



Thank you for your interest in the November 7, 2017 election and the City Council!

It's been an honor and a privilege to serve you in Ward 1. I'm running for reelection to continue working for positive change in our community. Please know that you can always contact me with any concern or issue. I'm here to help and to work for you.

I proudly support: protecting and promoting Penacook's historic and rural character; the Penacook branch library, our parks, community center, and schools; and continuing community-building events, like those sponsored by our Penacook Village Association and Penacook Historical Society. These are some of the assets that add tremendous value to our community every day.

SOME GOALS as we look ahead:

The City Council has made great progress, but there's always more to be done. The three main concerns I hear from folks relate to: economic vitality, public safety, and quality of life issues. Since 2012, the City of Concord has spent \$8.5 million on municipal projects in Penacook, plus an additional \$2 million investment in the former Tannery site redevelopment. These investments directly improve all three of the concerns, but of the three, I think **economic vitality** still needs the most work.

I'm proud of Concord's Standard & Poor's AA+ bond rating, and that the City produced a balanced budget for the 9th year in a row. The efforts leading to these distinctions have a direct effect on taxpayers, as the rate for borrowing to do projects in the City is lower because of the high bond rating.

We can do more to attract businesses to our community, however, which is another way to enhance our economic vitality and provide taxpayer savings. Everyone seems to be enjoying our revitalized Village Center. Already there is renewed interest in Penacook. I have begun working with the City's new Economic Development Director to make Penacook and Concord even more business-friendly. In Penacook, this is crucial, to help lower taxes to continue to attract/retain residents.

There are two main ways the City can provide tax relief. One is to create a tax reduction by cutting services. The other is to expand the tax base to increase revenue. Cuts can be achieved by reduction in personnel or services. However, cuts are challenging considering that 62% of the City budget is devoted to police and fire, 23% to water services, wastewater, road maintenance, and the like, and the remainder to paying off debt service for City projects.

Your taxes are made up of three portions: City, County, and school district. When the City reduces its spending, the overall Concord tax rate and Penacook tax rate decreases by the same amount, as we can only affect our portion of the tax rate (not the school or county portion). The City's portion of the overall tax rate for Concord and Penacook is identical (\$9.68 per \$1,000 of assessed value for both rates). Therefore, if the City rate was cut by \$1, the current Concord rate would reduce from \$27.67 to \$26.67 and the Penacook rate in turn

would decrease from \$33.34 to \$32.34 -- in equal portion. The entire City is treated equally as to rates. The County tax rates for Concord and Penacook are also the same.

The school districts in the City do not have equal tax rates. The Concord (CSD) and Merrimack Valley (MVSD) school districts are separate entities, with different enrollments, budgets, campuses, and their own budget requirements. The MVSD accounts for approximately 60% of the total tax burden for Penacook residents, compared with 54% for residents in the CSD. While the CSD rate has remained relatively stable over the past decade, the MVSD rate has slowly risen, despite a decline in overall student enrollment.

The City and MVSD face similar challenges as to downshifting of costs at the NH State level. Reaching a balanced City budget is made most difficult by this factor, along with the increase in health care costs. For example, for FY 2016, the City's tax rate went up about 4%, but 3.6% of that was directly related to the State of NH downshifting retirement costs. Similarly, the roughly 20% of MVSD children who have special needs are Federally mandated to receive special services. However, the State of NH and Federal governments do not fully fund these mandates, with the Federal government currently contributing approximately 40% of the cost of these services. The remainder of the cost comes from your local tax dollars.

Considering that the City and County tax rates are the same for Concord and Penacook, and if we anticipate the MVSD will continue to be faced with growing needs that the State and Federal governments will be challenged to fund, then the surest way of lowering our tax burden is to increase the tax base in Penacook, with continued concentration on housing and new businesses in the downtown, in Thirty Pines, and at Whitney Road (Exit 17). With the current vacancy rate in Concord at less than 1%, housing is an equally important component, especially affordable housing. We want folks working and living in our community to maximize their contributions to the local economy.

So how much of new assessed value would need to be constructed in the Penacook MVSD area to decrease Penacook's tax rate by one dollar? The answer is about \$17,700,000. And, to make the Concord and Penacook tax rates equal, roughly \$100,359,000 in new assessed value would need to be created. This represents a 27% increase in assessed value from what currently exists in Penacook.

That is a tall order, which is why we can't afford to sit idle. We have the responsibility to be bold in our decisions so that we can create solid progress in our lifetime, and leave a gift legacy of positive influence to future generations.

ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2017, at Immaculate Conception Church. Bonney St., Penacook!

I'm asking for your vote on November 7th so I can continue to push for progress and advance the community's interests. I'm building on an eighteen-year history of service to Concord and Penacook and I want to continue as your Ward 1 Councilor to help carry this work forward. Please visit my website, www.brenttoddconcord.com for more information and updates.

My community service:

Penacook Village Association (PVA), current Vice President; founding member and Board member, 2008-present; Business & Events Subcommittee co-chair
While serving on the Concord 2020 Board in 2005, I led Project Penacook, which culminated in several visioning sessions and the formation of our PVA. I chaired monthly public PVA meetings from 2006-2008 and continued to serve on the Board, helping to bring a farmer's market to Penacook, revive festivals, present concerts, and liaison with the City during revitalization and reconstruction efforts.

Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC), Council appointed Penacook representative, 2008 – present

TPAC Public Transportation Subcommittee, member 2008-present and former Interim Chair

I've worked with TPAC to find the best improvements for Village Street as a result of Rte. 3 reconstruction, and focused on improving bus routes and service to Penacook.

Concord 250, founder and Board President

I founded Concord 250, a non-profit organization, to support and promote the 250th anniversary of Concord in 2015 for the benefit of all residents, guests and friends of the City.

Concord 2020, former Board President

I led Concord 2020, a citizen involvement group supporting a smart growth vision in Concord.

My Council Advisory

Committees:

Economic Development; Parking; Public Safety Board; Street Trees; TPAC; Upper Floor Development; and Utility Appeals Board Chair.