

James S. Bennett – Biography

James Bennett is the Director of Economic Development for the City of Providence, and is the chairman of the Rhode Island Convention Center.

Mr. Bennett was selected by Mayor Angel Taveras as Providence's Economic Development Director in August 2011. In this position, Mr. Bennett oversees all economic development initiatives and leads efforts to support existing businesses, attract new businesses and create jobs in Rhode Island's capital city.

The Department of Economic Development includes the City of Providence's departments of Planning and Development, Inspections and Standards, and Arts, Culture + Tourism and the Workforce Development Board.

Mr. Bennett served as chairman of the Rhode Island Convention Center from 1995 to 2001 and was reappointed to the post by Governor Lincoln Chafee again in June 2011. His leadership of the board has been credited with the Convention Center's successful efforts to market Providence as a national convention destination and increase convention business and tourism in the capital city.

He has created three startup companies, run large corporations and organizations with more than 800 employees, founded publicly traded companies and worked in the highest levels of state government. Bennett has a strong background and experience in finance and job creation. His financial background includes eight years on Wall Street, with a focus on municipal and corporate debt.

Mr. Bennett graduated from Brown University in 1979, and was a professional hockey player for the Atlanta Flames from 1979 to 1981.