

## **Community Planning and Economic Development News Release**

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# **Karuna Mahajan Named New Director of Operations and Innovation Team for City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development**

**Thursday, March 2, 2017 (Minneapolis, MN)** – Today, City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Director (CPED) D. Craig Taylor announced his appointment of Karuna Mahajan as the new Director of Operations and Innovation.

Karuna has worked for the City of Minneapolis since 2001, most recently serving as Contract Administrator in CPED’s Housing division of Residential and Real Estate Development where she was responsible for managing contracts for over 700 City-owned properties, assisting in the implementation of the City’s new Target Market supplier program, and preparing financial reports. Prior to that, she worked in the City’s Finance department for nine years and the Police department for five years. Before joining the City, Karuna spent some time working at GlobalCase Technologies and at the City of Charlotte, NC.

“With over 16 years of experience working in a variety of roles at the City of Minneapolis, Karuna has developed a unique skill set. This combined with her thoughtful yet analytical style of leadership will benefit the department immensely,” said CPED Executive Director D. Craig Taylor. “She will bring a new and diverse perspective to our management team enabling us to be more expansive in our thinking and our approach to different issues. I am proud to welcome Karuna to our leadership team and I look forward to her start in this new role.”

“Karuna has helped grow and advance several initiatives including the City’s interdepartmental community garden program. Her versatility, commitment to excellence, and teamwork are welcome additions to the CPED leadership team,” Andrea Brennan, CPED Director of Housing Policy and Development.

As Operations and Innovation Director, Karuna will be responsible for managing the daily operations of CPED including budget, personnel issues, departmental business plans, coordinating the development and implementation of department policies, and other

operational activities. She will also lead the department's efforts in business process improvement, run the City's Innovation Center (located in the Crown Roller Mill building located at 105 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis), and manage a team of eight including CPED's interagency coordinator, three technology project managers, and the marketing and communications manager. Her official first day as the new Director of Operations and Innovation will be Monday, March 6, 2017.

"I started my career in the City of Minneapolis as a Budget Analyst Intern. I'm extremely humbled that after serving the City for many years, I have been offered this exciting opportunity," said Karuna Mahajan. "I am looking forward to taking on this new role and collaborating with a very talented and experienced team to provide efficient and effective operations along with innovative solutions for department's continued optimal contributions and services to the community."

Karuna holds a degree in Psychology from Panjab University of Chandigarh, India; Post Graduate Diploma in Public Relations from Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, India; a Masters in Public Administration from Panjab University, Chandigarh, India; and a Masters in Public Administration from Toledo, Ohio. She is also very active in the community. For the last 16 years, Karuna has served as a volunteer on the Maple Grove Townhome Association Board and as an accomplished Indian Classical Dancer (Kathak) taught dance, performed and choreographed community recitals for many years.

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