



# CITY OF CONCORD

*New Hampshire's Main Street™*

## REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Carlos P. Baía, Deputy City Manager—Development

**DATE:** November 16, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Rescission of the Economic Development Advisory Council (EDAC) Ordinance

### **Recommendation**

Accept this report and set the attached amendment for public hearing.

### **Background**

The Economic Development Advisory Council was established in 1978 and is governed by Article 30-3-16 in the City's Code of Ordinances. Over the decades, EDAC has provided City Council with input on a variety of subjects directly or indirectly affecting the economic well-being of the community.

Per the ordinance, membership in EDAC is allocated as follows:

The Economic Development Advisory Council shall consist of fifteen (15) members: five (5) members of the City Council; one member of the Capital Regional Development Council appointed by the Mayor from a list of three (3) names provided by the Capital Regional Development Council; one member of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce appointed by the Mayor from a list of three (3) names supplied by the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce; two (2) members representative of for-profit and not-for-profit creative enterprises within the City appointed by the Mayor from a list of four (4) names provided by the Chamber of Commerce's "Creative Concord" committee and six (6) at-large members. All appointees shall be confirmed by the City Council. The City Manager or his designee shall serve as a nonvoting ex officio member of the Economic Development Advisory Council. The Executive Directors of the Capital Regional Development Council and Concord Housing Authority shall serve as ex officio nonvoting members. The members shall be residents of the City of Concord or shall have an economic interest in the well-being of the City of Concord. All members shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment to the unexpired term as necessary. Members of the Advisory Council shall select their chairperson.

Over the last several years EDAC has struggled to maintain its 18 person membership and achieve quorum. Today, 7 of the 15 voting positions are vacant and 3 of the last four appointments to the committee resigned prior to the end of their terms.

## **Discussion**

The City's new Economic Development Director has worked diligently to meet key stakeholders and identify the City's strengths and challenges since coming onboard on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Based on the Economic Development Director's experience and assessment to date, the greatest value from an advisory body would be in the form of small "business strike force" teams of private sector and governmental leaders which she could convene as needed and whose composition would be determined by the demands of the particular market sector being pursued. Mayor Bouley suggested a similar approach in 2015 when first broaching the need to ramp up the City's business development efforts. In today's world dominated by 24/7 social media platforms and business models that were inconceivable just 5 years ago, many economic development deals require extreme flexibility and critical response within 24 hours to have any hope of maintaining a site selector's interest. This pace is at odds with the notion of a large advisory board who meets monthly and whose appointments are based on traditional business categories. Business development practices have changed dramatically and the City must adapt as well to stay competitive. As a result, it is recommended that Council set the attached amendment rescinding the EDAC ordinance for public hearing. As the City develops its economic development strategy over the next several months, it is anticipated that Council will have other opportunities to review changes and provide input.

As Mayor Bouley noted at the November 13<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, the City is very grateful to the current and past EDAC members for their service. Their contributions have helped shape City policy, improved our zoning ordinance, land development regulations, and set the foundation for the City's current and future economic development initiatives.