



# CITY OF CONCORD

## REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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

**DATE:** July 31, 2019

**SUBJECT:** 2018 – 2019 City Council Priorities

### **Recommendation**

Accept this report as to the current status of the City Council Priorities established on January 29, 2018.

### **Background**

Members of the City Council met on January 29, 2018 to discuss and set priorities for Calendar Years 2018 and 2019.

### **Discussion**

Listed below, in ranked order, are the accepted priorities, projects and ongoing initiatives; and their respective statuses as of June 30, 2019.

#### **GOAL 1. BALANCED BUDGET ISSUES: FY 2019 and 2020**

##### **a) Collective Bargaining/Contract Negotiations**

**Status:** The City is currently under contract with five of its six labor unions and is in negotiations with the Concord Police Supervisors Association (CPSA), whose contract expired on December 31, 2018. Negotiations will begin later this year with United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW); Concord Police Patrolman's Association (CPPA); and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

##### **b) Health Insurance Costs**

**Status:** Health insurance costs decreased in FY 2020. The City was quoted a 0% not to exceed rate from its carrier, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, effective July 1, 2019; and was able to negotiate a -2% decrease in rates and eliminate the HMO \$250 plan. All City employees now pay at least 10% of the premium costs for health insurance. The City provides insurance to retirees as well, and, in January 2019, the medical portion of the plan was renewed with a 5.5% increase, and the prescription plan was renewed at a .7% increase. Going forward, both components of the retiree health insurance will renew in January.

**c) Capital Financing Alternatives/Storm Water Utility**

**Status:** City Administration will continue to discuss this issue with City Council and work together to determine if this separate fund is necessary to change how the City addresses storm water issues.

The Engineering Services Division is working to secure consulting services for the analysis required to evaluate a storm water utility.

**d) Enterprise Fund Approach**

**Status:** The Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee had an initial discussion regarding Enterprise Funds at their April 16, 2018 meeting. The Committee further discussed Enterprise and Special Revenue funds at its September 17, 2018 meeting, specifically addressing the Solid Waste, Arena and Golf funds. After consultation with the City's external auditors, the Committee recommended to the full City Council to reclassify the Solid Waste, Arena and Golf funds from Enterprise to Special Revenue, and for the City Manager to include support to other funds in the annual budget process. The City Council approved the recommendation at the November 2018 City Council meeting. The change of these funds to Special Revenue was included in the FY 2020 budget adopted by City Council on June 17, 2019.

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

**Status:** An Economic Development Marketing Tool Kit and a Strategic Plan was accepted by City Council, and a new Economic Development website was launched.

Form-based code consultants have been retained. A public engagement plan was developed, stakeholder meetings were held, and a character analysis and strategy report distributed. A draft of the form-based code districts was submitted in late spring and several public meetings were held in June to review.

City Council accepted the donation of labor and appropriated funds to renovate the terminal lobby and pilots' lounge at the Concord Municipal Airport, to make this entrance into Concord more attractive. This project was successfully completed in the summer of 2018.

City Council authorized ArgenTech Solutions, Inc. to apply for an FAA waiver to locate a drone operations training company at the Concord Municipal Airport. The company has now located its corporate headquarters in Hangar 4.

Upon unanimous recommendation of the Planning Board, the City Council unanimously approved the rezoning of 28.5 acres of property along Whitney Road, from Urban Commercial and Industrial to Gateway Performance, to encourage the development of said property. The owners of the option on the property are continuing to work to secure a supermarket for the site.

The Granite Center development project to redevelop 6 Dixon Avenue, 14 Dixon Avenue, and 1 Eagle Square was completed. This was a public/private partnership with the City, which entailed sale of City-owned property, RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentives, and various license agreements for improvements on City-owned property constructed by the developer.

The Rollins Court housing project that will redevelop the former St. Peter's Church site was approved by the Planning Board. This project was subsequently delayed and modified by the developer. The developer's revised plan was approved by the Planning Board at its June 2019 meeting.

An Aldi Supermarket opened on Loudon Road in the fall of 2018, and, according to sources associated with the development, it is outpacing sales expectations.

The OCP Zoning District was modified to allow for the inclusion of housing.

MetalMax, a siding and roofing materials company, opened a location on Locke Road. Coordination and assistance on issues such as the company's energy needs was handled by the Economic Development Office.

The Bank of New Hampshire Stage opened on June 22, 2019. The project is expected to draw 30,000 patrons to downtown annually and create \$1.1 million in new direct, indirect, and induced economic development impacts.

### **GOAL 3. PUBLIC SAFETY WORK / CONTINUED SUPPORT OF SOCIAL SAFETY NETWORK**

#### **a) Opioid/Substance Abuse**

**Status:** The Police Department continues to take an aggressive stance in combating the opioid and illegal drug crisis facing the City. 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 is currently working directly with Riverbend's Choices, an initiative designed to provide comprehensive treatment services for those suffering from substance abuse issues. 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 2018, the Police Department made 335 arrests of individuals with illegal drug related charges. During the first six months of calendar year 2019, the Department made 139 arrests of individuals with illegal drug related charges. The Department continues to utilize Project Granite Shield grant funds to cover overtime costs in conducting illegal drug investigations in the City of Concord and surrounding towns. The Department received an additional \$65,000 in grant funding through Project Granite Shield to continue these investigative efforts through June 2019. The Department will continue to seek out grant funding for initiatives geared towards addressing the illegal drug crisis.

The Police Department also continues its involvement with the Merrimack County Drug Court Initiative. As part of this initiative, the Department has a member assigned to the Drug Court Team. The Team meets weekly to discuss the progress of individuals that have been assigned to participate in the Drug Court process. The Team regularly evaluates the status of each individual in the program and makes recommendations based upon the individual's performance. The Department conducts curfew checks on each participant that resides in the City of Concord.

The Fire Department has also been very active in collaborative efforts to address substance abuse. It continues to participate in monthly meetings of the Capital Area Substance Abuse Disorders Leadership Team, with representatives from the Concord Police and Human Services Departments, Concord Hospital, Riverbend Community Mental Health, the Capital Area Public Health Network, and Granite United Way, to assure that all stakeholders are aware of addiction recovery resources within the community.

In August 2018, the Fire Department applied for a grant from the NH Department of Safety's Project FIRST (First Responders Initiating Recovery, Support, and Treatment) to enhance the ability for public safety responders to provide follow-up monitoring to persons with substance use disorders, as well as provide training and other resources to their families and households. In November 2018, the Fire Department was approved for \$126,999 in grant funding, contingent on the approval of City Council and the Governor and Executive Council. The City Council approved the grant on January 14, 2019, and the Governor and Executive Council approved it on February 20, 2019. A Program Director was hired on April 28, 2019. The new Program Director has delivered a training program to all Fire Department members, called "OUD in the 603"; distributed over 40 kits containing Narcan; met with providers in several agencies to assure coordination and integration of efforts; and has actively engaged persons suffering from opioid use disorder, along with their families and support systems, to provide support and treatment pathways. The training will be extended to the Police Department in July.

## b) Community Policing

**Status:** During calendar year 2018, and the first half of 2019, the Police Department has been involved in a number of initiatives designed to further its relationship with the community. As part of these initiatives, the Department has hosted several community meetings involving the New American community at "Blue and You" events. At these events, officers meet with the New American community and discuss ways to strengthen their relationship with the Department, as well as how to better understand American law enforcement. In turn, Department members learn more about their culture.

The Police Department assisted in planning and hosting a refugee youth summit event to help teach the youth of the New American communities the dangers of drug and alcohol use. The summit covered topics such as where youth can turn for help if they are suffering from addiction, how drugs and alcohol affect the body and mind, and the dangers associated with the use of these substances.

The Police Department takes part in the Refugee Mental Wellness Community Council and assisted in planning an event for New Americans and other refugees to help educate those suffering from drug and alcohol addiction. The event was held on March 15, 2019 and was highly successful.

The Police Department has participated in several other programs to help promote community interaction with children and adults. With the assistance of several local businesses, the Department hosted several "Coffee with a Cop" events throughout the City and conducted "Lunch with a Cop" and "Police Readers" events throughout the schools in the Concord and Merrimack Valley School Districts. The Department also participated in the "Love Your Neighbor" event at Keach Park, and hosted bicycle

rodeos during which children received instruction on safe bicycle operation and the proper use of safety equipment. The Department collaborated with several community agencies and businesses and was able to give away a number of bicycles and bicycle helmets to those who attended the event.

During calendar year 2018, the Department sponsored six Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) programs, and has conducted an additional three classes during 2019. RAD is a comprehensive self-defense course for women and includes 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 provides women with the knowledge to make an educated decision about resistance.

Due to the unfortunate trend of mass shootings occurring in businesses and schools throughout the country, the Police Department has been offering active shooter training seminars. During calendar year 2018, the Department participated in 15 active shooter trainings with over 500 attendees, and has conducted an additional two training sessions, including over 120 attendees, during 2019. The Department has also conducted three safety presentations with local businesses, two fraud education presentations for seniors, and two domestic violence presentations with the New American groups.

Members of the Police Department have presented several internet safety talks in the Concord and Merrimack Valley School Districts to help educate students about the potential dangers of the internet and how to avoid being victimized.

The Department also took part in the National Police Lip-Sync Challenge and created a video which has been viewed in excess of 570,000 times. This video helped double the number of followers on the Department's social media platforms.

The Department hosted National Night Out at Rollins Park in August 2018. This event promoted positive police and community engagement. Estimated attendance was approximately 3,000 people, with over 100 displays and vendors. The Department is currently in the process of planning the 2019 National Night Out event.

The Police Department continues to work on a new initiative to assist in community engagement. The Department partnered with Hero Pups, an organization dedicated to training therapy dogs for veterans and first responders dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder and other injuries. The Department now has a trained comfort dog that engages citizens that have suffered a traumatic event or suffer from mental health issues, and also helps engage the public at schools, hospitals and other venues. Liberty, the one year old Labrador Retriever, has completed all of her training and is very active within the Department and community. She has participated in many social and community events throughout the City, and has also made many appearances at all of the schools throughout the City.

In December 2018, the Police Department was very fortunate to receive a donation of \$50,000 from an anonymous community member. The donor requested that members of the Police Department identify persons and families in need and make monetary disbursements or use the funds to obtain goods and services for the recipients as appropriate. This mission was dubbed *Operation Blue Elf* and received very good press

coverage by the local print and television media in the days leading up to Christmas. Police officers and civilian support staff made great strides in completing this mission by the close of 2018. *Operation Blue Elf* was a community policing success, which continued into early 2019.

The Police Department is currently working with the Crisis Center of Central NH and Riverbend on creating an Adverse Childhood Experience Response Team (ACERT). This team will be a partnership that will be deployed to serve children who have been exposed to violence. The ACERT members will be trained to respond to incidents, assess situations, and determine next steps that can be taken for the child, such as support groups, mental health counseling, early childhood education, or child-parent psychotherapy.

The Department is committed to participating in these types of initiatives and continuing to foster the relationship between the Department and the community. 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.

#### **GOAL 4. PUBLIC INFORMATION, MARKETING, AND COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **Status:**

Fire Department: The Fire Department continues to maintain a very active presence in print, electronic media and social networks. The Department's Facebook page has 4,972 followers and its Twitter account has 1,390 followers. WKXL has a weekly feature that airs on Fridays regarding Fire Department news and activities. Topics have included fire incidents on River Road and at the State Library; the development of a new training center on Old Turnpike Road; fire investigations; cardiac arrest "pit crew" training; the Fire Department memorial plot at Blossom Hill Cemetery; Fire Department participation in the Rock 'n Race fundraiser for the Payson Cancer Center; forcible entry and extrication training; National EMS Week; a Stop the Bleed class; ladder testing; community relations events at Beaver Meadow and Broken Ground Schools; the Department's first line of duty death, Amos Turner, in 1914; the Department's role in alerting the community to D-Day in 1944; a tragic drowning in the Merrimack River; Market Days vehicle displays; the activities of the Project First Director; and fireworks safety.

General Services Department: The General Services Department continues to increase public outreach. The Department promotes 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 fourth quarter of FY 2019, the General Services Department promoted hydrant flushing with daily Facebook ads targeted to flushing areas, recycling news articles to share the status of the recycling industry and how residents can recycle better, road work updates, the City's Earth Day and Arbor Day celebration in conjunction with the Blue Bag Program and Sustainable Tree Program, road load limits, pothole patching, street sweeping, downtown spring cleaning, and upcoming events and information in the City's "Talk Concord" podcast. May was a busy month for promotions. Campaigns included National Drinking Water Week and National Public Works Week. For Drinking Water Week, the Department hosted an open house facility tour and promoted Concord's water

source, Penacook Lake. The Department also promoted that Concord won the 2019 Best Tasting Water Award at the NH Drinking Water Festival. For Public Works Week, the Department performed a high volume of public outreach activities to engage the community about the importance of public works services. The Department hosted a Twitter party to engage Twitter users in a live conversation about public works, successfully increasing awareness of Concord's services and earning over 5,800 impressions. The third annual Concord Public Works Celebration was highly attended by over 450 people, including members of the community and students from local schools. The free public event featured live demonstrations, games, music, exhibits, Touch a Truck, a Pay-As-You-Throw trash bag raffle, and Battle of the Backhoe. The event is a great opportunity to interact with the community about public works services, provide a positive experience with the public, and encourage local kids to have an interest in public works. The Department also recognized its employees with a barbecue-style luncheon and service award pins. New this year, the Department partnered with the NH Food Bank to fight hunger during National Public Works Week by collecting non-perishable food donations for their "Fill a Public Works Truck" Food Drive. Donations were collected at the office during the week, at the Concord Public Works Celebration, and also at Market Basket on the Friday of Public Works Week. Thanks to donations from the public, the Department raised \$203.42 for the NH Food Bank and donated 400 pounds of food for the Friendly Kitchen, providing 822 meals to the local community. WMUR News 9 interviewed the NH Food Bank and General Services' staff about the food drive at Market Basket. The Department also continued to promote new employees, employee promotions, and job openings with Facebook advertising. New videos were produced by Concord TV and shared across multiple platforms that promoted the City's Earth Day and Arbor Day celebration, National Drinking Water Week, National Public Works Week, and the 2019 Concord Public Works Celebration. The Department also promoted events at the Everett Arena, including seasonal roller skating.

As of June 30, 2019, the Department had 2,208 Facebook likes, 583 Twitter followers, 444 Instagram followers, and 213 YouTube subscribers. In addition, the Department had 9,969 total subscriptions to the Alert Center, Notify Me, and News Flash modules of the City website. Approximately 49 press releases featuring the Department were published by the local media during the quarter and the General Gazette newsletter had 1,179 total subscribers.

Human Resources Department: During the fourth quarter of FY 2019, the Department posted 11 new full-time, one permanent part-time, and three part-time/temporary position vacancies. This totaled 15 new postings combined with the 26 that were carried forward from the previous quarter.

In the fourth quarter of FY 2019, 26 job vacancies (FT, PPT, and PT) were filled, of which seven were internal promotions and 14 were new hires. There was an average of 57 days from posting to hiring. This statistic does not include temporary hires, roster/continuous development, or intern postings. There were three recruitments that exceeded 100 days. These were excluded from the statistics as outliers. In a very competitive employment market, we remain under 60 days from posting to hiring. Finally, there were four Police Officers hired from a continuous/roster recruitment, three Firefighter/Paramedics from a current roster, and 100 seasonal/temporary/intern positions were successfully filled.

The Human Resources Department continues to use its standard free resources (the City website, Primex, NHMA, Chamber of Commerce, Concord TV, EEO/AA sites, NHES Job Match, NH Employment Support for Guard and Reserve, and the NH Community College Consortium), as well as paid sources (Union Leader, Indeed, Facebook, LinkedIn, Craig's

List, and industry specific job boards) for promoting job postings. These sources typically generate an adequate response for most positions. The Department continues to look for new and affordable ways to promote its talent acquisition needs.

Information Technology: Outstanding growth of the City website has shown to be an excellent investment in communication technology. The City website review team completed a new City website, which debuted on June 28, 2018. The new website incorporates the newly designed City seal, a new color scheme, has redeveloped the leisure services sites, and expanded the design on the General Services pages.

Library: In January 2019, the Library began a “#CPLstories” promotion during which a patron-provided, personal story regarding the benefits of Library resources is highlighted each month via social media, the Library’s website, and the Library’s monthly newsletter. In March, the Library worked with Concord TV to produce a short video called, “Everyone is Welcome at the Concord Public Library.” In celebration of the 2019 National Library Week theme, “Libraries = Strong Communities,” the video features different Library staff welcoming the Concord community to the Library in a variety of languages, including French, Spanish, Tagalog, Italian, and Magyar. The Library continues to maintain a strong social media presence, including very active Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages; and a monthly newsletter with over 2,000 subscribers, growing by an average of 100 subscribers per month.

In June 2019, the Library (in collaboration with the City’s Public Information Officer and Concord TV) released the first episode of a new video series called, “From the Concord Room.” The series explores the history of Concord through the lens of postcards and other archival materials found in the Library’s “Concord Room” (local history collection). The first episode focused on New Hampshire’s State House and was released during its recent Bicentennial Celebration. The second episode tells the fascinating history of the Eagle Hotel.

Parks & Recreation: With the opening of the new citywide community center in June 2018, the Department added over 30 new adult programs. The Department continues to maintain very active Facebook (over 4,000 followers) and Instagram pages. Staff continues to update the Department’s website and all social media sites. Department staff continues to send out news releases and works with the City’s Public Information Officer and Concord TV for assistance with marketing needs.

Police Department: The Police Department continues to utilize 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 in 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 about upcoming hiring processes, drug take-back days, upcoming citizen police academies, and other events. In addition, Police Department press releases are placed on its web page.

The Police Department’s Twitter page has approximately 2,042 followers, and its Facebook page has approximately 7,170 followers. Additionally, the Department’s Instagram page has over 550 followers. All of these venues are used to disseminate information regarding Department/City events and provide emergency information as necessary.



The Police Department has also created a Facebook page and Twitter page for Liberty, the Department's comfort dog. Both of these platforms are used to update the community on Liberty's appearances and how her training is going. Liberty's Facebook page currently has approximately 871 followers, her Twitter page has approximately 113 followers, and her Instagram page has 316 followers. The Department has received positive feedback on all three pages.

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 2018, over 222 tips were received leading to the arrest of 35 individuals. During the first six months of 2019, over 141 tips were received leading to the arrest of 23 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.

The Police Department's Domestic Violence Officer has appeared on several news outlets to include the Concord Monitor and NH Public Radio to discuss domestic violence and options for victims.

Another initiative of the Police Department is "Coffee with a Cop". 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 12 "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.

The Parking Division website was overhauled and updated last summer. It is regularly updated with relevant information about ongoing initiatives, such as the Narrow Streets Project. In addition, the Parking Division has been mailing notices to all property owners in narrow street study areas advertising public forums which have been held to date.

## **GOAL 5. PARKING MASTER PLAN / IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES**

**Status:** The City embarked upon a strategic planning process in 2014 for the purpose of making the Parking Fund financially solvent, while simultaneously promoting economic development goals tied to parking, as well as improving customer service and the quality of the City's parking facilities. The Parking Committee presented its final Strategic Plan to the City Council on November 13, 2017. The Strategic Plan included a variety of short and long-term recommendations to be implemented over the next several years. In December 2017, the City Council approved several ordinances to begin implementation of parking reforms. All ordinances took effect on July 1, 2018 (start of FY 2019). On April 9, 2018, the City Council approved \$35,000 to re-program meters and install updated signage in order to implement the above-mentioned ordinance changes. Other financial components of the Strategic Plan were implemented as part of the FY 2019 budget, which was adopted on June 14, 2018.

The following is a status update for key recommendations of the Parking Strategic Plan:

- 1) ***Parking Fund/General Fund Relationship:*** Although originally scheduled to be implemented as part of the FY 2019 budget, this portion of the plan was delayed, per the City Council, during the budget adoption process. As a result, all non-meter ticket

revenues – estimated at approximately \$100,000 – continue to accrue to the General Fund rather than the Parking Fund during FY 2019.

2) **Technology:**

- a. **Dedicated Parking Website:** The domain name “ParkConcordNH” was secured in March 2018. A Request for Proposals for a web designer has not yet been issued; however, a temporary parking website (concordnh.gov/parking) was created in June 2018 on an interim basis to help facilitate communication with the public. The interim website was a vast improvement over the City’s old website.
- b. **Online Payments:** On-line payments began in September 2018 and can be made at concordnh.gov/parking.
- c. **Smart Meters & Kiosk Upgrades:** On March 16, 2018, the City received proposals from vendors for new smart meters, as well as future upgrades of pay station kiosks. Vendor interviews were completed in May 2018, and, on August 31, 2018, the City selected two vendors – Flowbird and IPS – for a nine month trial to test their proposed products. The trial period began in mid-October and is scheduled to be completed in mid-July 2019. Signage has been installed at each test meter and kiosk advertising an on-line survey to gather input from the public about its experience with the test equipment. Ultimately, the City will select one vendor to provide smart meters and kiosks to the City as part of a multi-year, long-term contract. A final selection is scheduled to occur in July 2019.
- d. **Pay By Cell App:** Requests for Proposals were sent out in May 2019 to the two pay-by-cell vendors currently operating in New Hampshire. It is the City Administration’s goal to select a vendor and implement the program by the end of October 2019. The selected vendor will be compatible with Flowbird and IPS meters and kiosks.
- e. **Transition to Cale Parking Cards:** This began on October 22, 2018 and is now complete.

3) **Days/Hours of Enforcement:** This recommendation was implemented on July 1, 2018.

New hours of enforcement are as follows:

- a. On-Street and Lots: Monday through Saturday, 9 AM to 7 PM
- b. Garages: Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 7 PM

4) **Meter Parking Time Limits (3HR / 10HR):** This recommendation was implemented on July 1, 2018. Metered parking in the downtown central business district (i.e., Main Street and associated side streets between State and Storrs Streets) is now 3-hour parking. All other on-street meters are now 10-hour parking zones.

5) **Meter Rates:** This recommendation was implemented on July 1, 2018. New meter rates are as follows:

- a. Lots and Garages: \$0.50 per hour
- b. On-Street: \$1.00 per hour

6) **Meter Expansion:**

- a. **Phase I (South Main & Concord Streets):** Phase I meter expansion (i.e., approximately 43 meters on South Main Street and Concord Street) was completed in late October 2018. Meters were not installed on Dixon Avenue due to loss of on-street parking spaces associated with the Granite Center redevelopment project.
- b. **Phase II:** On June 17, 2019, the City Council approved Ordinance #3043 and #3044 to convert 338 on-street parking spaces into metered parking. This total includes 258 meters throughout Downtown Concord, as recommended in the Strategic Plan,

as well as 80 additional meters on Storrs Street. Funding to purchase and install these meters was appropriated as part of the FY 2020 budget. These spaces will be managed with single space smart meters. Meters are scheduled to be installed and operational by January 2020.

- 7) **Changes to Certain Citations:** This recommendation was implemented on July 1, 2018.
- 8) **Time Limit Enforcement for Handicap Parking:** This recommendation was implemented on July 1, 2018.
- 9) **Parking Encumbrance Permits:** On October 9, 2018, the City Council adopted Ordinance #3023 and #3024, which revised the City's policies and fee structure for parking encumbrance permits. The Parking and Engineering Divisions are currently working to revise the City's Street Encumbrance Permit to include parking encumbrances.
- 10) **Lease to Permit Conversion for Garages:** On May 14, 2018, the City Council adopted Ordinance #3010, which gave the City Manager the authority to establish permit parking in certain parking garages and surface parking lots. The State Street garage was converted from leases to permits on July 1, 2018. The School Street garage was temporarily converted from leases to permits on January 1, 2018, in order to facilitate ongoing repairs and renovations through the summer of 2020. City Administration intends to enter into discussions with long-term lessees about making the permit program permanent following completion of the current construction project. Lastly, discussions with major lessees of the Storrs Street garage are ongoing.

The conversion has been very successful. For instance, in the State Street Garage, the City has issued 121 permits for 96 permit only spaces. Metered parking has also been expanded from 110 to 124 spaces. Meter occupancy rates are very strong. Lastly, total capacity of the garage was expanded from 233 to 238 spaces by restriping oversized spaces.

- 11) **Resident Parking Permits (UNH Law/White Park Neighborhood):** This recommendation was implemented on July 1, 2018. Permit rates were decreased from \$50/permit to \$5/permit in late June 2018, per Parking Committee request to City Administration.
- 12) **Neighborhood Enforcement:** Funding was approved as part of the FY 2019 Budget. The recommendation will be implemented pending recruitment of additional Parking Enforcement Officers, which is ongoing.
- 13) **Maintenance & Capital Improvements:** Daily property maintenance responsibilities transitioned to the Downtown Services Team on July 1, 2018, and a new tool cat utility vehicle (financed by the Parking Fund) was purchased to support these efforts. The Public Properties Division remains responsible for electrical and mechanical systems. City Administration is responsible for capital improvements.
- 14) **Financials:** Year-end financials for FY 2019 were pending as of the date of this report. However, financials for FY 2019, between July 1, 2018 and May 31, 2019 (or 92% of the fiscal year), were very strong, as summarized below:

- a. Revenues (July 1, 2018 – May 31, 2019):
  - i) Total Revenues = \$2,631,312 (106% of budget vs. YTD goal of 92%)
    - Includes \$145,000 from Granite Center Project for sale of Dixon Avenue Lot and compensation for Storrs Street Parking Lot License / closure of metered parking on Bridge Street.
  - ii) Meter Revenues YTD = \$1,264,402 (116% of budget vs. YTD goal of 92%).
  - iii) Parking Citations YTD = \$367,988 (77%; slightly below YTD goal of 92%). This is explained, in part, by the following circumstances:
    - Emphasis on warnings vs. citations during July 2018 to help ease the public into new parking changes.
    - Parking Enforcement Officer staffing vacancies.
- b. Expenses (July 1, 2018 – May 31, 2019):
  - i) Total Expenses YTD = \$2,003,803 (85% vs. YTD goal of 92%).
  - ii) Highlights:
    - Parking Division overtime is at 795% of budget, due to staff vacancies. Only \$3,230 was budgeted for Parking Division overtime. Recruitment for staff vacancies is ongoing.

## GOAL 6. FOSTER/ENHANCE DIALOGUE WITH LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

**Status:** Working with Senator Feltes, the City put forward a bill (SB 587) to amend certain State statutes concerning motor vehicle registration surcharges to support construction and maintenance of parking infrastructure. The proposal was determined inexpedient to legislate by the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

In June 2018, Senator Feltes submitted a letter to the NHDOT Commissioner raising several lingering concerns on the part of the City concerning the proposed Bow-Concord I-93 project.

## GOAL 7. ENHANCED COMMUNITY EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Status:** City Council approved a partnership with the League of NH Craftsmen to hold an event in September 2018 on South Main Street. By many accounts, it was a very successful event. City Council also approved the sponsorship of the 2018 Governor's Conference on Tourism, which was held in Concord in May 2018. The City's banner program continues.

The 2018 Market Days event included a slackline event that was featured prominently in the Concord Monitor.

The Parks & Recreation Department continues to work with many organizations to offer community events. The Department works with the Black Ice Pond Hockey Association for its annual event. Also, the Department created a partnership with Concord Crew for a summer "Learn to Row" program for first time rowers; and worked with Red River Theatres to co-sponsor two "Movies in the Park" events last summer.

The Parks & Recreation Department once again held a Summer Concert Series, thanks to the generous sponsorship from the Walker Lecture Fund and Coca-Cola. In total, the Department offered 14 summer concerts.

Since the opening of the new citywide community center in June 2018, the Parks & Recreation Department has hosted several events at the center; including a Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce “Business After Hours” event, the City Employee Barbecue, the NH Parks and Recreation Association State Conference, and the Concord Young Professionals Network.

## **GOAL 8. SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES**

**Status:** Form Based Code – Concord Next - In February 2018, key members of the Code Studio consultant team traveled to Concord for a three-day visit to explore the community, meet with key stakeholders, and conduct an initial public kick-off meeting. The purpose of the stakeholder interviews was to hear from people familiar with the city, local development, and existing regulations. The consultants subsequently provided the City with an assessment of its existing code that clearly notes subject areas for improvement. The first draft of the new zoning districts was submitted in late spring 2019. The consultant and staff held several public meetings in June to gather input on the proposed changes to date.

The Concord Energy and Environment Committee has been working with Community Development staff to develop ways of streamlining the regulatory process vis-à-vis solar energy infrastructure to meet the City Council’s aspirational goal of 100% renewable electricity for the Concord community by 2030. Multiple community forums were held in the fall of 2018 to solicit input toward the creation of a solar ordinance. A hearing before the City Council was held on June 10, 2019. Several concerns were raised about some of the proposed limitations on larger scale solar developments. City Council tabled the decision on the ordinance pending additional review and coordination between City staff and the various stakeholders.

## **PROJECT 1. BUILDINGS AND PARKS**

### **a) White Park Skate House**

**Status:** Milestone Engineering and Construction was selected for this project on February 27, 2018. Milestone was selected using a competitive request for qualifications and experience proposal process. On June 11, 2018, the City Council approved Resolution #9097, which appropriated \$1.15 million to construct the project. Final plans and specifications for the project were finalized in July, and Milestone bid the project to subcontractors during July and August. Pricing was finalized on August 30, 2018, and the City and Milestone subsequently executed a construction contract for the project on September 6, 2018. Construction began in mid-September. On February 23, 2019, a fire occurred on the interior of the building, which caused approximately \$120,000 of damage and delayed substantial completion of the project from March 25, 2019, to June 10, 2019. The facility officially opened to the public on June 14, 2019. The Mayor formed a committee to raise half of the total project cost.

### **b) Athletic Fields**

**Status:** The Parks & Recreation Department continues to work with leagues to review and increase the usage of its athletic fields. Last year, there were over 270 scheduled youth and adult baseball games played on the City’s four baseball fields. The Department also continues to increase use of the new youth lacrosse field at Memorial Field. NH Wild, a new semi-professional baseball team, had their inaugural season last

summer, playing their home games at Memorial Field. The NH Wild is back again this summer.

**c) Terrill Park:**

**Status:** The Parks & Recreation Department finished work with VHB, Planning and Engineering staff on the final design and permitting for the new Terrill Park. All local and State permits have been received and the project is now fully permitted in the event the City moves ahead with park improvements. These permits are valid for five years, which should be ample time for the City to complete the project.

**d) Penacook Branch Library**

**Status:** Library staff met with the Penacook Village Association to discuss the future of the Penacook Branch Library. The Library Director has begun visiting potential library spaces around the Penacook community to evaluate viability. Staff has contacted other libraries that have recently launched new bookmobile services to obtain some usage statistics.

**e) Cemetery Improvements**

**Status:** The Parks & Recreation Department coordinated the paving of over 1,200 feet of roads at the Blossom Hill Cemetery, in addition to making improvements to the Perkins Chapel.

## **PROJECT 2. FUTURE CIP PROJECTS**

**Status:** The final portion of the Manchester Street project design has begun. Construction on the Abbott Road/Sewalls Falls Road roundabout was largely completed in the fall of 2018. Final landscaping is expected in the spring of 2019.

## **ON-GOING INITIATIVE 1. OPPORTUNITY CORRIDOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**a) Former NH Employment Security Property**

**Status:** In October 2017, the City Council held a public hearing and approved an agreement to sell the former NH Employment Security property to Dol-Soul Properties for \$1.075 million. Dol-Soul plans to redevelop the property into a 180,000 square foot mixed use project, featuring approximately 125 market rate apartments, 5,000 square feet of commercial space, and 125 parking spaces. To support the project, the City will demolish the former Employment Security building at a cost of approximately \$300,000. The City may also provide a quantity of permit parking spaces to augment on-site parking provided by the developer. The developer's due diligence period for the project, which was originally set to expire in early April 2018, was extended to provide additional time to complete market studies, as well as secure construction estimates and to further study utility issues for the project.

During the fall of 2018, the Developer reported that the project had a \$7 million gap (\$30.4 million project cost vs. \$23.4 million financeable project). Unless the gap could be bridged, the project would be unable to move forward.

Over the ensuing months, City Administration and the Developer reviewed a variety of potential strategies to help resolve the funding gap. These included RSA 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentives, New Markets Tax Credits, Community Development Block Grants, and Tax Increment Finance (TIF) supported on-site and off-site infrastructure improvements. Upon review, the TIF strategy was determined to be the only viable option.

One June 10, 2019, a proposal was submitted to the City Council whereby the City and the Developer would equally split the gap. Amendments to the Sears Block TIF District, as well as to the City's Purchase and Sales Agreement advancing this proposal, were scheduled for July 8, 2019, with a final vote to be held on August 12, 2019.

**b) Elm Grove Properties**

**Status:** In September 2017, the Elm Grove Companies acquired four properties in Downtown Concord for redevelopment. Elm Grove plans to renovate all four properties and will add 31 new market rate apartments, combined, at 5 South State Street and 15 Pleasant Street. On December 11, 2017, the City Council granted RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentives with six year terms to support renovation of the two above-mentioned properties. Building permits for the renovations were issued in March 2018. Construction is underway. Apartments at 15 Pleasant Street were completed in the spring, and 11 of the 12 new apartments have been leased. Renovations of 5-7 South State Street are scheduled to be completed this summer. Work at 19 and 26 Pleasant Street has also been completed.

**c) Hotel Concord**

**Status:** During the fall of 2017, Capital Commons, LLC, began renovating approximately 20,000 square feet of its office building located at 11 South Main Street into an independent, 38-room boutique hotel, on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> floors of the building. The initial phase of the project was completed in August 2018. The second phase of the project was completed in early 2019. To support the project, on June 11, 2018, the City Council approved Resolution #9103, which authorized the City Manager to enter into a license agreement for certain private improvements on City property.

**d) New Concord Theatre**

**Status:** On December 27, 2017, local developer Steve Duprey, doing business as New Concord Theatre, LLC, acquired the former Concord Theatre located at 16-18 South Main Street for the sum of \$483,500. Mr. Duprey is working in partnership with the Capitol Center for the Arts (CCA) to undertake a \$5,457,102 renovation of the property to create a new performing arts venue. The new venue will be a second location which will be owned and operated by the CCA. This new venue will feature an auditorium with capacity to hold between 270 guests (seated) to 450 patrons (standing), and will be capable of hosting a variety of performances, including small plays, concerts, lectures, and movies. The auditorium will be equipped with retractable stadium seating for easy configuration of the space, depending upon the event. The Theatre will also have banquet capabilities for meetings, parties, weddings, and other special events. On January 24, 2018, the City's Community Development Advisory Committee approved a loan participation agreement with the Capitol Regional Development Council in the amount of \$250,000 to support the project. However, due to changes to the project's financing plan, the developers will not be using the City's Revolving Loan Fund

Program. Construction began last summer and the project opened to the public on June 22, 2019.

In related news, on July 13, 2018, Steve Duprey announced that he had entered into a Purchase and Sales Agreement to acquire the Families in Transition (FIT) property at 20.5 South Main Street. Mr. Duprey is currently exploring development options for this property, as well as an abutting parcel he owns located at 20 South Main Street. On June 6, 2019, Mr. Duprey filed a notice of intent to demolish the former FIT property.

**e) Former Allied Leather Tannery**

**Status:** 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. The project has secured all required approvals from the Planning and Zoning Boards. On October 25, 2018, the NH Housing Finance Authority awarded \$714,000 in Low Income Housing Tax Credits to support the project. When sold, the credits will generate approximately \$5.95 million in funding for the project. On November 1, 2018, the NH Community Development Finance Authority awarded the City a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to finance on and off site improvements associated with Caleb's project. Bids were received for CDBG funded improvements on May 23, 2019, and the project was awarded to Jeremy Hiltz Excavating in the amount of \$401,667. Work on CDBG funded improvements will begin in July. It is anticipated that Caleb will acquire the property and commence construction in September.

**f) Storrs Street Extension**

**Status:** The City is awaiting further determination from the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) concerning preferred alternatives for I-93 Exits 14 and 15. The State's ultimate route will impact circulation in the area of Stickney Avenue. The City and the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) expressed concerns regarding what was deemed to be the latest iteration of the State's plan, particularly its impact on pedestrian and cyclist connectivity across the river. In June 2018, the NHDOT project consultants revised the latest version of the plan to incorporate wider more protected bicycle paths on Loudon Road. They also addressed concerns regarding the intersection of Loudon and Ft. Eddy Roads. The NHDOT team met with TPAC to review these changes, which seemed largely acceptable to TPAC. NHDOT has still, however, not committed to the demolition of its warehouse facilities on Stickney Avenue, which is a long-standing concern of the City. This issue, along with other concerns, was raised in a June 2018 letter from Senator Dan Feltes to the NHDOT Commissioner.

In the fall of 2018, the City Manager submitted written comments and provided oral testimony to the NHDOT Project Committee and the NHDOT Commissioner regarding I-93. He reiterated the City's position that the State's Stickney Avenue garages are a blight that needs to be demolished. The City Manager also expressed disappointment that the State's I-93 plan lacked ambition, did not fully accommodate pedestrian/cyclist concerns, and failed to make use of the river as a quality of life and economic development asset. At subsequent public meetings held in April and June of 2019,



various members of Council, residents, and City staff once again expressed a similar concern, stressing that this project would significantly impact the capital city for decades to come, and, as such, it should be much more creative.

Staff also met with Pan Am Railways in November to discuss various rail related items associated with the project. Staff has continued communication with Pan Am.

The adopted FY 2020 budget includes \$650,000 of funding supported by the North End Opportunity Corridor District (NEOCTIF) for design and permitting of the project. These funds were asterisked in the budget, meaning they were not appropriated as part of the budget adoption process, because appropriation will require amendments to the NEOCTIF District Development Program and Financing Plan. City Administration plans to seek appropriation of these funds, as well as approval of required NEOCTIF amendments, in early FY 2020.

## **ON-GOING INITIATIVE 2. CITYWIDE MULTI-GENERATIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER**

**Status:** The new Citywide Multi-generational Community Center opened in June 2018. As a result, the Department has been able to increase the number of programs offered and increase its hours of operation to seven days a week.

## **ON-GOING INITIATIVE 3. CREATE AND EXPAND PARTNERSHIPS**

**Status:** The City partnered with the League of NH Craftsmen to hold an event on South Main Street in September 2018.

Mayor Bouley announced the kickoff of the public portion of the fundraising effort for the White Park Multi-Use Facility, with the co-chairs of the campaign being Jennifer Frizzell and Chris Brown. In addition, Tom Champagne, Councilor Byron Champlin, Kristyn Van Ostern, Laura Simoes, and Luke Bonner volunteered their time and effort to see the project through. The HL Turner Group donated over \$70,000 of free labor to put the designs and planning together. The new facility opened in June of 2019.

On April 25, 2018, local developers Jon Chorlian and Steve Duprey, d/b/a Granite Center, LLC, confirmed that they had secured purchase and sales agreements, as well as financing commitments, to redevelop 4-6 Dixon Avenue, 8-14 Dixon Avenue, and 1 Eagle Square; and to surface two parking lots. To move forward, the developers desired to secure a variety of items from the City. These included acquisition of the City's seven-space Dixon Avenue parking lot, RSA 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentives for three of the properties, and permissions to construct certain improvements on public property. In order to accommodate deadlines associated with the developer's use of New Markets Tax Credits, a purchase and sales/development agreement, and related items required to support the project, had to be negotiated, drafted, and approved by the City Council by mid-July 2018. Typically, these projects take a minimum of six months to complete; however, the City met this aggressive schedule and approved all related items on July 9, 2018. Financing and real estate transactions for the project closed on August 3, 2018. The project has since been completed.

#### **ON-GOING INITIATIVE 4. CONTINUE EXPANDED NEIGHBORHOOD STREET IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

**Status:** The FY 2018 paving project was awarded to GMI Paving. In March 2018, the City Council approved the addition of \$1,601,622 in Senate Bill 38 and Excavation Permit lawsuit funds to the FY 2018 Paving Project, bringing the total funding for the summer paving project to \$3,276,622. The project was completed in November.

The FY 2019 Paving Project went out to bid in February. Continental Paving was the low bidder and was awarded the contract. As of June 30, 2019, the paving is approximately 50% complete. City Council has approved the addition of \$1 million to the paving program and Continental Paving has agreed to hold prices to add this work to this summer's program. Work on the additional 3.92 miles of streets will begin in July and should be completed by the beginning of November.