



CITY OF CONCORD
New Hampshire's Main Street™
Community Development Department

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EDAC)
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
June 24, 2025 @ 5:00PM
City Council Chambers
37 Green Street (2nd Floor) – Concord NH 03301

Attendees:

Committee Members:

Mike Vlacich, Chair, Mayor Byron Champlin, City Councilor Ali Sekou, Jim Bouley, Ari Pollack, Jean Hakuzimana, City Councilor Judith Kurtz, Patrick Tompkins, Alex Stoyale, Chuck Gilboy

Absent Members:

Emily Ricard, Sal Prizio, Bobby Segal, Steve Duprey, Michelline Dufort

Staff Present:

Matt Walsh, Deputy City Manager – Development
Stephanie McKim, Administrative Coordinator

Meeting called to order: 5:07 pm.

1. **Welcome by Chair Vlacich:** Chair Vlacich welcomed those in attendance and reviewed the agenda. Chair Vlacich reflected back to the presentation given by Rob Dapice, Executive Director/CEO of New Hampshire Finance Authority. He reported it has been a challenging legislative session on the housing front and that Concord continues to work hard and do its fair share to support new housing in the City. He reflected on the role of EDAC, which he surmised is to advise the City on its economic development vision for the community and what is needed to achieve that vision, as well as to advise the City on business development initiatives and how to grow the economy. Chair Vlacich encouraged EDAC to continue discussions with the business community, and support and advise policy makers.
2. **Adoption of Minutes:** A motion was made by Dr. Tompkins and duly seconded by Councilor Kurtz to adopt the amended minutes of April 22, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **Comments by Mayor Champlin:** Mayor Champlin reported that he, together with Matt Walsh, Tim Thompson, and Tim Sink of the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, as well as staff from the NH Small Business Administration met with the owner of Quality Press, Andrea Daniels. Quality Press leases approximately 6,000 sf of space on Hall Street and currently have a workforce of 3 full time employees and few part time employees. The Mayor reported printing at one time was the mainstay of Concord however those days are gone.

The Mayor reported Quality Press was originally located in Nashua and the owner moved the business location to Concord to be closer to home. Quality Press has a fairly broad market area working with companies like W.B. Mason and other organization as far as Ohio. Mayor Champlin reported a large portion of the customer base is non-profit and that was a cause for concern in the current political climate. Ms. Daniels is advertising through Google, and is extending service beyond printing on paper. The Mayor reported one particular challenge Quality Press is experiencing is staffing. Despite this challenge, the Mayor stated Ms. Daniels is very happy to be living and working in Concord.

4. **Conversation with Dr. Patrick Tompkins, President of NHTI regarding Workforce Development**

Dr. Tompkins was joined by Dr. Hector Iweka, NHTI Vice President for Academic and Workforce Education, Kathy Taylor, NHTI Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, and Anne Fowler, Career and Technical Education Principal at Concord Regional Technical Center (CRTC).

Dr. Iweka reported they have worked to redefine NHTI and recreate its foundation. NHTI's forward thinking strategy aims to excel in being community focused and career driven. Director Taylor reported workforce development and community education programs are her areas of focus and NHTI programs based on labor market indicators and needs. They have focused on those high demand areas such as construction, healthcare, and social services providing students with necessary skills to earn industry recognized certificates. Director Taylor reported they have developed LNA training for traditional students and LNA for success program to assist English as a second language (ESL) students to enter the workforce. Director Taylor reported some of these programs offer apprenticeships to students where they can earn while they learn. These three-year apprenticeship programs allow employers to hire and train students. The partnering employer may provide students with free tuition or tuition can be grant funded through Apprenticeship New Hampshire. Director Taylor reported students that complete these apprenticeship programs leave with several different industry recognized credentials, education, and on the job training. One recent apprenticeship partnership between NHTI, New Hampshire Army National Guard (for space and location to run the program), Floor Covering Education Foundation, and Floor Works will enable students to learn flooring installation through the NHTI's workforce development and community education. Director Taylor reported workforce development and community education programs need partnerships to be successful.

Principal Fowler reported CRTC serves high school aged students from nine regional school districts that include 30 towns in the Concord region. CRTC programs are federally funded and available at no cost to all public, private, home schooled and public charter school students within the region. Principal Fowler reported some of the recent challenges they have been facing on a daily basis stems from proposed legislation at the state house. Another challenge Principal Fowler reported is CRTC is at capacity with enrollments and parking can be a challenge. Principal Fowler reported 70% of students receive college credits or accrued post-secondary training hours, 90% of students earn industry recognized certificates or professional

1 licenses and 97% of students participate in work-based learning and this is a requirement of
2 the grant funding they operate on.

3
4 Principal Fowler reported a fulltime teacher at CRTC can only teach 3 classes. This becomes a
5 constraint for students seeking to complete a two-year program or students that want to get
6 into a program and can't because it is full. Principal Fowler reported that there are various
7 legislative proposals which will negatively impact funding for public education. She feels CRTC
8 should be its own business/school because Concord certainly has the need. However, she noted
9 that there is limited opportunity to physically expand the CRTC program at the Concord
10 Highschool Campus. Principal Fowler reported CRTC works closely with Dr. Tompkins at NHTI
11 to find ways to keep student in the Concord area and make a smooth transition from CRTC to
12 NHTI. She also noted how her program works with the City, including the City's Fire
13 Department for students enrolled in CRTC's EMS program.

14
15 Dr. Tompkins reported the purpose of this discussion is to lay out the current landscape of what
16 they are trying to accomplish, to answer any question this committee may have, to learn where
17 there may be opportunities and what they should be responding too.

18
19 Chair Vlacich reported NHTI is a big employer in the City of Concord, which economically
20 supports other local businesses through work force development and purchasing goods and
21 services.

22
23 Mr. Bouley inquired about the impact of the recent sudden closure of the Manchester Job Corp
24 (MJC). Dr. Tompkins reported he had learned about the closure just days before they were to
25 close the doors and unfortunately there was not much the NHTI could do given the
26 circumstances. His team looked at how they could provide housing to the students of MJC but it
27 was an incredibly complex situation due to the ages of students and funding. Director Taylor
28 along with other community colleges met with the students to offer programs they had
29 available, discussed third party funding, and offered support to the students. Dr. Tompkins
30 reported even if NHTI offered a MJC student free tuition, but that he was not aware of a single
31 enrollment at this time because that population requires more than free tuition. NHTI is not
32 built for that, especially with 6 days' notice about the closure of the MJC program.

33
34 Chair Vlacich inquired how NHTI and CRTC form business relationships in the community, how
35 would a business know to reach out, and could they handle more business. Dr. Iweka reported
36 NHTI has both formal and informal business relationships. NHTI develops relationships
37 through events at the Chamber, conversations at community networking events. He reported
38 developing new business is part of their plan as they move forward in workforce education. Dr.
39 Tompkins reported NHTI does have a career technical advisory committee connected to the
40 business community. NHTI collaborates with the committee to compare what they have to offer
41 and what their needs are. Dr. Tompkins reported there are limits in the healthcare programs
42 due to large number of student clinical placements, especially for radiology. Director Taylor
43 reported the Board of Nursing also limits student to instructor ratios. For the LNA program they
44 are limited to a total of 8 students per cohort.

45
46 Principal Fowler reported CRTC has a great relationship with the business community and each
47 program has an advisory committee that work with students, offers advices, and additional

resources to guide students upon completion of a program. They are always looking for more opportunities to connect students and businesses. The biggest challenge in workplace learning is the age restriction especially in the construction trades program. Every opportunity for their students has to be cleared through the Department of Labor.

Councilor Sekou inquired if housing is a challenge for students. Dr. Iweka reported housing is always a challenge. NHTI does have dormitories available for students; however, not all programs offered at NHTI qualify for dorm housing. There are other factors such as funding that contribute to this challenge. Director Taylor reported NHTI workforce development has tried to expand shared programs to remove that housing barrier and make program access throughout the state. This expanded shared programming with other community-based learning organizations supports and enables students facing childcare restriction, travel restrictions, and housing relocation restrictions, to get the training and skills needed in the workforce today.

Councilor Sekou ask about potential challenges for those students who are part of the English as a Second Language (ESL) communities, what kind of support would they need to deal with those challenges, how can the community support awareness of these workforce development programs.

Dr. Iweka reported more collaboration with non-profit organizations, networking events, educational sessions, and to continue to be open to discussions around programs and partnerships could be beneficial in outreach to the ESL community. Director Taylor reported one-way NHTI workforce development has assisted the ESL students is by expanding the LNA program from 6 weeks to 18 weeks. The first 6 weeks is intensive language learning for medical terminology, and the rest of the program is spread over online, laboratory and clinical training experiences. Once this has been completed the student will have three weeks of test training to prepare the students for the state licensing exam. Director Taylor reported they could also provide workshops for career development to assist students with cover letter and resume writing, interviewing skills partnering with community members to conduct mock interviews. Director Taylor reported partnerships are needed for the ESL students to expand programs into other industries. Dr. Tompkins inquired how the ESL LNA students (all new Americans) came to the program at NHTI. Director Taylor reported a partnership with Second Start enabled ESL New Americans the language access needed to be accepted in the program and Southern NH Services Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) assisted students with the cost of tuition, supplies, and material needed for clinicals.

Mr. Stoye inquired about requirements needed for a business to partner specifically in hospitality and culinary program areas. Director Taylor reported the Lakes Region Community College (LRCC) has a culinary program. It would be a significant investment in infrastructure to implement this program. Additionally, NHTI does not wish to launch a secondary program which would serve the same geography, thus potential students are referred to LRCC. However, NHTI does offer a hospitality certificate program Mr. Stoye inquired how a local restaurant owner could connect with students for internships. Dr. Iweka reported conversations and collaboration with NHTI and local business helps develop partnerships that are mutually beneficial for the college, local business and the students. Chair Vlachich reported NHTI and CRTC's approachability and flexibility is remarkable but the question of how can a

1 business connect with the programs and students may be more of a challenge for an average
2 small business doesn't have an HR department or resources to implement an internship. It may
3 be a question to discuss at a later point with regards to what role the government, the local
4 chamber and affiliates can play and how EDAC can advise in the future.

5
6 Mayor Champlin inquired how NHTI and CRTC is pursuing and assisting the refugee population
7 in workforce development, and are there opportunities for new training pathways in
8 developing educational areas like artificial intelligence (AI).

9
10 Dr. Iweka reported NHTI continues to review and improve training pathways for students to
11 meet the workforce needs. He stated meeting with various organizations such as the Chamber,
12 EDAC help them to learn more about the workforce needs of the community and underserved
13 populations.

14
15 Dr. Tompkins reported NHTI was once a well know engineering technology school and to look
16 at the program mix now, NHTI has a heavy mix of healthcare, hospitality, and workforce
17 development. Students are looking to get industry recognized training and credential and
18 develop their careers without the four-year commitment.

19
20 Director Taylor reported the expansion of apprenticeship programs have been supported by
21 the federal government and has connected students with organization that will pay for
22 education and train on the job. This is a positive direction, it is supported and it is a program
23 offering NHTI has in its pipeline. Mayor Champlin inquired if there is a preservation
24 apprenticeship program. Director Taylor reported they do not offer anything currently in
25 preservation apprenticeship. Mayor Champlin referred Director Taylor to the NH Preservation
26 Alliance. Principal Fowler reported the conversation to diversify is part of their strategic plan
27 and she and Dr. Tompkins have discussed how they can continue to develop programs and
28 support each other if one entity has space and the other has a need.

29
30 Councilor Kurtz inquired if NHTI has partnerships with healthcare facilities in Concord beyond
31 Concord Hospital. Dr. Iweka reported NHTI does have relationships with other healthcare
32 facilities. The challenge NHTI is facing is in the availability of spots in the programs is far less
33 than the demand. They often receive hundreds of applications for a single program that can
34 accept 40 students. They are developing programs to work around some of these challenges by
35 enabling students to earn a certificate that would allow them to work in another area in
36 healthcare if they can't get into a more advanced certification program.

37
38 Mr. Bouley inquired if NHTI has relationships with association affiliated with each of the
39 program areas such as New Hampshire Healthcare Association or are they focused on
40 individual business relationships. Director Taylor reported they do work closely with
41 association when possible. For example, the carpentry program has a partnership with
42 Association of Carpentry and Building and they are working to get New Hampshire Building
43 Association back into that program. Principal Fowler reported a partnership with New
44 Hampshire Automobile Dealer Association (NHADA) enable automotive students to connect
45 with Grappone Auto right here in Concord.

46

1 Chari Vlachich requested EDAC consider action steps and recommendation they may have for
2 City Council to consider. He requested EDAC further consider what they can do to encourage
3 conversation with the local Chamber, the School Board and create connection for workforce
4 development and economic growth.

5 6 **5. Review of the City's Economic Development Reserve Fund**

7 Deputy City Manager – Development Matthew Walsh reported the Economic Development
8 Reserve (EDR) fund was created on June 10, 1995 by City Council Resolution 6572. It was
9 originally capitalized with \$480,000 from surplus room and meals tax money proceeds. The
10 EDR was initially to provide seed money to assist in the creation of an industrial park, corporate
11 park, and civic center. Ultimately, the EDR supported the purchase and redevelopment of the
12 former Concord Lumber Property into the Corporate Park at Horseshoe Pond which features
13 the Grappone Conference Center.

14 The EDR fund has been used for a variety of economic development projects and initiatives over
15 the years such as economic development master plans, development feasibility studies,
16 acquisition and redevelopment of property, seed money for tax increment finance (TIF)
17 districts.

18 Mr. Walsh reported it EDR fund has also been used to support salary and benefits of economic
19 development related staff. Additionally, the EDR fund has been used to support special events
20 and festivals general in the downtown area.

21 Regarding the use of the Economic Development Reserve to support Tax Increment Finance
22 Districts, Mr. Walsh explained that the Development Program and Financing Plans for TIF
23 Districts are structured to repay EDR contributions. This helps to grow the EDR, as well as
24 ensure EDR funds are available for future economic development projects and initiatives. Mr.
25 Walsh noted that \$849,500 of EDR funds was used to support the North End Opportunity
26 Corridor Tax Increment Finance (NEOCTIF) District. All EDR funds have been repaid by the
27 NEOCTIF. Mr. Walsh also noted that a total of \$1,704,900 from the EDR had been used to
28 support the activities of the Penacook Village Tax Increment Finance (PVTIF) District, which
29 were primarily focused on the acquisition and cleanup of the former Allied Leather Tannery /
30 Amazon Realty sites. Of this total, there is presently \$695,000 remaining to be repaid to the EDR
31 by the PVTIF. He noted that the PVTIF makes annual payments towards this amount, and the
32 annual payment for FY2026 will be \$47,411.

33 Mr. Walsh also reported that \$2.85 million in EDR funds were used to support the activities of
34 the Sears Block Tax Increment Finance (SBTIF) District. Said funds were used primarily to
35 purchase and cleanup the former Sears Block located at 11 South Main Street (now site of the
36 Hotel Concord Building), construction of the City's Storrs Street Parking Garage, as well as
37 acquisition and redevelopment of the former NH Employment Security property located at 32
38 South Main Street (now the Isabella Apartment Building). Repayment of these funds is
39 scheduled to begin in FY2027.

40 Mr. Walsh reported as of May 31, 2025, the EDR fund balance was \$284,658.61. Accounting for
41 debits and credits approved as part of the FY2026 budget, the projected FY2026 balance of the
42 EDR is \$292,070.

Discussion ensued about the process for how funds are appropriated from the Economic Development Reserve. Mr. Walsh explained that City Administration will make proposals to City Council as part of the budget process, or as otherwise needed, for use of these funds, and that City Council has the final authority to approve such requests. Mr. Walsh noted that City Council may or may not seek advice from EDAC when considering appropriation requests involving the EDR.

Mr. Pollack inquired what the historic balance is for the EDR fund. Mr. Walsh reported the balance will vary based on the needs of the City and what is available at the end of fiscal year close out. Mr. Bouley noted that the City Council decisions regarding potential allocation of annual budget surplus funds to the EDR also affect the EDR fund balance.

Discussion ensued around the intent of the fund, assessing the supporting the economic development needs of the community with the EDR, potential use of the EDR to incentivize redevelopment of blighted properties, as well as the potential use of the EDR to support future master planning efforts.

6. Other Business

None

7. Next meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 23, 2025 at 5:00 PM

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Pollack and duly seconded by Dr. Tompkins. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie McKim

Administrative Coordinator - Development