



FROM: Suzi Pegg, Economic Development Director
Emily Beckett, Intern, Economic Development Office

DATE: September 2019

SUBJECT: September Economic Development Report

Recommendation

Accept this report.

On the local front in economic development....

There is a growing interest by 'out of the city' café and restaurant owners looking at potential spaces in the downtown area. Space size and equipment availability appears to be a challenge but the Economic Development Director (EDD) continues to work with them.

Teatotaler Café, one of those "out of city" restaurants that worked with the City to land a location in Concord, continues to promote its upcoming presence in Concord by cohosting events in the City.

Argentech Solutions is growing and is looking to move out of the space at the airport to Terrill Park drive. The Economic Development Director helped connect them to local realtors to help with their search.

HRKNSS cowork space has launched its monthly speaker series. The EDD is helping with this initiative by inviting contacts across NH to be speakers for the series.

The Lowell-based Concord Kinetic Sculpture race is working with the City of Concord to host a race here in June 2020. For more information on this event, visit www.lowellkinetic.com.

Out of town developers from the Boston market (no names given) are looking at housing opportunities in the Concord area. This is still a nascent search but the EDD is working to provide them background information and contacts.

The Invest Concord website has been updated with new material to keep it current and fresh. A new blog and videos were added. Please check out www.investconcordnh.com.

The Invest Concord Facebook page also received a refreshed look in line with the website. We have also upgraded the amount of content feed.

Total number of visits/leads generated this month: 13

Total for FY2020 to date: 19

Nationally in economic development...

Each month, in addition to a synopsis of Concord-specific activities and data, I will seek to provide Council with insight into different trends or areas of interest in the economic development world. This is the second report in this series.

I wish to thank Emily Beckett, our economic development intern, for her research and assistance with this month's submittal.

The Arts and Economic Development

In recent years, creative communities across the country have looked to the arts to advance economic development. Recent data illustrates that the arts contributed \$804.2 billion to the U.S. economy, and upward trends continue as more communities prioritize this sector. Revenue from the arts makes up about half of the nation's creative economy; 4.6 million jobs; as well as 4.3% of GDP.

The Arts & Community

The Arts can manifest themselves in myriad ways bridging what may seem like distinct industry sectors. In Boulder, Colorado the infestation of Emerald Ash Borer led to the unfortunate destruction of 4,500 trees or 11% of the City's tree canopy. Rather than just accept this loss, Boulder Parks and Rec officials secured a grant to launch an initiative that provided carpentry classes to the formerly homeless to teach them the skills necessary to convert the fallen timber into furniture and art pieces.

The Film Industry

A handful of U.S. communities have capitalized on their "quintessential" locations to become centers for film and television production. These regions typically offer a diversity of filming locations from urban neighborhoods to rural countrysides. Based on this factor alone, New Hampshire—with its four seasons, coastline, forests, lakes and mountains—should be a top choice for film producers. While New Hampshire has been

featured in memorable films such as “On Golden Pond,” our state has not been able to sustain a film industry. This is partially explained by the fact that unlike states with greater success in this field, New Hampshire does not offer significant financial incentives for film production.

Pittsburgh, PA, for example, provides a 25% tax credit to productions that spend at least 60% of their budget in the state. Austin, TX amplifies their incentives through a 22.5% cash grant based on in-state spending on feature films. To further help with the process, Austin identifies potential events and locations with permits in order to more effectively market their opportunities to film producers.

Perhaps the most successful example of the benefit of financial incentives is Georgia which over the last decade has emerged as the “Hollywood of the East.” In 2017, Georgia ranked first in the world in terms of total feature film productions. Blockbuster movies such as the Avengers franchise have been filmed in Georgia as well as successful TV shows such as the Walking Dead and Stranger Things. Film and production spending in Georgia reached \$2.7 billion in 2017. Of course, incentives are just one part of this equation, Georgia is also blessed to have a wide diversity of landscapes (mountains, seacoast, forests, cities, etc.) that provide a variety of attractive backdrops.

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships have been instrumental in fostering arts-based economic development throughout the country. The National Endowment for the Arts, along with private philanthropies, created ArtPlace, a planned 10 year collaborative “to position arts and culture as a core sector of community planning and development.” ArtPlace has invested \$104 million “to grow the field of creative placemaking through demonstration projects, in-depth investments in organizational change, and research.” Projects have included an artist collaborative with a native housing authority in Alaska to create garden plots and add artistic flourishes to a stretch of sidewalk and roadway. In Philadelphia, ArtPlace helped fund an artist in residency program in an historic mansion in a park which helped energize a regular calendar of community arts events and community discussions.

Art’s Potential in Concord

As illustrated below, harnessing the power of the arts can prove to make a community stronger. Concord is fortunate to have a rich tapestry of arts organizations including the League of NH Craftsmen, the Kimball Jenkins School of Art, NHTI’s Visual Arts Program, the Concord Arts Fair just to name a few. Thanks to these organizations and other businesses and non-profits in the community, Concord has been able to support

initiatives such as the Art on Main exhibitions and the WinterFest sculpture contest. Next year a Kinetic Sculpture race is planned.

In addition to the visual arts, Concord is also home to a vibrant assortment of performing arts venues such as the Community Music School, Bank of New Hampshire Stage, the Capital Center for the Arts, and the Concord Audi. National trends suggest that more people are taking advantage of affordable, live entertainment facilities as a form of leisure spending. The beauty of Concord is how all of our local arts initiatives and venues can cross-pollinate to provide a richer experience for residents and visitors. Events such as Market Days, the Multicultural Festival, and performances through RB Productions and the Concord School District highlight both visual and performing arts across generations. With each new event and collaboration, Concord gains more exposure as a community whose potential—as manifested through its arts scene—is unlimited.

References

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