



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Thomas J. Aspell, Jr., City Manager

DATE: April 4, 2025

SUBJECT: 2024 – 2025 City Council Priorities

Recommendation

Accept this report as to the current status of the City Council Priorities established on March 4, 2024.

Background

Members of the City Council met on March 4, 2024 to discuss and set priorities for the remainder of Calendar Year 2024, as well as for Calendar Year 2025.

Discussion

Listed below, are the accepted priorities, projects and ongoing initiatives; and their respective statuses as of March 31, 2025.

GOAL 1. FINANCE & TECHNOLOGY

a) Balance the Budget Minimizing the Tax Rate Impact

Status: For FY 2025, the City used \$560,760 to balance the budget. Subsequent to the budget adoption, the Use of Unassigned Fund Balance was reduced by \$460,760 at the tax rate setting. Additionally, the Use of Unassigned Fund Balance was increased by \$1,005,000 for the following: \$400,000 to support Police Department retention payments; \$405,000 to support General Services Winter Operation retention payments; \$160,000 for the preservation of the Concord Stables; and \$40,000 to support the City Council's efforts around Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Belonging (DEIJB). In January 2025, the City Council authorized using \$3,049,000 from Assigned Fund Balance as a transfer to reserves. The FY 2024 Audit is complete and the FY 2024 Unassigned Fund Balance of 21.6% was reported. The City's recently adopted revised Fund Balance Policy is a minimum of 20.5%.

b) Maintain AA+ Bond Rating

Status: In February 2025, the City was notified by S&P Global Ratings that it issued an AA+ rating for the upcoming bond issue, and affirmed the AA+ rating for the City's outstanding debt.

c) Maintain Compliance with Fiscal Policy Goals

Status: The City General Fund Fiscal Goal E-1 limits debt service to 10-14% of total appropriations. On June 30, 2024, the amount was 9.40%.

d) Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Implementation

Status: Implementation of all main modules was complete as of the start of FY 2024.

e) Assessing Full Measure and List and Revaluation

Status: The City's Full Measure and List and Revaluation process began in July 2024, and is expected to be completed in August 2026.

f) Pursue Federal and State Funding

Status: Notable grants applied for or received to date in CY 2024 and 2025 include:

1. On April 14, 2024, the City was awarded \$1,140,000 in "Municipal Per Unit" grant funds from the InvestNH Program. The City received these unrestricted funds due to the development of affordable housing units at Penacook Landing and the Rail Yard, respectively.
2. On July 8, 2024, the City applied for a \$25,000 Community Development Block Grant on behalf of 603 Legal Aid, Disability Rights Center – New Hampshire, and New Hampshire Legal Assistance, to conduct a feasibility study to explore the potential acquisition or development of a joint facility to house these respective entities. The grant application was successful.
3. In August 2024, the City Council authorized applying for a \$6,150,000 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as part of the Airport Terminal Program; and \$1,660,000 relative to design, mitigation and construction associated with the airport terminal project.
4. In August 2024, the City Council authorized applying for a \$605,000 grant from the State of NH / FAA relative to the development of an environmental impact assessment associated with the airport and terminal parking improvement project.
5. In August 2024, the City Council authorized applying for a \$5,058,000 grant from the FAA for the Airport Terminal Project.
6. In August 2024, the City Council accepted \$144,929.47 of Opioid Litigation Settlement Funds to be placed in reserve, retroactive to June 30, 2024.
7. In August 2024, a CMAQ grant in the amount of \$2,447,852 was received from the NH Department of Transportation for the McKee Square Intersection Project (CIP #31).
8. In September 2024, the City was awarded \$35,000 of InvestNH demolition funds to support the development of a privately owned, independent living facility for adults with developmental disabilities at 3 North State Street. These funds were accepted. The City also applied for an additional \$30,000 in InvestNH MUP Grant funds for this project; however, the application was not successful.
9. In the fall of 2024, the Police Department was awarded the FY 2024 Jeanne Shaheen Congressional Directed Spending grant in the amount of \$73,000 in unmatched funding. Funding from this grant will be used to improve crime scene processing equipment and to provide specialized training for Department members.

10. In the fall of 2024, the Police Department was awarded the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant in the amount of \$21,499 in unmatched funding. Funding from this grant will be used to improve equipment and technological enhancements.
11. In the fall of 2024, the Police Department was awarded \$9,626.47 through the U.S. Department of Justice Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program to be used as reimbursement for ballistic vest purchases for police officers. This funding provides up to a 50% reimbursement on ballistic vest purchases.
12. The Police Department received grant funding in the amount of \$73,000 from the NH Attorney General's Drug Task Force. This funding is designed to offset the cost of assigning a police officer to the Task Force.
13. The Police Department received \$40,000 in grant funding from the NH Department of Safety – Law Enforcement Opioid Abuse Reduction Initiative for conducting illegal drug investigations within the Concord community.
14. The Police Department received \$16,000 in grant funding from the NH Department of Safety, State Homeland Security, to aid in the purchase of specialized equipment for Concord Police Department members who are members of the Central New Hampshire Special Operations Unit.
15. In November 2024, the City applied for \$678,000 of Brownfields Cleanup grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to support redevelopment of the Concord Stables building located at 111.5 Warren Street. The application is currently pending.
16. In December 2024, the City applied for a \$25,000 Community Development Block Grant on behalf of Families in Transition to conduct a feasibility study to examine potential renovation of ground floor commercial spaces located at 9-11 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane into housing to support low/moderate income persons. The grant application was successful and the study is underway.
17. On December 17, 2024, the City was one of 18 municipalities in the state to be designated as a Housing Champion by the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. This designation will give the City and the other 17 communities exclusive, preferential access to \$5 million of special housing grants to be offered through the State's Housing Champions Program. On February 28, 2025, the City applied for \$1.75 million from the InvestNH Housing Champions Program to support the Heights Sewer Improvement Project (CIP #91 and #257). The application is currently pending.
18. In January 2025, the City was awarded a \$500,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant to help with the construction of a new Skate Board Park at Kiwanis Riverside Park. The Parks & Recreation Department is working with the non-profit Concord Skate Park Association to raise the \$500,000 match required as part of the grant award.
19. On February 10, 2025, City Council accepted the terms of a Homeland Security Program grant in the amount of \$259,062 for the purchase of a modular traffic barrier system to protect eventgoers that inhabit closed roadways against vehicle ramming incidents. On March 11, 2025, the City received its final approval to start the procurement process. Fire Administration is working with the City's Purchasing Division to ensure that the required FEMA competitive bid process is followed for this purchase.
20. On March 14, 2025, the Fire Department received final approval notification that it was awarded up to \$5,000 in Emergency Management Performance Grant funds for the purpose of updating the City's 2015 Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP). The City's LEOP update committee and contracted consultant are scheduled to meet for their first session on April 16, 2025.

21. In March 2025, the Police Department applied for the Stanton K-9 Establishment Grant for up to \$55,000 designated for start-up costs associated with introducing a new Law Enforcement K-9 Program at the Police Department.

g) Cost Containment – Health Insurance Costs

Status: The City received a rate hold for FY 2026 on medical and dental, after a 9.5% not to exceed rate. The medical renewal was, in part, due to a much lower member/loss ratio. We are seeing a lower frequency of high cost claimants as well. The City continues to offer a high deductible health plan with a Health Savings Account to driver consumerism, and have piloted an enhanced Reduce My Cost program to encourage employees to pursue lower cost providers for ancillary services like CT scans, MRI's, and lab work. The program pays a percentage of savings directly to the employee for choosing the low-cost provider. The City, along with its benefit consultant, Borislow, continually looks at ways in which to contain costs on health insurance.

h) Technology Infrastructure Improvements

Status: The Information Technology Department has completed the replacement of the wired networking infrastructure. Cybersecurity efforts funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to improve security around the water and wastewater systems (to be completed mid-2025) are continuing on schedule. We have nearly completed the upgrade of all eligible Windows workstation operating systems from Windows 10 to Windows 11. This upgrade must be completed by October 2025, which is Microsoft's end-of-support date.

New infrastructure projects for this year include the replacement of the City's wireless networking infrastructure, which was completed in its entirety ahead of schedule; and expansion of the fiber network to the new Penacook Library & Activity Center and the new Police Station. Additional fiber runs are being planned for the City Stables and the Heights Pump Station. The replacement of Human Services software is on schedule to be completed before the end of FY 2025.

The Community Development Department recently acquired georeferenced aerial photos for the entire City for calendar years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. This was achieved via a transition to an annual subscription for aerial photographs, which is funded through the Department's annual operating budget. Historically, the City had commissioned custom aerial flyovers of the City every five years to update its digital, georeferenced aerial photos for the geographic information system. However, this new approach allows the City to receive data on an annual basis at a significantly reduced cost as compared to past practice.

GOAL 2. ORGANIZATIONAL

a) Recruitment and Retention

Status: Five of the City's six labor unions have entered into new collective bargaining agreements with an eye on retention and recruitment. Four of those agreements included an increase in annual leave accrual, with one increasing the maximum amount only. There was also a focus on competitive COLA's authorized by the City Council, as well as training stipends for CFOA. The CPPA implemented a shift differential to entice

officers to second and third shift work. The committee's other recommendations were put into action with results reported below.

The earned leave bonus for CY 2024 was approved for union covered positions and has seen high usage. All employees were able to use earned leave bonus in CY 2024, with only five employees forfeiting time at year end. At this time, the discounted rate at Beaver Meadow Golf Course has been utilized by employees to play 84 rounds of golf; the non-resident Library card has been utilized by 24 non-Concord resident employees; and 18 non-Concord resident employees received free family pool passes. Our employee referral bonus has paid out \$22,000 in FY 2025. Paid Family Medical Leave has had utilization, particularly with claims for child bonding in the first year of birth/ placement, with 29 claims initiated through the third quarter of FY 2025. The Human Resources Department continues to look for trends in turnover by data analysis and exit interviews.

The Community Development Department has experienced significant vacancies and turnover during the past two years. As of March 31, 2025, there were 38 positions in the Department. Of this total, 27 positions (or 71% of the Department) are staffed by persons who either joined the Department or were promoted to their current position after June 2022. As of March 31, 2025, three (3) of the Department's 38 positions (8%) are vacant. Current vacancies are: Senior Engineering Technician, Engineering Technician II, and Assistant City Planner - Zoning. Recent staffing successes include filling the vacant Plumbing and Mechanical Inspector, Electrical Inspector, Code Division Fiscal Supervisor, Code Division Permit Technician, Civil Engineer Project Manager (Capital Projects), Senior Planner, and Administrative Coordinator positions. The Administrative Coordinator, which supports the Administration Division of the Community Development Department, is shared with the Human Resources Department.

The Police Department has made great strides in the right direction with staffing. In December 2024, the City Council approved a second retention payment for sworn police officers (minus the Command Staff). This retention payment was the second retention payment in 2024 and was implemented as an emergency stop gap to retain police officers. In 2024, the Police Department lost five police officers: two retired, two left for other law enforcement opportunities, and one was terminated while on probation. This is a dramatic turn around from 2023 when the Police Department lost 19 police officers.

The Police Department was successful in filling both Police Social Worker positions. This new program has made an immediate impact within the community and the Department. In 2024, the Department was also successful in hiring a new full-time employee in its Records Unit and in Dispatch.

Despite hiring seven new police officers in 2024, as of March 31, 2025, the Department is still in a staffing crisis, with 13 police officer vacancies, two parking officer equipment technician vacancies, and one police dispatcher vacancy. The applicant pool for these positions is very low, despite constant varied recruitment efforts. We are hopeful that a changing economy, combined with multiple college recruitments, will produce quality police officer applicants in the upcoming quarter.

Fortunately, the Police Department's retention efforts have been successful in slowing down employee turnover. The Department had just one retirement during this reporting period. Retaining employees remains a top priority at the Police Department. While

addressing the retention issues, the Department has simultaneously worked to expand its recruitment efforts.

During this reporting period, the Police Department has started two new police internships with students from two local colleges. This intensive work is for course credit and provides additional opportunities for these two college students to learn more about municipal policing. Our interns' hands-on experiences are discussed at their respective college campuses. We are mindful when creating learning experiences for our interns to showcase a wide variety of the work opportunities available at the Concord Police Department. This directly benefits the interns and promotes the Police Department when the interns' experiences are discussed in class. Both interns are doing very well, and we hope they decide to apply for employment with the Concord Police Department after they graduate later this year.

The Police Department is also hosting three students from the Concord CRTC Program. This program is similar to a college internship but geared to the high school level. The idea is to work with Concord High School to build a feeder program by creating interest in future law enforcement opportunities.

The Police Department remains steadfast in its commitment to filling all sworn police officer positions in 2025

For the first time since 2019, the Parks & Recreation Department managed to hire all 2024 summer seasonal employees for all three divisions (Parks, Cemeteries, and Recreation); however, an additional 25 seasonal employees needed to be hired in order to cover the required hours. The Department experienced higher than normal turnover due to the retirements of several full-time employees in the Cemetery Division; several permanent part-time staff working at the Citywide Community Center having left for full-time positions outside of the city; and turnover of the four full-time shared Laborer Truck Driver positions, which remains excessively high, as they move to non-shared positions when available. These shared positions work for nine months with the Parks & Recreation Department, and three months with the General Services Department.

At the November 2024 City Council meeting, for the second consecutive year, City Council appropriated \$400,000 to fund a winter stipend to be paid to full-time General Services Department employees that support winter operations for city streets, sidewalks, and the airport. The stipend was paid for the winter season from December 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025. During this period, General Services successfully filled a vacant CDL position with a candidate possessing a CDL for the first time in a number of years. One General Services employee, who was training to secure a CDL, resigned to pursue a different profession in the private sector. The program continues to successfully retain necessary CDL operators through the winter season.

b) Class and Compensation Study

Status: The consultant chosen for the Class and Compensation Study, Paypoint HR, began the study in October 2024, at which time it held kick-off meetings in person and virtually throughout the City. Employees completed the Position Vantage Point questionnaires, which were then reviewed by the Supervisors. The project team consists of the City Manager, the Deputy City Manager – Finance, and the Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations. The project team worked with the consultant to deploy the external wage and benefit survey for comparisons of total compensation and was

tasked with providing a project report in the 4th quarter of FY 2025. The project team is in receipt of the draft benefit and wage report and is scheduling meetings with the consultant to review internally and develop next steps, which will include reviewing and verifying the data and discussing implementation steps.

c) Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Belonging (DEIJB)

Status: The City Council DEIJB Committee will report on the status of this goal. The internal DEIJB committee has partnered with Avant Consulting, and the Leadership Team has been meeting bi-weekly to create systemic equity infrastructure, revise recruiting policies, and develop the guidelines around Employee Resource Groups. The DEIJB committee has selected and begun work with leaders throughout the organization, a team known as L2. The L2 team has been meeting and having robust discussions on data driven topics that impact service delivery for the City. Employee Resource Groups are forming so that employees can lead their own workgroup on a topic of interest in this space. Work on recruiting and retention continues, with changes to the training for applicant review and interviewer training in progress. We are also currently delivering a six-series session of Professional Development available to all employees on this topic, to be concluded in June.

d) Solid Waste Contract Implementation

Status: Having signed a new solid waste contract in November 2022, which transitioned curbside collection to a cart-based system and increased disposal costs, the General Services Department has been working with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee to evaluate alternate diversion programs.

e) Community Communication

Status: The Fire Chief, as the Emergency Management Coordinator for the City, has worked with the State of NH to gain access for key officials in the City to the Genasys Alert system that has been made available to all NH communities at no cost. This system will allow for GIS-based emergency notification of residents and visitors via email, automated voice phone calls, text messaging, and push notifications (through the proprietary Genasys Protect app). This system will allow emergency messages to be broadcast simultaneously in multiple languages, depending on end-user preferences. The back-end of the system has been configured, and introductory training of City staff will take place in the upcoming months. Once training and further configuration is complete, the system will be rolled out to the general public in order to sign up for alerts.

GOAL 3. HOUSING / HOMELESSNESS

Status: As of October 15, 2024, there were 2,352 housing units in development. Of this total, 584 units were completed by the end of 2024; 783 units have been approved by the Planning Board and are awaiting construction; and 985 units are currently in the development permitting process. The 2,352 housing units in development will increase the City's housing stock by 12.1% and the City's population by 5,409 people.

The City, using a variety of tools, has directly supported several recent and proposed housing projects. Tools employed by the City include the sale of City-owned real estate, procurement of grants supporting the development of housing projects, construction of infrastructure improvements, zoning amendments, granting of RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentives, as well as gap financing through the City's Revolving Loan Program. Recent examples of housing projects directly supported by the City using the aforementioned tools include, but are not limited to: Penacook Landing / 33-35 Canal Street (54 units, affordable); Rosemary's Way / 95 Village Street (42 units, affordable); Isabella Apartments / 32 South Main Street (64 units); First Church / 177 North Main Street (30 units); 6 South State Street (8 units, affordable); as well as ROI Properties / Black Hill Road (385 units); among others.

With respect to the First Church project, on August 14, 2023, the City Council approved Resolution #9573, which was later revised and extended by Resolution #9636, on April 8, 2024, which authorized an RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentive for the "First Church" market rate housing project located at 177 North Main Street. The anticipated total value of the seven-year tax incentive is valued at \$393,411 (combined). The project will preserve and renovate the historic former First Congregational Church into 30 units of market rate housing. The project will be substantially complete by the of FY 2025.

Housing, and especially income restricted housing (a.k.a. affordable housing), is a regional issue. As reported in the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission's 2023 Regional Housing Needs Assessment, in 2020, the City's population comprised 36.5% of the total population of the region (43,796 persons in Concord vs. a total regional population of 120,515). Additionally, as of 2020, 37.7% of the region's total housing stock was located in Concord (19,085 units in Concord vs. a total of 50,647 units in the Central New Hampshire Region). However, the same report noted that, in 2020, Concord contained 57.6% of the region's total affordable housing (or income restricted housing) in the region (1,214 units of 2,106 income restricted units in the region). As such, Concord has a disproportionate share of income restricted housing for the region. Additionally, 8 of the 20 communities (or 40%) within the Central New Hampshire region had zero income restricted (affordable) units.

Since 2020, an additional 373 income restricted (affordable) housing units have been built in Concord, and another 132 units have been approved and are awaiting construction. The City was directly involved in several of these projects through several of the tools mentioned above, such as sale of City real estate, securing of grants, or assistance with financing via the City's Revolving Loan Fund Program.

With 2,352 housing units in development, the City has satisfied housing development targets within the 2023 Central New Hampshire Regional Housing Commission's Regional Needs Assessment through 2030 (which suggested the development of 2,223 total units).

In September 2024, the City was awarded a \$35,000 InvestNH grant to support redevelopment of 3 North State Street into a 12-unit rooming house for persons with disabilities. The project was completed in March 2025.

Additionally, the City has received a \$25,000 CDBG Planning Grant to assist Families in Transition with a feasibility study to explore potential conversion of ground floor commercial space into residential units at 5 Market Lane. The study is ongoing.

On December 17, 2024, the City was designated as a “Housing Champion” by the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. As noted in the award letter, the City was selected because of its “outstanding commitment to fostering an environment that supports innovative and sustainable solutions to address New Hampshire’s housing needs.” The letter also noted that Concord’s “efforts have demonstrated leadership and vision in creating pathways for housing development that will positively impact residents and contribute to solving the State’s housing crisis.” There are 234 municipalities in New Hampshire (13 cities and 221 towns). Concord was one of 18 communities selected for this designation. Concord was selected as it was able to demonstrate the following:

- Compliance with NH State Law, RSA 674:59 (the State’s Workforce Housing Law).
- Ample opportunities to develop housing in Concord. Presently, Concord has 17 different zoning districts, of which housing is permitted in 14. Therefore, housing is permitted in approximately 95% of the City’s total land area (60.2 of 64 total square miles).
- The City’s adoption of innovative land use regulations in accordance with NH State Law RSA 674:21. These include a Cluster Development Ordinance, a Planned Unit Development Ordinance, and Conditional Use Permits.
- Ordinances permitting manufactured housing and mixed-use developments.
- Routine investments in public infrastructure improvements, which support housing.
- The adoption of a Complete Streets policy and promotion of walkable neighborhoods.
- Intermunicipal utility agreements with some neighboring municipalities which have, or could encourage, housing development.

The Town of Boscawen was the only other municipality in central New Hampshire to be designated as a “Housing Champion.”

Due to its designation as a “Housing Champion”, the City has been afforded preferential access to the State’s InvestNH grant program to support infrastructure investments which facilitate housing. On February 28, 2025, the City applied for \$1.75 million from InvestNH to support the Heights Sewer Improvement Project (CIP #91 and #257). The application is currently pending.

a) High Functioning, Coordinated, Quantified Approach to Homelessness

Status: The Police Department continues to be directly involved in responding to citizen complaints related to homelessness issues throughout the city. The Police Department has responded, and continues to respond to complaints related to encampments, trespass issues, welfare checks, illegal dumping, and more serious criminal issues, such as a 2nd degree assault.

The Police Department is committed to working with other community stakeholders to address these problems. The Concord Police Department has forged strong relationships with those impacted by homelessness, as well as groups whose charge it is to support those in need. Officers know members of the homeless community very well and work to ensure that they are connected to services. Officers work with the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, the Concord Homeless Resource Center, the Friendly Kitchen, the Salvation Army, the McKenna House, and the Community Action Program.

As of March 31, 2025, the Police Department continues to work in collaboration with all of its community partners to respond to homelessness issues throughout the city.

Members of the Police Department are directly involved in this social issue, including our Command Staff, Police Social Worker Unit, and police officers on patrol. While this vulnerable group presents many challenges, the Police Department is completely committed to working collaboratively with all of our community stakeholders to best respond to this community issue.

In the spring of 2024, six units of transitional housing for persons exiting homelessness were completed at 129 Pleasant Street. The project was completed by the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness.

In 2023, the City secured a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant to support the purchase and redevelopment of real estate located at 6 South State Street into eight units of transitional housing to support persons exiting homelessness. The project, which is also being developed by the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, is scheduled to start construction in spring 2025. The City also waived the street excavation moratorium for this property to allow the redevelopment to move forward.

On December 9, 2024, the City Council approved an agreement with the Granite United Way to support the Steering Committee on Concord's Plan to End Homelessness in providing fiscal sponsorship services for the purpose of supporting initiatives of the committee, as well as for the hiring of a full-time project manager to work in a joint cooperative effort in combatting the sources and impacts of homelessness within the City of Concord. Staff has initiated efforts to explore potential sources of grant funds to support this initiative.

GOAL 4. TRANSPORTATION & UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

a) Fully Fund Street Paving and Sidewalk Program

Status: Through the Purchasing Division, the General Services Department awarded a multi-year paving project to GMI Paving early last year. With the exception of a portion of Airport Road, where a new sidewalk is being designed by the City's Engineering Division, all of the FY 2024 paving was completed. Since the contract was for a two-year period, GMI Paving also completed approximately half of the streets included in the FY 2025 budget, as well as temporary pavement repairs on the Loudon Road bridge. The following streets were paved in calendar year 2024: Airport Road, from Loudon Road to #91; Farmwood Road; Fernald Street; Fox Run; Freedom Acres; a portion of Hannah Dustin Drive; Kearsarge Street; Long Pond Road; Mill Street; Oak Hill Road, from Appleton Road to #52; Old Turnpike Road, from Airport Road to Park Street; Pine Crest Circle; Regional Drive, from Chenell Drive to Airport Road; Shoe String Road; and Winthrop Street. Efforts to secure property rights and bid prices for the construction of the Airport Road sidewalk and related improvements are presently underway. The General Services Department conducted a preconstruction meeting with GMI Paving on March 28, 2025, to initiate the FY 2025 Paving Program. Streets scheduled to be completed during the spring and summer of 2025 include: the full length of Clark Street, Dolan Street, Edgemont Avenue, Fisher Street, Palm Street, Fairbanks Street, and Horseshoe Pond Lane; and North Main Street from Bouton Street to Horseshoe Pond Lane.

b) McKee Square

Status: Traffic studies and preliminary design concepts are underway. The project is included in the State's 10-Year Plan. Eighty percent (80%) of the project will be financed with State grants. On August 23, 2024, the City was notified that its application for a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant in the amount of \$2,447,852 was awarded for the project.

c) I-93 Project With or Without Bridge Deck (Including Storrs Street Ext.)

Status: The I-93 Project has been included in the 2024-2025 State 10-Year Transportation Plan. Design and permitting are scheduled from 2025-2028, with construction commencing in 2029. The project is tentatively scheduled to be completed in the mid to late 2030's. Estimated project cost is approximately \$504 million. The State has agreed to relocate the State's Lincoln Line and portions of the CSX Northern Main Line to facilitate Storrs Street Extension North (CIP #18).

On June 12, 2023, the City Council approved Resolution #9562, which appropriated the sum of \$200,000 for the I-93 Bridge Park Feasibility Study (CIP #567). A community meeting was held on February 20, 2024. Working with the NH Department of Transportation, the feasibility study identified two potential design alternatives costing between \$76-\$115 million. These concepts were presented to the public on February 4, 2025. The project is now complete and will be presented to City Council at its May 12, 2025 meeting.

d) State Parking Garages

Status: Demolition of the former NH Department of Justice Building at 33 Capitol Street has been completed. The State has awarded a contract to PC Construction in the amount of \$17.7 million for construction of the State's new 409-space Legislative Parking Garage. Construction was delayed as the State had to abate asbestos contaminated materials at the site. Soil abatement was completed in March 2025, and the project is now under construction and is expected to be completed in March 2026. Once the new garage is finished, the State will demolish the existing Legislative Parking Garage located above the Storrs Street rights-of-way. The State has engaged a consulting engineer to prepare required demolition specifications, which are presently 65% complete. The State plans to bid demolition in summer 2025. Pending Governor and Executive Council approvals, demolition would occur in spring 2026. Demolition will involve termination of the City's 1974 Air Rights Leased to the State for the garage. Discussions are ongoing with the State regarding the scope of work and expectations for the post demolition condition of the City's real estate.

GOAL 5. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**a) Interim Zoning Amendments / Initiate Master Plan Update / Concord Next 2.0**

Status: On July 8, 2024, the City Council adopted Ordinance #3167, which established zoning regulations for charitable gaming halls/casinos.

On August 12, 2024, the City Council approved Ordinance #3168, which modified the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, the ordinance created a conditional use permit for obstruction of the view of the State House dome for development projects located within the Central Business Performance and Opportunity Corridor Performance Districts; created a separate conditional use permit to allow for the maximum building height to increase from 80' to 90' within the Central Business Performance District; and also modified previously existing conditional use permit provisions which allow the maximum building height to be increased from 45' to 80' within that portion of the Opportunity Corridor Zoning District located between Loudon Road, Storrs Street, Hills Avenue, and I-93. Said ordinances were adopted, in part, to promote redevelopment of Phenix Hall and adjacent properties. Upon passage, said ordinances were referred to the Planning Board for further review. The Planning Board has completed its review and has proposed modifications to the originally adopted ordinance, as well as other zoning amendments. On January 13, 2025, the City Council held a public hearing on the subsequent revisions to those enacted by Ordinance #3168, and adopted Ordinance #3175, which codified said revisions.

Despite being understaffed, the Planning Division has begun preparing interim amendments to the existing Zoning Ordinance to address the most significant, persistent issues therewith. The initial batch of amendments will be released in April. Staff intends to work with the Planning Board, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Architectural Design Review Committee, and others, to review proposed amendments prior to presentation to City Council. Staff desires to have all interim amendments adopted by the end of December 2025. Following the completion of an upcoming City Master Plan, which, subject to future City Council appropriations would commence in FY 2026, and likely will take approximately two years to complete, more comprehensive amendments to the Zoning Ordinance will be initiated to implement the goals and objectives of said forthcoming Master Plan.

b) Implement Economic Development Advisory Committee

Status: During its March 2024 meeting, the City Council adopted Ordinance #3159, which re-established the Economic Development Advisory Committee. Appointments were confirmed by City Council on April 8, 2024. To date, the Committee has met on June 25, 2024; September 24, 2024; December 3, 2024; January 28, 2025; and March 25, 2025. The focus of the Committee's initial meetings has been to review the City's various economic master plans, as well as forthcoming interim zoning amendments.

c) Economic Development Web Site Overhaul / Digital Marketing Package

Status: In April 2024, the City launched a newly revised and updated web site, which included an Economic Development page. The Economic Development page continues to be refined by staff. In the near future, staff will be adding additional content to the website, including an overview of public/private partnership success stories, review of RSA 79-E supported projects, and others.

d) New Airport Terminal

Status: The current terminal building was constructed in 1937, and later expanded in 1965. The building is obsolete, fully depreciated, and inadequate to support this growing general aviation airport. Additionally, the building is not compliant with modern building codes, including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Due to these shortcomings, it has been a long-standing City goal to demolish and replace the current terminal with a new, modern facility that will support the airport for decades to come. Specifically, the goal of replacing the current terminal has been carried in various City Airport Master Plans since at least 1996.

Subject to State and Federal permitting processes, upon completion of the new terminal, the existing building would be demolished. Once demolition is completed, the property occupied by the current terminal will be used for additional hangar development at the airport.

In February 2024, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) notified the City that it intended to award a \$2.51 million Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) grant to support the construction of a new terminal as part of the FAA's FY 2024 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law – Airport Terminal Buildings Grant Program. This potential grant is a key financial component of making the long-desired project a reality in the coming years.

On March 11, 2024, the City Council approved Resolution #9622, which appropriated City, State and Federal funds to proceed with design, permitting and bidding of the new terminal building and associated parking, in anticipation of the aforementioned grant funding for construction of these improvements.

Following the approval of Resolution #9622, staff and project consultants began the process of designing the project, including presentation to the Planning Board in May 2024, and have completed the preliminary design phase.

As design of the new terminal and related improvements progressed in early to mid-2024, the City was informed by the FAA that the 2011 environmental assessment (EA) for the Airport is insufficient for the new Terminal Project. As such, a consultant must be engaged and a new EA prepared.

The EA process may take as much as 18 months to complete. It is anticipated that the updated EA will include an alternative analysis for the proposed new terminal building, demolition of the existing terminal building, as well as other projects programmed in the City's current Capital Improvement Program.

The results of the updated EA process may affect design details for the terminal building and related improvements. As such, findings of the updated EA, as well as any potential modifications to the terminal project resulting therefrom, will be presented to the City Council prior to resumption of design efforts.

During its August 12, 2024 meeting, the City Council approved a consent resolution which authorized the City Manager to apply for Federal and State funding in an amount up to \$605,000 for various purposes, including the completion of an updated environmental assessment for the Airport pertaining to the proposed terminal project. This application is currently pending.

On December 9, 2024, the FAA informed the City that it had cancelled the \$2.51 million BIL grant for the project. Once an updated EA is completed for the Airport, additional grant resources will need to be identified and secured in order to advance the new terminal project to final design and future construction.

e) Heights Sewer Project

Status: The FY 2024 Budget included \$1.9 million, combined, for CIP #91 and CIP #275, to design a replacement sewer pump station and piping improvements to address sanitary sewer capacity for certain areas of the Heights. The FY 2025 Budget appropriated the sum of \$16,900,000 for CIP #91 (sewer main improvements) and \$6,250,000 for CIP #275 (sewer pump station improvements) to fund construction of the project. Design is nearing completion. The project will be bid in late FY 2025. Construction will begin in early FY 2026. The project is currently scheduled for completion in late calendar year 2026/early 2027.

f) Regulatory Amendments – Review Charitable Gaming

Status: During its February 12, 2024 meeting, the City Council set for public hearing on July 8, 2024, proposed zoning amendments pertaining to charitable gaming. The Planning Board held a public hearing on May 15, 2024 on the proposed ordinance. The final ordinance was adopted by City Council on July 8, 2024.

g) Mayor's Business Visitation Program

Status: The Mayor's Visitation Program was implemented in August 2024. As of March 31, 2025, visits have included Boyce Highlands, Grappone Mazda, Northeast Delta Dental, as well as The Viking House/Capital Craftsmen/Hilltop Consignment. The goal is to conduct one business visitation per month (on average).

h) Historic Preservation Initiatives

Status: The City continues to work with the NH Preservation Alliance on redevelopment strategies for the Gas Holder building, and recently attended a summit with State and local leaders to advance that effort. A second summit is planned for April 2, 2025.

Recent amendments to zoning provisions for height in the Central Business Performance District were drafted to include protections for demolition of historic buildings.

Preservation and adaptive reuse of the First Congregational Church, located at 177 North Main Street, into 30 units of market rate housing, which was supported by a City RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentive valued at \$393,000, is nearing completion.

i) Placemaking / Gateways / Community Art / Murals

Status: As part of the FY 2025 budget, \$35,000 was appropriated to clean up landscaping at the Exit 14 Gateway. Work was initiated and is ongoing. On February 6, 2025, Brixmor (the owner of the Capitol Shopping Plaza at 80 Storrs Street) granted the City a beautification easement, which allows the City to install murals or other improvements at portions of the property to beautify views of downtown from I-93. The easement was a condition of Planning Board approval for renovation of the plaza.

GOAL 6. ENERGY / ENVIRONMENT / SUSTAINABILITY**a) Community Power Review**

Status: On March 11, 2024, City Council approved Resolution #9620, adopting a Community Power Plan and authorizing the City to join the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH). The Draft Community Power Electric Aggregation Plan was submitted to the Public Utilities Commission on April 15, 2024. The Community Power program launched on October 1, 2024.

b) Complete Solar Arrays at Old Turnpike Landfill / Hall Street Wastewater Treatment Plant

Status: In May 2023, the City issued an RFP for the lease of the capped landfill for a ground-mounted solar array. Kearsarge Solar, LLC, was selected for the construction of a 5 MW solar array on the landfill. The City will benefit from annual rent payments for a 20-year lease term; annual property tax payments in the form of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT); and annual electric cost savings from group net-metering credits.

Kearsarge Solar has secured an approved interconnection plan from Unitil, which will be fully executed later this spring. City staff is working with the developer on the final terms of the PILOT agreement and group net-metering agreement.

Kearsarge has filed necessary development permitting applications with the Planning Board and the NH Department of Environmental Services. Construction is scheduled for fall 2025.

Through the City's Purchasing Division, the General Services Department procured Kearsarge Solar to install a solar array at the Hall Street Wastewater Treatment Plant, funded through a grant received from the NH Department of Environmental Services. The project was completed in November 2024.

c) Convert Remaining Ornamental Street Lights to LED

Status: A citywide street light conversion project in 2021-2022 resulted in the installation of 2,005 LED cobra head lights and 20 LED flood lights. Not included in this program were 72 ornamental lights (referred to as the "Bishop Crook" lights) located between Exit 13 and the southern limits of the Main Street Project, and between Exit 14 and the northern limits of the Main Street Project.

In January 2024, City staff worked with a lighting designer to select fixture options that are similar in design to the existing, but meet EnergyStar specifications for energy efficiency. A quote for the fixtures, including installation, was submitted in February 2024. Staff continues to seek potential grant opportunities to advance this project.

GOAL 7. PUBLIC SAFETY**a) New Police Station**

Status: On December 15, 2023, the City entered into a Purchase and Sales Agreement to acquire 4 Bouton Street for the purpose of developing a new police station. On April

8, 2024, the City Council received a comprehensive staff report and presentation concerning acquisition of 4 Bouton Street for a new Police Station (CIP #643), as well as projected costs and a schedule for a new station if the City Council elected to move forward with said initiative. Following said report, the City Council unanimously voted to proceed with acquisition of 4 Bouton Street. In accordance with the City Council's directive, the City acquired 4 Bouton Street on May 24, 2024 for the sum of \$3,924,232. The FY 2025 Budget appropriated the sums of \$240,000 to weatherize and secure the building, as well as \$3,131,800 to design the new Police Station.

The building was weatherized in fall 2024. Using a competitive bid process, on October 15, 2024, Milestone Construction was selected to serve as the City's Construction Manager/General Contractor for the project.

On November 13, 2024, the City received proposals from five design teams for the project. Four teams were selected for interviews. Interviews were completed on December 17, 2024. On January 7, 2025, the design contract was awarded to a team led by Harriman. Schematic design is currently underway.

It is anticipated that full design will be completed in fall 2025. Subject to available funding, the City may undertake interior demolition of the existing structure to help facilitate the design process, as well as identify any unusual conditions which may affect the design, with the goal of reducing potential future change orders. Subject to final design and future funding appropriations by City Council, construction is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about April 1, 2026. The current project schedule anticipates the project will be completed in late summer 2027.

A website dedicated to the project has been added to the City's website under the Police Department section. Project updates will be provided as the project progresses.

b) City Hall Campus Master Plan & Schematic Design

Status: On April 8, 2024, City Council was briefed on City Administration's proposed strategy to proceed with a City Hall Campus Master Plan, presuming relocation of the Police Station to 4 Bouton Street. The FY 2025 Budget included \$250,000 to undertake a campus master plan. A request for proposals has been issued by the City's Purchasing Division. Proposals are due on April 22, 2025.

c) Fire Gear Replacement

Status: The Fire Department continues to wait for PFAS-free gear to become available while the manufacturer works through issues related to garment durability. This setback has caused considerable inconvenience for Department members, as secondary sets of gear are now shared among members of each fire station, as additional sets of gear reach their end-of-life dates. The Fire Department continues to withhold from purchasing additional PFAS-containing gear during this timeframe.

Fire Administration will continue to closely monitor this situation, and the availability of serviceable secondary sets of gear.

d) Build Out Police Department Social Worker Staffing & Funding Options

Status: As of March 31, 2025, the Police Social Worker Unit is fully staffed with a Masters level Police Social Worker, an Outreach Social Worker, and a Masters level Police Social Worker intern; and has quickly developed into a critical component of the Police Department. This specialized unit does intensive follow-up on police related matters involving homebound seniors living in our community; community members experiencing addiction recovery and often co-occurring mental health issues; and Adverse Childhood Experiences Response Team (ACERT) follow-up visits.

This unit has greatly improved the police response to our most vulnerable community members, who are often in need of intensive case follow-up. The Police Social Worker Unit works to connect at-risk populations with the necessary service providers in the community. This has allowed police officers to work more on law enforcement issues while providing specially trained social workers to address the police related social issues in the community.

The Police Department anticipates growth in this area and has already developed plans to propose increased staffing in the unit as part of the FY 2026 budget.

e) Community Policing

Status: The Concord Police Department continues to work very hard to foster positive engagements with the community. The Department is fortunate to have a dedicated Community Services Division; however, the entire Department is dedicated to community policing.

The School Resource Officers are actively involved at Concord High School and Merrimack Valley High School. Currently, due to workforce shortages, there is no SRO at Merrimack Valley Middle School. The Community Services Officers stay in contact with Bishop Brady High School, Trinity Christian School, and St. John's School as well. Liberty, the Department's comfort dog, also makes frequent visits to the schools in the city. Safety assessments continue to be conducted at several of the public and private schools. Recommendations have been made to the schools to help officers in accessing the schools during threatening events.

On August 6, 2024, the Police Department hosted its annual National Night Out event at Rollins Park. National Night Out is an evening of local and state police officers coming together to help increase awareness of community police programs, which in turn helps build bridges between officers and those they serve to protect. Approximately 4,000 attendees participated in the event.

During the month of September 2024 – Food Action Month - the Police Department partnered with the NH Food Bank and sponsored several food drives. Participants were challenged to "Help Stuff a Cruiser". Three local charities were the benefactors of the food drives. Enough food was collected to provide 3,602 meals and \$1,446 was raised. The Department also participated in two Coffee with a Cop events.

In December 2024, Police Department members teamed up with Toys for Tots to acquire and distribute Christmas gifts to families in need. Police Department members volunteered their time and resources and traveled to Manchester on December 23rd to pick up 30+ large boxes of toy donations for our community.

Beyond having police officers hand out toys on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the Police Department worked diligently to partner with community stakeholders to share these gifts in order to expand the reach of the Police Department. Hundreds of toys were provided to Concord High School, the City's Parks and Recreation Department, Concord Housing, and Project S.T.O.R.Y.

The Police Department works closely with the New American communities throughout the city in an attempt to open communication and to plan for informational events with the Department. The Department also serves on the Refugee Advisory Council (RAC), which meets monthly. The RAC helps ensure the coordination of services for refugees and immigrants, and raises awareness of issues that affect refugee and immigrant communities throughout New Hampshire.

In January 2025, the Concord Police Department held a Coffee with a Cop event with Connect 55 (55+ community). The event was a great success, as it provided a relaxed environment where community members and the police could interact and build positive relationships. A second Coffee with a Cop event was held at a local coffee shop in the downtown area. It is important that the Police Department engage with the community to build equity and public trust.

The Community Resources Unit worked with several local businesses to provide security assessments, alarm testing, and response procedures. This helps businesses build worker safety plans and provides for improved lines of communication between our local business community and the Police Department.

The Community Resources Unit also hosted a meeting with a local Cub Scout Troop at St. Paul's Church. The Unit organized and hosted a Skate with a Cop event at the Everett Arena. These events provide great opportunities to build stronger bonds within the community and help our police officers get to know community members in a way that otherwise simply would not happen.

f) Fire Department Equipment Replacement

Status: The Fire Department continues to work with City Administration and the General Services Department to create a plan to address the upcoming challenge of balancing the up to 48-month lead times on new fire apparatus with the increasing call volume's impact on an aging fleet.

There have been some changes as the Fire Department continues to wait for the arrival of several apparatus that have been ordered with FY 2023, FY 2024, and FY 2025 CIP funds, comprising two ambulances (one ordered on February 5, 2023 and the other ordered on July 19, 2023); a tanker (ordered on June 15, 2023); a tower truck (ordered on August 9, 2023); and an engine (ordered on July 29, 2024). The tower truck is expected to arrive in the summer of 2025. The two ambulances have been pushed back and are now expected in the first quarter of 2026. The Fire Department still awaits estimated completion dates for the tanker and the engine.

With the increase in call volume expected over the next few years related to growth of residential units, coupled with the fact that the Department is already at operational capacity, the Fire Department recommends maintaining possession of an engine that would normally be traded as part of a purchase agreement once the next new engine arrives.

g) Continuous Improvement in Public Safety Effectiveness

Status: The Police Department continues to make forward progress with departmental policy improvement. As of March 31, 2025, the Department has continued to make positive strides toward State accreditation. This is a lengthy process, and the Police Department has continued to update departmental policies to ensure we are meeting or exceeding the highest standards for the profession. Accreditation ensures accountability and transparency in police operations and promotes trust and confidence within the community.

h) Recruitment and Retention

Status: The Fire Department continues to face significant struggles with recruitment and retention. New members have recently been hired, but these have been offset by other members retiring or leaving for other reasons. The City and IAFF Local 1045 are actively negotiating a new collective bargaining agreement. Fire Administration hopes to include clauses in the new contract that will assist with recruitment and retention efforts.

The Fire Department currently has eight (8) vacancies, one member on Temporary Alternate Duty, and one member out on short-term disability. These 10 positions need to be filled with overtime, which is causing members to work many hours. Additionally, five (5) members are using intermittent Paid Family Medical Leave (PFMLA). The required shift coverage of all these vacancies has caused significant overspending of budgeted overtime. Burnout resulting from employees required to work overtime is noticeable. The amount of forced overtime has been a key factor cited to Fire Administration during exit interviews of some recently departing employees. Each time an employee leaves, additional overtime is needed to maintain current service levels, which causes further employee burnout, enticing additional members to leave. This compounding problem is near a critical breaking point. Fire Administration will work with Department members and City Administration on how best to stop this cycle.

As of March 31, 2025, the Police Department has continued to make recruitment and retention a top priority. Even though the Department has 13 police officer vacancies, two parking officer equipment technician vacancies, and one police dispatcher vacancy, staff has responded well to the challenges and improved their individual capacities and resiliency. This comes at a key moment as the applicant pool for these positions is very low, despite constant varied recruitment efforts. This staffing problem is not unique to the Concord Police Department, and our staff has recognized that the Department is committed to improving working conditions. Recent equipment upgrades, new collective bargaining agreements, and positive movement toward building a new police station have made a positive difference in employee outlook and recruitment. The Police Department is looking ahead to capitalize on these improvements.

GOAL 8. RECREATION & LEISURE**a) Complete Construction of a New Canal Street Riverfront Park**

Status: On April 3, 2024, a ribbon cutting was held for the new park. The park was substantially completed in late fall 2024. A soft opening event was held on December 16, 2024. Final punch list items will be addressed in spring 2025, following which an official opening ceremony will occur. The City's total budget for the project is \$3.37 million.

The project is being funded by a mixture of Tax Increment Finance District supported bonds, Parking Fund supported bonds (new Canal Street Public Parking Lot), development impact fees, as well as a \$500,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund grant from the State of New Hampshire.

b) White Park Inclusionary Playground

Status: An RFP for construction of the new playground went out in early summer 2024. The City was awarded \$400,000 in Land and Water Conservation Grant funds; received \$50,000 in donations; and appropriated \$350,000 of GO bonds for the construction. The City worked with the Friends of White Park to select a vendor via RFP process for the construction of the new playground. City staff is now working with the vendor with the goal of having the new playground completed by fall of 2025.

c) Complete New Penacook Library & Activity Center (Divest of 3 Merrimack St.)

Status: The project was completed in August 2024, and the City took ownership of its condominium unit on October 30, 2024. Operations at the new facility began on December 5, 2024. In accordance with Resolution #9518, which was adopted on December 12, 2022, City Administration has initiated efforts to divest of the existing Penacook Library, located at 3 Merrimack Street, for redevelopment. Divestment shall include the requirements to preserve and adaptively reuse the existing building.

d) Memorial Field Design & Partnership Review

Status: The City has held two public meetings to help develop a new Master Plan for the complex. At the last meeting, the residents present were in favor of a full renovation of the entire complex. City staff and the design team presented information to the Concord School Board at their October 2024 meeting and updated the City Council at their November 2024 meeting. City staff will continue to work with the Concord School District to move this project forward.

e) Keach Park Lights

Status: The first public meeting was held last fall. City staff have met with the H.L. Turner Group on final design and permitting, and have reviewed the project with the Airport Advisory Committee and with NH Fish & Game to make sure there is no impact to wildlife. A second public meeting was held on December 12, 2024. At the second meeting, there was a review of facility scheduling, increased maintenance needs, and other projected operating expenses, as well as new revenue from field rentals and charging user groups when field lights are used. At their March 2025 meeting, the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee voted not to move forward with this project. A presentation will be made to the Airport Advisory Committee, and then to City Council for final review and approval.

f) Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT)

Status: Construction of the 4,000' section of the trail through the city's Gully Hill Sunflower Fields has been completed, and a ribbon cutting ceremony was held on September 27, 2024. Total project budget was \$705,000. The Parks & Recreation Department is handling the regular maintenance of this section of trail (similar to the section of trail at Terrill Park). Negotiations with the City, NH Department of

Transportation, and CSX to acquire a 6+/- mile of section of the Northern Main Line, between Horseshoe Pond Lane and the Contoocook River, are ongoing. An updated real estate appraisal and title review have been completed by the City, at its expense, and are under review with CSX. A draft purchase and sales agreement is currently under review and being refined by the parties.

Additionally, staff continues to prepare for additional sections of the trail. Recently, the City acquired easements from Brady Sullivan for future phases of the trail over property located at 11 Stickney Avenue, as part of the Planning Board development permitting process for the new apartment development at that location. Similarly, provisions for future extension of the trail were included in the Comprehensive Development Plan approval for ROI Properties' development located at Black Hill Road.

In partnership with the Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, City Administration is working to negotiate an easement at property located at 6 Loudon Road to facilitate a future extension from the Gully Hill sunflower fields to the Loudon Road Bridge at the Merrimack River. The bridge is currently subject to an ongoing Capital Improvement Project (CIP #588), which includes widening the existing bridge to include a 14' wide shared use path to connect the MRGT from the east side of Concord to Downtown.

Also, the City continues to work with the State on provisions to construct that portion of the MRGT between 6 Loudon Road and Horseshoe Pond Lane, as part of the forthcoming I-93 Bow-Concord project.

g) Garrison Park Pool

Status: The City held a community meeting with the neighbors of Garrison Park to discuss the opportunity to convert the pool to a splash pad or keep it as a pool. Everyone present wanted to keep it as a pool, as the City can offer swim lessons there and a pool can be used by all ages of the community, while a splash pad is geared towards younger children. As the Garrison Park Pool has not been open for the past four years, due to lack of lifeguards, residents present requested that the City keep Garrison Park Pool open, even if the City is unable to hire enough lifeguards. Each summer since COVID, the White Park, Kimball Park, Merrill Park, and Garrison Park pools have not been fully open. The Parks & Recreation Department was able to hire enough lifeguards and Water Safety Instructors to open all six pools and splash pads during the summer of 2024.

h) Terrill Park

Status: Terrill Park remains fully designed and permitted. Over the past year, City staff have renewed all required permits for the project and they are in place until 2027. Phase 1 of the park was finished and opened in October 2020. This phase included the construction of the first section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, moving the existing dog park and building a new parking lot to support the trail and the dog park. Phase 1 was funded by a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant, private donations, and City funds.

i) Kiwanis Park Design

Status: Funds were appropriated in the FY 2024 Capital Improvement budget for final design and permitting of the park. The City has been working with VHB, who was involved with the master planning process for the final design and permitting of the renovated park. The City is now working on a traffic study and permitting for the project.

In addition, the City has brought on a skateboard park designer, Gridline, to help design a new skateboard park. All design documents were completed in late fall 2024. The Parks & Recreation Department is working with VHB on submitting the required permits per the approved master plan.

During the winter of 2023-2024, the Department applied for a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant in the amount of \$500,000 to help with construction costs of a new skateboard park. In December 2024, the City was notified of the grant award.

Parks & Recreation Department staff will continue to work with skateboard park committee members and the community at large to fundraise the required match of the grant award.

j) Identify Additional East Side Greenspace

Status: The Recreation & Parks Advisory Committee has discussed, at several meetings, the need for new parks and safe access to them. The City's Master Plan calls for 10 acres of park land per 1,000 residents, and with 2,300+ new housing units in the approval or planning stages (including approximately 1,000 units for the Heights neighborhood in the vicinity of the former Steeplegate Mall), there is a need to work with developers and the community to identify and plan new community parks. Areas east of Keach Park and areas around Thirty Pines have been discussed.

k) Bicentennial Square "Light" Renovation

Status: The FY 2025 Budget included \$100,000 in CIP #579 for design of park improvements. As of March 31, 2025, a design team led by VHB has been engaged for the project. Geotechnical studies and conceptual designs are underway. A community meeting to review concepts will be held in the coming months.