

ERIC HIRAGA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Eric Hiraga is the Executive Director of Denver Economic Development & Opportunity (DEDO), a position he assumed upon his appointment by Mayor Michael B. Hancock in August 2017. DEDO is leading an inclusive and innovative economy for all Denver residents, businesses, and neighborhoods. Under Hiraga's leadership, DEDO has been at the forefront of the city's pandemic relief and recovery efforts; sponsoring Mayor Hancock's [Economic Relief & Recovery Council](#), as well as forming and leading RISE Denver (Rebuilding for an Inclusive and Sustainable Economy).

These initiatives are supporting Denver's small businesses and nonprofits while jumpstarting the economy through thoughtful business development; job creation and advancement efforts; and expanding opportunities for small, minority, and women-owned businesses. Hiraga's leadership also resulted in the city's first-ever Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization Team (NEST) which supports neighborhoods experiencing significant change. In addition to NEST, Hiraga also directs DEDO's Business Development, Global Business Development, Workforce Services, and the city's Division of Small Business Opportunity.

In addition to economic development, Hiraga previously oversaw the City's housing affordability and homelessness division and was an integral part of creating a new, self-sustaining organization known as HOST or the [Department of Housing Stability](#), which builds a healthy, housed, and connected Denver. Prior to overseeing DEDO, Hiraga held a Mayoral appointment as Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff for [Denver International Airport](#) (DEN), a \$1 billion operation with over 35,000 employees. Prior to the airport, Eric was Vice President of Development Finance for multi-family developer Trademark Communities.

Hiraga received a B.S. in International Affairs from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He was awarded a Peace and Friendship Fellowship from the Japanese Ministry of Education at the University of Tsukuba, the Marshall Memorial Fellowship, and is currently in the second cohort of the Colorado Inclusive Economy. Current civic activities include Denver Urban Renewal Authority, Japan America Society of Colorado, and the Biennials of the Americas.