

Christine Mackay, Director

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



“Every day I have the privilege of helping to build our city of the future for businesses and residents.”

Phoenix Community and Economic Development director, Christine Mackay, has served the people of Phoenix since August 2014. She is responsible for leading and fostering an environment where businesses can create and retain jobs, make capital investment and reinvestment in the community, and connect our workforce to employers and training opportunities. During Mackay’s tenure with the City of Phoenix, the department has facilitated the creation of over 84,000 high-value jobs, seen the average wage of those jobs increase from over \$30,000 in 2014 to more than \$80,000 in 2022, and closed deals with more than \$50 billion in capital investment.

Christine leads a department of over 60 full time staff that encompasses the full spectrum of economic development areas including: business attraction, business retention and expansion, community development, international relations, Sister Cities, the Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board, administration, research, marketing, the City-owned Footprint Center and the Phoenix Bioscience Core.

In 2021, Christine was named as one of the Top 50 Economic Developers in the Country by Consultant Connect. She is a three-time honoree as “Economic Developer of the Year, Large Community” by the Arizona Association for Economic Development. Mackay was recognized as “Leader of the Year in Economic Development–Public Policy” by the Arizona Capitol Times, and “Industry Leader of the Year – Economic Development” by Arizona Commercial Real Estate Magazine. She has also been on the list of the Arizona Business magazine’s “50 Most Influential Women in Arizona.”

She is a member of the Economic Development Director’s Team for Greater Phoenix, Maricopa Association of Government’s Building a Quality Regional Community committee, Flinn Foundation Biosciences Roadmap committee, the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), Commercial Office Real Estate Executives (CoreNet), the Arizona Association for Economic Development (AAED), and the Arizona Business Incubator Association.

Christine has nearly 25 years’ experience in economic development overlapping 30 years of commercial real estate experience. Mackay has spent both her personal and professional life here in the Valley.

Eric Johnson, Assistant Director

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



Eric Johnson is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the divisions that encompass the support operations of the department including administration, fiscal, contracts, human resources, information technology, marketing, research, as well as the Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board and Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Center. Community and Economic Development is home to a staff of 60 full-time employees with an annual budget of \$55 million (FY22-23) for operations and Capital Improvement. Eric also assists the Director with special projects including strategic planning, developing policies and procedures and city-wide initiatives.

Eric's career spans more than two decades of management, economic development, urban planning, code enforcement, transit, and administration experience in the public sector. During his time in CED, he led many of the city's major economic development efforts including public private partnerships, revenue sharing and incentive agreements, transit-oriented development, Arizona State University Downtown Phoenix campus, Phoenix Biomedical Core campus, and mega events such as the 2015 Super Bowl and 2016 College Football National Championship. Eric joined the City of Phoenix in 2004. In addition to CED, he's also worked in the Downtown Development Office, Office of Customer Advocacy, and Development Services Department (now Planning and Development Department).

Prior to Phoenix, Eric worked in Glendale, Arizona as well as municipalities in Colorado and Illinois. He is a graduate of the University of Colorado at Denver, with a Master of Public Administration, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, with a Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning, and is certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). Eric is a member of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the American Planning Association (APA).

Michelle Pierson, Deputy Director

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



With over 20 years of experience and knowledge, Michelle has been involved in all facets of economic development; business retention and expansion, small business/entrepreneurship, attraction, and workforce development. As a Deputy Director, Michelle leads the Business Retention and Expansion Division (BRE), focusing on the growth of the existing Phoenix companies. Michelle and her team proactively cultivate relationships with Phoenix companies of all sizes. The team also provides assistance and guidance to small businesses that create a sense of place and are the heart of the City of Phoenix. Over the last five years, The BRE team has worked with over 5,000 companies to expand their footprint resulting in over 20,000 net new jobs and approximately \$3 Billion in capital investment.

Michelle is currently a member and has received AZEDPro certification from the Arizona Association of Economic Development, is a past Board member of the Children's Museum of Phoenix, is a member of the City of Phoenix's Phoenix Hispanic Network and has mentored high school students for YearUp. Born and raised in Nogales, Arizona, Michelle comes from a family of small business owners and entrepreneurs who were role models for the next generation, which created the foundation of giving back to the community through public sector work.

Xandon Keating, Deputy Director

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



Xandon Keating leads the Community Development Division (CDD), a specialized team focused on driving real estate investment and redevelopment in Central Phoenix. CDD manages the Downtown Redevelopment Area including seeking redevelopment proposals for City-owned Downtown properties, working with private landowners to redevelop their properties and with the Downtown community to identify solutions to ongoing issues. The division also oversees the City's contractual relationship for many Downtown assets such as the Arizona State University Downtown Campus and the Phoenix Biosciences Core. CDD also manages the Downtown Enhanced Municipal Services District, a business improvement district established to provide a high

level of services in the downtown core with the aim of increasing the level of activity.

With more than 15 years in local government, Xandon's work experience includes the City's Planning and Development Department, the City Council Office and the Office of Environmental Programs. During his time with the City, he has worked on many City projects including a number of significant Downtown projects focused on residential growth, new retail and entertainment options and educational infrastructure. Xandon has had a key role in updating the Phoenix General Plan, overseeing Planning Commission and Village Planning Committees such as Camelback East and South Mountain, and managing the City's rezoning process. Xandon has extensive experience working directly with the community whether it be providing information through a customer service function, engaging with neighborhood leaders through his role with the District 1 Council Office, or working closely with stakeholders through various City boards and commissions.

Xandon holds a Masters in City and Regional Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Bachelors of Arts in Economics and Political Science from the University of Colorado.

Nathan Wright, Deputy Director

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



Nathan Wright is responsible for managing the efforts of the Business Attraction Division. This team helps to assist highly successful companies in their growth expansion or move to Phoenix and manages innovation and retail initiatives and specialized staff that oversee the foreign trade zone, the aviation land reuse area and the Phoenix film office.

Nathan's career includes over 15 years of experience at the City of Phoenix working in a variety of areas including economic development, water, transit, aviation, and planning and development. Nathan joined the City of Phoenix in 2007 and has worked on major economic development efforts including the Arizona State University Downtown Campus, Phoenix Biomedical Campus, and a variety of major downtown projects. He has served as a management assistant to the Water Services Department Director, managed the Planning & Development Department's Self-Certification Program, served as a management assistant in the Building Inspections Division, served as a planner in the Transit Department and worked for three years in the Voluntary Acquisition and Relocation Services Program in the Aviation Department. Mr. Wright has also worked closely on special events such as the Super Bowl, National Championship Game and NCAA Final Four.

Prior to working in Phoenix, Nathan worked in Residential and Commercial Financing in California and Arizona. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Technology and Globalization from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott and is a graduate of Arizona State University, with a Master of Science in Urban and Environmental Planning. He is fluent in Italian and grew up in southeastern Arizona.

**Rita Marko, Deputy Director Protocol
Program Administrator President and CEO,
Phoenix Sister Cities, Inc.**

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



Rita Marko is the President/CEO of Phoenix Sister Cities, Inc., and is the Deputy Community and Economic Development Director for International Relations for the City of Phoenix, where she manages the City's Protocol Program.

Rita began her career with the City of Phoenix as the Development Officer for Phoenix Public Library, staffing the Phoenix Public Library Foundation – a 501(c)(3) organization that supports library programs and services. Rita was promoted to the Library's Community Relations Manager with responsibility for media relations, community outreach and the library's public website – with approximately 2.5 million hits per month. Rita also served as a Management Assistant in the City Manager's Office, where she staffed two Deputy City Managers, three City Council Subcommittees and two City task forces, including one to address civilian pension reform. Rita was most recently in the Public Works Department, staffing the Director's Office, and had responsibility the City's contract with Maricopa County Animal Care & Control – responsible for enforcement of the City's animal ordinance, among other tasks.

Prior to joining the City, Rita served as a grantwriter for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Phoenix, raising approximately \$1.5 million in about 18 months. Rita has also worked with the Skokomish Indian Tribe in Washington state. Initially hired as their Health Planner, Rita also served as an Economic Development Planner and the Director of Economic Development for the tribe.

Rita has a Masters degree in anthropology from the University of Arizona. She was born in Chicago, Illinois.

LaSetta Hogan, Executive Director and Workforce Administrator, Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



LaSetta manages the Business and Workforce Section within the Community and Economic Development Departments and concurrently serves as the Executive Director of the Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board (PBWD). The Business and Workforce team works diligently to improve our competitive position with not only developing our future workforce but also engaging with and repositioning our current workforce. These efforts are focused on through the PBWD Board, our University and Community College partners as well as engaging with the business community. The team works to leverage resources, services, and information to develop and access talent pipelines to meet workforce needs of business and industry.

Wathsna Sayasane, Deputy Director

Phoenix Community and Economic Development
200 W. Washington St., 20th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003 | 602-262-5040



Wathsna Sayasane leads the Management Services Division within the Community and Economic Development (CED) department. This team oversees the department's administrative support, fiscal management, and information technology support functions.

Since starting her career in 2006 with the City of Phoenix, Wathsna has worked in various capacities for multiple departments, which include the Neighborhood Services, Finance, Public Works, and Planning and Development departments. Additionally, she is an alum of the City's Management Fellowship Program and completed rotations in the City Manager's Office, Aviation, and Budget and Research departments. The majority of her experience has been concentrated within management services operations, internal and quality controls, and compliance work. She's also been fortunate to have worked on a broad range of City initiatives and projects, including social services and capital infrastructure projects. Her leadership experience managing multiple teams responsible for the successful contract administration of grant-funded public services and programs with partner non-profit agencies is vast. Her management services field experience and execution of public facility and neighborhood infrastructure projects such as park renovations and public street lighting projects have gained her the expertise needed to take on her new role. Her prior community development experience as CED Project Manager includes working on downtown redevelopment projects and as an Assistant Real Estate Administrator in Finance for citywide acquisition and relocation projects.

Wathsna holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Urban Planning from Arizona State University. Before moving to Arizona for college and starting her family in Phoenix, Wathsna was raised in Boise, Idaho, by her parents, who are first-generation Laotian immigrants.