



# CITY OF CONCORD

## REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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

**DATE:** November 29, 2018

**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 the remainder of Calendar Year 2018, as well as for Calendar Year 2019.

### **Discussion**

Listed below, in ranked order, are the accepted priorities, projects and ongoing initiatives; and their respective statuses as of September 30, 2018.

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

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

**Status:** The City is currently under contract with all six of its labor unions. The City and the Concord Fire Officers Association (CFOA) have finished negotiations and the CFOA has entered into a new collective bargaining agreement that provides a 2.5% COLA for the three years the contract is in place, and a premium share of 10% paid by CFOA members. In other collective bargaining news, the US Supreme Court recently ruled in the Janus case that service/agency fees that were mandatory were not constitutional. Thus, to the extent applicable, we have informed our unions that we would remove language to that effect from the current collective bargaining agreements.

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

**Status:** Health insurance costs increased in FY 2019. The City was quoted a 9.9% not to exceed rate from its carrier, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, effective July 1, 2018, and was able to negotiate an 8.9% final increase in rates. Costs continue to rise in health care, overall, and the City competes in a tight market to recruit and retain talent; therefore, providing competitive health insurance is a must. All City employees now pay at least 10% of the premium costs for health insurance. The City provides insurance to retirees as well, and, this year, the medical portion of the plan was

renewed with a 1.48% increase, and the prescription plan was renewed at a 12.5% increase. This will result in an increase of approximately \$30,000 for the retiree health insurance subsidy.

**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.

**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 discussed Enterprise and Special Revenue funds at its September 17, 2018 meeting, specifically addressing three Enterprise funds: Solid Waste, Arena and Golf. After consultation with the City's external auditors, the Committee has 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 will consider this recommendation as part of their consent agenda at the November City Council meeting.

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

**Status:** An Economic Development Marketing Tool Kit and a Strategic Plan has been drafted and accepted by City Council. The new Economic Development website is now live. Form-based code consultants have been retained and stakeholder meetings have been held.

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 in question recently stated that they 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, is underway.

The Rollins Court housing project that will redevelop the former St. Peter's Church site was approved by the Planning Board. Demolition and construction are anticipated in the first quarter of FY 2019.

### **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 the first nine months of 2018, the Police Department made 272 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 of 2019.

The Police Department 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 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 late August, the 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 providing training and other resources to their families and households. The Fire Department also did some preliminary work on a proposal entitled, "HEALing Communities" with the NH Department of Health and Human Services and the Center for Technology and Behavioral Health at Dartmouth College.

#### **b) Community Policing**

**Status:** Through the first nine months of 2018, the Police Department has been involved in a number of initiatives designed to further its relationship with the community. 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 has participated in several other programs to help promote community interaction with children and adults. The Department 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 a bicycle rodeo during which children received instruction on safe bicycle operation, as well as 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.

Through the first nine months of 2018, the Department sponsored three Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) programs. 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 recent trend of mass shootings occurring in businesses and schools throughout the country, the Department has been offering active shooter training seminars. Through the first nine months of 2018, the Department participated in 11 active shooter trainings with approximately 360 attendees. The Department also conducted four safety presentations with local businesses, four 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 dangers of the internet and how to avoid being victimized.

The Department took part in the National Police Lip-Sync Challenge and created a video which has been viewed in excess of 550,000 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 promotes positive police and community engagement. Estimated attendance was approximately 3,000 people with over 100 displays and vendors.

The Department has begun working on a new initiative to assist in community engagement. The Department has 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 intends to have a trained comfort dog that will engage citizens that have suffered a traumatic event or suffer from mental health issues, and also help engage the public at schools, hospitals and other venues.

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:**

City Administration: An Economic Development Marketing Tool Kit has been developed, and the Public Information Officer position is now filled.

Fire Department: The Fire Department continues to maintain a very active presence in print and electronic media and social networks. The Department's Facebook page has 4,124 followers and its Twitter account has 1,300 followers. WKXL has a weekly feature that airs on Fridays regarding Fire Department news and activities. Topics have included fireworks safety; National Night Out; grilling safety; retirements, promotions, and new hires; the activation of three Department members by FEMA for response to hurricane impacted areas of the country; heating safety; Fire Prevention Week; and home escape planning.

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 2019, the General Services Department promoted road maintenance updates to inform the public of work being completed, such as drainage work, road mark painting, downtown maintenance, etc. The Department continued to promote new employees, employee promotions, and job openings with Facebook advertising, and, in particular, promoted their new Maintenance/Operations Flex Technician internship with online outreach, a media article, and an appealing brochure that was distributed at a Concord job fair and will be used for future outreach. The Neighborhood Street Paving Program continued throughout the summer and weekly updates were issued in the City Manager's newsletter, in addition to daily news flash alerts and tweets for specific road closure information to keep the public informed. The Everett Arena hosted several events that were promoted on Facebook and through weekly articles in the Concord Insider. Roller skating continued through the end of July, with promotions including radio ads, press releases, newsletters, and a Facebook event page that reached over 29,700 people. The Department attended National Night Out again this year to engage the local community with an assortment of vehicles for Touch-A-Truck and a promotional table with giveaway items, informational brochures, and a Pay-As-You-Throw trash bag raffle as an incentive for residents to sign up for the Department's General Gazette newsletter. The Department developed a new web page on the City website to feature information about the Downtown Services Team, including the importance of the crew, their new daily working hours, and a direct link to the Citizen Request Tracker to provide the public with easy access to information and how to submit a work order request. The Department heavily promoted the City's Annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day, including targeted Facebook advertising to Concord residents, social media, several press releases, website alerts, newsletters, a radio PSA, and inclusion in the 2018 Solid Waste Brochure that was

mailed to residents at the beginning of the year. The Department continues to educate and engage residents about how to recycle better with attention to the ongoing national interest in recycling contamination. The City's trash and recycling vendor created a helpful video on how to recycle better, which the General Services Department shared on its website and in its newsletter. The Department also shared relevant external articles and materials on social media to communicate the message to reduce plastic waste and contamination. To increase excitement for the ice season at the Everett Arena, and to continue educating the public about Department services, early promotions included sharing time-lapse and detailed videos of how the ice is built. Ice skating promotions followed and continue through the season. The Arena now offers public Wi-Fi software that includes e-mail marketing for users that opt-in to the internet connection. Visitors that opt-in to the Wi-Fi connection for the first time will receive an e-mail shortly after thanking them for visiting the Arena, encouraging them to visit the City website and liking the Arena's Facebook page, and providing contact information for the Arena to encourage two-way communication. This software will be used for other future e-mail marketing initiatives to increase visitors and visitor engagement.

As of September 30, 2018, the Department had 1,940 Facebook likes, 511 Twitter followers, 25 Google+ followers, and 155 YouTube subscribers. In addition, the Department had 8,789 total subscriptions to the Alert Center, Notify Me, and News Flash modules of the City website. Approximately 25 press releases featuring the Department have been published by the local media during this quarter and the General Gazette newsletter had 1,120 subscribers.

Human Resources Department: During the first quarter of FY 2019, the Department posted nine new full-time, two permanent part-time, and one part-time position vacancies. This totaled 12 new postings combined with the 22 that were carried forward from the previous quarter.

In the first quarter of FY 2019, 21 job vacancies (FT, PPT, and PT) were filled, of which 11 were internal promotions and 10 were new hires. There was an average of 53 days from posting to hiring. This statistic does not include temporary hires, roster development postings, or intern postings. There were two recruitments (over 100 days) that totaled 242 days. The post to hire average would be 47 days without these outliers. Additionally, there were three Police Officers and two Firefighters hired from an existing roster and 11 seasonal/temporary/intern positions filled.

During the first quarter of FY 2019, Department members attended two job fairs; one at the Everett Arena and the other at NHTI. Staff collected 76 new job interest cards and received positive responses from the attendees. Additionally, staff connected with the NHESGR, a support program for local National Guard members and veterans, and is now posting its vacancies on their Facebook page. The Department also established a connection with over 50 colleges and universities in New England through a consortium called Handshake. We are able to post to some or all outlets through this clearing house.

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 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 our talent acquisition needs.

Information Technology: Outstanding growth of the City website has shown to be an excellent investment in communication technology. The IT staff has been working for the past 10 months with several department staff representatives, in conjunction with the City's website vendor, CivicPlus, on a redesign of the current website. Current development incorporates the newly designed City seal, a new color scheme, and has also redeveloped the leisure services sites, as well as expanded the design on the General Services pages. The new design successfully debuted on June 28, 2018, in support of the new community center informational campaign. IT has also been working with the new Public Information Officer in preparation of marketing through social media and the current structure across the departments.

Parks & Recreation: The Parks & Recreation Department's annual winter/ spring brochure was delivered to the community in early February. This brochure advertises all programs and events from March 1<sup>st</sup> to mid-June 2018. In March, the Summer Camp brochure was delivered to the community. The Summer Camp brochure advertises all regular summer camps and many new camps that will be held in the new citywide community center. In April, the Department created two seasonal brochures to advertise all the summer and fall programs the Department is coordinating. The summer/fall brochure advertises all regular summer/fall programs being held between June 1<sup>st</sup> and early October, and the new Adult Activities Guide highlights all the new adult programs to be held at the new citywide community center. The Department continues to maintain very active Facebook (over 3,700 followers) and Instagram pages. Staff was active on the City's website development team and also upgraded the Department's scheduling software to allow users of the Audi to request dates and pay online for rentals. In June 2018, the Department created several videos highlighting the new citywide community center. Department staff will continue to send out news releases and will work 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 1,817 followers, and its Facebook page has approximately 6,200 followers. Both of these venues are used to disseminate information regarding Department/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 the first nine months of 2018, over 166 tips were received leading to the arrest of 22 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 “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. Recently, the Department held a “Coffee with a Cop” event at Charter Trust on North Main Street. Since its inception, the Department has held 11 “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.

## **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. 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 – shall 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. It is anticipated that a Request for Proposals for a web designer will be issued in January 2019; 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:** A vendor has been selected and a “soft rollout” for on-line payments began in September. Staff has been working through some initial back office integration issues. Once resolved, promotional efforts for this payment option will begin in earnest.
  - 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. 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 is set to commence in mid-October and run through mid-July 2019. Signage will be 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.



- d. **Pay By Cell App:** Sample Requests for Proposals have been gathered and are being reviewed by staff. City Administration anticipates that an RFP will be issued in January 2019, with the goal of selecting a vendor and implementing the program by July 1, 2019. The selected vendor will be compatible with Flowbird and IPS meters and kiosks.
  - e. **Transition to Cale Parking Cards:** This is scheduled to begin on October 22, 2018.
- 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 Phase I (South Main & Concord Streets):** As of September 30, 2018, the majority of new meter poles were installed and new meters were ordered. It is anticipated that the new meters will be operational on or about October 19<sup>th</sup>. Phase II meter expansion is scheduled for FY 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.

- 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 currently underway.
- 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) has been ordered to support these efforts. The Public Properties Division remains responsible for electrical and mechanical systems. City Administration is responsible for capital improvements.
- 14) **Financials**: With key recommendations implemented, the Parking Fund has been performing well. Key highlights for the first quarter of FY 2019 are as follows:
- a. Revenues:
- i) Total Revenues = \$940,926
    - FY 2019 Q1 Revenues = 38% of budget (goal 25%).
    - 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.
    - FY 2018 Q1 Revenues = \$574,728
  - ii) Meter Revenues YTD = \$361,086 (33% of budget; goal 25%).
    - FY 2018 Q1 Meter Revenues = \$182,497.
    - FY 2019 Q1 Meter Revenues are nearly double same period in FY 2018.
    - Excludes meter revenues associated with Phase I meter expansion area (South Main / Concord Streets). Meters will be operational on October 19th.
  - iii) Parking Citations YTD = 20%; slightly below goal of 25%. This is explained, in part, by the following circumstances:
    - Emphasis on warnings vs. citations during July to help ease the public into new parking changes.
    - Staff vacancies and ramping up additional enforcement staff.
    - No new citation revenues yet with Phase I meter expansion area (to be opened in October).
- b. Expenses:
- i) Total Expenses YTD = \$806,301. FY 2018 same period = \$836,331.
  - ii) Highlights:
    - Approximately \$532,000 of total \$806,301 YTD expenses was associated with debt service payments (principal and interest).
    - Parking Division overtime is at 212% 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, 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, this 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. The City's banner program continues.

This year's successful 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. This past winter, the Department worked 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 for this summer.

## **GOAL 8. SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES**

**Status:** Form Based Code – Concord Next - In early February, 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.

Since kick-off, the consultants have provided the City with an assessment of our existing code that clearly notes subject areas for improvement. The City Planner has kept the Council regularly updated on the progress of this project via reports and presentations.

The Concord Energy and Environment Committee has also 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.

## **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. A preliminary budget estimate for the

project was completed in April. On June 11, 2018, the City Council approved Resolution #9097, which appropriates \$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. The project is scheduled to be completed in March 2019. The Mayor has formed a committee to raise half of the total project cost. To date, approximately \$158,000 has been raised for the project.

**b) Athletic Fields**

**Status:** The Parks & Recreation Department continues to work with leagues to review and increase the usage of its athletic fields. This spring, there will be over 230 scheduled youth and adult baseball games played on the City's four baseball fields, an increase from last year, and an increase of almost 70 games over FY 2012, when the Department was re-organized. The Department also created a new youth lacrosse field at Memorial Field for weekend use by the Concord Crush Youth Lacrosse League. NH Wild, a new semi-professional baseball team, had their inaugural season this past summer, playing their home games at Memorial Field.

**c) Terrill Park:**

**Status:** The Parks & Recreation Department continues to 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 filed and permits were reviewed and returned to the City this past summer. 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 in May to discuss the future of the Penacook Branch Library. Staff has contacted other libraries that have recently launched new bookmobile services to obtain some usage statistics. The Library Director has begun visiting potential library spaces around the Penacook community to evaluate viability.

**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 progressed over the summer with a fall 2018 completion date.

**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, has been extended through November 30, 2018, to provide additional time to complete market studies, as well as secure construction estimates and to further study utility issues for the project.

**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 well underway. It is anticipated that 15-17 Pleasant Street will be completed around the end of the year, with 5-7 South State Street being completed in early 2019.

**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. The hotel will be located 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 will be 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). Together, they plan 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. A closing on the financing package is scheduled for July 17, 2018. Construction began this past summer and the project is scheduled to be completed in May 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 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.

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. In November 2017, Caleb applied for certain federal tax credits to support development of the project. That effort was not successful and Caleb re-applied for credits in August 2018. Awards will be announced on October 25, 2018. In July 2018, the City will apply for \$500,000 in CDBG funds to support this project. CDBG awards will also be announced on November 1, 2018.

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, 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.

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

**Status:** This project secured a temporary Certificate of Occupancy on June 1, 2018. The facility opened to the public on June 12th, and a ribbon cutting ceremony was held on June 21st. A final Certificate of Occupancy was issued on June 28, 2018. The project is now complete and is in the final process of being closed out.

**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 this campaign being Jennifer Frizzell and Chris Brown. In addition, Tom Champagne, Councilor Champlin, Kristyn Van Ostern, Laura Simoes, and Luke Bonner have agreed to volunteer their time and effort to see this project through. The HL Turner Group has donated over \$70,000 of free labor to put the designs and planning together to this point.

Granite Center Project: 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. 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 is now under construction.

The Parks and 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. The Tuesday night Never's Band concerts were held throughout the City in many of the neighborhood parks, while the Thursday night concerts were held in Eagle Square.

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

**Status:** The FY 2018 paving project was awarded to GMI Paving and work is underway. 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 will be completed by November 30, 2018. In the spring, the contractor will touch up and seed loamed areas.