



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Thomas J. Aspell, Jr., City Manager
DATE: October 13, 2017
SUBJECT: 2016 – 2017 City Council Priorities

Recommendation

Accept this report as to the current status of the City Council Priorities established on January 25, 2016.

Background

Members of the City Council met on January 25, 2016 to discuss and set priorities for the remainder of Calendar Year 2016, as well as for Calendar Year 2017.

Discussion

Listed below, in ranked order, are the accepted priorities, projects and ongoing initiatives; and their respective statuses as of September 30, 2017.

GOAL 1. BALANCED BUDGET ISSUES: FY 2017 and 2018

a) Collective Bargaining/Contract Negotiations

Status: All unions are currently under contract until June 30, 2018, at which time the Concord Fire Officers Association (CFOA) agreement will expire.

b) Health Insurance Costs

Status: Harvard Pilgrim gave the City a not-to-exceed (NTE) rate increase of 13.43% in December 2016. The City worked with Harvard Pilgrim on reducing this amount to an increase of 5.9%.

GOAL 2. COMMUNITY-WIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES TO EXPAND TAX BASE

Status: On April 11, 2016, the City Council approved a resolution which expanded the RSA 79-E Program to make historic buildings not located within the two established RSA 79-E Districts in downtown and Penacook Village potentially eligible to participate in the program.

The Community Development Department put forth two significant changes to the Zoning Ordinance to facilitate the development and redevelopment of property. The first, approved by Council in 2015, eliminated the 60% open space requirement for minor subdivisions, addressing what was considered a particularly onerous regulation for property owners in Concord. In May 2016, Council also voted to support a recommendation to alter the base thresholds that trigger minor site plan review in cases where no change to the site is actually proposed and there is virtually no impact to the surrounding neighborhood. Additional changes were also subsequently made to the requirements for ADR application reviews within the ordinance, all with a goal of improving efficiency and effectiveness during the development review process.

The FY 2017 budget included funding for the creation of a new Economic Development Director for the City. After a nationwide search, Suzanne Pegg, Vice President for Global Business Development and Marketing for the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, was selected for this position. Ms. Pegg started with the City on May 1, 2017. To date, she has met with dozens of business and community leaders. In August, she presented City Council with a report outlining her strategic economic development goals and activities.

At its March 2017 meeting, Council approved a \$15,000 match for a Business Incubator Needs Assessment, in partnership with CRDC, the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, Merrimack County Savings Bank, and the New Hampshire Business Finance Authority. The firm of Axcel Innovation, LLC, was retained by the Chamber of Commerce. The firm is currently working on the second phase of this assessment, the results of which are expected in late calendar year 2017.

GOAL 3. PUBLIC INFORMATION, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Status: The City is working effectively towards increasing public awareness through branding, marketing and communications.

City Administration: A “Communications Collaborative” has been created, which consists of public information specialists from Parks & Recreation, the Library, Police, Fire, General Services, and the City Manager’s Office. The “Collaborative” meets regularly to discuss initiatives and ideas for increasing/improving communications.

City Administration is also, with an economic development focus, looking to improve citywide communications and marketing to more effectively present the City and its assets and services to residents, visitors, businesses and site selectors. The City is also working with the new Economic Development Director, Suzanne Pegg, to leverage her global marketing experience.

City Administration also researched best practices from other communities around the country to determine the full breadth of social media/communications platforms that could be utilized. Administration presented the concept of a Public Information Officer (PIO) to the City’s Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee (FPAC) at their August 2017 meeting. FPAC subsequently recommended that the creation of a PIO position be proposed to City Council for adoption.

Assessing Department: The Assessing Department strives to provide taxpayers with assessing information regarding abatements, current use, numerous exemptions and tax credits, and links to general assessment information on its web pages. The Department

contracted with a consultant to review the content of the Assessing web pages and their overall functionality. The review consisted of ease of use; taxpayer usability and understanding; redundant information; missing information; and confusing or misleading information. Changes were recommended that would improve the efficiency of the navigation and links.

In March 2017, Assessing staff attended “Customer Service in the Public Sector” through Primex. This education session specifically focused on assessing departments and included interactive and thought-provoking sessions to identify various customers and set specific customer service goals. The Department will continue to take advantage of future education and training to develop and provide staff with customer service tools.

Fire Department: The Fire Department maintains an active presence in print, electronic and social media. WKXL hosts a weekly segment to provide an update on Fire Department activities and safety messages. The Department’s Facebook page has 3,660 followers (up from 3,531 last quarter), and its Twitter account has 1,084 followers (up from 1,035 last quarter). Featured information for the first quarter of FY 2018 included fireworks safety, the hiring process for firefighters and firefighter paramedics, retirements, National Night Out activities, the new Engine #7, and the deployments of Fire Department members to hurricane stricken areas of the country with a FEMA urban search and rescue task force.

General Services Department: The General Services Department continues to increase communications with the community. The Department disseminates public information via website updates, print media, press releases, the City Manager’s newsletter, its monthly General Gazette newsletter, and bill stuffers. Social media is used to improve community engagement, continue branding, and encourage public awareness of services.

During the first quarter of FY 2018, the General Services Department continued to highlight its employees on social media and in its General Gazette newsletter featuring promotions, new hires, training initiatives, and retirements. Job openings continue to be published on social media and in the General Gazette newsletter as well, with a consistent message that Concord General Services is a great place to work.

The Department participated in National Night Out with a Touch-a-Truck program and a large assortment of equipment vehicles for kids and the community to interact with. The Department also set up a promotional display with informational brochures, free goody items, and a Pay-As-You-Throw trash bag raffle for new newsletter subscribers.

Additional topics promoted through various media outlets include the heating conversion project at the Municipal Complex; new safety equipment and inspection work completed at Equipment Services in preparation for the winter season; pool construction at Keach Park; trash holidays; the Downtown Services Team’s maintenance of the new Main Street; and Everett Arena ice skating information along with a new time lapse YouTube video of the ice building.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day was heavily promoted across all media outlets, including through Facebook advertising, which reached over 8,000 people. Concord TV was invited to attend the event and created a video with the City’s Solid Waste Manager highlighting its importance. Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day was very well attended with 627 cars counted.

As of September 30, 2017, the Department had 1,493 Facebook likes, 432 Twitter followers, 25 Google+ followers, and 88 YouTube subscribers. In addition, the General Services Department had 7,489 total subscriptions to the Alert Center, Notify Me, and News Flash modules on the City website, which is used regularly to alert the community of relevant events. Approximately 24 press releases have been published by the local media during this quarter.

Human Resources Department: During the first quarter of FY 2018, the Department posted nine new full-time (FT), one permanent part-time (PPT), and two part-time (PT) job vacancies; as well as five temporary positions and three roster postings. This totaled 20 new postings, of which 6 were carried forward from the previous quarter.

During the first quarter of FY 2018, 16 new employees (FT, PPT, and PT) were hired. There was an average of 48 days from post to hire. This statistic does not include temporary hires or roster postings. Of the 16 new hires, three Police Officers and two Firefighters were hired from existing rosters. In addition, 15 seasonal/temporary positions were successfully filled.

The Human Resources Department continues to use its standard FREE resources (the City website, Primex, NHMA, Chamber of Commerce, and NH Community College Consortium), as well as our paid sources (Union Leader, Indeed, Facebook, and industry specific job boards) for promoting job postings. These sources typically generate an adequate response for most positions. The Department will continue to seek new and affordable methods to promote all of the City's talent needs.

The Human Resources Department participated in the Department of Employment Security's Job Fair on September 21, 2017. The fair was held at the Steeplegate Mall and was attended by over 160 employers. Staff spoke to nearly 100 people and promoted the City's Job Interest Cards through our ATS system, NEOGOV. This resulted in a modest increase in new Job Interest Card requests in the following weeks.

In early 2017, the Human Resources Department began boosting (paying for increased visibility) its job postings on the City's Facebook page. This social platform produces a lot of engagement for small money. An example would be a recent two week boost of a Police Officer posting, which cost \$50. The boost received 582 post engagements, which includes likes and shares, and it reached a total of 9,277 people. Other successful postings have included the Zamboni Driver and Meter Technician positions. Though it remains difficult to quantify if Facebook increases the number of qualified candidates, it clearly increases traffic, visibility, and good will. For example, the Police Officer boost, which ran from 8/8/17 through 8/22/17, netted 95 likes; as compared to 13 likes during the two prior weeks when no boost was running.

Concord Public Library: The Library makes good use of social media to post information about upcoming programs and library services. A YouTube channel was created for the posting of videos of Library programs, and Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts are also maintained. In addition, the Library makes great use of the News Flash feature of the City website.

The Library has added a voluntary sign-up to receive marketing emails that promote Library services. In addition, the Library has increased the publication of its newsletter from a bi-monthly basis to a monthly basis. A monthly program bookmark is being placed,

on a trial basis, in all outgoing holds and interlibrary loans. The Library has reinstated the hanging of posters at local downtown businesses; and has increased its posting frequency on all social media, added scheduled evening and weekend posts, and is assessing when it has the most success with patron engagement. The Library has also begun to utilize local Concord history more in its social media marketing. The Library worked with the Library Foundation to promote this year's Concord Reads title: *Adrift: 76 Days Lost at Sea*, which culminated with an author presentation at Red River Theatres.

As of March 2017, children that are Library cardholders can fill out an online request to have an item of their choice color printed for free on the Library's new 3D printer.

In May 2017, the Library launched an online periodical database called *Zinio*. The database can be viewed directly through the internet or by downloading the application, "*zinio for libraries*" and then selecting CPL. Once registered, 57 magazine titles, as well as back issues, may be accessed. There are no lending limits to the length of time an item may be checked out and there are no hold queues.

In August 2017, the Library began to offer a new digital streaming service called *Hoopla*. *Hoopla* offers a variety of streaming items, such as e-books, music albums, movies, and audiobooks. For the initial program launch, patrons may check out five items of any medium per month through *Hoopla*.

The Library has been experimenting with using Facebook ads to promote programs. So far, there has been mixed success, depending on the type of program and the target audience.

Programming staff has been exploring the use of Canva as a graphic design tool for program posters, which has resulted in improved poster designs. Canva is a powerful tool that the Library plans to continue to explore and take advantage of for both paper and digital advertising.

During Library Card Sign-up Month, staff gave out welcome bags to new patrons that included Library swag (CPL sunglasses, programming information, chocolate, etc.), as well as information on getting started with the Library's digital resources. New patrons are also enrolled in the Library's on-line newsletter when they sign up for a Library card.

The Library continues to explore ways of incorporating video into its social media and marketing efforts. Video of the program, Black Bears, was published on the Library's YouTube channel, and video of the Stone Walls program was highlighted on social media.

Parks and Recreation Department: The Parks & Recreation Department creates four seasonal brochures each year, which are delivered to all elementary school children in the city. These brochures highlight all Department programs and events for the next 3-4 months. The content of the brochures is also posted on the Parks & Recreation web site. In addition, the Department maintains a very active Facebook page, with over 2,900 "likes". The Department also creates a monthly newsletter for the web site, weekly news releases for local media, a monthly TV show ("We Are Serious About Fun") with Concord TV, and numerous public service announcements. The Department works very closely with the Friends of the Audi to advertise events and rental opportunities.

The Parks & Recreation Department also maintains the web site for the Beaver Meadow Golf Course. Staff creates and sends out weekly and monthly e-mail blasts to several thousand golfers who have signed up to belong to its online e-club. The web site receives 2,500-3,500 unique web hits per month. The Department also maintains a very active Facebook page for the course, with over 1,600 “likes”. During the golf season, staff coordinates weekly newspaper and radio ads.

Police Department: The Police Department utilizes a number of social media sites, as well as the City website, to present information about the Department to the public and to keep the public informed of events occurring within the City. The Department’s website includes many pages with valuable information, including guidance on how to obtain reports and other services that the Department provides. The site also provides notification on upcoming hiring processes, drug take-back days, upcoming citizen police academies, and other events. In addition, all Police Department press releases are placed on its web page.

The Police Department’s Twitter page has approximately 1,585 followers, and its Facebook page has approximately 3,200 followers. Both of these venues are used to disseminate information regarding Department and/or City events and provide emergency information as necessary.

The Police Department also administers the Concord Regional Crimeline, which allows individuals to anonymously provide tips regarding ongoing investigations in Concord and surrounding towns. Tips can be submitted by phone, online or by text message. During calendar year 2016, over 370 tips were received, leading to the arrest of 37 individuals. This year, through the end of September, 219 tips have been received, which have led to the arrest of 53 individuals.

The Police Chief participates in a weekly radio show on WKXL, where different topics are addressed based upon events occurring in the city, state and, on occasion, the nation. Another initiative of the Police Department is the “Coffee with a Cop” program. This program is designed to promote interaction between the community and the Department by sharing coffee and fostering discussion in a relaxed atmosphere. Since its inception, the Department has held eight “Coffee with a Cop” events at different locations throughout the City. All of these events have been well received by the public and business owners.

During the last three school years, the Police Department has taken part in two programs focused on the schools: “Lunch with a Cop” and “Police Readers”. “Lunch with a Cop” features police officers joining students throughout the city during lunch time to field questions and leave a positive impression with the students. The “Police Readers” program has police officers go into K-2nd grade classrooms and read books to the students.

The Police Department continues to offer Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) classes, which are comprehensive defense training courses for women that include situational awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance, and progresses to the basics of hands-on defense training. The RAD System is dedicated to teaching women defensive concepts and techniques against various types of assault by utilizing easy, effective and proven self-defense tactics. The system of realistic defense will provide a woman with the knowledge to make an educated decision about resistance.

With the growing number of mass shooting incidents occurring across the country, the Police Department has been offering CRASE (Civilian Response to an Active Shooter Event) training to all local businesses and schools. This training teaches participants how to react during an active shooter incident. The training also helps those businesses or establishments come up with an action plan should an incident occur at their location.

The Police Department partnered with the New Hampshire Food Bank to sponsor several food drives during Food Action Month (September) in 2016 and 2017. Participants were challenged to “Help Stuff a Cruiser”. Three local charities were the benefactors of the food drives.

GOAL 4. PUBLIC SAFETY WORK & CONTINUED SUPPORT OF SOCIAL SAFETY NETWORK

Status: The Police Department takes an aggressive stance in combatting the opioid crisis facing the City. In January of 2016, the Department assigned an additional investigator to the Drug Enforcement Unit in order to augment the Unit’s efforts in conducting undercover drug investigations and to assist in collecting and disseminating drug intelligence. The Department has worked closely with other stakeholders on this matter to include other police agencies, service providers, and other branches of the criminal justice system. The Department also has a representative participating on the Merrimack County Drug Court Team, will be implementing a Drug Court in October 2017 as part of the Merrimack County Superior Court. The Department will continue these efforts and regularly assess personnel assignments and initiatives to most effectively address illegal drug usage in the city. During calendar year 2016, the Department made 318 arrests of individuals with illegal drug related charges. This was a 23% increase in the number of drug-related arrests over calendar year 2015. During the first 9 months of 2017, the Department has made 208 arrests of individuals with illegal drug related charges.

During the fall of 2016, the Police Department received a grant award in the amount of \$75,000 through the Law Enforcement Opioid Abuse Reduction Initiative (Project Granite Hammer). These funds were utilized by the Department to cover overtime costs to conduct illegal drug investigations in the City and surrounding towns. The Department has recently been notified that it will be receiving additional funding through Project Granite Shield for the remainder of 2017 and the beginning of 2018. These funds will also be used to cover overtime costs in conducting illegal drug investigations.

The Police Department also continues with initiatives put in place to best address community safety concerns. The highly successful Problem Oriented Policing (POP) Unit is a tool the department utilizes to address issues that can be best resolved with a concentrated pro-active approach, which is not always possible through the Patrol Division. The POP Unit is able to address public safety issues through enforcement and by coordinating with other City and community resources. The POP Unit has been very successful in addressing issues with the homeless population, panhandling, nuisance properties, and many other quality of life issues within the City. Recent staffing issues have limited the Department’s ability to fully implement the POP Unit; however, we are hoping to have this unit up and running again during FY 2018. All officers are encouraged to participate in community engagement activities. The success of the Police Department in providing the safest community possible is dependent upon a cooperative effort between the Department and the community as a whole.

In an attempt to strengthen its partnership with the refugee/New American community, the Police Department has held several Q&A type meetings with the refugee/New American community to address any questions or concerns they may have relating to the community, local and state laws, and the Police Department. With the assistance of the NH Department of Motor Vehicles, the Police Department implemented a driver training course to assist those having difficulty obtaining a driver's license due to language and cultural obstacles. This continues to be a work in progress. The Department also looks forward to working with the new administration of the New American Africans to further the partnership between the police and the refugee/immigrant community.

The Fire Department actively participates in collaborative efforts with Concord Hospital, Riverbend Community Mental Health, and the Concord Regional Visiting Nurses Association for effective patient care, particularly for patients suffering from mental health conditions. A major step forward occurred in September when the Department received permission to transport patients suffering from behavioral health conditions directly to Riverbend's crisis facility. This is a much more clinically appropriate option than transport to a hospital emergency department.

GOAL 5. PARKING MASTER PLAN / IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

Status: The Strategic Parking Plan was presented to the Parking Committee on June 27, 2016. Since then, the Parking Committee has held three public forums; one on August 18, 2016, one on September 8, 2016, and one on May 23, 2017. In addition, the Committee has held over a dozen workshop meetings to review the recommendations of the study and potential modifications thereof. Following the May 23, 2017 public forum, the Parking Committee began making final tweaks to the draft recommendations. At its most recent meeting on September 25, 2017, the Parking Committee decided to tentatively present its final recommendations to the City Council on November 13, 2017, for a public hearing on December 11, 2017.

GOAL 6. FOSTER/ENHANCE DIALOGUE WITH LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

Status: In coordination with Merrimack County, the City provided support regarding a proposal to construct a new County Courthouse, adjacent to the existing courthouse, instead of on the Heights. Support included testifying at numerous State Legislative Committee hearings and background work associated with those hearings.

In coordination with the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce, the City provided support regarding a proposal to open the State House to the public on weekends to promote tourism in downtown Concord.

In December 2016, the City Council authorized the City Manager to work with the legislative delegation to draft amendments to RSA 231 and RSA 261, concerning alternative funding mechanisms for the construction, repair, maintenance, administration, and enforcement of parking facilities and parking meters. Efforts to amend the statute were not successful and City Administration is working with the Mayor to reintroduce revised legislation for the upcoming legislative session.

GOAL 7. ENHANCED COMMUNITY EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

Status: The Mayor established an Ad-Hoc City Council Committee to review the process, costs and revenues associated with community events. The committee held several meetings and accepted input from local event organizers. A report to Council was submitted in early 2017. Recommendations included holding a LEAN event to streamline the current permitting process. This LEAN event was held in late May. Recommendations from that LEAN event would streamline the event permitting process from eight review/decision points to one. The committee voted to support the recommendations at its May 30th meeting. These recommendations were subsequently adopted by City Council during the summer of 2017. A comprehensive set of amendments to the business/ event licensing chapter of the City ordinances, resulting from those recommendations, has been forwarded to City Council for review at their October 2017 meeting.

The Concord Public Library is the current repository of the four community mosaics created by Concord residents as part of the Citywide 250th celebration.

The Parks & Recreation Department has been working with several organizations this past year to increase the number of community events, as follows:

- Hosted four new baseball tournaments with the Concord Sports Center, with the largest tournament bringing 24 teams from all over New England.
- Expanded the number of games hosted for the Granite State Baseball League. Teams from all over New Hampshire and Massachusetts now play games most weekends on City fields.
- Worked with Seacoast Express Soccer Club to help host their annual regional tournament in fall of 2016, and will be expanding the number of games hosted at City facilities for the fall 2017 tournament. This tournament brings in over 120 soccer teams from all over New England and Canada over two days.

PROJECT 1. MAIN STREET COMPLETE STREETS PROJECT

Status: This transformative project was completed in 2016, with some punch list and follow-up sign and warranty work completed in 2017.

PROJECT 2. CITYWIDE MULTI-GENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER

Status: On April 11, 2016, the City Council approved a \$7.1 million plan for a new city-wide multigenerational community center at the site of the former Dame School located at 14 Canterbury Road (CIP #443). As part of its approval, the Council appropriated \$6.55 million of supplemental funding for design and construction. A contract for design services was executed on May 23, 2016. Design and permitting efforts were substantially completed in late fall 2016.

A Request for Qualifications and Experience (RFQ&E) was prepared for the purpose of selecting a Construction Manager (i.e., General Contractor) for the project. A total of 11 responses to the RFQ&E were received on November 18, 2016. Five firms were short listed and interviewed. Milestone Engineering and Construction was selected to be the Construction Manager for the project on January 5, 2017.

During the ensuing months, the Construction Manager solicited bids from various subcontractors and established a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for the project. Due to a robust construction market, the project cost exceeded available budget. Therefore, on May 8, 2017, the City Council appropriated an additional \$515,000 to support the project.

Construction began in late June 2017. As of September 30, 2017, all demolition activities were completed, foundation footings and frost walls for the new gymnasium and support spaces were nearly complete, interior framing within the 1960's wing was largely complete, and installation of rough mechanical/electrical/plumbing were well underway. The project is scheduled to be completed in June 2018.

PROJECT 3. SUSTAINABILITY: MUNICIPAL FACILITIES, RECREATIONAL ASSETS, AND NORTHERN PASS

Status: City staff provided a report and presentation to the City Council on the impact of invasive insect species within the City of Concord at its April 2016 meeting. The City Council accepted the report with the understanding that there will be several action items over the next several years.

The City continues to follow the Northern Pass project closely. Per Council's direction, the City filed as an intervener at the federal and state levels. The Council's Northern Pass Committee, the Community Development Department, and the City Solicitor's office continue to work closely to protect the City's interests in this matter.

PROJECT 4. OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

a) South Main Street

Status: On September 21, 2011, the State of New Hampshire notified the City of its plans to divest of the former Employment Security property located at 32-34 South Main Street and 33 South State Street. The State divested of this property as part of a larger plan to consolidate various Employment Security offices throughout central New Hampshire to the former Tobey Building in the State Office Park on Fruit Street. Renovation of the Tobey Building was completed in May 2014. The State's asking price was \$1.75 million, as determined by a July 2011 real estate appraisal. In accordance with RSA 4:40, the City was afforded a right of first refusal to acquire the property before it was listed on the open market.

Due to the property's highly visible location and strategic importance relative to the City's ongoing downtown revitalization efforts, the City elected to invoke its right of first refusal to acquire the property. Recognizing its fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayers, the City Council had initially hoped to avoid using City funds to acquire the property by partnering with a private developer who would acquire the site through a three party transaction involving the City, the State, and the developer. As such, in early 2013 the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purpose of selecting a developer to redevelop the property. Two proposals were received, but neither ultimately moved forward. As a result, on October 31, 2014, the City acquired the property for the sum of \$1.575 million plus closing costs.

To finance the purchase and related holding costs, the City Council approved Resolutions #8777 and #8778, which appropriated the sum of \$1.99 million in Sears Block Tax Increment Finance (SBTIF) District bonds and notes. In accordance with RSA 162-K:8 (the State law governing tax increment finance districts), as well as the SBTIF's Development Program and Financing Plan, these bonds and notes were issued as short-term, low cost interest only Bond Anticipation Notes, with the understanding that the issuance would eventually be converted to a full principal and interest debt once the property is sold to a developer. At the time of purchase, the City had structured its financing plan on the assumption it would hold the property for approximately five years.

In January 2015, the City issued an RFP for the purpose of engaging a commercial real estate broker to market the property. In March 2015, the City engaged the NAI Norwood Group of Bedford, New Hampshire, to market the site. To support marketing efforts, the City engaged a design team to prepare conceptual site plans depicting how the property could potentially be redeveloped. Following completion of the development concepts and a comprehensive marketing package, the property was put on the market in August 2015 with an asking price of \$1.6 million.

On April 19, 2017, Dol-Soul Properties LLC submitted a Letter of Intent to acquire the property. A purchase and sales agreement was prepared and submitted to the City Council on September 11, 2017 for public hearing on October 10, 2017. Dol-Soul plans to acquire the property for \$1.075 million and redevelop the property into a \$12.5 million, 120,000 square foot mixed use project featuring approximately 109 market rate apartments and 5,000 square feet of commercial space, as well as 54-103 parking spaces. To support the project, the City will demolish the former Employment Security building at a cost of approximately \$300,000, and will provide up to 82 permit parking spaces to augment on-site parking provided by the developer. The project is expected to start construction in late 2018.

b) Penacook Village

Status: Final cleanup of the 4.04 acre former Penacook Mill/Amazon Realty site located at 11-35 Canal Street was completed in September 2014. In January 2015, the City issued a Request for Proposals for the purpose of engaging a commercial real estate broker to market the property. In March 2015, the City engaged the NAI Norwood Group of Bedford, NH, to market the property. To support marketing efforts, the City engaged a design team which prepared conceptual site plans depicting how the property could potentially be redeveloped. Following the completion of development concepts and a comprehensive marketing package, the property was put on the market in August 2015 with an asking price of \$540,000. On May 8, 2017, the City Council approved a purchase and sales agreement to sell approximately 2.5 acres of the site to the Caleb Development Corporation for the sum of \$540,000 (a full price offer). Caleb plans to redevelop the property into a 54-unit affordable housing project. The remaining 1.5 +/- acres of the site will be retained by the City for a potential future riverfront park, currently scheduled in CIP #567 in FY 2020 for \$1.2 million, as added by the City Council during the FY 2018 budget adoption process. On September 11, 2017, the City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into an agreement amending certain provisions of the purchase and sales agreement concerning temporary lot line configurations between the Caleb and City parcels. Execution of that amendment is currently pending. On September 13, 2017, Caleb received a crucial variance from the Zoning Board to allow for ground floor residential uses at the property. On September

20, 2017, the Planning Board determined Caleb's site plan application for the project to be complete, and set the application for public hearing on October 18, 2017. Pending the award of certain tax credits to help finance Caleb's project, conveyance of the property and start of construction could commence as early as summer 2018.

The Concord Public Library is monitoring potential locations to better house the Penacook Branch Library, as the current building has increasing challenges.

c) Downtown 2nd & 3rd Floor Redevelopment

Status: In February 2016, the developer of the Remi Block (formerly known as the Vegas Block) closed on a \$2.8 million financing package for renovation of the property into 20 market rate apartments and three commercial storefronts. The City contributed \$200,000 to the financing package through its Revolving Loan Program. Further, the City has supported the project with a RSA 79-E Tax Relief Incentive benefit (valued at \$315,000), and a license for installation of balconies over the City's adjacent streets. The City is in discussions with the developer regarding use of municipal parking to support the project. The project was completed in March 2017 and was fully leased within 23 days.

In June 2016, the Planning Board approved the site plan and subdivision for the Bienvenue project, which will convert the former Sacred Heart Church to 10 condominiums. This project has garnered significant interest, as its units will push the price point for downtown residential living in Concord. Completion is expected in July 2017.

The City has also received interest from other parties seeking to acquire other older buildings in the downtown area for conversion to market rate apartments.

d) North Central Corridor/Storrs Street Connection & South End Rail Yard

Status: Using budget surplus associated with the recent cleanup of the former Tsunis property, the Engineering Services Division engaged a design consultant to commence the preliminary design process. The initial review of the commensurate I-93 Bow/Concord project alternatives, however, illustrated that the City would be best served to delay the Storrs Street extension project until the State has a firmer grasp on its preferred I-93 alternative for the area in between Exits 14 and 15. Because of this concern, the City Council, as part of the FY 2018 budget adoption, delayed final design and construction from FY 2018 to FY 2020. As part of the I-93 Bow/Concord planning process, the City has articulated to the State its desire to maximize potential development opportunities along the corridor, including near Stickney Avenue, Storrs Street, and Horseshoe Pond.

ON-GOING INITIATIVE 1. SEWALLS FALLS BRIDGE

Status: Construction was completed in the fall of 2016. A final wearing course and the adjacent Heritage Park area were completed in the spring of 2017.

**ON-GOING INITIATIVE 2. MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR
IMPROVEMENTS – LOUDON ROAD**

Status: The City Council, at its September 2016 meeting, voted to no longer pursue the three lane conversion and instead make safety improvements via driveway access

management and re-paving. Paving is expected to start in early July and take four weeks. Paving work will be done overnight with curb adjustments accomplished during the day.

ON-GOING INITIATIVE 3. CREATE AND EXPAND PARTNERSHIPS (particularly in regards to Recreation and Economic Development Opportunities)

Status: The Parks & Recreation Department coordinates work with many community groups to expand recreation opportunities and to help with the offering of the following programs and services:

- In the fall of 2016, the Department worked with the newly formed NH Squash Association and St. Paul's School to offer new community sports leagues utilizing the indoor squash courts at St. Paul's School.
- Coordinates the Adopt-a-Spot Program with over 50 different organizations maintaining areas around the city.
- Works with numerous youth sports groups to assist with marketing and registering of participants. In addition to the Concord Crush Youth Lacrosse Program, the Department works with Concord Youth Hockey to assist with their "learn to play hockey" registrations.
- Works with the Pope Memorial SPCA for the operating of the dog park at Terrill Park.
- Coordinates with several groups for community park clean-up days, including the Friends of White Park, Concord Crew at Kiwanis River Front Park, the Merrimack River Greenway Trail Committee, and the group representing the Skate Board Park.
- The Senior Citizen Program continues to expand, due, in part, to partnerships with the Concord Regional Visiting Nurses Association, AARP, and the Community Action Program.
- Works with the Concord School District to host their weekly Concord Heights Family Resource Center at the former Dame School.
- Works with the Friends of the Audi to promote events, marketing, and volunteer days.
- Works with the Capital Area Wellness Coalition, the Patriots Alumni Club, the Concord Police Department, the Concord Rotary Club, Black Ice Pond Hockey, and Friends of White Park to offer several special events around the City.
- Worked with Red River Theatres to co-sponsor a "Movie in the Park" in July 2017.

The Concord Public Library partnered with local businesses to offer its first "How To" Festival in May 2016. The festival offered thirty 25-minute educational sessions for the public on a range of topics, including biking opportunities promoted by S&W Sports; scarf tying provided by Gondwana; and useful information about the City's trail system to name just a few.

The Concord Public Library has installed six "Little Free Libraries" in the community. "Little Free Libraries" are community spaces at which residents can read and exchange books for free without a library card. Simply take a book, pass it on to another reader, return it or exchange it for a different title. The "Little Free Libraries" are located at Rolfe Park, Rollins Park, White Park, Keach Park, the Oak Hill Trail, and the Marjory Swope Trail. There has been tremendous usage of the free materials in these libraries.

The new Economic Development Director has been meeting with many local businesses and civic leaders to assess community economic development assets and establish a network of resources that could be considered for potential partnership opportunities and/or participation on economic development task forces.

ON-GOING INITIATIVE 4. CREATIVE ECONOMY WORK

Status: Creative Concord is actively engaged in conducting the Americans for the Arts economic prosperity survey and is working with the City on the development of pilot programs for the coming year. The FY 2017 Budget provided matching funds for the survey and funding for the beginning of a downtown public arts program. Artwork was installed on Main Street as part of what is hoped to be a continuing effort to foster art in our downtown. In the summer of 2017, the Kimball Jenkins School of Art launched a bicycle-themed exhibit along the sidewalks on Main Street.

ON-GOING INITIATIVE 5. CONTINUE EXPANDED NEIGHBORHOOD STREET IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Status: The FY 2017 paving project has been completed as scheduled. With good pricing, the City was able to add Broad Cove Drive to the list of streets that were reclaimed this year. Staff is working on the RFP documents for the FY 2018 program and hopes to have it out to bid by mid-November. Staff is also working on a plan to use the Excavation Permit fees that cleared the legal phase this spring, as well the Senate Bill 38 funds that the City will receive.