# SPECIAL MEETING
# BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
# PUBLIC HEARING - TIF DISTRICT
**April 7, 2026 at 6:15 PM**

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

The Mayor called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Vincent.

A moment of silence was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Alderman Kaw-uh, Goonan, Dexter, Fajardo, Bonilla, Kantor, Trisciani, O'Neil, Terrio, Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Vincent

Absent: Alderman Thomas

**1.** The Mayor advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to hear those wishing to speak on the creation of a tax increment financing district that would occupy approximately 415 acres, with approximate boundaries of Bridge Street/Lake Avenue, Beech Street, Queen City Avenue, and the Merrimack River, for the purposes of financing the construction of a bridge, rail trail, intersection improvements, and pedestrian improvements within the area; that anyone wishing to speak must first step to the nearest microphone when recognized and give his/her name and address in a clear, loud voice for the record; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that each person will be limited to three minutes to speak; and any questions must be directed to the Chair.

The Mayor requested the Department of Public Works make a presentation.

Owen Friend-Gray, Deputy Director of Public Works: Thank you for humoring me again. This will be a similar presentation to the last one from the last meeting. However, there is a little bit of different information, slightly different format.

Alderman Fajardo: Thanks for mixing it up.

O. Friend-Gray: You're welcome. You know, keep you guys on your toes a little. So, Manchester RAISE awards. So why are we doing the TIF? In 2021, Manchester Public Works is teaming with Fuss and O'Neill. Engineers put together a proposal to improve safety, create connectivity, and mitigate congestion in the south millyard district of the city. This was envisioned to be done with new roads, bridges, and pedestrian facilities. So, in 2021 USDOT granted the City of Manchester a $25 million RAISE grant, which was the maximum allowable amount any city could receive. The city originally committed to a $5 million match for a $30 million project. So, to get a little more into the detail of those project components, there are four primary components. One is a grade separated crossing of the railroad tracks off of the end of South Commercial, connecting to Gas Street. We're putting in a bridge over the railroad. So going forward, that's not going to be something that you need to stop at when the train's coming through and allows two means of egress from around the South Commercial Street area, especially around the Fisher Cats Stadium. Intersection improvements for pedestrians, this intersection’s improvements primarily focused on the Granite Street Commercial Street intersection. Evaluating different options between signal timing, improved crosswalks, elevated crossings and different multimodal options are being considered. Third intersection improvements, primarily vehicular movement, but also for pedestrians, is what we are terming the peanut roundabout, which is at the Queen City Cilley South intersection, affectionately known as confusion corner. So, this will bring a streamlined and much improved intersection flow and process to this area, as well as two multi-use trails that will act as the final connectors between the South Manchester rail trail, which extends all the way down to the Mass state line, to the Riverwalk and the Goffstown trail, which goes actually all the way out to New Boston. These are a few pictures of those details I was just discussing. Upper left, lower right is that bridge grade separated crossing over the railroad track. Upper right image is the multi-use trail that will be running from Queen City Ave at the termination of the current rail trail to Elm Street, where it'll join the multi-use trail that actually you can see on the upper left image. That will be wide enough for bicycles and pedestrians. And then that peanut roundabout I spoke of a little earlier, confusion corner, that can be seen in the lower left image. So why are we asking for a TIF? Unfortunately, in 2021, as I mentioned previously, the project estimate was $30 million. Now with final design changes primarily through the acquisition of the railroad by

CSX from Pan AM but also heavy increases due to inflation especially due to Covid and construction costs, the project currently now estimates at $50 million, so that would be a $20 million shortfall for those doing the math at home. So how do we make up this $20 million? Public Works is proposing a TIF district. You can see the image on the right, but pretty much the bounds are Beech to the river and then Granite down to Queen City Ave. This has been analyzed by an external TIF analysis firm. They have determined that the bonding capacity with the current planned proposed build out prior to any of these improvements going in is $20.8 million. Luckily, that covers our roughly $20 million shortfall. So that is the amount we are requesting, is that $20.8 million as part of this TIF. I want to mention and highlight that a TIF is funded based on the increased tax revenue from an area from a static point in time when the TIF is created going forward and any additional revenues from increased property taxes in that area are what is used to pay down the TIF bond. So, what that means is that there is zero effect on the current tax rate for the taxpayers. The total amount within the area of the TIF, if your property value increases, you might be paying more in taxes, but the actual tax rate to the general populace stays the same. So, this is a screenshot from the TIF analysis performed by RKG. You can see they call out in the upper left that $20.8 million in bonding. This was assuming a 2.411% in the interest rate which is rather conservative. And then the debts payments starting in 25. Obviously, we're not starting it in 25. We would be looking at 26. And then the full debt service starting in 2027. This shows the green line, you want to basically be above your orange line. In 2026 where we're sitting now, if we did the bond, we would start above that orange line and stay above it, which means that this is in RKG's estimation, an economically viable project. So, with that, happy to answer any questions the board may have.

Alderman Terrio: I was just curious about this, if there were any limitations. I looked up the TIF law up at the state. It's RSA 162-K and the section I'm specifically referencing is RSA 162-K:5 I and II: Establishment of districts; limitations. So Roman numeral one, and I'm hoping I'm looking at the most current form of law, it says total acreage for one TIF shall not exceed 5%. And the total current acreage within the TIF will not exceed 10% of the total acreage of the municipality. And that leads us to Roman numeral two, which says a TIF can't be more than 8% of the assessed value, and then the total for the city for all your TIFs shall not exceed 16% of all the assessed value in a municipality. I'm hoping I'm seeing the most recent form of the TIF law. Has the department looked at total acreage and total assessed value? It looks like we might be bumping up against those limits and we won't be able to do any TIFs in the future.

O. Friend-Gray: So, for total acreage, we have looked at that. This TIF is approximately 415 acres. The City of Manchester is 21,100 acres, roughly 21,200 acres, depending on which source you're citing. But that represents approximately just under 2% of the total city. So, we're good on the 5% there. The other TIF around Pearl Street lot, that is about 205 acres, I believe. I would have to double check with Mr. Belanger just to be correct on that, but I do know that it's roughly only just under 1%. So right now, with these two TIFs, we're looking at a total area impact of 3%, which keeps us well below that ten.

Alderman Terrio: So, we still have 7% of the land. And now did you look at the assessed value?

O. Friend-Gray: I did not look at those specifically, but I can absolutely run those numbers for you. And I'll get back to you.

Alderman Terrio: So that we're legal.

O. Friend-Gray: Yes, 100%.

Alderman Terrio: That's good to hear. I was worried that we were going to be bumping up against it. Sounds like we can still do 7% of our land.

Mayor Ruais: I actually want to follow up. I think you had a good question last time regarding the use of multiple TIFs. I wanted to look that portion up as well. So, around the state, Concord has three active TIF districts right now. Cities like Nashua, Portsmouth, Dover, and Rochester have all had multiple TIF districts running concurrently. I thought you raised a good question because we do have Pearl Street and this one potentially coming online, but multiple municipalities operate multiple TIFs concurrently without bumping up against that. But the assessed value is something that we can look at as well.

The Mayor called for those wishing to speak.

Alex Hawk, 195 McGregor Street: I just want to briefly come up here and reiterate my support for the TIF district. I think this is a great opportunity for the South Elm area to get some investments. Without reiterating everything that DPW just presented, I think that it will certainly be a great return on that investment as well. I think it's a great opportunity to finally get rid of confusion corner and I've called it the silly intersection. And then one of the biggest things I hear online from people is that Granite Street is super congested. And this will help alleviate that as well. So again, I support this and ask that you please do as well.

Elyza Agosta, 390 Orange Street: I'm also on the board of the MTA, and I have, because of the construction or the planned construction of the new multimodal or the transport center, I've heard a lot about the RAISE grant and its connections. And so, I just want to make sure that we understand the broader context of this, because I think it's important to understand that these different projects, these different pieces, are coming together in a really important way. So, the new transit center is going to be at the current location of where the MTA is located right now, which right now people don't go to a lot. It's just the bus depot. I go there for the board meetings. But, once that's constructed, there's going to be a lot of people wanting to get to that location. This bridge and this whole project, all these different connections are really important to make sure that people can access the transit center. I also think when you're thinking about wanting to use tax property increases, another thing to consider is that having a transit center is going to be a really important part of the property value and how those property values will rise in the future. So having that all kind of come together in that way from my opinion makes the TIF seem like a really smart investment into the future of the city and our infrastructure.

Mayor Ruais asked if anyone else wished to speak.

There were none.

*This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business can be presented, and on motion of **Alderman Dexter**, duly seconded by **Alderman Trisciani**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

Matthew Normand

City Clerk

*Meeting Start Time: 6:15PM*
*Meeting End Time: 6:31PM*
*Minutes Prepared By: Michael Intranuovo*