



FROM: Suzi Pegg, Economic Development Director

DATE: 1st April, 2020

SUBJECT: April Economic Development Report

Recommendation

Accept this report.

Social Media (SM)/ Marketing

During the current Covid-19 crisis, the Economic Development Office's (EDO) priority is on keeping our business community up to date on available federal, state and local help. All SM platforms are being utilized on a regular basis with many agencies cross sharing to help keep the public updated.

The EDD, the Chamber and Intown are also working with Concord TV to do a community video targeted at the business community. We hope this will be in production soon so it can be distributed locally as soon as possible throughout our SM channels and the website

City of Concord Podcast

This has been temporarily suspended at the time being. Past episodes can be found on the website.

Measures:

Economic Development Director Target Visits/Leads for FY2020: 150

Total number of visits/leads generated this month: 60

Note: number included 49 whom the EDD reached out to as part of the survey. No 'in person' meetings are being held during quarantine restrictions.

Total for FY2020 to date: 115

Last Quarter Business Update

1. New Investment: Doggy Day Care Kennel.

The Economic Development Office (EDO) has been working closely with this client from another part of the state. They will be opening up a canine day care center here in Concord in the next couple of months in addition to moving to Concord themselves. They have been looking at the region for some time and had identified an initial location which after further enquires did not work out for them. The Economic Development Office helped these entrepreneurs search for other locations until they found one which would be suitable. The EDO also coordinated with the pertinent City departments and has been in touch on a regular basis.

2. New Investment – Teatotaler

This project is still moving ahead. The business owner has been waiting for the renovation team to start work on the Warren Street location. The EDO has been in continual contact. The company encountered a problem in late March with their design plans and the use of the building. Within hours of this being brought to the City's attention, the EDO coordinated a response from multiple City departments to bring a solution to the client and move the project forward.

3 Acquisition: Client “Alex”

This acquisition of a manufacturing company is completed but the client wishes to remain anonymous for the time being until they have everything in place to make a press announcement. The EDO has been in continuous communication with them from a first inquiry call several months ago. The client is from another state and had many questions regarding the processes in NH, financing/incentives, utilities and introductions to realtors and networks (the new CEO is in the process of moving to Concord) and local recruitment. The company plans to grow the facility by adding new jobs and upgrade with new equipment.

Background

Each month I will seek to provide Council with insight into different trends or areas of interest in the economic development world as well as a synopsis of Concord-specific activities and data.

Discussion

COVID-19: Update on Resources for Concord Businesses

Right now there is no single business/individual that has not been impacted by the COVID-19 Virus. We are learning new techniques (and its flaws) in working remotely because of restricted mobility either as an employer or an employee and the dominant factor to keeping everyone in this working environment is through a smartphone or other technology centric platforms. Who else knew about Zoom until now!

Its impacts on regions may be a shift like we have never seen before and we don't know what the future looks like as so many unknowns are still in play. Some businesses may not come back from this but many others are adapting such as those in the retail sector by offering take-out family meals, e-commerce and gift cards to use at a later date. Others have just simply 'shut up shop' for the time being.

As an economic developer, we are trained how to deal with companies in the face of natural disasters such as hurricanes or floods, but nothing in the playbook has prepared any of us for this. That being said, we are all learning at a rapid pace how to work with our stakeholders by tapping into federal and state incentives which can offer some kind of lifeline to our companies and other economic development organizations are sharing best practices on how to deal with what we are facing.

For the City of Concord, we have been proactively working with our partners in the City on initiatives and sharing pertinent information to help our companies.

A survey, initiated by the City's Economic Development Office, went to businesses that have links with the EDD, the Greater Chamber of Commerce and InTown Concord on the 19th March. Results are being reviewed on a weekly basis and the EDD and partners are putting in place information and webinars addressing these needs.

A downloadable pdf of a business resources page was loaded up on to the City's website. This will be updated as needed as more programs are rolled out for the business community. The EDD has been on many calls to keep updated on these resources.

Here is a quick summary from IEDC's website on some of the most talked about programs:

The Paycheck Protection Program, intended to help enterprises with 500 or fewer employees keep their workers on payroll, is one of the key components of the \$2 trillion economic relief measure President Trump signed into law March 27. The loans will be distributed under the existing framework of the Small Business Administration's 7(a) program, a partnership between private lenders which issue the loans and the federal government.

The new program raises the maximum amount of a 7(a) loan from \$5 million to \$10 million. The maximum interest rate for the loans is set at 4 percent, and independent contractors, sole proprietors, the self-employed and certain nonprofits are eligible. If all employees are kept on payroll for eight weeks, SBA will forgive the portion of the loans used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest or utilities; up to 100 percent of the loan is forgivable.

For SBA, the CARES Act also included \$10 billion for emergency economic injury disaster loan grants, \$17 billion for loan subsidies, \$100 billion for secondary market guarantee sales and \$240 million for small business development centers and women's business centers for technical assistance for businesses. The Economic Development Administration received \$1.5 billion in supplemental funding, directed to the economic adjustment assistance account. The Community Development Block Grant program was allotted \$5 billion in supplemental funding.