

**Economic Development Department  
Proposed FY 21 Budget  
April 28, 2020**

**Overview**

The Economic Development Department, which shares a secretary in the planning office, manages the activities of the Economic Development Commission (EDC), Town Beautification Committee (TBC) and Historic District Commission (HDC). The department also applies for and manages grants and works on or assists other relevant projects and committees.

**COVID-19**

Since COVID-19, the focus of the department has shifted to assist companies affected by the shutdown. I expect this will continue should the current situation extend into FY21. In addition, not being able to meet remotely has hindered but not stopped work in department. Apparently, the ability to have public meetings remotely will be enabled next month. That's positive since applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness may need review and approval by the HDC. Further, a subcommittee of the EDC is currently reviewing the town's incentive policy, which expires June 30. The EDC will need to meet to develop a recommendation for the town council relative to continuation of the plan. The good news is that despite COVID-19, serious interest in doing business in Cheshire continues and is expected to do so even if the current situation extends into FY 21.

**Objectives**

- ◆ Continue effort to support businesses during COVID-19 crisis and recovery period.
- ◆ Follow-up on recommendations of the economic analysis, including utilization of TIF.
- ◆ Continue work to bring compatible development to Cheshire.
- ◆ Resolve transfer of state-owned land to the town.
- ◆ Review incentive policy with EDC for effectiveness and modify, as necessary.
- ◆ Develop marketing/promotional program to attract new business development.
- ◆ Work to bring redevelopment to prime and underperforming properties.
- ◆ Prepare application for another round of Brownfield Remediation Grant funding for Ball & Socket property.
- ◆ Continue retention efforts, including company visits and meetings with the EDC.
- ◆ Continue to provide assistance and information to the business community and prospective companies.
- ◆ Foster strong communication with the Cheshire chamber. Participate in or host program(s) for businesses with the chamber.
- ◆ Commence planning for Business Appreciation Day program.
- ◆ Pursue and manage grants.
- ◆ Continue to address unsightly properties in the commercial and industrial areas.
- ◆ Continue work with TBC to enhance the town's residential and commercial attractiveness.
- ◆ Support and advance historic preservation activities and initiatives of the HDC.

**October 1, 2020 Grand List**

Significant development activity is or will be underway which will positively affect the next Grand List. Several of these projects include: Whole Foods (86,000SF warehouse addition); Climate Engineering (30,720 SF maintenance & warehouse facility); Constitution Surgery Alliance (75,000 SF medical office & surgery center); Marbridge Retirement Center (46,350 SF expansion); and, Counterweight (20,000 SF brewery and tasting area).