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## **McCabe Enterprises to create economic development plans - by Donald Grebien**

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Mayor  
Donald Grebien

McCabe Enterprises has been selected by the cities of Pawtucket and Central Falls to produce detailed economic and workforce development plans as part of a joint initiative between the two cities. These plans will help guide economic development efforts in the post COVID-19 economic environment.

McCabe Enterprises and their team, comprised of ConsultEcon Inc., PARE Corporation, and Paul Lukez Architecture, are charged with producing a joint economic development plan, a workforce and business development assessment, and a feasibility study for a training and innovation center in Pawtucket.

These studies will explore how to leverage private and public investments to ensure that the economic recovery and future economic opportunities are enjoyed by the residents, small businesses, artists, craftspeople, and those most impacted by COVID-19 within the two cities.

As the first anniversary of the 2020 COVID-19 shutdowns approaches, it becomes even more crucial to understand the new workforce and job training needs of the residents of Pawtucket and Central Falls. McCabe Enterprises is now working to identify existing skill and training gaps in order to best work with the Pawtucket Foundation, Northern Rhode Island Chamber and the business community to fill these gaps with new job training initiatives.

The joint economic development plans will also identify the top investment opportunities in both Pawtucket and Central Falls and marketing strategies that could be best employed to attract additional private sector investment and development. This one-year project will capitalize off of existing development activity and work to connect the Tidewater Project currently underway along the riverfront with the Pawtucket Downtown and the Pawtucket-Central Falls Transit hub opening in mid-2022.

The Pawtucket Foundation, Pawtucket and Central Falls will work closely with local business and workforce development leaders to create a detailed action plan for future economic development. This economic development project will include an analysis of and recommendations for the Pawtucket Downtown and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District surrounding the incoming train station expected to open in mid-2022. The plans will also specifically look at the 280 Rand St., the property in the TOD District where several large mill buildings burned down in March, 2020 and work with the property owners to explore future development options and opportunities

In July 2020, the Pawtucket and Central Falls were awarded \$150,000 in grant funds from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to support this project. In October, Pawtucket released the Request for Proposals (RFP) and received three bids from economic development consultants, ultimately selecting McCabe Enterprises. The cities are have now begun working McCabe Enterprises and have prioritized workforce development as the first sector to analyze.

Donald Grebien is the mayor of city of Pawtucket, RI.

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