



Danya Smith is the next director of the Lynn EDIC. (Danya Smith)

Danya Smith named next EDIC Executive Director

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LYNN — Following an interview with members of the Lynn Economic Development & Industrial Corporation Board, Danya Smith, senior director of policy and intergovernmental affairs for Mayor Jared C. Nicholson, was appointed as the organization’s next executive director Tuesday afternoon.

Smith’s appointment as executive director follows the 20-year tenure of EDIC Executive Director James Cowdell, which ended upon his retirement on June 1.

Charles J. Gaeta, EDIC Board chairman, said the Board was pleased with Smith’s “strong credentials. He’s been working with the development team



now for the four-plus years that he's been with the city. I think he has the background for this, and I think we were comfortable with a lot of the questions, how they were answered.”

Gaeta said a contract will be negotiated in the coming weeks.

A lifelong Lynn resident, Smith has worked as a senior advisor to Nicholson for four years in housing, economic development, education, and project management.

Since the creation of the mayor's development team, he has “participated in every single development team meeting since its inception, so I was able to really see projects from early planning through implementation,” Smith said.

“I'm really excited about the potential opportunity to drive investment and business to the city. Lynn is at an important time from an economic development perspective. We have strong fundamentals, growing interest from developers in the business community, and an opportunity to sort of shape growth that benefits all residents,” Smith said.

In this role, Smith said he would be “aggressive” in attracting business and investment to the city.

Smith said he wants to leverage Lynn's existing zoning and land-use policies to steer commercial projects into key sites within the city, including attracting companies in the food production and hospitality industry.

“I think it's clear that we have a food manufacturing and production specialty, and I think we should be focusing on trying to attract those businesses, trying to work with associations that represent those businesses to draw them to Lynn. We have aspirations for a hotel and bringing the hospitality industry to Lynn,” he said.

He added his work in facilitating this would be “to connect with hotel operators and intermediaries to test market demand for a hotel in Lynn.”

“I think we can probably do a better job at targeting specific industries that are aligned with our strengths and our aspirations,” Smith said.



Smith said his management style is “strategic and collaborative” and that he would draw “from the knowledge of the folks who have worked here.”

He added, “I like to solve problems. I like to set clear expectations, delegate effectively, and let people take ownership of their work.”