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Two Taunton organizations, TIDC and TDC, mark anniversary milestones in 2008

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During this year two organizations responsible for industrial development in the city of Taunton will mark significant milestones in their history. The Taunton Industrial Development Commission (TIDC) now part of the Office of Economic and Community Development, this spring, will celebrate its 45th anniversary. In 1963 through the efforts of the city of Taunton and the Taunton Area Chamber of Commerce (TACC), the city adopted a state ordinance to create an industrial development commission to retain and recruit industrial companies, primarily manufacturing, to the city's existing industrial areas and to work together to obtain a portion of the former Camp Myles Standish in the northwest section of the city to establish an industrial park. Today, the commission members (several with over 20 and 30 years of volunteer service, 190 total) continue to support the OECD staff in their efforts to provide retention, recruitment, and liaison services to our industrial companies.

The current 188 industrial companies with over 10,000 employees represent a diverse mixture of manufacturing, distribution, and service areas. The historic manufacturing base of metals and textiles has broadened to biotech, electronics, precision machining, medical devices, computer parts, communications, plastics, software, auto parts, and specialty materials. Distribution is certainly a growing industrial sector especially in the areas of frozen food products, paper products, beverages, grocery products, institutional supplies, automotive, electronics, giftware, clothing and furniture. The service sector is represented primarily by telecommunications and health services companies.

In the early '70s the city, TIDC, and the TACC worked with area legislators to obtain the army camp property for industrial purposes. During the process in 1973, the Taunton Development Corporation (TDC) was chartered as a not for profit corporation to bring jobs and taxes to the Taunton area. This early model of a public/private partnership was successful in acquiring 437 acres from the state in 1974 to begin the development of the Northwest Industrial Park, now known as the Myles Standish Industrial Park, as a modern garden style industrial subdivision. This fall, the TDC will celebrate its 35th anniversary with several of its original volunteer board members actively involved. Continuing president Joseph Quinn was the original chairman of the TIDC leaving that volunteer post to lead the new corporation through three property acquisitions to become the commonwealth's largest industrial park in building square feet at over 5.8 million constructed to date in 809 acres. MSIP now has over 100 companies with over 7,400 employees and provides diversified business and employment opportunities in the center of southeastern Mass. With an all volunteer board, staff support is provided by management agreement from the TIDC, now OECD. The public/private partnership of the city of Taunton, TIDC, and the TDC is now working together to acquire and redevelop 156 unused acres of the former Paul Dever School for industrial and recreational

purposes which will allow for a future phase IV MSIP expansion. The new expansion area will support additional distribution companies as well as biotech, research and development, light manufacturing, and services.

TDC continues the development of the 350 acre Liberty and Union Industrial Park at the junction of limited access Rtes. 24 and 140. The park offers a variety of fully serviced industrial lots for manufacturing, distribution, and service companies including several large lots with CSX freight rail access. In addition to the park's anchor company Jordan's Furniture's 900,000 s/f corporate office and distribution center, over 200,000 s/f of new construction is complete with six current companies operating on Revolutionary Dr. with close to 800 employees.

In phase two, along new road O'Connell Way, over 500,000 s/f of industrial space is under construction in two projects: Condyne LLC's Crossroads Commerce Center which will provide build-to-suit space for companies from 30,000-300,000 s/f and the Maggiore Companies' Liberty and Union Business Center which will offer build-to-suit lease space for companies from 7,000-20,000 s/f. The full build out of the three phases of the Liberty and Union Industrial Park is projected to provide 15-20 new companies, 1,500-2000 employees and over \$1.5 million in new property taxes. Other benefits from the project have been the water system improvements from a new million gallon tower provided to the city by Condyne/New Boston and substantial roadway improvements and designs for Stevens St. at Rte. 140 and the Rte. 140/24 interchange by the TDC.

Other local organizations with significant anniversaries in 2008 are: the Taunton Employment Task Force which for 25 years since 1983 has been working to connect greater Taunton employers and job seekers. Now partnering with the Taunton Career Center, their highly successful annual Regional Job Fair at the Holiday Inn will be on April 9th from 3-7 p.m. The heart of Taunton, one of the commonwealth's longest operating Main St. programs, which celebrated its 20th year anniversary on March 5th, recognizes the volunteers and staff who continue working with the city of Taunton to improve our historic downtown through business retention, recruitment, and increased diversified housing opportunities. Taunton's new district courthouse project has begun and will certainly spark new interest in downtown.

The office of economic and community development under executive director Kevin Shea is proud to be supporting these great volunteer organizations and looks forward to many more years together in partnership to maintain Taunton's reputation as not only a great place to do business but to live as well.

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