



CITY OF
**SOUTH
PORTLAND**

Economic Development Committee
Steven Riley, Chairperson
Julie Curran, Vice Chairperson

To: Mayor Richard T. Matthews and Members of the South Portland City Council c/o City Clerk, Jessica Hughes

From: City of South Portland Economic Development Committee
(Steven Riley - Chairperson, Julie Curran - Vice Chair/Secretary, Martha Riehle - Member, Sari Greene – Member, Donna Larson Kane - Member, Ryan Hamilton - Member, and Joel Ouellette-Member)

Date: February 19, 2025

Re: Economic Development Committee (EDC) 2024 Annual Report

INTRODUCTION

The following report is provided in accordance with Sec. Sec. 2-133 (f) (c) of the Code of Ordinances, which requires the Economic Development Committee (EDC) to submit an annual report of the Committee's activities to the City Council in January of each year.

MEETING DATES

Meetings of the EDC were held on the following dates in 2024: January 17, February 21 (Business Awards), April 17, October 23, and November 20.

MEMBERS

Committee members in 2024 are as follows: Donna Larson Kane- Chairperson, Members: Martha Riehle, Sari Greene, Ryan Hamilton, Joel Ouellette and Julie Curran, joining in November and Steven Riley, joining in December.

At the end of 2024 there were no seats on the Committee that were open.

PURPOSE OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Economic Development Committee (EDC) is to assist in fostering a robust economy in South Portland so as to maintain and improve employment opportunities, retain existing business, attract new commercial investment, support a superior level of municipal services, and advance the general prosperity.

DUTIES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The duties of the Economic Development Committee shall include:

(a) Making recommendations to the City Manager and the City Council regarding implementation of the City's economic development strategies as contained in the

South Portland Comprehensive Plan and in any economic development plans that the City Council from time to time may adopt;

(b) Guiding the drafting and updating of such economic development policy documents and making recommendations for new economic development programs;

(c) If approved by the City Council, developing economic development incentive programs in addition to, or funded by, tax increment finance (TIF) districts, such as revolving low-interest loan programs, and, after following prescribed application, public notice, and review procedures, making awards and disbursements to successful applicants. However, this shall not include programs and functions overseen by the Community Development Advisory Committee.

(d) Carrying out such other duties as may be required or established by the City Manager and/or City Council.

The Committee's works are coordinated with the City's Economic Development Department.

2024 – COMMITTEE ACTIVITY SUMMARY

- **2023 - ANNUAL BUSINESS AWARDS RECOGNITION EVENT**

The EDC kicked off its 2024 activities by holding the City's 2023 Business Awards Recognition Event on February 21, 2024. The event was held at the South Portland Middle School. Prior to the event, student tour guides offered attendees the opportunity to tour the facility. It was a great way for the City and Schools to partner and showcase the facility to the business community who may not have had the opportunity to visit.

The following Awards were presented:

Small Business of the Year: **Bridgeway Restaurant**

SoPo Sustainability Award: **Avesta Housing/Kaplan Thompson Architects**

New Business of The Year: **Restore Hyper Wellness**

Santo "Sam" DiPietro

Community Impact Award: **Lyric Music Theater**

Maker of the Year: **Brant & Cochran, Axes from Maine**

Business of The Year: **Diodes, Inc**

Business Leader of The Year: **Edward Palmer, Sr.**

A Video of the Business Awards Event may be accessed via this link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/14QBm4sJOjaIbCzi_eJKaCdpLi9Laf21T/view?usp=sharing

We again congratulate all of the 2023 Award Recipients, and thank all who had a hand in putting this celebration together.

- **UPCOMING 2024 - ANNUAL BUSINESS AWARDS RECOGNITION EVENT**

Last year's event was such a success that the EDC and the School Department have agreed to continue this partnership. On **February 26, 2025**, the 2024 Business Awards Recognition Event will take place at South Portland High School. Attendees at this event will be able to learn a bit about the newest group of South Portland businesses, individuals, and organizations who have been nominated and selected for recognition for 2024. The stories are always interesting and you will be amazed by what these recipients are doing right here in South Portland. **This event is open to the public and we encourage you to join us. RSVP at the following link: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/qaxjjuj>**

2024 – OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

- EDC member Marty Riehle sits on the City's Comprehensive Plan Committee which met throughout the year and will continue into 2025.
- Initial discussion and introduction of a Tourism Improvement District in South Portland through Visit Portland. They have begun this program in Portland and will engage South Portland next in 2025.
- Lea Duffy joined the Economic Development Department on September 30, 2024 as Economic Development Specialist.
- In October the EDC met with a representative of the Planning Department to offer input and feedback on the Core Themes and Strategies drafted for the update of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- In the fall / winter the EDC solicited nominations and made selections of individuals, businesses, and organizations who will be recognized at the 2024 Business Awards Event to be held in February of 2025.

South Portland is both a desirable residential community and a top-notch business location. We have helpful and knowledgeable team who would welcome the opportunity to assist you, whether you have a business, are looking to establish or expand a business, we encourage anyone interested in our community as a home for their business to please reach out to us at: bizsupport@southportland.gov or by calling us at 207-347-4139, we are here to serve you.

Respectfully Submitted,



Donna Larson, on behalf of Steven Riley, Chairperson for the City of South Portland Economic Development Committee

The submission of the Annual Report Approved by a unanimous vote of the Members of the EDC on February 19, 2025

cc: Scott Morelli, City Manager
Joshua Reny, Assistant City Manager
Lea Duffy, Economic Development Specialist
Shara Dee, Communications Officer