



Letter From the Director

Brandon D. Davis, Esq., is the newly appointed acting Director of the Office of Public Accountability for the City of Grand Rapids. In that role, Brandon serves as the liaison between public safety and Grand Rapidians.

Brandon's entire career has been devoted to public service. Prior to serving as the Director of OPA, Brandon served as the Senior Labor Relations Specialist for the City of Grand Rapids. Before uniting with GR, Brandon was a noted trial attorney in Muskegon County and handled serious felony cases as a Senior Assistant Prosecutor. Brandon began his career in his hometown of Detroit, MI where he served as both a defense attorney and prosecutor. Brandon obtained a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Interpersonal and Public Communication from Central Michigan University in 2007. He then earned a Juris Doctor from Wayne State University Law School in 2010.

Brandon also holds certifications from Cornell University in both Diversity and Inclusion and Strategic Human Resources Leadership. Brandon is excited about the opportunity to serve Grand Rapidians in this new capacity. He looks forward to partnering with community to advance the important work of the Office of Public Accountability.

Hello Grand Rapids!

I am honored to serve as your very first Director of Oversight and Public Accountability. Throughout my career I have fought for justice on street corners, in boardrooms and courtrooms across our great state. As a continued result, I believe in protecting the rights of our community members and operating with integrity at all times. Both my lived and professional experience have allowed me to see the best and worst of the justice system. I am excited to apply what I have learned to this important work of leading the Office of Oversight and Public Accountability as we work to eliminate disparities in the justice system by increasing transparency and accountability in our police and fire departments.

Prior to the recent reemergence of the national discussion around policing, in August of 2019, City Manager Mark Washington created the Office of Oversight and Public Accountability in response to the community's request for increased accountability and transparency in the City's public safety departments. OPA serves as the Executive Office liaison between community and our public safety departments. The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many others have heightened nationwide outrage and discussions regarding police reform and reimagining public safety accountability across our Country. These events have also highlighted the need for the work that is done by OPA. We are fortunate that through City Manager Washington's leadership, OPA was able to begin its work and start the strategic planning process prior to these senseless murders.

While creating this plan, we focused on elevating resident voice, pursuing equitable outcomes and reimagining policing in Grand Rapids. Although COVID-19 delayed our engagement plans, we were intentional about creating opportunities for stakeholder engagement. The plan is the product of the collective wisdom of community, subject matter experts, and the information contained in the City's past studies and recommendations.

This plan is aligned to the City's Strategic Plan and incorporates the values, objectives, and priorities of that plan with a focus on public safety accountability that intentionally pursues justice. This plan incorporates the City's commitment to reimagining policing in Grand Rapids. This plan is a living breathing document. It is intended to guide the strategic direction of OPA, while being flexible enough to adapt to the needs of our community. This plan also provides an opportunity for stakeholders to hold OPA accountable.

Rep. John Lewis once said that "If you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have a moral obligation to do something about it." It is my honor to serve as your Director of Oversight and Public Accountability and do something about the injustice in our justice system. I am committed to transparency. I am committed to being responsible. I am committed to uniting our community. I am committed to equity. I am committed to justice. I am committed to working in partnership with community, the Grand Rapids Police Department, and the Grand Rapids Fire Department to achieve the desired outcomes that are detailed in this plan and to make Grand Rapids a place where all people feel safe and are safe, at all times.

In service,

Brandon Davis, Esq.