



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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

DATE: October 21, 2022

SUBJECT: 2022 - 2023 City Council Priorities

Recommendation

Accept this report as to the current status of the City Council Priorities established on February 7, 2022.

Background

Members of the City Council met on February 7, 2022 to discuss and set priorities for the remainder of Calendar Year 2022, as well as for Calendar Year 2023.

Discussion

Listed below, are the accepted priorities, projects and ongoing initiatives; and their respective statuses as of September 30, 2022.

GOAL 1. BALANCED BUDGET ISSUES : FY 2023 and 2024

a) Eliminate Use of Fund Balance to Balance Budget

Status: As part of the FY 2023 Budget adoption, the City Council approved reducing the use of fund balance to \$375,000. City Administration intends to recommend further reduction in Use of Fund Balance to balance the budget, to zero, for the FY 2024 Budget proposal.

b) ARPA Strategy

Status: On March 14, 2022, City Council approved a supplemental resolution appropriating \$4,567,295 in ARPA funds as part of the Standard Revenue Replacement Option under the U.S. Treasury Final Rules for ARPA funds. The City received its first installment of \$2,283,647.65 in July 2021 and the second installment in August 2022. The first installment was distributed to applicable City Funds for FY 2022. The second installment was distributed to the Parking Fund and the General Fund as part of the FY 2023 revenue budget. A final allocation will be transferred to the General Fund in FY 2024.

The General Services Department successfully obtained an ARPA grant in the amount of \$760,000 from the NH Department of Environmental Services as part of the \$3.8 million facility refurbishment at the Hall Street Wastewater Treatment Facility. The secondary clarifier project has been awarded to Northeast Earth Mechanics, Inc. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2023.

c) Health Insurance Costs

Status: The City has received a renewal on their medical insurance with a 10.25% rate increase driven by high cost claimants and the impact of COVID on the industry as a whole. The new rates will go into effect for FY 2023. Also, for FY 2023, the City will pay 90% of the premium and the employee will pay 10% of the premium. This is a change from the 95/5% cost sharing over the last two years.

d) Grant Funding Opportunities

Status: The General Services Department has completed a grant application for approximately \$75,000 from the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to offset, in part, the replacement of a 2001 Mack sludge hauling truck. In conjunction with the Information Technology Department, the General Services Department is also pursuing grant funds to enhance cybersecurity for the City's water and wastewater treatment facilities. The Wastewater Division has applied for grant funding for 10 infrastructure improvement projects through the NHDES' State Aid Grant and State Revolving Fund programs. NHDES has approved three grant applications: 1) Sludge Holding Tank Mixing System, \$166,000; 2) Chlorine Building Solar Collection System, \$250,000; and 3) Hall Street Process Evaluation, \$100,000.

The City is currently working on a Federal Aviation Administration Airport Terminals Program grant.

The Fire Department previously applied for and received an award of \$47,368 in GOFERR Locality Equipment Purchase Program funds. This was accepted and appropriated at the July City Council meeting. Orders have been placed for a LUCAS CPR device, an IV pump, a transport ventilator, and a cardiac monitor and ventilator simulation training system. All equipment has already arrived, except for the IV pump, which is expected in a couple of weeks. These purchases were made to support placing the fourth ambulance in service on October 1, 2022.

The Fire Department took possession of an enclosed trailer that will house swiftwater rescue equipment and increase the Department's ability to respond to water emergencies. This money was previously awarded through the NH Department of Safety Homeland and Security Grant Program. The Fire Department was also granted permission from City Council to apply for two separate grants totaling \$25,000 through the 2020 and 2021 NH State Homeland Security Program Critical Infrastructure - Water Related Catastrophe Program. The applications have been submitted and decisions are still pending.

The City Hazard Mitigation Plan update continues. This project used FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRICA) grant funds to hire a consultant along with the use of City employee time as an in-kind match. The updated plan is anticipated to be presented to City Council shortly after the first of the new year.

The Fire Department is working with State officials to secure FEMA Public Assistance funding to reimburse City expenses related to the response to COVID-19. The City is potentially eligible for a total of \$37,173.81. Applications are pending FEMA review.

The Fire Department distributed 25 bicycle helmets received through a Safe & Active 2022 grant through the Injury Prevention Center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock. These were distributed to community members by Fire personnel at the National Night Out event. Logistical planning to make 12 life jackets received via the Lifejacket Loaner Program from the Injury Prevention Center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock continues.

The Parks and Recreation Department applied for two EDA Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation grants. The first one was for the Phase 2 build of Terrill Park, which includes an artificial turf field with lights, parking area, storage building, equipment and associated site work. The Terrill Park project is fully designed and permitted, and is “shovel ready”. The second grant was for the design, permitting and construction of the boardwalk section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, which would connect the built section at Terrill Park to the new cornfield section near Loudon Road. Unfortunately, the City was not awarded either grant.

In January 2022, the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) awarded the Abbot-Downing Society a Brownfields Technical Assistance Grant to complete a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment and Hazardous Building Materials Survey of the former Concord Stables located at 117.5 Warren Street. The City prepared the grant application on behalf of the Abbot-Downing Society. The cost of these assessments is being paid for entirely by the State. These studies will allow the City and Abbot-Downing Society to further refine the redevelopment strategy for the property, as well as position the project for future potential Brownfields Cleanup Grants from the US Environmental Protection Agency and NHDES to support redevelopment efforts.

On April 11, 2022, the City Council authorized the City Manager to apply for two Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants: one for up to \$500,000 to support the construction of the new Riverfront Park in Penacook; and another for up to \$400,000 to rebuild the playground at White Park. A site visit with LWCF staff occurred on May 11, 2022, and the City has received notification that both projects are eligible projects. City staff are working on the two grant applications, which are due in early December 2022.

The Police Department has applied for \$24,436 in federal funding from the 2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program. The Police Department plans to use these funds to purchase specialized equipment for its Computer Crimes Unit. This equipment will improve our technological capabilities with investigations involving encrypted mobile devices. A portion of these funds will also be used to supplement training opportunities for two investigators. The Police Department is looking to further improve the capacity of these investigators in advanced forensic techniques. This training is a 40-hour training program focused on bloodstain pattern documentation and shooting incident documentation. This highly specialized training will require out of state travel and there is currently no other money available in the Police Department budget for this training.

The Police Department has applied for \$80,217 in American Rescue Plan Act funds. These funds are to be used to purchase two all-terrain vehicles, a pick-up truck, and a trailer. These vehicles will be used to help patrol City trails and conservation areas. The Police Department has applied for \$39,989 in NH Highway Safety funds. These funds will be used towards roadway safety and driver education outreach.

The Police Department applied for and was granted \$26,625.54 in NH Highway Safety funds for the purchase of a laser scanner. This scanner will assist investigators in processing major crime scenes and fatal accidents.

The Police Department applied for and was granted \$41,321.12 in NH Department of Justice funds for Project Safe Neighborhoods. These funds are to be used to help reduce violent crimes throughout the city.

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

a) **Bricks and Mortar**

Status: The commercial construction at Exit 17, called Interchange Development, continues to progress. In March, the Planning Board conditionally approved 1,500 SF for a restaurant, 2,750 SF for retail, and 2,500 SF for a credit union. This is in addition to the already approved Market Basket, State Liquor Outlet, and Wendy's restaurant at the site. Market Basket opened on August 26, 2022. Homegoods is scheduled to open on October 29, 2022.

The Grappone Family received development approvals from the Planning Board for a new Mazda dealership at 134 Manchester Street. Demolition of structures at the property is complete and sitework is currently underway.

Development of multiple pad sites at the Brixmor Plaza on Storrs Street are underway. The project will feature approximately 16,000 SF of development, including a 110 Grille restaurant, another yet to be announced restaurant, an Xfinity store, and a coffee shop with drive thru.

b) **Zoning Rewrite**

Status: Work continues on the final draft of Phase 1. Phase 2 public meetings were held virtually on March 28-31, 2022. It is anticipated that staff will bring both phases to City Council at the same time for public hearing and adoption in late 2022.

c) **Housing**

Status:

- i. **Former NH Employment Security Property:** The City acquired the former NH Employment Security (NHES) property from the State of New Hampshire on October 31, 2014. The property, which was comprised of two parcels totaling 0.78 acres, consisted of a 26,100 SF building and 73 parking spaces. On May 20, 2021, the City Council approved Resolution #9375, which authorized the City Manager to enter into a Purchase and Sales Agreement with the John Flatley Company concerning sales and redevelopment of the former NHES property located at 32-34 South Main Street and 33 South State Street. The Purchase and Sales Agreement was executed on May 17, 2021, and subsequently amended on September 14, 2021 and January 11, 2022. The Developer plans to demolish the existing 26,100 SF former office building and construct a new 80,000 SF apartment building featuring 64 market rate units. The new development will have an assessed value of \$8 - \$10.24 million, and will generate \$215,000 - \$275,000 in property taxes annually. Due to governmental ownership, the property has been tax exempt since 1979.

On December 22, 2022, the City completed interior asbestos abatement at the property. The cost of abatement was \$320,000, of which \$200,000 (or 60%) was funded by a grant from the NH Department of Environmental Services.

On March 2, 2022, the Developer secured required variances and special exceptions from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

On April 20, 2022, the Developer secured conditional site plan approval from the Planning Board for the project.

On June 9, 2022, the City sold the property to the Developer. The Developer has secured the property, abatement of remaining hazardous building materials is completed, and demolition is currently underway.

The new apartment building is scheduled for completion in fall 2023.

- ii. Penacook Landing Phase 2: On September 18, 2019, the City sold 2.5 acres of the former Allied Leather Tannery site, located at 33-35 Canal Street, to the Caleb Development Corporation (Caleb) for redevelopment into a 54-unit housing project. Phase 1 was completed in October 2020. On October 28, 2021, Caleb was awarded \$467,844 in tax credits from the NH Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) for Phase 2 of the project. On May 10, 2022, the NHHFA awarded a supplemental allocation of tax credits in the amount of \$20,322 for Phase 2. Phase 2 will feature 20 apartments (15 one bedroom and 5 two bedroom); 18 of which shall be affordable units reserved for income qualified households. The estimated cost of Phase 2 is \$5,850,000 (\$292,500/unit), of which \$4,149,077 will be financed by equity generated by the sale of tax credits for the project. On June 22, 2022, the City's Community Development Advisory Committee approved the Caleb Group's application to the City's Revolving Loan Fund Program for \$600,000 of permanent financing to support Phase 2. The financing package for the project includes funds from five different entities, including the City. On September 27, 2022, Caleb closed on all financing for the project. Construction is scheduled to begin in October. The project will be completed in fall 2023. Upon completion, Phase 2 will have an assessed value of \$1,615,000 and generate \$45,000 of property tax revenues for the community annually. Interest payments on the City's \$600,000 loan will generate approximately \$291,000 in revenue for the City's Revolving Loan Fund Program.
- iii. Other: A 16-lot residential single-family subdivision was approved by the Planning Board for a parcel located at the intersection of Sewalls Falls Road and Abbott Road. Construction is imminent.

CATCH Neighborhood Housing has submitted a plan to the Planning Board for 48 units of affordable housing to be located at 303 Sheep Davis Road.

d) Economic Development Website Update

Status: In October 2021, InvestConcordNH.com, the previous Economic Development web site, was archived due to significant price increases and a lack of updating during COVID-19. City staff is currently making improvements to, and reorganizing, the economic development portion of the main City website to make it more accessible, informative, accurate, and engaging. An update is currently underway.

e) Downtown Business Investment

Status: Staff continues to encourage downtown investment and communicate with pertinent property owners.

f) Outdoor Dining/Food Trucks

Status: The Ad-Hoc Outdoor Dining Committee developed a final outdoor dining policy, which was presented and adopted at the March 14, 2022 City Council meeting. This new policy includes several clarifications to the application process, design standards, and the implementation of a \$3 per square foot usage fee on City property (i.e., sidewalks, public

squares, etc.) and a fee of \$1,000 per parking space encumbrance per dining season. The dining season will run from April 15, 2022 to November 15, 2022. The committee subsequently forwarded a revised Peddler's ordinance and a new policy for food trucks operating throughout the City, which was approved in May.

g) Fees/Rent Analysis

Status: The Ad-Hoc Fee Committee has met with and completed its recommendations for the Parks & Recreation and Community Development Departments. The proposed fee changes were approved by City Council in August for the Parks & Recreation Department. The recommended fee changes for the Community Development Department are being submitted for the October City Council meeting with a public hearing to follow in November.

GOAL 3. PUBLIC SAFETY WORK

a) Fire Stations and Police Station Analysis

Status: The Fire Department will undertake planning discussions with City Administration, based on results of the recently completed ESCI Station Location Study. This study, along with the H.L. Turner Group Building Assessment reports, will be shared with the Public Safety Advisory Board. The fire stations continue to incur increased expenses for maintenance and replacement of aging systems.

The Police Department recently underwent a Building Assessment conducted by the H.L. Turner Group. The report generated from this assessment outlined many building deficiencies, safety issues, and spatial needs, both short- and long-term. This assessment also outlined possible options for remodeling the current building and/or constructing a new building. The Police Department has well outgrown the functional capabilities of its current building. The building, as it stands now, would fall short of many police accreditation standards. The building itself could certainly serve as an asset for the City as part of the City Hall Complex; however, the days where it can serve as Police Headquarters have passed and improvements or replacement have become imperative.

The Police Department shared the results of the H.L. Turner Group Building Assessment with the City Administration and City Council on May 9, 2022. Chief Brad Osgood; along with Gerard Blanchette and Doug Proctor, from the H.L. Turner Group; briefed the City Council on the report and the current status of the Police Department building. This conversation focused on both the anticipated maintenance needs of several key components of the building, as well as how the Police Department has outgrown the physical size and layout of the building. It was discussed that the current Police Department is nearly 50 years old and does not meet the needs of a modern professional policing facility.

b) Enhance Emergency Management Services

Status: The Fire Department has hired four new Firefighter/Paramedics to support staffing of the fourth ambulance. These employees completed their recruit school on September 30th, allowing the Fire Department to meet its goal of placing the fourth ambulance in service on October 1, 2022.

Seven paramedics attended a five day simulation-based continuing education program at Concord Hospital's Forrest D. McKerley Simulation and Education Center. This physician-taught program uses hi-fidelity mannequins and live actors to teach medical concepts and

reinforce good clinical decision making through a myriad of scenarios followed by video debriefing.

GOAL 4. RECREATIONAL/CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES, PARKS AND CEMETERIES

a) Library, Pools, Arena, BMGC, Trails, MRGT, Recreation Programming

Status: For the finale of National Poetry Month in April, the Concord Public Library held a Haiku Hike. Patrons were led on a leisurely walk around White Park and learned about haiku, a traditional form of Japanese poetry. Then, they got to write and share their own haikus about Concord in the springtime.

Later in the spring, a NH Fish and Game Wildlife Steward gave a presentation at the United Church of Penacook on Understanding Bobcats in New Hampshire.

In May, the Library virtually hosted Andrew Vietze, a Baxter State Park Ranger and author, who told of his adventures in the wilds of the Katahdin region.

The Concord Public Library partnered with New Hampshire Audubon to connect patrons to a five-part webinar, which was held in February 2022, on the Peregrine Falcon in New Hampshire. Attendees learned the history of the bird, its stages of life, conservation efforts, birding tips and more.

The Parks & Recreation Department's 2022 summer and fall brochure went out in early May, which covers all programs and events from June 1st through the end of October.

The Parks & Recreation Department is coordinating the design and permitting of the cornfield section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail. The City has hired VHB, of Bedford, for the design and permitting for this section of trail.

The Parks & Recreation Department started advertising for summer lifeguard positions in January, with the goal of opening all seven outdoor pools this past summer. The Department typically needs to hire just over 40 lifeguards to open all pools. Once again, this year, the Department paid the class registration fee for applicants to take the American Red Cross Lifeguard class (value \$380). However, by mid-June, the Department was only able to hire enough lifeguards to open four pools.

In the FY 2022 Capital Improvement Plan, there were funds appropriated for court restoration at Rollins Park (\$135,000), Trolley Stop repoint at White Park (\$90,000), and stand-alone pickleball courts at Rolfe Park (\$90,000). The court projects were completed in early June 2022. The repointing of the Trolley Stop at White Park is complete. In addition, the FY 2022 budget included funds for a pond restoration project at White Park (\$210,000), for which the City is under contract with VHB to create a plan and required permits. Also funded were road repairs at Blossom Hill Cemetery (\$80,000). The mini makeover / renovation of Thompson Park is underway and will be completed in the summer of 2023.

b) Terrill Park, Kiwanis Park, Skate Park, Penacook Riverfront, Monkey Around Playground, Cemeteries, Recreational Corridor

Status:

- i. Canal Street Riverfront Park: In 2004, the City held a design charrette for the purposes of soliciting public input concerning redevelopment of the former Allied Leather Tannery

complex at 23-25 Canal Street. As part of that exercise, the community expressed a strong desire to develop a new public riverfront park at the Tannery property to support future redevelopment of the site, as well as revitalization of Penacook Village.

In 2012, the City acquired additional property at 5-11 Canal Street to support future development of the park. As part of marketing efforts conducted for the Tannery site in 2008 and in 2015, the City commissioned various conceptual site plans for the former Tannery complex, which included a new riverfront park.

In conjunction with the sale of the portion of the Tannery site located at 35 Canal Street to the Caleb Development Corporation for the Penacook Landing housing project, in September 2020, the City retained a 1.53-acre parcel with approximately 500 feet of frontage on the Contoocook River for the future riverfront park.

As part of the FY 2022 budget, the City Council appropriated \$110,000 of impact fees for design and permitting of the Canal Street Riverfront Park. On November 5, 2021, a Request for Qualifications and Experience was issued to engage a design team for the project. Proposals were received on December 10, 2021. On February 11, 2022, the firm of GPI was selected for the project. Contracts with GPI were executed on March 25, 2022.

On April 11, 2022, the City Council approved Resolution #9449, which authorized the City Manager to apply for up to \$500,000 in Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants to support the project. A site visit with LWCF staff occurred on May 11, 2022. Applications are due on December 16, 2022. City Administration intends to seek \$500,000 to support the project.

On April 15, 2022, a kick off meeting for the project occurred with GPI. The kickoff meeting also involved meetings with Chief's Restaurant and Briar Hydro Associates (both about the project site). On May 19, 2022, additional meetings were held with the remaining two site abutters (Day Properties and the Caleb Group), as well as the City's Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee.

On June 9, 2022, the City Council approved the FY 2023 Budget, which included \$1,247,729 for the Canal Street Park. An additional \$500,000, which is associated with the pending LWCF grant application, was asterisked in the budget and will be appropriated at time of grant award.

On June 22, 2022, the City, in partnership with the Penacook Village Association, held a community forum to discuss four concept plans for the park. Feedback from this session will be digested over the summer and used to craft a final concept plan for the park.

In August 2022, City Administration issued an RFQ&E to engage on-call construction management services for this and other capital improvement projects. Interviews are scheduled for late October.

Pending receipt of grant funds, as well as bid pricing from the to-be-selected construction manager, construction is scheduled for late spring/early summer 2023.

- ii. Monkey Around Playground: The Parks & Recreation Department continues to work with the Friends of White Park on their fundraising efforts. In May, the Friends held a cornhole tournament with food trucks to raise money for the playground replacement. On April 11, 2022, the City Council authorized the City Manager to apply for up to \$400,000 of Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants to support the project.

A site visit with LWCF staff occurred on May 11, 2022. If the project is selected to move into the grant application phase, the formal grant application will be due late Fall 2022, and the City will find out the status of its application by spring 2023.

- iii. Kiwanis Riverfront Park: City staff, working with the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee, the Everett Arena Advisory Committee, Concord Crew and the new Skate Board group have met regularly regarding possible new park amenities. In the FY 2022 Capital Improvement Program, there were funds approved for the “Visioning of the Kiwanis Riverfront Park down to Terrill Park.” We will have a vendor under contract by the end of calendar year 2022.

GOAL 5. ENHANCED COMMUNITY EVENT S/ARTS

a) Promote Community Events with Community Partners

Status: Community events continue to be shared through a variety of City channels, including the City Manager’s newsletter and social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). The City’s Public Information Officer continues to work with the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce and Intown Concord on coordinated community outreach.

During this reporting period, the City issued permits for 18 events including political rallies, road races, an Arts Market, the Rock ‘n Race, and the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk, to name a few.

The Parks & Recreation Department started scheduling the parks in mid-February for use in 2022, and all youth and adult sports leagues had regular seasons. The Department also started issuing permits for special events held in City parks. Some of the special events that were scheduled include: SouperFest, an Arts Market in Rollins Park, UNH Law School Graduation at White Park, several 5k road races, Making Strides at Memorial Field, and a Multicultural Festival at Keach Park. The Department, once again, hosted several baseball and softball tournaments this past spring and summer. The Department also worked with Overcomers Refugee Services to host the first Umuganda Event at Keach Park on June 25th.

The Parks & Recreation Department continues to be involved in several special events, such as the annual July 4th celebration, Wings and Wheels at the Concord Airport, Halloween Howl, and an outdoor summer music series.

The Parks & Recreation Department secured sponsorship from the Walker Lecture Fund to add a new Sunday morning Concert in the Park series that was held at White Park in the summer and fall of 2022. The Department also booked all bands for their 2022 summer outdoor concert series.

The Police Department continues to foster its positive relationship with the community through a number of initiatives and events that Department personnel attend and sponsor. During this quarter, the Department worked closely with the schools in both the Concord School District and Merrimack Valley School District preparing for the start of the school year. The D.A.R.E. Program was presented in both school districts and the Department’s School Resource Officers are actively involved at Concord High School, Merrimack Valley High School, and Merrimack Valley Middle School. Additionally, Liberty, the Department’s comfort dog, makes frequent

visits to the schools throughout the city. Safety assessments have been conducted at several of the public and private schools. These safety assessments will continue throughout the year.

Members of the Police Department have conducted active shooter trainings, as well as safety presentations to businesses and community groups, and also presented fraud education classes to the elderly and to a local bank. The Department also presented an active shooter training for the Concord School Board and other School administrators. This is the first of many trainings that will be held for the School District.

The Department works closely with the New American communities throughout the city. The Department met with two different New American leaders in an attempt to open communication and to plan for informational events with the Police Department. The Police Department assisted the New American Scholars with their "Students Helping Students" program. This program is designed to promote area high school students assisting and tutoring New American and refugee students who have recently settled in the Concord area. This program also extends beyond the classroom and assists in other areas of life which may be difficult for those new to the country. The Department is working with the Overcomers Refugee Services to plan youth mentoring and educational meetings.

The Department held three R.A.D. (Rape Aggression Defense) classes. All classes were well attended.

The Police Department held its annual National Night Out event. This highly successful event promotes crime and drug prevention awareness, generates support and participation in local anti-crime programs, strengthens neighborhood spirit, and promotes police community partnerships. This year's event had approximately 3,000 attendees.

The Fire Department participated in National Night Out and provided educational materials on various fire safety topics, as well as demonstrations of new smoke detector technology. Hundreds of community members participated in fire truck tours. Children enjoyed "extinguishing" fire on a wooden prop by spraying water on it from a fire hose.

On-duty Fire companies participated in the Wings and Wheels event at the Concord Airport and provided truck tours and demonstrations.

The City of Concord participated in Intown Concord's Market Days. The Human Resources Department shared a table with the Fire Department, who conducted its "Fill the Boot" MDA fundraiser. The Human Resources Department brought all current job openings for review, as well as job interest cards for those "shopping" for a new career. It was a great opportunity to be part of the celebration and provide information to Market Days attendees.

Human Resources Department representatives co-chaired two committees with the Human Resources Association Greater Concord organization; one pertaining to Marketing and one for Community Relations. As part of this organization, the City of Concord sent several subject matter experts to participate in the Concord Regional Technical Center's annual Interview Fair for students.

The Concord Public Library held several programs in City parks throughout the spring and summer, including story times and book discussions. The Library also hosted a summer concert series, with each concert being held at a different location throughout the city.

Library staff visited Abbot-Downing Elementary School for their Earth Day celebration, and participated in the Christa McAuliffe Elementary School's block party, providing library

information and card sign-ups. The Head Start Socialization Group visited the Library weekly for story times.

The Concord Public Library was present at Intown Concord's Market Days, at which Library staff provided information on Library resources, temporary literary tattoos, and story times in the family area on the State House lawn.

The Library continues to provide free programs for community members of all ages, which are promoted on its website and social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter), in the Library newsletter, in the City Manager's newsletter, and in the Concord Monitor and The Patch. Several Library programs are held in partnership with other organizations, such as Granite VNA, Soak Up the Rain New Hampshire, the NH Audubon Society, and NH Humanities.

GOAL 6. SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

a) Energy: LED Street Lights

Status: Approximately 99% of the street lights have been converted to LED. The few remaining lights to be replaced are expected to be completed by the end of October 2022. This project is anticipated to save the City in excess of \$600,000 over the next ten years. Certain ornamental street lights, which were excluded from the project, such as those located on Loudon Road and the Manchester Street bridge, will be addressed in future capital improvement projects to be proposed by City Administration.

b) Diversity

Status: The City has purchased a contract with CircaWorks to provide recruitment efforts towards Diversity Hiring. This will help us reach under-represented groups to innovate and lead with the country's largest network of community-based organizations and niche sites.

The Fire Department has hired an additional female firefighter, bringing the total number of female Firefighter and Firefighter/Paramedics to four.

c) Workforce & Housing (Homelessness)

Status: Over the past 24 months, the Penacook Landing multifamily development added 34 units of workforce housing in downtown Penacook and CATCH added 42 units on Village Street. Penacook Landing Phase 2 will start construction in October 2022 and will add an additional 20 units for the community, as discussed in Section 2.c.ii. of this report.

Dakota Partners and the Tamposi Brothers have both advised that they plan to move forward with their respective workforce projects (at least initial phases) this year. Dakota's project on Langdon Avenue will add 192 units at build-out and is currently under construction. The Tamposi Brothers development project is projected to build 123 units.

In July, CATCH Neighborhood Housing secured Planning Board approval to develop 48 units of affordable housing on Sheep Davis Road.

The Concord Coalition to End Homelessness has been working diligently on its Housing First model, recently securing Zoning Board of Adjustment relief for a project at 120 Pleasant Street. On May 23, 2022, the Concord Monitor announced that it had entered into a purchase and sales agreement with New England Family Housing concerning the sale of 95 acres for development. According to their article, the project may include approximately 120 affordable

housing units, as well as another 532 +/- market rate housing units. New England Family Housing is currently undertaking its due diligence for the transaction.

d) **Essex Hydro**

Status: An agreement was reached with Essex Hydro to enter into a long-term Net Metering Agreement for a portion of their renewable energy generation. The agreement received full approval by the Public Utilities Commission, and Net Metering began on June 1, 2022. The City has received \$6,111 as of September 30, 2022.

e) **Renewable Energy**

Status: The City continues to work towards finding partners for renewable energy projects that are in the best interest of the City of Concord and will help achieve the City's renewable energy goals.

f) **Trees, Urban Canopy**

Status: Two trees were planted at White Park on Arbor Day.

Five street trees were planted along the street frontage of Maple Grove Cemetery using budgeted funds from the Conservation budget.

The Tree Committee set up a booth at the Farmer's Market for three weeks in June to educate residents about proper tree planting techniques and the Sustainable Tree Program.

The Tree Committee did a reconnaissance of the neighborhoods in Penacook slated for paving next year, and identified 31 potential tree planting locations. General Services will review the locations to determine if these locations are feasible, and then the committee will start public outreach in Penacook, asking these residents if they are willing to plant a tree in their front yard.

The Sustainable Tree Program has been maxed out and is now taking names for a waiting list for spring 2023.

GOAL 7. TRANSPORTATION

a) **I-93, Storrs Street, Stickney Avenue**

Status:

- i. **I-93 Project:** On August 9, 2022, the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT), and their consultant, McFarland Johnson, presented a project update at a special Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) meeting. The updates were inclusive of additional improvements at the City's request, including improvements at Exit 13 (the Manchester Street intersection with Old Turnpike Road), partially restoring access to the Exit 14 northbound on-ramp, alternatives to expand the Merrimack River Greenway Trail through the project limits, exploring partial access at Stickney Avenue, and consideration of the proposed Storrs Street Extension Project and associated railroad realignment. TPAC continued to solicit public input and discussed all aspects of the project at subsequent meetings held on August 25, September 15, and September 29. After weighing all public input received, TPAC will submit a recommendation report to City Council for its consideration at their October 11 meeting.

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

Status: In March 2021, the City filed an application for TAP grant funds to support the development of a rail trail on a 1.9 mile section of the Northern Line between Sewalls Falls Road and the Town of Boscawen. PanAm Systems provided a letter of support for the City's application.

On July 7, 2021, the City entered into a Purchase and Sales Agreement with PanAm Systems/Northern Railroad for a 5.6+/- mile discontinued segment of the Northern Main Line located between Horseshoe Pond Lane and the Contoocook River, as well as a 0.5 mile section of the Concord-Claremont Line located between Horseshoe Pond Lane and the Smokestack Center on McGuire Street.

On October 18, 2021, the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) invoked the State's Right-of-First-Refusal (ROFR) for the Northern Line, in accordance with RSA 228:60-b. As such, the City's Purchase and Sales Agreement with PanAm automatically terminated upon the State's enactment of its ROFR. The State enacted its ROFR, as the Northern Line has been designated for a potential future high-speed rail corridor to connect Boston to Montreal. As such, the City and NHDOT entered into negotiations concerning a potential partnership between the City and the State, which would allow the Merrimack River Greenway Trail to move forward while simultaneously protecting the State's interests relative to the high-speed rail corridor. These negotiations were successful and, on May 9, 2022, the City Council approved Resolution #9463, which authorizes the City Manager to enter into the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) negotiated between the City and NHDOT. Said agreement will be presented to the Governor and Executive Council pending final negotiation of a purchase and sales agreement between Pan Am and the NHDOT. Upon execution of the MOA between the City and NHDOT, the NHDOT shall assign the purchase and sales agreement to the City, following which the City shall complete its due diligence and acquire the property.

Following completion of due diligence, the City terminated the Purchase and Sales Agreement for the Concord-Claremont Line on October 25, 2021 due to title concerns.

The "cornfield" section of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT) (approximately 4,000 feet from Loudon Road south towards Terrill Park) is currently under design and permitting. The City was awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant to build this section of the trail from Loudon Road south along the Merrimack River. The LWCF grant was for an estimated \$550,000 project and requires a 50% match (\$275,000), which the Friends of the MRGT has indicated they will help fundraise for. In February 2022, the Friends of the MRGT, in partnership with the City, applied for an allocation of Community Development Investment Program (CDIP) tax credits from the NH Community Development Finance Authority for the portion of the project located between Terrill Park and Loudon Road. Unfortunately, the funding application was not successful. The Friends of the MRGT will continue efforts to raise the required match. It is anticipated that all design documents and permits for this section of the trail will be completed by the end of December 2022.

c) **Airport Terminal**

Status: On January 27, 2022, the City held an Airport Listening Session where the consensus among the attendees was to move forward with a new terminal. At the February 24, 2022 Airport Advisory Committee meeting, the committee unanimously recommended the City Council authorize staff to apply for an FAA Airport Terminal Program grant. This program would provide potential funding for the relocation and construction of the Concord Municipal Airport's terminal building, with only a 5% match required. At the March 14, 2022 City Council meeting, the Council authorized the City Manager to apply for this grant. Unfortunately, the

City's application was not successful. Pending City Council authorization, City Administration plans to reapply for these funds in the upcoming application round.

d) **Sidewalks: Maintain/Recondition**

Status: The Planning Board continues to require sidewalks on most site plans. In instances where construction of a sidewalk may be premature (no connection within any reasonable distance), the Planning Board has instituted a "fee in lieu" policy. Under this approach, a fee commensurate with the cost to construct sidewalk would be assessed to applicants seeking site plan approval. The funds generated from this fee would be used to support City sidewalk construction in the future. To date, one project has been subject to this policy as a condition of approval. However, said project has not yet moved forward. When/if the project moves forward, and fees are collected, a resolution establishing this reserve in trust account will be submitted to City Council.

e) **Projects: Langley Parkway, McKee Square**

Status:

- i. McKee Square (CIP #31): The McKee Square intersection improvement was approved in FY 2023 for a traffic assessment and design/engineering, and FY 2024 construction. Preliminary options for this work include a roundabout and a signal alternative. Staff will work with its engineering consultants on developing and scheduling meetings with the public and stakeholders.
- ii. Langley Parkway (CIP #40): In accordance with the City Council's direction, as provided to City Administration during the adoption of the FY 2023 Budget in June 2022, this project has been removed from the City's Capital Improvement Program.

ONGOING INITIATIVE 1. FORMER TANNERY SITE/PARK

Status: Updates about this project are addressed in Goal 2(c) and 4(b) of this report.

ONGOING INITIATIVE 2. ENHANCED NEIGHBORHOOD STREET PAVING PROGRAM

Status: Continental Paving this year's project in early November, as follows:

- Curtice Avenue: Completed.
- Foster Street: Completed.
- Granite Avenue: Completed.
- Prospect Street: Completed.
- South State Street, from Pleasant to Clinton Street: Reclaim completed.
- South Street, from Pleasant to Clinton Street: Reclaim completed.
- Capitol Street: Completed.
- Centre Street, from Main to Union Street: Completed.
- Green Street: Completed.
- North State Street, from Pleasant to Court Street: Completed.
- Park Street: Completed.
- Pleasant Street, from Main to Spring Street: Completed.
- School Street, from Main to Spring Street: Completed.

- Warren Street, from Main to Spring Street: Completed.

ONGOING INITIATIVE 3. BRIDGES

Status: The NH Department of Transportation agreed to add an additional \$14 million in State bridge aid to the Loudon Road bridge project to accommodate a wider bridge with a 14' multi-use path. This renovated bridge will provide a critical connection for the Merrimack River Greenway Trail from east to west, and will also be safer for all cyclists and pedestrians, as well as improve the angle of the bridge today as it intersects with Ft. Eddy Road. The City and NHDOT are planning to begin design work shortly.

ONGOING INITIATIVE 4. TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Status: The Information Technology (IT) Department supported the Wastewater and Water Treatment Plants in applying for grants related to the cybersecurity and access to control systems throughout the enterprise. This included working with the Federal Environmental Protection Agency on auditing and creating an action plan for calendar years 2022 and 2023 to improve securing and updating our access controls. These grant applications are currently under review. While a cybersecurity action plan has been developed in conjunction with all stakeholders, no money has been awarded yet.

The IT Department's new Network Security Engineer has hit the ground running and is in the process of developing a plan to improve the City's security stance.

The City's Munis migration continues. Energov, the permitting module, went live on August 22, 2022. The spring of 2022 marked the beginning of training and migration to the Munis Tax module, with an expected go live target of May 1, 2023, thus completing the conversion from our legacy software packages, New World Systems and Munismart.