



Diane Nichols Tradd
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

Kevin Coughlin
Deputy DPD Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kevin J. Murphy, City Manager

FROM: Kevin Coughlin, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: COUNCIL MOTION OF 2/13/18 BY COUNCILOR MERCIER AND MAYOR SAMARAS
REQUEST CITY MANAGER REVIEW THE POSSIBILITY OF RE-ESTABLISHING THE POSITION OF
DOWNTOWN COORDINATOR

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD), Office of Economic Development (EC) presently engages in several activities for maintaining contact with Downtown businesses and property owners. These duties and corresponding activities included larger organized meetings for business owners and property owners (2014, 2015) to provide outreach from the City Manager and key City staff, surveying Downtown businesses (2015, 2017), and personally visiting business clusters (2016, 2017, 2018) to gain greater insight into the challenges facing them. The City always explores and recommends any opportunity to assist with available resources. Routinely, the results of these activities are reported through the City Manager to the Council Subcommittee on Economic Development or directly to the City Council.

Ongoing "Downtown" duties of the Economic Development Office also include routine fielding and responding to inquiries from businesses, property owners and prospective tenants regarding appropriate commercial space available in the Downtown. DPD acts as a facilitator for accessing resources that provide vital resources such as the Lowell Development and Financial Corporation's Downtown Venture Fund, the City's Sign and Façade Improvement Grant Program, and resources provided by other partners such as the Merrimack Valley Small Business Center and Entrepreneurship for All (EforAll). A recent example of this is assisting The Flower Mill in relocating from a small retail storefront on Merrimack Street to their significantly larger current location at 183 Dutton Street. The City assisted in getting the business access to both a forgivable relocation loan and sign and façade grant funding which benefited both the landlord and the tenant.

The Economic Development Office also coordinates closely with the Special Events and Cultural Affairs (C.A.S.E.) Office. Both have regular contact with Downtown businesses through event planning/promotions and share strategies and resources for City and business success. Information sharing and advance notice for problem mitigation demonstrates a valuable synergy by these two departments.

The DPD has designated Tom Lamond as the Downtown business liaison in the Economic Development Office. His direct contact phone number is 978 674-1437. Working with the Director of Economic Development and other DPD staff, he will field requests and respond accordingly to the business needs and calls of the Downtown area. We are also hoping for an affirmative decision from MassDevelopment regarding the City's Transformational District Initiative (TDI) grant. If successful, MassDevelopment will provide a "TDI Fellow" – a full time Economic Development expert - for a three year period that will assist with the JAM, HCID, and Downtown areas.

On March 5, 2018, the City Manager, through the DPD, hosted another meeting of Downtown businesses and property owners. The meeting was hosted at the Enterprise Bank Community Room, 18 Palmer Street, in Lowell. Approximately 45 participants attended the very successful meeting. Several members of the City Council also attended: Mayor Samaras, Councilor Mercier, and Councilor Milinazzo. The meeting purpose was to continue the outreach to Downtown stakeholders and to work in concert with the members of the City Council to better understand the ongoing needs of these businesses. The Manager facilitated the meeting with several department heads and key senior staff to directly answer questions from attendees. A formal presentation was made on the following topics: new incoming businesses, resources to downtown businesses, the Hamilton Canal Innovation District activities, and the responsibilities of downtown businesses and owners. (Copy attached). A list of contacts for reporting problems directly to the City was also included. Several participants had questions and all answers were successfully supplied.

Attachments: (2)

KC/ns
3/15/18

cc: Diane N. Tradd, Assistant City Manager/DPD Director
Andrew Shapiro, Director of Economic Development

The background of the slide features a large, faint, circular seal of the City of Lowell. The seal depicts a cityscape with various buildings, a factory with smoking chimneys, and a ship. The word "LOWELL" is written in a circular path around the central image. The seal is rendered in a light gray color.

The City of
LOWELL

**Downtown Business
Stakeholders Meeting**

5:30pm

**Enterprise Bank Community Room
18 Palmer Street**

March 5, 2018



What's Happening Downtown?

New Businesses:

- 175 Merrimack: Purple Carrot Bakery
- 110 Gorham: The Keep
- 135 Central: Sahel (African Restaurant)
- 25 Merrimack: Walgreen's (retail pharmacy)
- 144 Merrimack: Crepes and the City
- 197 Market: Warp & Weft
- Transformative Development Initiative (TDI)

Business Resources

The City of Lowell Economic Development Office can assist businesses seeking to locate or expand in the Downtown in a number of ways, including site finder services, technical assistance-seeking permits/ licenses; and directing/ referring businesses to other local/state/federal resources. There are also various sources of funding to aid business growth that both the City and its partners manage:

City Sign & Façade Grant

-\$2K per storefront

Lowell Historic Board Sign Grant

-Reimbursable up to \$500

GLWDB

-Assists with hiring
-Workforce Training Funds

Downtown Venture Fund (LDFC)

-\$100K max
-6% interest, no payments year one

MVSBC Micro Loan

-Up to \$50K
-Interest: 5.25% - 7.25%

City Small Business Retention Program

-Up to \$10K for business growth

What's Happening in the HCID?

Selected Projects

Legend

- HCD North Infrastructure
- HCD North - Temp Parking
- Swamp Locks Bridge
- Temporary Parking
- HCD Parking Garage
- NPS Land Transfer
- S and R
- WinnResidential
- Watermark
- Lowell Justice Center
- Open Development Parcel





Business / Property Owner Responsibilities

When there is a snow/ice event:

- Remove snow or ice from sidewalks and alleyways within 12 hrs. after end of snow/ice event.
- If snow/ice event ceases after 6:00 P.M., remove before 1:00 P.M. the following day.
- No salt should be used on downtown walkways - only use calcium ice pellets.
- If a Snow Emergency is declared, vehicles must be off the street within 6 hours of the declaration.
- Parking is available and free at select garages until the snow ban is lifted. The available facilities will be listed on the notice of parking ban.
- Keep parking lots and doors clear of snow and ice for customers and employees.
- Make sure gutters are clear. Know where runoff water from melting snow will travel.

In all cases:

- All businesses are responsible for sweeping their sidewalks two times daily and if non-compliant, could be subject to enforcement.
- Maintain clear access to/from entrance of store.
- Property and business owners should immediately report to the DPW any sidewalk tripping hazards.
- For sidewalk dining, secure all necessary approvals for design and also liability insurance and license agreement with the City including a vote of City Council.
- Building owners should properly maintain building storefronts/facades and prevent deterioration under Historic Board minimum maintenance standards.
- Keep alleys free of trash, debris, and ensure regular dumpster pickups.

Contact Us

See Something — Say Something

Who should I call in Lowell if I see a problem with...?

TRAFFIC LIGHTS
Police Department – 978-674-4500

STREET LIGHTS
Public Works – 978-674-4111

STREET SIGNS
Sign Shop – 978-674-1973

OVERHANGING SIGNS
Development Services – 978-674-4144

PARKING METER OR KIOSKS
Parking Department – 978-674-4014

TREE LIGHTS
Public Works – 978-674-4111

MAILBOXES
U. S. Postal Service –
978-441-2458

FIRE HYDRANTS
Water Department –
978-674-4240

TREES
Public Works – 978-674-4111

BANNERS
Cultural Affairs & Special Events (CASE) –
978-674-1481

CITY TRASH BARRELS
Public Works – 978-674-4111

STREETS OR SIDEWALKS
Public Works – 978-674-4111

GRAFFITI
Citizen Services Hotline – 978-674-4035

HANDICAP OR LOADING ZONES
Police Department – 978-674-4500

DUMPSTERS
Development Services –
978-674-4144

BENCHES
Parks Department – 978-970-4194

The City of
LOWELL
Alive. Unique. Inspiring.

Truancy Reporting
Police Department
978-937-3200

MORE RESOURCES
Other City Issues
Citizen Services Hotline
978-674-4035

Damaged Bus Shelters
LRTA
978-459-0614

www.lowellma.gov/requesttracker.aspx



After clicking on an issue to report, you will be asked to login or create an account.