The Concord area was originally populated by Native Americans known as Penacook (or Pennacook), who were a branch of the Algonquin-speaking Abenaki nation. The Penacook were led by chief Passaconaway through the early 1600s. Conflicts such as King William’s War (1688-97) and the French and Indian War eroded the native population and led to further development of land by European settlers. By 1725, white settlements had moved across New Hampshire and in January of that year the Massachusetts Bay Colony claimed the area as the Plantation of Penacook.

Over the next two years, it was settled by captain Ebenezer Eastman and incorporated in 1733 as Rumford. A bitter border dispute with Bow was not resolved until 1762. In 1765, the town was reincorporated and renamed Concord to denote the hope of a newfound harmony between the towns. In June of 1776, a contingent of New Hampshire leaders, among them Concord’s Colonel Timothy Walker, sent forth a declaration to the New Hampshire Continental Congress delegates that stated that New Hampshire would stand with the other colonies against Great Britain.

Following the revolutionary war, Concord thrived on industrial efforts that included furniture making, textiles, and the quarrying of granite. In 1808, Concord became the capital and construction on the State House began in 1816. It is the oldest state house in the nation where legislators meet in the original chambers. New Hampshire continues its strong tie to history with its first-in-the-nation primary status, which makes Concord a must-stop destination for presidential hopefuls. Through the 19th century, Concord became famous for its carriages and stagecoaches, which can still be seen as an emblem throughout the city.

In 1990, the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium opened to honor the memory of Concord school teacher Christa McAuliffe, who died in the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster. Since its opening the center has grown considerably to include a museum and other attractions. It was renamed the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center in 2009 to also honor New Hampshire native astronaut Alan Shepard.

In 2014, the City began a project to revitalize Main Street. The project created wider sidewalks to encourage window shopping, added gathering places for people to congregate, became more accessible for those with disabilities, increased the lighting, added artwork, and slimmed the driving lanes from four to two while adding a stone paved median. The Main Street Project has received numerous awards from entities such as the American Public Works Association, American Council of Engineering Companies, and the Institute of Transportation Engineers.