



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Matthew R. Walsh, Deputy City Manager - Development
Jennifer Johnston, Human Resources and Labor Relations Director

DATE: March 6, 2023

SUBJECT: Community Development Department Reorganization

Recommendation

Accept this report and set the attached Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances to create the following in the class specification index: Assistant Community Development Director, Director of Special Projects and Strategic Initiatives, and Permitting System Coordinator for public hearing on April 10, 2023.

Background

Established in the 1990s, the Community Development Department is charged with the regulation and facilitation of development activities within the City. Historically, the Department has been comprised of the following divisions: Administration, Code, Economic Development, Engineering Services, and Planning. The Department is the only one in the organization that does not have an assistant department head.

In 2001, staffing within the Department was expanded with the position of Community Development Project Manager to support special projects, including economic development projects.

In 2007, a reorganization occurred which replaced the position of Community Development Director with Deputy City Manager – Development. As part of this reorganization, economic development tasks associated with branding, marketing, business retention / recruitment, and the Airport, were retained in the Community Development Department. However, the Community Development Project Manager was transferred to the City Manager’s Office and promoted to new position of Assistant for Special Projects. The Assistant for Special Projects was assigned additional economic development responsibilities including CDBG and the City’s Revolving Loan Fund Program.

On June 30, 2008, the position of Business Development Coordinator, was transitioned from full-time to part-time. This position was responsible for economic development branding, marketing, business retention / recruitment, as well as real estate activities associated with the Airport and management of the RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentive Program. The part-time position was discontinued in June 2009. As a result of these changes, said economic development responsibilities were reassigned to the City Manager, Deputy City Manager – Development, and Assistant for Special Projects.

In August 2013, the position of Director of Redevelopment, Downtown Services, and Special Projects was created. As part of this reorganization, additional economic development programs (such as RSA 79-E) were transitioned to the position. In addition, management of the City's parking system was assigned to this position. Following the creation of this position, the Assistant for Special Projects position was discontinued.

As part of the FY2017 Budget, the City Council created the position of Economic Development Director. The position was primarily responsible for economic development branding and marketing, as well as business retention / recruitment. The position was filled on April 30, 2017 and subsequently discontinued on June 30, 2021, following which said duties reverted back to the Deputy City Manager – Development, as well as the Economic Development Fellow, which was created as part of the FY2022 Budget. In March 2022, the Economic Development Fellow transitioned to the vacant Community Development Specialist position.

In 2019, Energov, a Tyler Technologies product, was selected to be the City's on-line development permitting program. After a series of delays associated with a variety of factors, including the Covid-19 Pandemic, Energov officially launched on August 22, 2022. All development permit applications administered by the Code, Engineering, and Planning divisions, as well as the Fire Department, are now received and managed via Energov. As the system matures, other City Departments, including General Services, Assessing, and Police, will also come to rely on this program. Although a robust program with the potential to improve the user friendliness, efficiency, and interdepartmental operability of the City's permitting processes, implementation of Energov has been onerous and challenging.

Discussion

- 1) **Reorganization Proposal:** Given recent staff transitions in the Community Development Department, fragmented approach to staffing economic development roles / responsibilities, and advent of the Energov permitting program, City Administration recommends the creation of the following new positions within the Class Specification Index:

- a. **Assistant Community Development Director:**

- i. **Responsibilities:** Position will serve as assistant department head for the Community Development Department and report directly to the Deputy City Manager – Development.

The position will be specifically responsible for all aspects of economic development, and serve as a catalyst thereto. Economic development duties include, but are not limited to, branding, marketing, business retention / recruitment, administration of economic development programs (tax increment financing, RSA 79-E, community development block grants, revolving loan fund, etc.), brownfields program, public / private partnerships, as well as all aspects of capital improvement projects developed by the City as part of public / private partnerships.

The position will also be responsible for all aspects of coordination and management of the City's Parking System and Concord Municipal Airport.

The position will also be responsible for preparation of the City's Capital Improvement Program.

The position will also be involved in other aspects of the department's operations, including review of proposed regulatory amendments and fee structures, hiring processes key positions, budgeting, and other similar items.

ii. Benefits to the Organization / Community:

1. Creates an assistant department head for continuity and future succession planning;
2. Centralizes all aspects of economic development with one individual (including parking and the airport) for improved efficiency; ensures a wholistic approach to economic development strategy and execution;
3. Ensures continued coordination of all aspects of the parking system pertaining to community and economic development, enforcement, repair and maintenance, and interdepartmental cooperation related thereto. Preserves the concept of a "champion" to advocate for the parking systems needs.
4. Also ensures continued coordination of all aspects of the Airport pertaining to community and economic development, enforcement, repair and maintenance, and interdepartmental cooperation related thereto. Preserves the concept of a "champion" to advocate for all Airport issues.

b. Director of Special Projects and Strategic Initiatives:

- i. Responsibilities: Position will report directly to the Deputy City Manager – Development.

Position will initiate and manage a variety of complex special projects, particularly related to community and economic development projects, including, but not limited to, brownfields cleanup and redevelopment, parks and recreation, transportation, parking facilities, historic preservation, energy and sustainability, other community improvements, place making, public art and community beautification projects, and others as assigned. Position will immediately assume responsibility for the following: Canal Street Riverfront Park, new Penacook Branch Library / Recreation Center, I-93 Bridge Park Study, Abbott Downing Society / Concord Stables Project, Merrimack River Greenway Trail, among others.

The position will also lead and manage the City's efforts relative to energy and sustainability. As such, the position will work with all City departments on such initiatives, as well as staff the Energy and Environment Committee. Position will also become responsible for administering projects related hereto, such as remaining LED lighting conversions for City-owned light poles, development of renewable energy facilities on City property.

The position will also lead and manage the City's efforts associated with place making, public art and beautification.

ii. Benefits to the Organization / Community:

1. Provides dedicated staff resources to support implementation of important special projects, strategic initiatives, and associated public / private partnerships associated therewith. Ensures that opportunities regarding such efforts will be maximized.
2. Provides resources to grow and strengthen the City's efforts regarding energy and sustainability, as well as place making, public art, and community beautification.

c. Permitting System Coordinator:

- i. Responsibilities: This position will also report to the Deputy City Manager – Development.

The position will be responsible for all aspects of designing, developing, customizing implementing, modifying and managing the Energov program. The goal of the position is to ensure maximum user friendliness, utility, efficiency, and functionality of the Energov Program.

Additionally, the position will be responsible for training all City staff and applicants how to use the program.

The position will also be the interface between Tyler Technologies, the City's Information Technology Department, and

This position is essentially analogous to the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) Coordinator. Like GIS, Energov is a far reaching, City-wide application which will reside within the Community Development Department.

ii. Benefits to the Organization / Community:

1. Improves and expedites implementation of Energov program to protect the City's investment and ensure appropriate implementation of program across the organization.

2) Financial Analysis: The following is a financial analysis of the proposed reorganization and net cost to the City associated with the creation of these positions. As part of this proposed reorganization, the following positions would become vacant: Director of Redevelopment, Downtown Services and Special Projects as well as the Economic Development Fellow. This is factored into the analysis below. Said analysis is a projection for FY2024 and includes all salaries and benefits.

- Proposed New Positions: \$424,065
- Less Existing 2 Positions to be Eliminated: -\$238,274
- Net New Cost: \$185,791