



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

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

DATE: July 1, 2021

SUBJECT: 2020 - 2021 City Council Priorities

Recommendation

Accept this report as to the current status of the City Council priorities established on February 18, 2020.

Background

Members of the City Council met on February 18, 2020 to discuss and set priorities for the remainder of Calendar Year 2020, as well as for Calendar Year 2021.

Discussion

Listed below, in ranked order, are the accepted priorities, projects and ongoing initiatives; and their respective statuses as of June 30, 2021.

GOAL 1. BALANCED BUDGET ISSUES : FY 2021 and 2022

a) Collective Bargaining/Contract Issues

Status: The City is currently under a collective bargaining agreement with all of its unions. In March 2021, the City and CFOA ratified the terms of a collective bargaining successor agreement resulting in all of the City's six unions now featuring high deductible health insurance plans as the premium driver.

b) Health Insurance Costs

Status: The City received a renewal rate of 3% from Harvard Pilgrim for FY 2022.

c) Capital Financing Alternatives/Storm Water Utility

Status: The Engineering Division, with consultants from Tighe & Bond, gave a presentation to the Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee on their evaluation of the City's potential creation of a storm water utility fund. The committee recommended staff return in the fall of 2020 after conducting public outreach and meetings with stakeholders in the community. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this project has been put on hold until such time as in-person community meetings can occur safely.

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

a) **Employment Security**

Status: On November 4, 2020, John J. Flatley Company submitted a proposal to acquire and redevelop the property. This led to the parties entering into a Letter of Intent on January 8, 2021. On May 10, 2021, the City Council approved Resolution #9375, which authorized the City Manager to enter into a Purchase and Sales Agreement with the John J. Flatley Company concerning sale and redevelopment of the premises. The Purchase and Sales Agreement was executed on May 17, 2021. Subject to completion of due diligence and permitting, the Developer intends to demolish the existing building and construct a new 80,000 SF +/-, 6 story building featuring approximately 64 market rate apartments. Subject to completion of asbestos abatement by the City, as well as other contingencies, it is anticipated that a closing with the developer will occur on or about October 29, 2021. The City's asbestos abatement is being financed in part by a Brownfields Grant from the NH Department of Environmental Services in the amount of \$172,500.

b) **Opportunity Corridor**

Status: Storrs Street North Extension (CIP #18): Discussions are ongoing with Pan Am railways and the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) concerning this project. The project was included in the FY 2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as an "asterisked" project; meaning that it was not appropriated as part of the FY 2021 budget adoption process. City Administration will bring forward the required resolutions to advance this project once negotiations with Pan Am and NHDOT are concluded.

Dakota Partners, an affordable housing developer, secured Planning Board approval on July 21, 2021 for a mixed-use development at the Langdon Avenue/South End Marsh property. The project will add 192 units of housing, along with office space.

c) **Exit 17/Whitney Road**

Status: On July 13, 2020, the City Council passed Resolution #9302, which appropriated the sum of \$456,000 of General Fund supported bonds and notes to design and permit a roundabout as part of CIP #30, Hoit Road (US Route 4)/Whitney Road Intersection Improvement Project. The City Council subsequently directed City Administration to enter into negotiations with Interchange Development LLC, concerning a public-private partnership to facilitate development of a proposed regional shopping center and associated improvements to the Hoit Road/Whitney Road intersection. Phase I of the proposed development will include a 13,500 SF NH Liquor and Wine Outlet and an 80,000 SF Market Basket supermarket, with potential for a 20,000 SF attached retail tenant.

On December 16, 2020, Interchange Development LLC secured conditional Planning Board condominium subdivision and site plan approvals for their proposed development.

On April 12, 2021, the City Council approved Resolution #9360, which authorized the City Manager to enter into a Development Agreement between the City and Interchange Development concerning design, permitting, and construction of CIP #30 Hoit Road/Whitney Road Intersection Improvement Project. Also on April 12, 2021, the City Council approved Resolution #9362 and #9363, which amended the Penacook Village Tax Increment Finance District Development Program and Financing Plan concerning CIP #30 and the Developer's project, and appropriated \$4.78 million to construct improvements to Hoit Road and Whitney Road related thereto.

On May 11, 2021, the City received bids for construction of CIP #30. The low bidder was F.L. Merrill Construction, Inc. of Pembroke, New Hampshire, with a bid of \$3,795,485. The

bid is within budget and it is anticipated that a notice to proceed will be issued once various items set forth in the Development Agreement between the City and Interchange Development LLC are satisfied later this summer.

In the meantime, construction of the 80,000 SF Demoulas Supermarket and associated attached retail tenant, as well as the State of New Hampshire Liquor and Wine Outlet, is currently underway.

It is anticipated that CIP #30 will be completed in spring/summer 2022. The Liquor and Wine Outlet is slated for completion in late winter 2022. The Demoulas Supermarket will be completed during the summer of 2022.

d) **Exit 13**

Status: The developer has submitted a comprehensive development plan for Planning Board review. The project, as currently presented, would include multifamily residential, assisted living, townhomes and retail.

e) **Housing**

Status: Prior to the economic impact of COVID-19, new market rate housing construction was proceeding at a steady pace. New single-family homes in Concord were selling for \$350,000-\$400,000 in the active developments in the north Concord and Penacook areas. Since the State's gradual re-opening, the City has not observed any significant drop-off in terms of housing transaction volume or price point.

In terms of multifamily housing construction, Phase 1 of the Penacook Landing project (34 units) located at 33 Canal Street was completed in October and is fully occupied. On December 17, 2020, Caleb was awarded \$324,837 in tax credits from the NH Housing Finance Authority for Phase 2 of Penacook Landing, which will feature 20 units of affordable housing at 35 Canal Street. Said tax credits are awarded annually on a competitive basis. This particular application round was especially competitive and resulted in only a partial award for Penacook Landing Phase 2. As such, the project has been delayed pending the upcoming 2022 tax credit application process, which begins in August 2021. If successful, construction would likely begin in spring/summer 2022.

In December, the City closed with CATCH Neighborhood Housing on the sale of the Village Street property, which, in conjunction with other adjacent properties, will be developed into a 42-unit housing development featuring affordable and market rate rental units. Construction is currently underway.

The City has also had significant interest from multiple developers for larger multifamily housing developments, including one at the south end railyard site off of Langdon Avenue.

GOAL 3. PUBLIC SAFETY WORK

a) **Opioid/Substance Abuse**

Status: The Police Department continues to take an aggressive stance in combatting illegal drug issues facing the City. The Department works closely on this effort with stakeholders in the community and throughout the State to include other police agencies, service providers, City Departments and the court system. The Police Department continues its involvement with the Merrimack County Drug Court Initiative. As part of this initiative, the Department has a member assigned to the Drug Court Team. The Team regularly evaluates the status of each individual in the program and makes recommendations based upon the individual's

performance. The Department conducts curfew checks on each participant that resides in the City of Concord.

During the fall of 2019, the Police Department received a grant award in the amount of \$50,000 through the Law Enforcement Opioid Abuse Reduction Initiative (Project Granite Shield). These funds were utilized by the Department to cover overtime costs associated with conducting illegal drug investigations in the City and surrounding towns. The Department will continue these efforts and regularly assess personnel assignments and initiatives to most effectively address illegal drug usage in the city. During 2020, the Department arrested 195 individuals on illegal drug related charges. Additionally, during the first six months of 2021, another 87 individuals were arrested on illegal drug related charges.

The Department also maintains a prescription drug drop box in the lobby of the police station. This drug drop box allows people to drop off their unused or unwanted prescription medications that otherwise could be available for abuse or unauthorized consumption. During 2020, over 189 pounds of prescription drugs were turned in by members of the community. The Department also continues to participate in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's National Drug Take Back Days. It should be noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department restricted access to the lobby in mid-March of 2020, and thus, prescription drugs have only infrequently been disposed of in the drop box since that time.

The Police Department also works closely with Riverbend's Choices program in helping individuals suffering from drug and other substance abuse issues to find treatment.

The Fire Department, working within Project FIRST grant guidelines, continues with its goals to:

- Educate both first responders and the public about Substance Use Disorder - specifically Opioid Use Disorder;
- Reduce opioid overdoses and opioid overdose deaths by training people on the use of Naloxone and providing opioid overdose response kits; and
- Collaborate with other entities to enhance the "Hub and Spoke" model to facilitate and assist people in seeking treatment for opioid use disorder.

During the last quarter, 97 naloxone kits have been distributed throughout the community to first responders, at-risk persons, and various support networks. Eighty (80) Fire Department members were trained through the NH Recovery Coach Academy on Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and compassion fatigue.

Grant funding for Project FIRST expires in September 2021. The Fire Department is exploring opportunities to sustain opioid/substance abuse intervention/prevention programs using existing operational funds.

b) Community Policing

Status: Prior to the restrictions put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Police Department was involved in a number of initiatives designed to further its relationship with the community. As part of these initiatives, the Department hosted and participated in several community meetings with multiple organizations throughout the city. The Department also actively stayed involved with the New American community. When the restrictions were put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department shifted to virtual meetings with these community groups. The Department also continues to work with the Refugee Advisory Council.

The Police Department has participated in several other programs to help promote community interaction with both children and adults. During 2020, with the assistance of several local businesses, the Department hosted two “Coffee with a Cop” events in the city. These highly successful events offer an opportunity for community members to interact with the City’s police officers in a relaxed atmosphere. Officers are available to answer any questions that residents may have and are able to foster a positive collaborative relationship between the Department and the community. The Department anticipates continuing these events following the lifting of restrictions put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department also participated in a Family Winter Fun Day held at Keach Park. This event was sponsored by Waypoint, which promoted families to get out and get together as a community. Additionally, the Department participated in several honor parades throughout the community to recognize birthdays, veterans, and other special events that were hindered due to the pandemic. The Department continues to participate with the Concord Safe Communities Coalition of the National Safety Council of New England. This organization monitors issues and concerns facing the Concord community.

The Police Department continues to participate in Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) classes, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in person classes had to be suspended. RAD is a comprehensive self-defense course for women and includes situational awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance, and progresses to the basics of hands-on defense training. The RAD system is dedicated to teaching women defensive concepts and techniques against various types of assault by utilizing easy, effective, and proven self-defense tactics. The system of realistic defense provides women with the knowledge to make an educated decision about resistance. With the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions having been lifted, RAD classes are being planned for the upcoming months.

Due to the unfortunate trend of mass shootings occurring in businesses and schools throughout the country, the Police Department has been offering active shooter training seminars, both in-person and virtually. Since the start of 2021, the Department has participated in six active shooter trainings with over 200 attendees. Four of these trainings were conducted on a virtual platform. The Department also conducted six safety presentations for local businesses, visiting nurses, elder care providers, and the New Hampshire Technical Institute, as well as two fraud educational presentations for seniors.

The Police Department continues to successfully utilize its Comfort Dog, Liberty, a two-year old female Labrador retriever. Liberty has been instrumental in interacting with community members and members of the Police Department. She has been deployed to numerous scenes and locations where violent or traumatic events have occurred to help lend relief to those suffering or affected by the incident. Liberty has also engaged those suffering from mental health issues, and has also made appearances at schools, hospitals and other venues. She has participated in many social and community events throughout the city and has a large following of supporters. Liberty has also assisted during interviews of traumatized children at the Merrimack County Advocacy Center. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, Liberty had to curtail many appearances. In the last several months, however, she has been able to make appearances at more and more events and increase interactions with the public and those who could benefit from her services.

In December 2019, the Police Department was very fortunate to receive a donation of \$50,000 from an anonymous community member. The donor requested that members of the Police Department identify persons and families in need and make monetary disbursements or use the funds to obtain goods and services for the recipients as appropriate. This mission has been known as Operation Blue Elf. Operation Blue Elf was a community policing success and has continued through 2021.

The Department's Adverse Childhood Experience Response Team (ACERT) launched in October of 2019. This team is made up of a member of the Concord Police Department, a member from Riverbend Community Mental Health, and a member from Merrimack County Human Services. The team deploys to residences where children have been exposed to violence. At the residences, the team meets with the families and assesses the situation to determine next steps that can be taken for the child, such as support groups, mental health counseling, early childhood education, or child-parent psychotherapy. ACERT made 285 home visits during 2020. However, home visits were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The team continued to follow up with families by phone. The team was able to reinstitute home visits in August, but had to suspend them in December once again. During 2020, the team contacted over 505 families either by phone or in person to assist with services that may be needed. Home visits were once again reinitiated in May of 2021, and the team has contacted over 94 families in-person and an additional 263 families by phone to assist with services that may be needed.

The Police Department continued to assist citizens with installing child safety seats into their vehicles. Safety checks were also conducted to ensure that previously installed seats were properly and safely installed.

Police Department staff presented at the IMPACCT (Mastery of Post-Secondary Achievement in College, Careers, and Training) Academy. This group is made up of at-risk kids with disabilities. Presentations covered roles of the police, good decision making, and alcohol and drug prevention.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Police Department has been limited in participating in many of its community-based programs. In an attempt to stay active with the community, numerous officers have participated in birthday and honor parades throughout the city. The Department also participated in a Veteran's Day parade at the Abbott-Downing School.

The Police Department has been working with the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness to assist those that are homeless and trying to find a permanent home. The Department has been actively involved in assisting in cleaning up homeless sites that have been left in disrepair.

The Police Department is committed to participating in these types of initiatives and continuing to foster the relationship between the Department and the community. All officers are encouraged to participate in community engagement activities. The success of the Police Department in providing the safest community possible is dependent upon a cooperative effort between the Department and the community as a whole.

c) **Working with School Districts**

Status: The Police Department has three officers assigned as School Resource Officers (SRO). Officers are assigned to Concord High School, Merrimack Valley High School, and Merrimack Valley Middle School. Each of these officers is responsible for the safety and security of the schools' campuses, to act as mentors and educators, to be community policing liaisons, and to be problem solvers. The SRO's are also expected to help guide students through personal, educational, and social pressures that are part of being an adolescent.

During 2020 and the beginning of 2021, the Department was extremely active in all of the schools throughout the City to include both public and private schools. The Department currently has six officers trained in D.A.R.E. The D.A.R.E. Program is designed to teach students at an early age the dangers of drug and alcohol use. This program has been widely

successful and appreciated throughout the schools. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic shutting down the schools, several of our D.A.R.E. officers video recorded their lesson plans, with the help of Concord TV. Some of these lesson plans were played by the schools through their on-line learning platforms. While distance learning is still in place at both school districts, arrangements have been made to carry on with the D.A.R.E. Program remotely when possible.

Since the beginning of 2020, officers have participated in “Police Readers” throughout the schools in the Concord and Merrimack Valley School Districts. Officers went into first and second grade classes where they read the class a book and answered any questions the children might have. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officers made video recordings of themselves reading books. These videos were then shared with the schools where the videos were played over their on-line learning platforms.

Since the beginning of 2020, members of the Police Department have presented two internet safety talks in the Concord and Merrimack Valley School Districts to help educate students about the dangers of the internet and social media and how to avoid being victimized. Officers provided suggestions to students on how to protect themselves from becoming victims.

The Police Department has assisted the Concord School Board by participating as a member of a task force focused on developing a strategic plan for improving student safety and wellbeing. This task force involves a variety of stakeholders from within the Concord community, and is facilitated by Gerri King, Ph.D., a nationally recognized organizational facilitator.

The Fire Department continues its relationship with the Concord High School CRTC Emergency Services Program. Operations have returned to pre-COVID status. The recently graduated class was the largest of the six programs that were run in the state, with 26 students enrolled. The program had four students achieve Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) credentials, and four students achieve Firefighter I certification. Two of these students have chosen to further their education and are currently enrolled in advanced EMT (AEMT) school. The Concord Fire Department maintains a close relationship with the students in the program, with several staff members providing mentorship and serving as instructors. The program periodically utilizes the Fire Department training grounds for realistic training opportunities. Three of the recently graduated students are pursuing degrees in Fire Science at Lakes Region Community College, with one of the students being accepted into a live-in program at a Lakes Region fire department.

d) **Recruitment**

Status: During calendar year 2020 and through the first half of 2021, the Police Department has aggressively worked to recruit staff. Staffing and training continues to be one of the Department’s main priorities and will remain so until our agency stabilizes our work force.

During 2020, the Police Department hired 16 new police officers; and during the first six months of 2021, the Department has hired an additional three new police officers. Currently, the Department has three officers in field training, and three officers attending the Police Academy. Those officers in the academy are set to graduate at the end of August.

All of the above-mentioned police officer candidates were the result of targeted recruitments. Department staff put in countless hours to identify, meet, and recruit these candidates one on one. We worked to educate them on our hiring process and the transition to become a police officer.

As of June 30, 2021, the Department has three vacant police officer positions. These vacant positions will be filled by three new officers who are scheduled to begin working for the Department during the beginning of July 2021. These officers will be attending the police academy at the end of August

At the beginning of 2020, the Police Department had three vacancies for police dispatchers. A recruitment process took place during the first quarter of 2020 and we were able to hire two new dispatchers on May 17, 2020. One of these dispatchers resigned shortly after taking the position. The Department hired one new dispatcher who began working at the end of August and an additional dispatcher began employment with the City at the beginning of November. This new dispatcher also resigned shortly after taking the position. The Department hired a new dispatcher at the beginning of April 2021; however, another full-time dispatcher resigned in order to work for another City department. There is currently one vacant dispatcher position, which is anticipated to be filled during the summer.

It is critically important to understand that in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of our fellow police agencies have postponed their hiring and recruitments. The Concord Police Department has not stopped efforts with regards to recruitment or hiring. We have found creative ways to connect with applicants and conduct interviews in a responsible and safe manner. We have continued to push forward despite these challenging times. Overall, the Department has hired 22 new employees since the beginning of 2020, which includes 16 new police officers, four dispatchers, one records technician, and one fleet mechanic.

The Fire Department has modified its recruitment process for Firefighter Paramedics and has seen short-term success with attracting fully qualified applicants. A Recruitment and Retention Committee has been recently formed to further this effort. The Fire Department hired four new members: two Firefighter Paramedics and two Firefighters this past quarter.

GOAL 4. PUBLIC INFORMATION, MARKETING, AND COMMUNICATIONS

a) Overall Economic Development

Status: In 2020, the City worked with the community's restauranteurs to allow for flexibility during the COVID-19 re-opening. Efforts included temporarily waiving requirements for site plan compliance for parking spaces used for outdoor dining in private parking lots, and expanded permitting for outdoor dining on public sidewalks and in public parking spaces. At its October 2020 meeting, City Council authorized the expenditure of \$15,000 to provide financial relief for restaurants in Concord as they prepared themselves for the upcoming winter season in the pandemic. The City Council also renewed its temporary expanded outdoor dining program in 2021.

The City, via the Revolving Loan Fund Program, partnered with Provident Bank and the Capital Regional Development Council on a \$4.1 million financing package to support the construction of a new corporate headquarters for Eastern Analytical, Inc., a Concord-based environmental testing agency and laboratory, to be relocated to 51 Antrim Avenue in the Airport Industrial Park. This undeveloped property has been vacant since the development of the Henniker Street and Antrim Avenue project, approximately 15 years ago. The City's share of the financing package was \$287,000. The project has tangible economic development and financial benefits for the City. Specifically, it will retain a Concord-based employer which has been located in the City for 25 years. The project also retains 32 full-time jobs and will spur the creation of another 3-4 full-time positions in the near future. Lastly, property tax revenues from the new development will be approximately \$43,000-\$55,000 annually. The project began construction in the fall of 2020.

In February 2021, as part of an overall reorganization of the City's economic development activities, the City Council authorized the creation of a Local Government Management Fellowship (LGMF), in partnership with the International City/County Management Association, to provide much-needed support for a variety of City and economic development projects, and to assist with staff succession planning. The LGMF began with the City on July 6, 2021.

b) **Concord TV**

Status: The City of Concord works closely with Concord TV on a variety of initiatives including informational videos, public service announcements, event promotion and coverage, and monthly podcasts. Though the pandemic derailed some plans and events in 2020, Concord TV partnered with City staff to safely produce several informational videos on a variety of topics, including accessing City buildings, online City payments and services, water safety, trail etiquette, and more. Recent collaborations include an updated video of the City's online services, Arbor Day, the pollinator garden at Merrill Park, and the Merrill Pool ribbon cutting ceremony.

Concord TV recently recorded and live-streamed the Fire Department's two promotion ceremonies, as well as their 2020 Awards Program.

Concord TV's ability to live stream City meetings on YouTube during the pandemic has been very valuable.

c) **Concord / Merrimack Valley School District**

Status: The City has been working with the Concord and Merrimack Valley School Districts to enhance their presence on the City website and hopes to have educational resources prepared before school returns in the fall of 2021. The City and School Districts have been exploring other ways to collaborate; however, the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily suspended some collaborative opportunities and events.

d) **General City Communications: SeeClickFix**

The City transitioned from its current Citizen Request Tracker module to SeeClickFix in late 2020. This new reporting tool launched in January 2021. The City is partnering with SeeClickFix to make it easier than ever for the community to report a concern using either the online request portal or the MyConcordNH app, available on iPhone and Android phones. The MyConcordNH app also features important City services and information, making it easier to stay informed.

GOAL 5. WORKING WITH STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

a) **Transportation with NHDOT**

Status: The City and NHDOT have worked collaboratively to advance the U.S. Route 4/Whitney Road intersection improvement project. Construction is expected to begin in late July.

b) **Department of Justice / Garages**

Status: The General Court of New Hampshire, in coordination with the NH Department of Administrative Services, sought proposals for the preliminary study of constructing a new office building to house the New Hampshire Department of Justice, certain Legislative space, and a new parking garage. The work was scheduled to be undertaken in the fall of

2019 and deliverables completed by calendar year end. The City now understands that this project has been tabled in light of the anticipated financial impact on the State from the COVID-19 shutdown.

c) **Stickney Avenue**

Status: On June 30, 2020, the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) informed the City that it was listing the property for sale. In accordance with RSA 4:39-c:1, the City has a right of first refusal to acquire the property.

On October 21, 2020, the NHDOT notified the City that its bid process had concluded and that one offer to purchase the property, in the amount of \$1 million, was received from Brady Sullivan. Brady Sullivan indicated that it would redevelop the property for “residential” purposes, but provided no specific details to the NHDOT or the City.

In its October 21, 2020 notice, the State also inquired as to whether the City would have interest in matching the bidder’s offer.

On December 14, 2020, the City Council approved Resolution #9336, which authorized the City Manager to enter into negotiations with the NHDOT concerning a Purchase and Sales Agreement to acquire the former NHDOT Maintenance Facility located at 11 Stickney Avenue in accordance with RSA 4:36-c:1. The NHDOT, at their request, took the initial lead on drafting the Purchase and Sales Agreement. The initial draft was received on February 15, 2021.

Negotiations continued during March, April and May; and various drafts of a Purchase and Sales Agreement were exchanged between the parties. On May 21, 2021, the NHDOT informed the City that they were terminating negotiations, as they had entered into a Purchase and Sales Agreement with Brady Sullivan.

GOAL 6. ENHANCED COMMUNITY EVENT S/ARTS

a) **Promote Community Events with Community Partners**

Status: With greater vaccination numbers, more events are starting to re-materialize. In August, Concord will be home to Market Days.

The Fire Department continues to partner with the State, the National Guard, and the Capital Area Public Health Network to deliver COVID vaccines. To date, Fire Department personnel have administered or assisted with administration of over 50,000 vaccinations. They also participated in a closed point of distribution where New Americans and under-represented communities were vaccinated, as well as a closed point of distribution for staff from area school districts.

GOAL 7. SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

a) **Form Based Code**

Status: Community Development staff and City legal counsel are meeting regularly to ensure that the document, which will have significant consequences for the future of our community, has the essential fundamentals to ensure compliance and defensibility. Staff hopes to have Phase I before City Council later this year.

b) Street Light Re-lamping

Status: It is anticipated that the City's LED Street Light Re-lamping Project will be completed in 2021. Until received approval from the Public Utilities Commission to expand their on-bill financing program to accommodate a higher amount than currently allowed for the City of Concord. The City Council held a public hearing and approved the LED Street Light Re-lamping Project at its January 2021 meeting. The City has awarded a contract for this project to RealTerm Energy.

c) Renewable Energy & Conservation

Status: At its April 13, 2020 meeting, the City Council approved a recommendation from City Administration to award a bid for a small scale, "behind the meter" facility located at the Hall Street Wastewater Treatment Facility, in the front of the parcel. The City is projected to save up to \$100,000 over the life of the project (slightly less if the system has to export some of the generation due to added costs).

ReVision energy provided the City with a refreshed proposal. Review by the Selection Committee and the City's consultant concluded that the proposal, while it would show support for renewable energy, ultimately was not economically beneficial as presented. Also, there is the risk that electric costs may not escalate as modelled and the City could end up in the red on this project, negatively impacting sewer utility rate payers. The Selection Committee referred the proposal to the City Council for its direction and decision at the July 2020 Council meeting. ReVision Energy further revised its proposal, which was economically beneficial, and City Council voted to move forward with the contract award. Contract negotiations are ongoing.

d) Recycling

Status: The General Services Department worked with property management firms and condominium associations to address significant contamination in the multi-family recycling stream, making changes to programs as needed. Some multi-family properties have suspended recycling programs as a means by which to address persistent contamination. Others have opted for dumpster modifications that prevent large items from being deposited in the dumpsters.

GOAL 8. RECREATION AND PARKS**a) Athletic Fields**

Status: The Parks and Recreation Department coordinates the reservations and maintenance of the City's parks and athletic fields. During the course of the year the following fields are maintained and reserved for numerous user groups: four baseball fields, five lacrosse fields, seven softball fields, two flag football fields, three football fields, one field hockey field, and 19 soccer fields.

Parks and Recreation staff worked with the three high schools, and youth and adult leagues, to ensure a successful spring 2021 season. As of the end of March 2021, all regular spring sports resumed, following all State COVID guidelines.

b) Citywide Community Center

The Citywide Community Center has remained open during the pandemic, while following all COVID guidelines. The Parks and Recreation Department offered summer camps during June, July and August 2020, and continued offering programs and classes during the fall and winter of 2020/2021. Department staff managed to rearrange class times to ensure good cleaning of the facility. Since early February 2021, the Department has seen a steady increase in participation in all program age groups, from youth to adult programs. Registered participant levels were at pre-COVID numbers for programs starting in late April and May 2021.

The Heights Branch of the Concord Public Library reopened in June and is open on Wednesdays from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

c) **Terrill Park**

Status: The new Master Plan for Terrill Park has been approved and is fully permitted. Phase 1 of the project, completed in the fall of 2020, includes a new upper parking lot, a new dog park, the paved Merrimack River Greenway Trail, and related site improvements. Phase 1 was funded in partnership with the Friends of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, a grant from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the City of Concord. The new dog park at Terrill Park is maintained by volunteers from the Pope Memorial SPCA.

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

Status: The City is engaged in ongoing discussions with property owners, stakeholders, and potential partners concerning the possible acquisition of private property to support future development of the MRGT. The Parks and Recreation Department is working on the next phase of this project, which will bring the trail from Loudon Road south to the wetland north of Phase 1 of Terrill Park.

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. Pan Am Systems, owner of the rail line, provided a letter of support for the City's application.

On June 14, 2021, the City Council approved Resolutions #9379 and #9380 concerning the acquisition of a 5.5 acre, 0.5 mile long portion of the Concord-Claremont Line for the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail, as well as a 72.5 acre, 5.6 mile long section of the Northern Rail Line to facilitate CIP #543, the Merrimack River Greenway Trail. Subject to completion of due diligence, it is anticipated the City will acquire both properties in December 2021.

e) **City Trail System**

Status: The City's trails continue to be extremely popular and, with their increased use, there is a greater need for maintenance and oversight. The Council approved the creation of a 20-hour Trails Ranger position to help address these issues proactively. It is anticipated that this position will be filled by mid- to late summer.

ONGOING INITIATIVE 1. FORMER TANNERY SITE/PARK

Status: 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 2019, the City retained a 1.53-acre parcel with approximately 500 feet of frontage on the Contoocook River, located at 11 Canal Street, for the future riverfront park.

The current park concept plan was commissioned by the City in 2015 and had an estimated total cost of \$950,000. The concept included full reconstruction and expansion of the Canal Street Public Parking Lot. Adjusting for inflation, the estimated total cost of the project is \$1.35 million. It is anticipated that the total cost of the park will be supported by the Penacook Village Tax Increment Finance (PVTIF) District, recreational impact fees, and grants. The Parking Fund may also support reconstruction and expansion of the Canal Street Municipal Parking Lot, which is included in the project scope.

On April 12, 2021, the City Council approved Resolution #9362, which amended the Penacook Village Tax Increment Finance District's Development Program and Financing Plan to include the new riverfront park.

The project was included in the FY 2021 Capital Improvement Program as CIP #567. Specifically, the FY 2022 budget appropriated \$110,000 of Recreation Impact Fees to design and permit the new riverfront park. Construction is tentatively programmed in the FY 2023 CIP budget.

ON-GOING INITIATIVE 2. ENHANCED NEIGHBORHOOD STREET PROGRAMS

Status: The FY 2021 Paving Project went out to bid on December 18, 2020 and was within budget. GMI Asphalt was the low bidder and is the contractor for this summer's project. The project will be completed by the end of July.