



# CITY OF CONCORD

## REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Thomas J. Aspell, Jr., City Manager  
**DATE:** January 28, 2026  
**SUBJECT:** 2024 – 2025 City Council Priorities

### **Recommendation**

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

### **Background**

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

### **Discussion**

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

#### **GOAL 1. FINANCE & TECHNOLOGY**

##### **a) Balance the Budget Minimizing the Tax Rate Impact**

**Status:** For FY 2026, the City used \$610,000 to balance the budget. The City's adopted Fund Balance Policy is a minimum of 20.5%.

##### **b) Maintain AA+ Bond Rating**

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

##### **c) Maintain Compliance with Fiscal Policy Goals**

**Status:** The City General Fund Fiscal Goal E-1 limits debt service to 10-14% of total appropriations. On June 30, 2025, the amount was 9.20%.

##### **d) Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Implementation**

**Status:** Implementation of all main modules was complete as of the start of FY 2025.

**e) Assessing Full Measure and List and Revaluation**

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

**f) Pursue Federal and State Funding**

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

1. On April 14, 2024, the City was awarded \$1,140,000 in "Municipal Per Unit" grant funds from the InvestNH Program. The City received these unrestricted funds due to the development of affordable housing units at Penacook Landing and the Rail Yard, respectively.
2. On April 18, 2024, the City received a grant award in the amount of \$18,000 from the New Hampshire Council of the Arts, Arts Conservation Grant Program, for restoration of the Eastman Monument.
3. On July 8, 2024, the City applied for a \$25,000 Community Development Block Grant on behalf of 603 Legal Aid, Disability Rights Center – New Hampshire, and New Hampshire Legal Assistance, to conduct a feasibility study to explore the potential acquisition or development of a joint facility to house these respective entities. The grant application was successful.
4. In August 2024, the City Council authorized applying for a \$6,150,000 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as part of the Airport Terminal Program; and \$1,660,000 relative to design, mitigation and construction associated with the airport terminal project.
5. In August 2024, the City Council authorized applying for a \$605,000 grant from the State of NH / FAA relative to the development of an environmental impact assessment associated with the airport and terminal parking improvement project.
6. In August 2024, the City Council authorized applying for a \$5,058,000 grant from the FAA for the Airport Terminal Project.
7. In August 2024, the City Council accepted \$144,929.47 of Opioid Litigation Settlement Funds to be placed in reserve, retroactive to June 30, 2024.
8. In August 2024, a CMAQ grant in the amount of \$2,447,852 was received from the NH Department of Transportation for the McKee Square Intersection Project (CIP #31). This amount was subsequently increased to \$3,169,480.97, and funding was formally accepted and appropriated by City Council on September 8, 2025.
9. In September 2024, the City was awarded \$35,000 of InvestNH demolition funds to support the development of a privately owned, independent living facility for adults with developmental disabilities at 3 North State Street. These funds were accepted. The City also applied for an additional \$30,000 in InvestNH MUP Grant funds for this project; however, the application was not successful.
10. In the fall of 2024, the Police Department was awarded the FY 2024 Jeanne Shaheen Congressional Directed Spending grant in the amount of \$73,000 in unmatched funding. Funding from this grant will be used to improve crime scene processing equipment and to provide specialized training for Department members.
11. In the fall of 2024, the Police Department was awarded the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant in the amount of \$21,499 in unmatched funding. Funding from this grant will be used to improve equipment and technological enhancements.
12. In the fall of 2024, the Police Department was awarded \$9,626.47 through the U.S. Department of Justice Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program to be used as reimbursement for ballistic vest purchases for police officers. This funding provides up to a 50% reimbursement on ballistic vest purchases.

13. The Police Department received grant funding in the amount of \$73,000 from the NH Attorney General's Drug Task Force. This funding is designed to offset the cost of assigning a police officer to the Task Force.
14. The Police Department received \$40,000 in grant funding from the NH Department of Safety – Law Enforcement Opioid Abuse Reduction Initiative for conducting illegal drug investigations within the Concord community.
15. The Police Department received \$16,000 in grant funding from the NH Department of Safety, State Homeland Security, to aid in the purchase of specialized equipment for Concord Police Department members who are members of the Central New Hampshire Special Operations Unit.
16. In November 2024, the City applied for \$678,000 of Brownfields Cleanup grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to support redevelopment of the Concord Stables building located at 111.5 Warren Street. The application was successful and funding was awarded on May 16, 2025.
17. In December 2024, the City applied for a \$25,000 Community Development Block Grant on behalf of Families in Transition to conduct a feasibility study to examine potential renovation of ground floor commercial spaces located at 9-11 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane into housing to support low/moderate income persons. The grant application was successful and the study has been completed. At its November 2025 meeting, City Council authorized the City Manager to apply for, accept, and expend up to \$500,000 of additional Community Development Block Grant funds to support construction of additional dwelling units at FIT properties located in Bicentennial Square per the feasibility study. Award announcements will be made in spring 2026.
18. On December 17, 2024, the City was one of 18 municipalities in the state to be designated as a Housing Champion by the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. This designation will give the City and the other 17 communities exclusive, preferential access to \$5 million of special housing grants to be offered through the State's Housing Champions Program. On February 28, 2025, the City applied for \$1.75 million from the InvestNH Housing Champions Program to support the Heights Sewer Improvement Project (CIP #91 and #257). The application was successful, and the sum of \$859,689 was awarded on April 16, 2025 for the pump station portion of the project (CIP #275). These funds were accepted and appropriated by City Council via Resolution #9769 on September 8, 2025. The project is underway.
19. In January 2025, the City was awarded a \$500,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant to help with the construction of a new Skate Board Park at Kiwanis Riverside Park. The Parks & Recreation Department is working with the non-profit Concord Skate Park Association to raise the \$500,000 match required as part of the grant award.
20. On December 30, 2025, a modular traffic barrier system was ordered which is intended to protect eventgoers that occupy closed roadways against vehicle ramming incidents. This purchase was made using \$258,958 in Homeland Security Program grant funds that was accepted by City Council on February 10, 2025 for this purpose. The system is expected to arrive in March 2026.
21. In March 2025, the Police Department applied for the Stanton K-9 Establishment Grant for up to \$55,000 designated for start-up costs associated with introducing a new Law Enforcement K-9 Program. The Police Department was awarded \$51,900 to re-establish a patrol service dog, acceptance of which was unanimously approved by City Council in May 2025. The Police Department has subsequently selected a K9 handler, purchased a 10-month old Belgian Malinois, and started a 14-week K9

- training academy program to achieve certification through the North American Police Working Dog Association.
22. In June 2025, the Police Department applied for federal grant funding through the FY 2025 Community Policing Development Accreditation Supporting Law Enforcement Agencies Seeking Accreditation COPS grant program. The Police Department is seeking up to \$90,000 to support the Department's State accreditation process.
  23. In June 2025, the Police Department applied for federal grant funding through the FY 2025 Community Policing Development Microgrant Program, through the COPS grant program. The Department is seeking \$88,000 to purchase specialized equipment used to identify unknown hazardous substances, such as fentanyl and its synthetic analogs.
  24. The Police Department received \$80,000 in grant funding from the NH Highway Safety Agency – Law Enforcement Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative. The Department will use funds from this grant to pay for overtime expenses incurred by the Department as it implements enhanced strategies in its efforts to combat the illegal drug/opioid crisis facing the City and surrounding communities.
  25. The Police Department received \$80,100 in grant funding from the NH Highway Safety Agency, of which \$23,100 will be used to assist with proactive roadway safety programs, such as added DWI enforcement, seatbelt education and enforcement, speed enforcement, distracted driving enforcement, community outreach and betterment, and pedestrian safety enforcement. The remaining \$57,000 received will be used for the purchase of Collision Analysis Reconstruction equipment. This equipment will be used to increase the Department's investigative abilities related to serious bodily injury and fatal traffic accidents.
  26. On November 10, 2025, the City Council approved a resolution which authorized the City to apply for, accept, and appropriate up to \$130,000 of Community Development Block Grant funds from the NH Community Development Finance Authority on behalf of the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness to assist with funding for their Emergency Winter Shelter and Resource Center. Award announcements are expected in early 2026.

**g) Cost Containment – Health Insurance Costs**

**Status:** The City received an increase of 10.5% for FY 2027 on medical, after a 17.9% not to exceed (NTE) rate. The medical renewal NTE was, in part, due to unprecedented trend increases in health care costs. This past year has seen the end of one of the three health care risk pools, as well as School Care issuing contribution assessments to make up for shortfalls, and HealthTrust has been building a back-up of reserves through two years of double-digit premium renewals. We are seeing a lower amount paid to high cost claimants, although we have 11 claimants that are over the pooling amount of \$150,000. Other drivers of this include the rising cost of medical care, including rising labor costs for clinical staff and medical workforce shortages; high incident rates of mental illness and chronic conditions; and the cost impact of specialty medications like specialty drugs, biosimilars, and GLP-1 can't be understated.

The City continues to offer a high deductible health plan with a Health Savings Account to driver consumerism, and continue to market an enhanced Reduce My Cost program to encourage employees to pursue lower cost providers for ancillary services like CT scans, MRI's, and lab work. The program pays a percentage of savings directly to the employee for choosing the low-cost provider. The City, along with its benefit consultant, Borislow, continually looks at ways in which to contain costs on health insurance.

The City continues to be self-insured for dental, using Delta Dental as our third-party administrator. The City set a 7% increase for Dental for FY 2027 based on claims and the forecast of Borislow.

## **h) Technology Infrastructure Improvements**

**Status:** The Information Technology Department has completed the replacement of the wired networking infrastructure. Cybersecurity efforts funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to improve security around the water and wastewater systems (to be completed mid-2026) are running behind schedule due to delays by the vendor. We have completed the upgrade of all eligible Windows workstation operating systems from Windows 10 to Windows 11.

The replacement of the City's wireless networking infrastructure was completed in its entirety ahead of schedule; as well as expansion of the fiber network to the new Penacook Library & Activity Center and the new Police Station. Additional fiber has been run for the City Stables. The replacement of Human Services software has been completed.

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

Using funding appropriated in the FY 2026 budget, the Community Development Department has engaged Tyler Technologies to transfer the City's development permitting database, which was used to manage all development permits prior to August 2022, to the City's Energov permitting platform (which went live in August 2022). This will ensure that all development permitting information is located in a single database. The project is ongoing.

## **GOAL 2. ORGANIZATIONAL**

### **a) Recruitment and Retention**

**Status:** All six of the City's labor unions are under collective bargaining agreements with an eye on retention and recruitment. The COLA's authorized by the City Council are well ahead of the 2025 twelve-month CPI for New England, which came in at 2.5%.

Eight employees initiated Paid Family Medical Leave during the second quarter of FY 2026. Five of those claims were for bonding, two were for intermittent leave for family, and one was for intermittent leave due to illness of employee. The employee referral bonus paid out \$7,000 in the second quarter of FY 2026, with 5 referred employees.

The Community Development Department has experienced significant vacancies and turnover during the past two years. As of March 31, 2025, there were 38 positions in the Department. Of this total, 30 positions (or 79% of the Department) are staffed by persons who either joined the Department or were promoted to their current position

after June 2022. As of December 31, 2025, there was only one vacant position in the Department (City Planner).

The Police Department has made great strides in the right direction with staffing. As of December 31, 2025, the Police Department hired three new police officers. One of these police officers has prior full-time law enforcement experience and has immediately begun field training. The other two new officers will begin the 16-week NH Police Academy to acquire their police officer certification before they start field training with the Concord Police Department. The Department hired two new police dispatchers who are in training status. The Department has two additional police dispatcher candidates who will be hired in January 2026, which will make our dispatch center fully staffed.

The Police Social Worker Unit is fully staffed and has quickly developed into a critical component of the Police Department.

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

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

Overall, Police Department staffing is trending in a positive direction; however, Chief Brad Osgood has announced his retirement, effective January 23, 2026, after serving as Chief of Police for over 12 years. This will be a tremendous loss in experience for both the Police Department and the City of Concord.

The Parks and Recreation Department managed to hire all funded seasonal positions in the Parks and Cemetery Divisions. However, despite best efforts, they were unable to hire an adequate number of lifeguards for the 2025 season. Full time staffing within the department has been fairly stable this year except with the two share positions within the cemetery division. These shared positions work for nine months with the Parks & Recreation Department, and three months with the General Services Department. Turn over has been high for the PT positions for opening and closing the City-Wide Community Center, Merrimack Lodge at White Park and the new Community room in Penacook.

At the November 2024 City Council meeting, for the second consecutive year, City Council appropriated \$400,000 to fund a winter stipend to be paid to full-time General Services Department employees that support winter operations for city streets, sidewalks, and the airport. The stipend was paid for the winter season from December 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025. During this period, General Services successfully filled a vacant CDL position with a candidate possessing a CDL for the first time in a number

of years. One General Services employee, who was training to secure a CDL, resigned to pursue a different profession in the private sector.

**b) Class and Compensation Study**

**Status:** Paypoint HR completed the Class and Compensation Study and it was presented to the City Council at the September and October Council Meetings. The report was released for consideration, though not yet adopted by Council.

The project team has been working with unions to address their questions, as well as working with Department Heads to establish the labor grade structure and ten-step wage scale that was recommended by the report. If the report is accepted by City Council, it will allow our six labor unions to re-open the collective bargaining agreements as they relate to wages for negotiation in light of the new information.

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

**Status:** The City Council DEIJB Committee will report on the status of this goal. The internal DEIJB committee has partnered with Avant Consulting. We have completed our work with Avant. Now we are using that training to develop Universal Design Recruitment Practices. A beta run was conducted in December, following a training session on Universal Design. In January, the hiring managers will re-convene to discuss the results of the beta testing and make final recommendations to our recruitment practices.,

We have selected two Employee Resource Groups and training was conducted for the co-chairs in the first quarter of FY 2026. Employee Resource Groups will continue to meet in FY 2026 on the topics of Workplace Wellness and Caregivers Alliance for Resources, Empowerment, and Support (CARES).

**d) Solid Waste Contract Implementation**

**Status:** The General Services Department continues its planning and coordination efforts with the City's solid waste collection contractor, Casella Waste Systems, and the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) relative to the impending transition to automated collection.

This transition, which will result in trash and recycling collection being completed by vehicles equipped with an automated "arm" picking up City-issued totes (garbage and recycling collection bins), is scheduled to take place in two phases. The first phase, a pilot phase, is expected to launch on or around July 1, 2026, to approximately 25% of Concord homes, as determined by collection routes. The second, subsequent phase will then roll out the program Citywide on or around July 1, 2028.

All residents received communications relative to a general program overview in December 2025, while further information will be mailed to "pilot" households in early 2026.

For more information, including an interactive map illustrating the pilot collection routes, visit [www.concordnh.gov/automated](http://www.concordnh.gov/automated) collection.

### e) Community Communication

**Status:** The Fire Chief, as the Emergency Management Coordinator for the City, has worked with the State of NH to gain access for key officials in the City to the Genasys Alert system that has been made available to all NH communities at no cost. City staff is awaiting initial training on the system prior to implementation. Training on this has been delayed due to other priorities.

### **GOAL 3. HOUSING / HOMELESSNESS**

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

The City, using a variety of tools, has directly supported several recent and proposed housing projects. Tools employed by the City include the sale of City-owned real estate, procurement of grants supporting the development of housing projects, construction of infrastructure improvements, zoning amendments, granting of RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentives, as well as gap financing through the City's Revolving Loan Program. Recent examples of housing projects directly supported by the City using the aforementioned tools include, but are not limited to: Penacook Landing / 33-35 Canal Street (54 units, affordable, completed in 2020 and 2024); Rosemary's Way / 95 Village Street (42 units, affordable, completed in 2022); Isabella Apartments / 32 South Main Street (64 units, completed in 2024); Independent Living Concord / 3 North State Street (12 units for persons with disabilities, completed in 2025); First Church / 177 North Main Street (30 units, completed in June 2025); 6 South State Street (8 units, affordable, completed in September 2025); as well as ROI Properties / Black Hill Road (385 units); among others.

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

Some notable housing projects which are actively under construction include: 11 Lofts / 11 Stickney Avenue (80 market rate rental units) – it is anticipated that the developer will be seeking Certificates of Occupancy in January 2026; Tanager Circle / near 150 Fisherville Road (68 townhomes); and Suffolk Drive / near 151 Fisherville Road (83 townhomes). Additionally, a preconstruction meeting for the construction of 144 senior rental units to be constructed at 33 Old Loudon Road has occurred and site clearing has begun, with full construction scheduled to begin in early CY 2026. Further, on June 30, 2025, ROI Properties received a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) from FEMA for modification of the Merrimack River floodplain, thus clearing the way for future development of 385 units located on Black Hill Road, near Exit 13 of I-93.

On September 8, 2025, the City Council set a proposed amendment to the City's zoning ordinance pertaining to the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). In accordance with recently passed HB 577, the proposed ordinance will permit ADUs by right wherever

single-family homes are permitted (which encompasses all six residential zoning districts, as well as four non-residential districts).

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

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

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

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

Additionally, the City has received a \$25,000 CDBG Planning Grant to assist Families in Transition (FIT) with a feasibility study to explore potential conversion of ground floor commercial space into residential units at 5 Market Lane. The study has been completed and, at its November 2025 meeting, City Council authorized the City Manager to apply for, accept and expend up to \$500,000 of additional Community Development Block Grant funds to support construction of additional dwelling units at FIT properties located in Bicentennial Square. Award announcements will be made in spring 2026.

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

- Compliance with NH State Law, RSA 674:59 (the State's Workforce Housing Law).
- Ample opportunities to develop housing in Concord. Presently, Concord has 17 different zoning districts, of which housing is permitted in 14. Therefore, housing is permitted in approximately 95% of the City's total land area (60.2 of 64 total square miles).

- The City's adoption of innovative land use regulations in accordance with NH State Law RSA 674:21. These include a Cluster Development Ordinance, a Planned Unit Development Ordinance, and Conditional Use Permits.
- Ordinances permitting manufactured housing and mixed-use developments.
- Routine investments in public infrastructure improvements, which support housing.
- The adoption of a Complete Streets policy and promotion of walkable neighborhoods.
- Intermunicipal utility agreements with some neighboring municipalities which have, or could encourage, housing development.

The Town of Boscawen was the only other municipality in central New Hampshire to be designated as a "Housing Champion" in 2024.

Due to its designation as a "Housing Champion", the City has been afforded preferential access to the State's InvestNH grant program to support infrastructure investments which facilitate housing. On February 28, 2025, the City applied for \$1.75 million from InvestNH to support the Heights Sewer Improvement Project (CIP #91 and #257). The application was successful, and the sum of \$859,689 was awarded. These funds were accepted and appropriated by the City Council via Resolution #9769 on September 8, 2025.

**a) High Functioning, Coordinated, Quantified Approach to Homelessness**

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

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

The Police Department has continued to respond to calls for service involving members experiencing homelessness in our community. The vast majority of calls for service are related to continued trespassing issues, impairment issues, and encampment clean-up efforts. Welfare checks have increased due to the cold weather. In an effort to better track demands placed on the Police Department, a dedicated call for service code was developed to help better track this community problem. This code was developed in June 2025. In the last quarter of CY 2025, the Police Department logged 210 calls for service for homelessness. These calls for service originated from 112 self-directed calls and 98 citizen complaints. The total time officers spent on these calls for service was approximately 504 hours.

It is critically important to understand that approximately 319 of the 504 hours mentioned above were related to the Department's initial response to a homicide investigation into the murder of a homeless female in a remote wooded section of undeveloped City land off of Manchester Street. The 319 hours listed is for the initial response and crime scene processing. It does not reflect all the subsequent investigative hours put into this one call for service. This particular case is an ongoing investigation,

thus the hours invested into this investigation will continue to climb until the matter is resolved.

Another 56 hours of initial police response were related to a fatal car accident involving a homeless woman on Loudon Road. This case is also still under investigation and will require additional investigative time until the matter is resolved.

In the second quarter of FY 2026, the Fire Department responded to a total of 63 calls where homelessness either directly caused the call for service or was a contributing factor. The total time that Fire companies spent from arrival to clearing these calls for service was 28.3 hours. These statistics do not include where a homeless individual was involved, but homelessness was not a causal factor of the call for service.

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

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

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

On November 10, 2025, the City Council approved a resolution which authorizes the City to apply for, accept, and appropriate up to \$130,000 of Community Development Block Grant funds from the NH Community Development Finance Authority on behalf of the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness to assist with funding for their Emergency Winter Shelter and Resource Center. Award announcements are expected in early 2026.

#### **GOAL 4. TRANSPORTATION & UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

##### **a) Fully Fund Street Paving and Sidewalk Program**

**Status:** Through the Purchasing Division, the General Services Department (GSD) awarded a multi-year paving project to GMI Paving.

GMI Paving completed all of the streets included in the FY 2025 budget, as well as temporary pavement repairs on the Loudon Road bridge.

The following streets were paved in calendar year 2024: Airport Road, from Loudon Road to #91; Farmwood Road; Fernald Street; Fox Run; Freedom Acres; a portion of Hannah Dustin Drive; Kearsarge Street; Long Pond Road; Mill Street; Oak Hill Road,

from Appleton Road to #52; Old Turnpike Road, from Airport Road to Park Street; Pine Crest Circle; Regional Drive, from Chenell Drive to Airport Road; Shoe String Road; and Winthrop Street.

The following streets were completed in the spring of 2025: the full length of Clark Street, Dolan Street, Edgemont Avenue, Fisher Street, Palm Street, Fairbanks Street, and Horseshoe Pond Lane; as well as North Main Street from Bouton Street to Horseshoe Pond Lane.

With the exception of a portion of Airport Road, where the City's Engineering Services Division is currently designing a new sidewalk and drainage improvements, all of the FY 2024 and FY 2025 paving was completed.

In FY 2026, through the end of November 2025, the following streets were completed: Avon Street, Clinton Street, Mooreland Avenue, Midland Street, Meadow Street, and Madison Street. In partnership with the Engineering Services Division, GSD also completed work on two intersection improvement projects: Centre Street at Washington Street, and Sewalls Falls Road at Abbott Road. Both intersections are scheduled for completion in the spring of 2026, with minor punch list items remaining.

The Engineering Services Division of the Community Development Department is in the process of reconstructing the Airport Road corridor, which includes new sidewalks. The project will be completed in 2026. Engineering has also completed schematic design for sidewalk improvements on Green, Capitol and School Streets, which will be undertaken simultaneously with the State's new Legislative Parking Garage project in spring 2026. Design for sidewalk and bus stop improvements are also underway for the North Main Street corridor.

Sidewalk modifications associated with the realignment of the Washington/Center Street intersection, and Abbot/Sewalls Falls Road intersection, are substantially complete.

**b) McKee Square**

**Status:** Traffic studies and preliminary design concepts are underway. The project is included in the State's 10-Year Plan. Eighty percent (80%) of the project will be financed with State grants. On August 23, 2024, the City was notified that its application for a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant in the amount of \$2,447,852 was awarded for the project. This amount was subsequently increased to \$3,169,480.97, and funding was formally accepted and appropriated by City Council on September 8, 2025.

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

**Status:** The I-93 Project was included in the 2024-2025 State 10-Year Transportation Plan. Design and permitting are scheduled from 2025-2028, with construction commencing in 2029 and finishing in 2030. However, the State's proposed draft 2027-2036 10-Year Transportation Improvement Plan, as submitted to GACIT, dated August 14, 2025, only includes design/permitting for the project, as well as repair of multiple red-listed bridges in the Corridor. Due to current funding limitations, construction of the project is not included in the draft 2027-2036 plan. The State has agreed to relocate the State's Lincoln Line and portions of the CSX Northern Main Line to facilitate Storrs Street Extension North (CIP #18), as well as to construct future sections of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail.

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

**d) State Parking Garages**

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

**GOAL 5. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**a) Interim Zoning Amendments / Initiate Master Plan Update / Concord Next 2.0**

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

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

On August 11, 2025, the City Council approved Resolution #3183, which revised Chapter 26-9 of the Code of Ordinances to clarify and reform the demolition delay ordinance

On October 14, 2025, the City Council approved Ordinance #3186, which amended the zoning ordinance pertaining to the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). In accordance with recently passed HB 577, the proposed ordinance will permit ADUs by right wherever single-family homes are permitted (which encompasses all six residential zoning districts, as well as four non-residential districts).

On November 10, 2025, the City Council approved Ordinance #3188, which amended the zoning ordinance regarding childcare facilities. The amendments made the zoning ordinance consistent with State Law and removed unnecessary barriers to the development of childcare facilities.

On November 10, 2025, the City Council approved Ordinance #3189, which amended zoning ordinance provisions regarding Floor Area Ratio calculations (which pertain to development density). The amendments brought ordinance into conformance with State Law.

Staff is presently working on proposed revisions to the parking ordinance, as well as potential changes to the signage and flood plain ordinances. These will be brought forward in the coming months.

As part of the FY 2026 budget, the City Council appropriated \$400,000 to update the City's 2030 Master Plan (which was completed in 2008). A draft Request for Proposals (RFP) was reviewed by the Planning Board on November 19, 2025 and December 17, 2025, respectively. In accordance with the Planning Board's direction, the RFP was issued on December 10, 2025. A pre-proposal meeting was held with interested consultants on December 18, 2025. Proposals from consultants are due on January 29, 2026. The draft schedule included in the RFP anticipates that the Master Plan will be completed in early 2028. Once the Master Plan is completed, more comprehensive amendments to the Zoning Ordinance will be initiated to implement the goals, objectives, and recommendations of said forthcoming Master Plan.

On October 14, 2025, the City Council approved \$5,000 to conduct city-wide visioning exercises with New Hampshire Listens, to support the Master Plan update. Visioning sessions will be scheduled once a consultant for the Master Plan is selected and data gathering is initiated.

**b) Implement Economic Development Advisory Committee**

**Status:** During its March 2024 meeting, the City Council adopted Ordinance #3159, which re-established the Economic Development Advisory Committee. Appointments were confirmed by City Council on April 8, 2024. To date, the Committee has met on June 25, 2024; September 24, 2024; December 3, 2024; January 28, 2025; and March 25, 2025, April 22, 2025, June 24, 2025, and October 21, 2025. The focus of the Committee's initial meetings has been to review the City's various economic master plans, review of proposed interim zoning amendments, as well as meetings with subject matter experts in the areas of housing, higher education / workforce development, and childcare.

**c) Economic Development Web Site Overhaul / Digital Marketing Package**

**Status:** In April 2024, the City launched a newly revised and updated web site, which included an Economic Development page. The Economic Development page continues to be refined by staff.

**d) New Airport Terminal**

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

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

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

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

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

Following the approval of Resolution #9622, staff and project consultants began designing the project. Design plans were presented to the Planning Board in May 2024.

After the design process was initiated, the FAA determined that an existing environmental assessment (EA) for the Airport, which was completed in 2011, was insufficient for the new Terminal Project.

During its August 12, 2024 meeting, the City Council approved a consent resolution, which authorized the City Manager to apply for Federal and State funding in an amount up to \$605,000 for various purposes, including the completion of an updated environmental assessment and associated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review for the Terminal Project.

Before moving forward, the City must engage a qualified consultant in accordance with FAA requirements for the EA and NEPA review. That process is ongoing. Currently, staff anticipates completing the required EA update and NEPA review in fall 2026.

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

On December 9, 2024, the FAA informed the City that it had cancelled the \$2.51 million BIL grant for the project. Once an updated EA and NEPA review is completed for the Airport, additional grant resources will need to be identified and secured in order to advance the new terminal project to final design and future construction. Towards that end, City Administration intends to submit a grant application to the FAA for design and construction of a new terminal building and related improvements. It is anticipated that grant awards will be announced in fall 2026 (which is around the time staff anticipates completing the updated EA and NEPA review process for the project).

**e) Heights Sewer Project**

**Status:** The FY 2024 Budget included \$1.9 million, combined, for CIP #91 and CIP #275, to design a replacement sewer pump station and piping improvements to address sanitary sewer capacity for certain areas of the Heights. The FY 2025 Budget appropriated the sum of \$16,900,000 for CIP #91 (sewer main improvements) and \$6,250,000 for CIP #275 (sewer pump station improvements) to fund construction of the project. Design of the pump station has been completed and bids were received on September 23, 2025. In October 2025, the City awarded the contract for construction of the new pump station to PRB Construction, with construction to begin in the spring of 2026. Final completion of the pump station is expected by fall 2026. Bidding is tentatively scheduled to occur in March 2026. Construction of both projects will be underway in spring 2026 and will be substantially completed in late 2027 / early 2028.

**f) Regulatory Amendments – Review Charitable Gaming**

**Status:** During its February 12, 2024 meeting, the City Council set for public hearing on July 8, 2024, proposed zoning amendments pertaining to charitable gaming. The Planning Board held a public hearing on May 15, 2024 on the proposed ordinance. Ordinance #3167, which amended the zoning ordinance regarding charitable gaming facilities (casinos) was adopted by City Council on July 8, 2024.

**g) Mayor’s Business Visitation Program**

**Status:** The Mayor’s Visitation Program was implemented in August 2024. As of December 31, 2025, visits have included Boyce Highlands, Grappone Mazda, Northeast Delta Dental, The Viking House/Capital Craftsmen/Hilltop Consignment, Quality Press, Inc., and 603 Bar-B-Q.

**h) Historic Preservation Initiatives**

**Status:** The City continues to work with the NH Preservation Alliance on redevelopment strategies for the Gas Holder building, and recently attended two summits with State and local leaders to advance that effort.

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

Preservation and adaptive reuse of the First Congregational Church, located at 177 North Main Street, into 30 units of market rate housing, which was supported by a City RSA 79-E Community Tax Relief Incentive valued at \$393,000, was completed in June 2025. The building was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

On August 11, 2025, the City Council approved Resolution #3183, which revised Chapter 26-9 of the Code of Ordinances to clarify and reform the demolition delay ordinance.

In August 2025, the City placed the former Penacook Library, located at 3 Merrimack Street, on the market for redevelopment. In accordance with Resolution #9518, approved on December 12, 2022, as a condition of any sale, the City will retain a covenant on the property to ensure that the existing building at the property shall be preserved in perpetuity until such time as the building suffers a casualty rendering it infeasible to repair or rebuild.

In anticipation of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Eastman Clock Tower Monument's 1925 dedication, the City applied for and was awarded an \$18,000 grant from the New Hampshire Council on the Arts, Arts Conservation Grant Program, to restore the four clocks on the monument. City staff took care of the cleaning and replanting of trees in the park. A local Boy Scout added a walking path and additional plantings around the monument as part of his Eagle Scout project. A re-dedication event was held on October 27, 2025.

**i) Placemaking / Gateways / Community Art / Murals**

**Status:** As part of the FY 2025 budget, \$35,000 was appropriated to clean up landscaping at the Exit 14 Gateway. Cleanup was completed to the extent feasible given limited funds.

On February 6, 2025, Brixmor (the owner of the Capitol Shopping Plaza at 80 Storrs Street) granted the City a beautification easement, which allows the City to install murals or other improvements at portions of the property to beautify views of downtown from I-93. The easement was a condition of Planning Board approval for renovation of the plaza.

The East Concord Gateway sign was completed in spring 2025. Total cost was approximately \$5,000.

**GOAL 6. ENERGY / ENVIRONMENT / SUSTAINABILITY**

**a) Community Power Review**

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

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

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

Kearsarge Solar has secured an approved interconnection plan from Unitil. They also secured conditional site plan approval for the project from the Planning Board in May 2025, as well as all required State development permits. On September 8, 2025, City Council approved a PILOT agreement and group net-metering agreement for the project. Unitil has completed the relocation of its utility infrastructure at the property to a new easement area, which will accommodate this project. Construction began in late 2025. The project will be complete in 2026.

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

**c) Convert Remaining Ornamental Street Lights to LED**

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

The FY 2026 budget included \$1.150 million in CIP #628 to replace these 72 +/- street lights. Working with the City's Purchasing Division, a vendor has been identified that can provide required design and construction services for this project. The vendor is currently finalizing a bid for the project. Staff continues to seek potential grant opportunities to advance this project.

**GOAL 7. PUBLIC SAFETY**

**a) New Police Station**

**Status:** On December 15, 2023, the City entered into a Purchase and Sales Agreement to acquire 4 Bouton Street for the purpose of developing a new police station. On April 8, 2024, the City Council received a comprehensive staff report and presentation concerning acquisition of 4 Bouton Street for a new Police Station (CIP #643), as well as projected costs and a schedule for a new station if the City Council elected to move forward with said initiative. Following said report, the City Council unanimously voted to proceed with acquisition of 4 Bouton Street. In accordance with the City Council's directive, the City acquired 4 Bouton Street on May 24, 2024 for the sum of \$3,924,232.

The FY 2025 Budget appropriated the sums of \$240,000 to weatherize and secure the building, as well as \$3,131,800 to design the new Police Station.

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

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

On July 14, 2025, City Council received a consent report about the project, in which staff indicated that schematic design had been completed and that the preferred design consisted of a 72,828 SF building (38,778 SF renovated existing building with new 34,050 SF addition), together with 92 on-site parking spaces. The preliminary estimated construction cost was \$41,279,817. The same report informed City Council that approximately \$700,000 was available from previous appropriations, which City Administration planned to use to advance several potential components of the project, such as interior demolition and hazardous material abatement, as well as potential utility service improvements. Interior demolition and abatement activities were initiated in fall 2025 and remain ongoing.

As of September 30, 2025, design development was approximately 60% complete, and a construction budget was being finalized.

On October 14, 2025, the City Council received a comprehensive report about 60% design of the proposed facility, together with a \$45.5 million funding request for the project. On November 24, 2025, the City Council approved Resolution #9791, which appropriated the sum of \$41 million for the project. Final design will be completed in January 2026, following which formal bids will be received by the Construction Manager from prospective subcontractors for the project. Full construction is scheduled to commence in late March / early April 2026, weather permitting. The project is tentatively scheduled for completion in late summer / early fall 2027.

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

#### **b) City Hall Campus Master Plan & Schematic Design**

**Status:** On April 8, 2024, City Council was briefed on City Administration's proposed strategy to proceed with a City Hall Campus Master Plan, presuming relocation of the Police Station to 4 Bouton Street. The FY 2025 Budget included \$250,000 to undertake a campus master plan. A request for proposals (RFP) was issued in March 2025. Proposals were received on April 22, 2025. On May 22, 2025, the firm of Lavallee Brensinger was selected for the project. The project is currently underway.

#### **c) Fire Gear Replacement**

**Status:** The Fire Department received the remaining portion of the PFAS-free sets of gear that were ordered. All suppression personnel have been outfitted with one set of this gear. The only remaining PFAS in the structural ensemble is the boots, which are currently unavailable in PFAS-free models. Once these become available, the Fire Department will prioritize their replacement.

Over the next couple of years, the Fire Department will work to replace each member's backup set of gear, which currently still contains PFAS. This schedule has been chosen for financial and logistical reasons.

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

**Status:** The Police Social Worker Unit is fully staffed with a Masters level Police Social Worker, an Outreach Social Worker, and a Masters level Police Social Worker intern; and has quickly developed into a critical component of the Police Department. This

specialized unit does intensive follow-up on police related matters involving homebound seniors living in our community; community members experiencing addiction recovery and often co-occurring mental health issues; and Adverse Childhood Experiences Response Team (ACERT) follow-up visits.

As part of the FY 2026 annual budget, the Police Department added a full-time outreach worker position to its Police Social Worker Unit. The Department has also incorporated the funding for its ACERT program into the operating budget, where it had been grant funded in the past. We anticipate that this will allow the Police Social Worker Unit more time to provide services to the community, as their time spent on grant reporting will be reduced.

During the quarter ending December 31, 2025, the members of the Police Social Worker Unit handled 84 calls for service, involving approximately 231 hours of work on these initial calls. Some of the cases the Unit is involved with include aging and elderly issues, death, domestic violence, housing instability, mental health, substance use, and ACERT. The Police Social Workers provide intensive case follow-up for our community members in need and provide ongoing support.

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

#### e) **Community Policing**

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

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

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

In April 2025, the Community Resources Unit worked with Broken Ground School to assist them with their evacuation drill. Department members worked with Easter Seals and Alliance Asset Management to provide CRASE training. Department members also provided a security presentation to Merrimack County Savings Bank.

In May 2025, the Community Resources Unit spoke to students at Concord High School and Concord Christian Academy about working in the criminal justice field. Department members attended two Coffee with a Cop events, one at Starbucks and the other at Target. These events provide great opportunities for Department members to build positive relationships with community members.

In June 2025, the Community Resources Unit, along with other department members, collaborated with the Special Olympics to support the Torch Run. This two-day event began with one leg entering the City of Concord on June 5<sup>th</sup>, and exiting the city on June 6<sup>th</sup>. The Department had several members involved and arranged for the runners to have a police escort from the Capitol to just beyond the Epsom traffic circle. One member of the Concord Police Department ran the entire distance from the Capitol to the University of New Hampshire, the location of the annual Special Olympics event.

Also, in June 2025, the Chief of Police and other members of the Command Staff attended an event in support of the Boys & Girls Club. The Concord Police Department has a rich history of volunteer work in conjunction with the Boys & Girls Club. Much of the involvement with the Boys & Girls Club is in support of their fundraising efforts to help better support local programs for children.

In July 2025, the Community Resources Unit attended community meetings and geared up for the annual National Night Out community event. The National Night Out event is the largest event orchestrated by the Police Department. This event brings together a large group of community members dedicated to strengthening police-community partnerships, increasing awareness of crime prevention and enhancing public safety. This year's event was again held at Rollins Park, which bolstered neighborhood camaraderie by bringing people together to build positive relationships for improved public safety. The event was a huge success and raised over \$4,000 for the Police Department to use to fund other community policing events in the upcoming year.

In August 2025, the Community Resources Unit held various meetings with residents in the community and provided Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) presentations to the NH Association for the Blind, the Abbot-Downing School, and the Second Start Alternative High School. Police Department members also escorted the NH Police Academy's graduation class from the NH Police Academy to the NH Police Memorial.

In September 2025, the Community Resources Unit conducted three security assessments of schools, and conducted school emergency radio checks.

In September 2025, for Food Action Month, the Police Department partnered with the NH Food Bank and sponsored several food drives. Participants were challenged to "Help Stuff a Cruiser." Three local charities were the beneficiaries of the food drives. This year was another successful year, as community members were very generous with their food donations. These food donations go a long way to helping those in need in our community.

In October 2025, nearly a dozen Police Department members attended the Halloween Howl community event and handed out candy to children. During the event, police officers took countless photographs with families and children throughout the evening. This event provided a unique setting to engage with citizens and positively promote the Police Department. The night was an overwhelming success in bringing the community together for a safe family event on Main Street.

The Police Department's biggest community initiative of the quarter was working with the Toys for Tots organization to become redistribution center for surplus toys raised by the organization. Members of the Police Department assisted the Toys for Tots organization at their fulfillment center in Manchester, where New Hampshire residents in need were selected to "shop" for Christmas gifts for their families.

After all the fulfillment orders were complete, the surplus toys were brought to the Concord Police Department where they were further distributed to those in need. The members of the Police Department worked tirelessly to provide toys to approximately 1,000 children in the community. This event was held during the week of Christmas, and it was an extraordinary Departmental effort.

In the second quarter of FY 2026, the Police Department logged a total of 62 community policing events involving over 164 hours of service. Most of these engagements were smaller scale meetings at area schools, parks and businesses.

#### **f) Fire Department Equipment Replacement**

**Status:** The Fire Department took delivery of the new tower truck (ordered on August 9, 2023) on December 31, 2025. Crews will undergo training on the apparatus before it is upfit with radios. It is expected to be in service in February 2026. The tanker (ordered on June 15, 2023) started production in December 2025 and is expected for delivery to the City in the first quarter of 2026. The two ambulances (one ordered on February 5, 2023 and the other ordered on July 19, 2023) began production in December 2025, with delivery of both expected in the first quarter of 2026 as well. Two engines (one ordered on July 29, 2024 and the other on December 29, 2025) are not expected to start production for a couple of years due to manufacturing backlog.

With the increase in call volume expected over the next few years related to many factors, including the growth of residential units, coupled with the fact that the Department is already at operational capacity, the Fire Department recommends maintaining possession of an engine that would normally be traded as part of a purchase agreement once the next new engine arrives. The Fire Department will also include the request to purchase an additional engine in the FY 2027 CIP, due to the extended lead times (3-4 years), to allow for implementation of Engine 1 while also maintaining sufficient backups to use when an engine is out of service for maintenance or repairs.

The Fire Department ordered and received 10 new cardiac monitors using FY 2025 and FY 2026 CIP #527 funds. Crews will be trained in their operation before the new monitors are placed in service.

The Fire Department also received the newly ordered SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) at the end of November 2025. Crews will be trained on the new SCBA before they are placed in service.

**g) Continuous Improvement in Public Safety Effectiveness**

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

**h) Recruitment and Retention**

**Status:** The Fire Department made tremendous progress with recruitment and retention during this past quarter. Eight final offers of employment were signed in mid-December 2025, with an onboarding date of January 2, 2026. This fills all of the suppression vacancies. The new members will participate in a four-week recruit school in January. This will alleviate the burden on members having to fill these long-standing vacancies, and will have positive effects on employee burnout, as well as the Department's overtime budget.

The Fire Department has one vacancy in the Training Officer position due to promotion. Advertisements to fill this position will begin in January.

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

**Status:** On April 3, 2024, groundbreaking was held for the new park. The park was substantially completed in late fall 2024. A soft opening event was held on December 16, 2024. Final punch list items were addressed in spring 2025. An official park dedication ceremony and grand opening event was held on August 13, 2025. The park features a pavilion, walking paths linking to Canal Street and Crescent Street, and scenic overlooks of the Contocook River. Programming in the park includes a seasonal concert series by the Parks & Recreation Department. The project also included sidewalk and streetscape improvements on Canal Street, including a 10' shared use path, which will eventually connect to the Merrimack River Greenway Trail / Northern Rail Trail; and a new bus stop for Concord Area Transit. The total budget for the park was \$3,369,800, and was finished by Tax Increment Finance District bonds (\$2,525,000), Parking Fund supported bonds (\$160,000), development impact fees (\$179,800), as well as a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant (\$500,000) from the State of New Hampshire.

**b) White Park Inclusionary Playground**

**Status:** An RFP for construction of the new playground went out in early summer 2024. The City was awarded \$400,000 in Land and Water Conservation Grant funds; received \$50,000 in donations; and appropriated \$350,000 of GO bonds for the construction. The City worked with the Friends of White Park to select a vendor via RFP process for the construction of the new playground. In April, the Friends of White Park, City Administration, and the Parks & Recreation Department raised just over \$60,000 in donations as the project cost came in over budget. The new all-inclusive playground was opened on October 17, 2025.

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

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

**d) Memorial Field Design & Partnership Review**

**Status:** The City has held two public meetings to help develop a new Master Plan for the complex. At the last meeting, the residents present were in favor of a full renovation of the entire complex. City staff and the design team presented information to the Concord School Board at their October 2024 meeting and updated the City Council at their November 2024 meeting. In the FY 2026 budget, a CIP project was approved for final design and permitting; however, the project was not funded, as the City and School District needed to approve project funding. In June 2025, the City Council and the Concord School Board created a joint subcommittee to look at the Master Plan recommendations, and reported back to both governing bodies in November. At their December 2025 meeting, the Concord School Board voted to approve the recommended Memorial Field Master Plan and to jointly fund with the City the next phase of the project. The next phase consists of final design and permitting at a cost of \$1.2 million.

**e) Keach Park Lights**

**Status:** The first public meeting was held in January 2024. City staff also met with the H.L. Turner Group on final design and permitting, and reviewed the project with the Airport Advisory Committee and with NH Fish & Game to make sure there is no impact to wildlife. A second public meeting was held on December 12, 2024. At the second meeting, there was a review of facility scheduling, increased maintenance needs, and other projected operating expenses, as well as new revenue from field rentals and charging user groups when field lights are used. The Airport Advisory Committee approved the lights as they relate to airport operations.

At their May 2025 meeting, City Council voted to approve moving forward with construction of the new field lights pending FAA approval. They also voted to have the athletic field lights on, Thursdays through Sundays, from dusk to 10 PM, for “pick-up soccer” (no organized groups/leagues, no rental or light fees charged, and field use is first come basis). On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, the field can be scheduled by parks and recreation and other organizations (with field rental and light fees charged) from dusk to 10 PM. The additional operating costs for the new athletic field lights (power, additional porta toilets, field maintenance, etc.) was presented to City Council and will be included for consideration in the proposed FY 2027 budget. . Field lights were installed in November 2025 and the field will be usable in late spring 2026.

**f) Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT)**

**Status:** Construction of the 4,000’ section of the trail through the city’s Gully Hill Sunflower Fields has been completed, and a ribbon cutting ceremony was held on September 27, 2024. Total project budget was \$705,000 and was funded in part by a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant, City funds, and donations from the Friends

of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail. When this section of the trail opened, the Parks & Recreation Department took over the maintenance of this new section of trail (mowing, trimming, etc.).

On August 11, 2025, City Council approved Resolution #9761, which authorized the City Manager to enter into a Purchase and Sales Agreement with CSX to acquire a 5.73 mile of section of the Northern Main Line, between Horseshoe Pond Lane and the Contocook River, consisting of 81 +/- acres for the sum of \$533,000. The resolution also appropriated an additional \$143,000 to support this purchase. The Purchase and Sales Agreement was executed on August 25, 2025. In accordance with State law, notice to the State of New Hampshire has been made. The State's right of first refusal expires on November 25, 2025. On November 12, 2025, the State formally released its right of first refusal for this transaction. Pending the completion of a boundary survey for the premises, the City will close on the acquisition of the property from CSX on or about February 25, 2026.

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

The State's Draft 10-Year Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), dated August 14, 2025, includes \$1,991,600 of funding to construct 1.79 miles of rail trail between Sewalls Falls Road and the Contocook River, as well as \$5,563,000 for a 0.33-mile boardwalk near the Merrimack River to connect existing trail segments in Terrill Park and the Gully Hill Sunflower Fields. The STIP will be finalized in summer 2026. Staff notes that grant funding for the 1.79-mile segment has been previously awarded by NHDOT in 2021/2022 and is being held open pending the City's forthcoming acquisition of the 6-mile corridor from CSX.

In partnership with the Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, City Administration is working to negotiate an easement at property located at 6 Loudon Road to facilitate a future extension from the Gully Hill sunflower fields to the Loudon Road Bridge at the Merrimack River. The bridge is currently subject to an ongoing Capital Improvement Project (CIP #588), which includes widening the existing bridge to include a 14' wide shared use path to connect the MRGT from the east side of Concord to Downtown. Construction of the Loudon Road bridge improvements is currently slated for 2027-2029.

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

**g) Garrison Park Pool**

**Status:** In March 2024, the City held a community meeting with the neighbors of Garrison Park to discuss the opportunity to convert the pool to a splash pad or keep it as a pool. Everyone present wanted to keep it as a pool, as the City can offer swim lessons there and a pool can be used by all ages of the community, while a splash pad is geared towards younger children. As the Garrison Park Pool had not been open for the

past four years, due to lack of lifeguards, residents present requested that the City keep Garrison Park Pool open, even if the City is unable to hire enough lifeguards. Each summer since COVID, the White Park, Kimball Park, Merrill Park, and Garrison Park pools have not been fully open.

The Parks & Recreation Department was able to hire enough lifeguards and Water Safety Instructors to open all six pools and splash pads during the summer of 2024, and the General Services Department managed to make repairs needed to open the pool in 2024. Garrison Pool did not open in summer 2025, as the Department was not able to hire enough lifeguards to open all pools.

#### **h) Terrill Park**

**Status:** City staff have renewed all required permits for the project and they are in place until 2027. Phase 1 of the park was finished and opened in October 2020. This phase included the construction of the first section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, moving the existing dog park and building a new parking lot to support the trail and the dog park. The cost of Phase 1 was \$380,000 and was funded by a \$100,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund grant; \$178,760 of City funds; and donations from the Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, and private donations, totaling just over \$100,000.

#### **i) Kiwanis Park Design**

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

In addition, VHB brought on a skateboard park designer, Gridline, to help design a new skateboard park. The non-profit Skate Park Association and skate park users approved a new skate park design. The Parks & Recreation Department is currently working with VHB on a final design.

During the winter of 2023-2024, the Department applied for a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant in the amount of \$500,000 to help with construction costs of a new skateboard park. In January 2025, the City was notified of the grant award. The total cost of the new skate park will be approximately \$1.8 million, with Phase 1 costing \$1 million.

The Parks & Recreation Department will continue to work with the Skate Park Association and the community at large to fundraise the required match of the grant award.

#### **j) Identify Additional East Side Greenspace**

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

with developers and the community to identify and plan new community parks. Areas east of Keach Park and areas around Thirty Pines have been discussed.

**k) Bicentennial Square “Light” Renovation**

**Status:** The FY 2025 Budget included \$100,000 in CIP #579 for design of park improvements. As of March 31, 2025, a design team led by VHB has been engaged for the project. A community meeting was held on September 16, 2025, which presented three unique design concepts for public feedback. Design continues.