEO should be comfortable building relationships with a diverse group of public officials, community champions, business leaders, and funding partners.

Our next CEO should understand the importance of building a strong multi-faceted strategy that reaches beyond traditional economic development activities.

Our next CEO should be prepared to provide dynamic leadership in our collective efforts to support our existing business community while also pursuing new development opportunities and reactivating vacant and underutilized assets of our county.

Our next CEO should be ready to lead efforts to stimulate innovative public-private partnerships and identify sustainable funding sources to sustain and grow GMED activities.

Our next CEO should excel at generating interest in public projects, navigating the complexities of public finance, and driving results through to successful completion.

Our next CEO should be naturally collaborative with other local leaders, while supporting our communities in making strategic decisions on investments, infrastructure, and funding.

Our next CEO will serve as the key liaison for a business-focused platform that includes a diverse range of stakeholders, including local businesses, civic leaders, property developers, educational institutions, and the broader community. Muskegon County is experiencing an exciting period of growth, earning recognition for its revitalization efforts and working diligently to become a premier destination for businesses, residents, and visitors alike.



# THE POSITION

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The CEO reports directly to the GMED Board of Directors. The GMED Team consists of a staff of 7 (including the CEO) and an operating budget of \$850,000.

The CEO is expected to provide strategic visionary leadership that excites the business community and motivates enthusiastic participation in building a resilient economy with common goals.

CEO responsibilities include:

- Developing and implementing a county-wide comprehensive economic development strategy that aligns with long-term goals and priorities;

- Identifying and targeting industries for growth, investment, and diversification.

- Developing and implementing a funding program to grow and sustain GMED's efforts throughout Muskegon County;

- Fostering strong relationships with existing businesses;

- Working collaboratively with local governments, regional organizations, and community stakeholders to promote GMED's economic development initiatives;

- Serving as a liaison between the various local government agencies and the business community, ensuring responsiveness to their needs;

- Working collaboratively with partner institutions to promote Muskegon County as a destination for business, tourism, and investment;

- Advocating for adequate local, state, and national investment into Muskegon County's key infrastructure, utility, site development, and workforce development needs;

- Advocating for Muskegon County at various regional, state, and national economic development events;

- Monitoring and analyzing economic data, trends, and key performance indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives; and

- Preparing and presenting reports to Board leadership, stakeholders, and the public.

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# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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The new CEO will be expected to address several key challenges and opportunities. These challenges and opportunities will require strategic leadership, collaborative discussions, consensus-building, and creative problem-solving:

Foster a more collaborative environment among local government partners that helps each community feel the benefits from the successes of the other communities.

Bring rural and urban leadership together to build a development plan that prioritizes the goals of the individual communities while addressing the pressing economic development needs of the County, including housing development at varying affordability levels, commercial and industrial site readiness, and workforce quality of life;

Support business development and entrepreneurship at varying levels, including small businesses and minority-owned businesses.

Support the redevelopment and reuse of vacant and/or under-utilized commercial and industrial areas.

Build collaborative working relationships with several other business-facing organizations to create a strong and unified effort to move Muskegon's economy forward.

Identify and attain tools that lift Muskegon's economic development efforts above those of similar institutions. This should include strategic partnerships, grant programs, tax credit programs, and other tools currently available to public and private organizations.

Build a reputation as a successful problem-solver and work to become the "first call" when business owners have their own challenges or opportunities.



Viridian Shores Waterfront Development, Muskegon Lake

# THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

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The ideal candidate will be a strategic thinker, an innovative leader, and an articulate communicator with strong listening skills. They should be engaging and comfortable interacting with and presenting to elected officials, business leaders, and key community stakeholders. The next Chief Executive Officer will have a proven track record in organizational leadership and a demonstrated ability to achieve measurable results.

As the leader of a multifaceted organization, the selected candidate must exhibit strong leadership skills and a commitment to staff development. Supervisory experience is preferred. The ideal candidate should understand economic development principles, emerging trends in urban and regional planning, business and technology operations, and community development. Experience in Michigan economic development is desirable but not required.

Additionally, the new CEO must possess exceptional interpersonal skills and be able to foster open, collaborative, and productive relationships with the local government leaders, local businesses, community organizations, developers, and other stakeholders.

To be successful, the new CEO must be willing to enthusiastically take the roles of:

**Analyst.** Understand the strengths and weaknesses as well as the comparative advantages of Muskegon's economy.

**Catalyst.** Invoke enthusiasm and excitement within the community to support various initiatives.

**Advocate.** Be a champion of the community to protect the interests of existing businesses. If a business is threatened, be the voice of support that brings the community together to understand the need to protect jobs and industry in the County.

**Educator.** Educate business, local governments, the general public, and community stakeholders about the role and benefits of economic development. Understand the role education plays in business success.

**Visionary.** Offer a vision of marshaled community spirit and resources that focus on collaborative projects that can positively change the community's economic future.

**Fundraiser.** Be able to articulate the value of GMED to investors. Encourage investment from community and private partners in the regional concept.

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# COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

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The salary range for Chief Executive Officer is \$135,000-\$150,000 annually. The final salary offered will consider the candidate's experience and qualifications. GMED offers a comprehensive benefits package.

## TO BE CONSIDERED

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GMED fully intends to maintain a confidential hiring process. GMED will not contact references until mutual interest has been established between GMED and the candidate.

The first review of resumes will take place no later than, April 11, 2025.

This position will remain open until filled; however, early applications are strongly encouraged for optimal consideration. Resumes will be reviewed and evaluated continuously throughout the recruitment process, and the position may close at any time once a strong candidate pool is identified.

Confidential inquiries are welcomed and can be directed to Frank Peterson at (231) 788-8086. Interested candidates should take advantage of this opportunity and apply as soon as possible. Submissions must include a comprehensive resume, a compelling letter of interest, and professional references. Submissions should be sent electronically via email to [fpeterson@developmuskegon.org](mailto:fpeterson@developmuskegon.org).

GMED will assess candidates based on their alignment with the qualifications outlined in this recruitment profile. The final selection will be made by the Board of Directors, with the newly appointed CEO expected to begin June 2025 or at a mutually agreed-upon date.

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[www.developmuskegon.org](http://www.developmuskegon.org)

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AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



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