



**LEBANON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION AND DOWNTOWN LEBANON  
TIF ADVISORY BOARD**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2022 - 4:00 PM**  
**Council Chambers, City Hall or**  
**REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM**  
**LebanonNH.gov/LIVE**

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- 1. Call to Order**
  - 2. Approval of Minutes**
    - A. March 16, 2022
    - B. March 23, 2022
  - 3. New Business**
    - A. Discussion: Redevelopment of lower parking lots
    - B. Public Comment
  - 4. Other Business**
    - A. Benefits of Enhancing Riverfront Access and Amenities
  - 5. Future Agenda Items**
  - 6. Next Meeting Date**
    - A. May 25, 2022
  - 7. Adjournment**

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public that wish to attend remotely may do so by going to [LebanonNH.gov/Live](https://LebanonNH.gov/Live) where you will find instructions on how to enter the meeting. Members of the public will be able to participate and ask questions through the City's virtual platform or by phone. Please note: Should technical difficulties occur during the meeting that disrupts virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

**Agenda  
Economic Development Commission & Downtown Lebanon  
TIF Advisory Board  
April 27, 2022**

**Agenda Item #2A  
Approval of Minutes**

**March 16, 2022**

DRAFT

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION &  
DOWNTOWN TIF ADVISORY BOARD  
JOINT MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022 – 4:00PM  
City Hall – Council Chambers  
51 North Park Street, Lebanon**

**MINUTES**

**EDC MEMBERS PRESENT:** William Dunn (Chair), Andrew Key, Councilor Karen Liot Hill (Vice Chair), Kevin Purcell [4:32 PM] (remote), David Newlove, Tracy Hutchins (Upper Valley Business Alliance, remote), Chip Brown

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dan Nash, Johanna Cicotte, Councilor Doug Whittlesey

**TIF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Barry Schuster (Chair), Victoria Smith

**STAFF PRESENT:** Planning and Development Director David Brooks

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**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

- The March 16, 2022 Economic Development Commission meeting was called to order at 4:20 PM
- There was no quorum present for the Downtown TIF Advisory Board, so it did not formally call a meeting to order.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. February 16, 2022 & February 23, 2022

*Motion by Councilor Liot Hill to approve the minutes of February 16, 2022, and February 23, 2022 as written.  
Second by David Newlove.*

*\* The Vote on the MOTION was approved (5-0).*

**3. NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Discussion: Redevelopment of the lower parking lots

Chair Dunn explained that he invited Sarah Riley, Chair of the Conservation Commission, and Colin Smith, Chair of the Pedestrian & Bicyclist Advisory Committee, to the meeting to give their thoughts on this item.

Sarah Riley stated that she is strongly in favor of having public natural spaces in the Downtown. This aligns with the Conservation Commission's mission. She noted that the Master Plan states in Chapter 3 that the river is a unique and underutilized resource in Lebanon. She would like for this area to be embraced and nurtured, and that this may repay the Town via economic benefits. She recommended members of the committees look into the UNH Nature Economy publications. She believes this project could allow for an amazing opportunity for a riparian/aquatic resource right behind City Hall. She would like to see a natural park area with native vegetation which could be a refuge from the City, while still steps away from the Downtown area. She would also like to see a ped/bike crossing bridge over the river, if possible. This would allow people to have safer, easier access to the Downtown area using multimodal travel.

There was a discussion about how creating a green space through this project could help with the City's heat island effect. These heat pockets give off higher surface temperatures than the surrounding areas, and trees/green space can help to alleviate this.

*Kevin Purcell entered the meeting remotely at 4:32 PM. He was unable to attend the meeting due to travel times.*

Councilor Liot Hill asked if the project should not seek an exemption from the Shoreland Protection Act, to allow for more flexibility in the timing of the process. Sarah Riley noted that she believes DES will be a resource to help the City achieve a sustainable goal for the property. There are plenty of examples of compatible recreational uses along shorelines. Ms. Riley suggested that the committees use the State's guidance to discover how to create the best recreational/ecological experience in this area. This shoreland area does have some invasives in it, allowing for this project to give an opportunity for ecological restoration.

Colin Smith stated that he has not yet spoken to the Pedestrian & Bicyclist Advisory Committee yet on this item, but as an individual he likes the concept being put forth. This is an interesting project from a ped/bike perspective, as it could help to connect the Mascoma River Greenway to the Northern Rail Trail at Spencer Street. There is the opportunity to make many multimodal improvements. He did note that some cyclists using the Rail Trail are quite fast-moving, and there should be consideration given to potential usage conflicts in this area.

Bob Moses stated that he is glad there is consensus regarding creating an open park and recreation space on the lower parking lot level and working to connect the Rail Trail and tunnel. He asked if this project needs to jump into an RFI. Chair Dunn explained that an RFI is an earlier step in the process than an RFP. The consensus seems to be that a consultant is needed to show the groups a number of potential ideas to choose from.

Chair Schuster suggested that the group members come up with bullet lists of the values that they would like to see reflected in either lot area.

David Newlove stated that he likes the idea of creating a nature walk area on the riverfront where kids can explore the natural environment.

Councilor Liot Hill agreed that she likes the idea of getting people right down onto the waterfront. She noted that it might be important to designate the roadway from the ped/bike corridor and articulate higher speed traffic areas from those of the nature walk. There is a concern regarding creating safety for all users of the area.

Andy Key stated that he likes the idea of the project maintaining the amount of parking needed for the downtown, while also allowing for more green space. He would like for there to be an opportunity to explore the upper parking lot area for business use, possibly to offset some of the costs associated with the project. A green area to connect to the baseball field area would be nice. He asked if the Taylor Street area can be looked at differently.

Councilor Liot Hill stated that she would like to have Dan Nash present his idea for an additional deck of parking behind the Citizen's Bank building. This could help with creating additional parking for that which might be removed as part of this project.

It was noted that Mr. Brooks will put together a potential draft for an RFI proposal for the committees to review at their next meeting.

Clifton Below explained that the retaining wall on site could be removed, so that the area is no longer divided into upper and lower parking lots. He reviewed a proposal that reconfigures Court Street and extends it to create a traffic calming effect. Taylor Street could also be extended. The area behind City Hall could be used as a redevelopment opportunity with the possibility for parking below grade. He noted that the Shoreline Protection Act is used to protect existing natural shorelines. It is worth seeking this to decide what can be done by the City in that space. There are some property ownership issues in this area, such as land owned by the Senior Center.

C. Public Comment – *this was previously addressed.*

#### 4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

5. NEXT MEETING DATE: March 23, 2022 – EDC only; April 27, 2022 – EDC & TIF

#### 6. OTHER BUSINESS

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT.

*The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 PM.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristan Patenaude

**Agenda  
Economic Development Commission & Downtown Lebanon  
TIF Advisory Board  
April 27, 2022**

**Agenda Item #2B  
Approval of Minutes**

**March 23, 2022**

DRAFT

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2022 – 4:00PM**  
**City Hall – Council Chambers**  
**51 North Park Street, Lebanon**

**MINUTES**

**EDC MEMBERS PRESENT:** William Dunn (Chair), Dan Nash, Andrew Key, Kevin Purcell, David Newlove

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tracy Hutchins (Upper Valley Business Alliance) Chip Brown, Johanna Cicotte, Councilor Karen Liot Hill (Vice Chair), Councilor Doug Whittlesey,

**STAFF PRESENT:** Planning and Development Director David Brooks

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**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

- The March 23, 2022 Economic Development Commission meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** None

**3. NEW BUSINESS:**

Chair Dunn noted that there was an article in the Valley News regarding the new art school which received conditional approval to move into Downtown Lebanon. He then welcomed Chet Clem to speak on items regarding West Lebanon.

A. Presentation: Economic Development in West Leb

1. Action Plan: <https://www.westleb.org/actionplan>
2. Vision Deck: <https://www.riverparkwestlebanon.com/vision>
3. River Park: <https://www.riverparkwestlebanon.com/>

Chet Clem spoke in his role as a developer for Lyme Properties and also in his role as Vice Chair of the West Lebanon Revitalization Advisory Committee. He noted that March is the 12-year anniversary of the River Park zoning change. Not many new ideas have been introduced into the action plan for this area, although many studies have been completed. There is frustration that this area is worthy of being addressed but continues not to be. He reviewed some examples of revitalization projects, such as Mill City Park at Franklin. There could be a phased implementation for projects in West Lebanon to be sustainable both economically and financially. One project already undertaken put the River Park property to use as publicly accessible open space and trails. This land was passed to a NH not-for-profit in 2020 to hold in perpetuity. In January 2021, the efforts were made to reinvigorate the 2007 vision for River Park. Efforts are being made to align downtown West Lebanon with the rest of the City. He would like to see current landowners treated the same as new developers. He would like to see proactive discussions on how the River Park project could succeed.

Chair Dunn stated that he can see the frustration and the vision regarding this topic. He asked to chat with Mr. Clem offline regarding the history of the vision.

David Newlove asked what would be placed in the River Park development, if not biotech uses. Mr. Clem explained that he has tried to broaden the scope to medtech and innovation economy businesses. Housing has now been moved up in the phasing process. Mr. Clem noted that he has extended water and sewer to the site. He is trying to align the area to market needs. Mr. Newlove asked if single-family starter homes are economically viable. Mr. Clem stated that he cannot sell a net zero home with the necessary infrastructure in this market for a profit under current zoning. He is an advocate for missing middle housing and the City should potentially consider zoning changes in order to allow this to occur more easily. There does not seem to be a way to create all of the single-family houses the market says it needs while supporting the necessary infrastructure and services. There needs to be a path to create down-sizable housing choices that could also be desired by young professionals, which seems to be unavailable in most of the Upper Valley region.

Andy Key asked what the largest hurdle from the City is on this project. Mr. Clem explained that the amount of upfront carry on this project is a concern for him. He is approved and has his entitlements.

Kevin Purcell exited the meeting.

City Manager Shaun Mulholland noted that there was interest in marketing the West Lebanon site by the City, and this was pursued with NH Business and Economic Affairs. He asked if there is anything else that Mr. Clem needs from the City in regard to this project, as the City has tried to push this project forward from its end and does not owe Mr. Clem anything at this point. Mr. Clem stated that there might be a few items to discuss in terms of Tax Increment Financing. Mr. Clem noted that he owes the City an updated proposal.

B. Discussion: Reinitiate Business Listening Tours – *not discussed at this time.*

C. Public Comment

Becky Foster explained that for the past 15 years the citizens of West Lebanon have met and voted to get the River Park moving, as they believe it will create the funding needed for the City to move forward with the Downtown improvements. The citizens were promised high value income coming into that area, not low-income housing.

**4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

**5. NEXT MEETING DATE:** April 27, 2022

**6. OTHER BUSINESS**

**7. ADJOURNMENT.**

*The meeting was adjourned at 5:14 PM.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristan Patenaude

**Agenda**  
**Economic Development Commission & Downtown Lebanon**  
**TIF Advisory Board**  
**April 27, 2022**

**Agenda Item #3A**  
**New Business**

# **Discussion: Redevelopment of lower parking lots**

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY  
CITY OF LEBANON, NH

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST  
Month Date, Year

INTRODUCTION

The City of Lebanon, NH is issuing this Request for Expressions of Interest (“RFEI”) to solicit interest from qualified parties in the redevelopment of two City-owned properties (together the “Development Sites”) totaling approximately 2.30-acres (Lower lot ~1.7 ac or ~74,000 sqft; Upper lot: ~0.60 ac or ~26,000 sqft) along the southerly side of the Mascoma River within Downtown Lebanon. The purpose of this RFEI is to solicit interest and redevelopment strategies for the Development Site(s) that will advance the goals and objectives of the 2016 Lebanon Downtown Vision Plan and Tunnel Assessment (<https://lebanonnh.gov/474/Downtown-Visioning-Study-Tunnel-Project>).

This project represents a significant development opportunity for the City. It also presents a unique opportunity to enhance the rediscovery and restoration of the Mascoma River frontage through downtown and to provide critical pedestrian and bicyclist connections between the Northern Rail Trail and the Mascoma River Greenway and downtown tunnel area, while also providing for economic development opportunities in the downtown core. All development concepts must be consistent with the Key Concepts and planning principles developed through significant public input during the Downtown Vision Plan process including: Reconnection to the Mascoma River, Placemaking, Pedestrian/Bicycle Connectivity, and Economic Development.

The City of Lebanon may utilize responses generated by this RFEI process to inform a subsequent Request for Proposals (“RFP”) process. It is the City’s intent and desire to identify a development team through this RFEI/RFP process to redevelop the properties in a manner that achieves the City’s goals and objectives formulated through the community-driven Downtown Vision Plan process.

TIMELINE

RFEI Issuance Date: .....  
Date to Submit Questions:.....  
Answers to Questions Posted:.....  
Deadline to Submit Expressions of Interest: .....

SITE CONTEXT AND DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN

Located between Concord, NH, and Burlington, VT, the City of Lebanon is the employment, commercial, and civic hub of the Upper Connecticut River Valley. Situated near the junction of Interstates 89 and 91, Lebanon itself is a small City with a resident population of just over 14,000 people, but its daytime population exceeds 40,000 as a result of the City’s role as a major employment and shopping destination for the region. The City of Lebanon is experiencing a residential development boom with nearly 1,300 new single-family and multi-family residential units either under construction or in the development pipeline. The City’s support of these projects

demonstrates its commitment to new development that will serve as a catalyst for economic growth, private investment, and job creation.

<locus map>

<aerial photo of study area>

## LEBANON DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN

In November 2016, the City released the Downtown Vision Plan and Tunnel Assessment report for the core area of Downtown Lebanon, including Colburn Park and the major approaches to it as well as sections of the Mascoma River that are part of the historic downtown pattern of development. The purpose of the Downtown Vision Plan was to identify and assess, through citizen engagement and professional analysis, the range of alternatives and feasibility for revising the downtown, and to enhance the physical appearance and functionality of the area. The study identified opportunities and established alternatives for building redevelopment, traffic circulation, bike and pedestrian connections, and streetscape amenities.

The community-driven plan was formulated using extensive feedback received through a comprehensive and robust 15-month community engagement process resulting in the collection of nearly 1,300 public comments compiled during multiple public engagement meetings, city events, surveys and web-based comments. The final Downtown Vision Plan, background studies, presentations, and public comments are available for download at the Downtown Visioning Study & Tunnel Project webpage: (<https://lebanonnh.gov/474/Downtown-Visioning-Study-Tunnel-Project>).

Within the Vision Plan Framework, the City is poised to begin implementing a series of near-term strategic investments and potential long-term development scenarios to invigorate and further define its Downtown area. Such investment will bring vitality to the Downtown while strengthening the existing connection to the Mascoma River itself. The Downtown Vision Plan is meant to become a resource for the City and an investment roadmap to future developers and property owners as the initiatives and strategies that are included in this report move forward.

<maps and images from Visioning Study>

## DEVELOPMENT SITES

The Development Sites are located along the southerly side of the Mascoma River and are situated north of City Hall and north of the buildings along the Hanover Street pedestrian mall. The two parcels are owned by the City of Lebanon. Combined, the parcels comprise over approximately 2.30 acres and are currently improved with two surface parking lots. The “upper” and “lower” parking lots are separated by a retaining wall that delineated the southerly side of a former railroad right-of-way, but is now owned by the City of Lebanon.

Both parcels hold great potential for downtown redevelopment, including opportunities to reconnect to the Mascoma River as well as improved connectivity between the Northern Rail Trail and the Mascoma River Greenway. Any redevelopment of this area must be consistent with the Key Concepts outlined in the Downtown Vision Plan and carefully consider potential impacts and enhancement opportunities for the surrounding natural resources and neighborhoods, including pedestrian and bicycle connections, traffic, parking, and infrastructure.

<close up aerial>

**SITE #1: 0 HANOVER STREET; TAX MAP 91, LOT 230 (“LOWER LOT”/TAYLOR STREET)**

**Location:** Bordered to the north by the Mascoma River, the south by a former railroad right-of-way retaining wall, the east by CCBA Playing Fields and Taylor Street right-of-way, and the west Ledyard Charter School building.

**Ownership:** City of Lebanon

**Approximate Lot Size:** ~1.7 Acres or ~74,000 Square Feet

**Current Use:** All-day surface parking lot.

**Downtown Vision Plan:** Development concepts must include the enhancement and restoration of the Mascoma River frontage along with connections to the adjacent green spaces and the downtown core. There is also the opportunity to incorporate connections between the Northern Rail Trail and the Mascoma River Greenway. Mixed-use development is contemplated to enliven the downtown area. The relocation of Taylor Street and the relocation or replacement of existing parking spaces should be considered.



**SITE #2: 0 FLYNN STREET; TAX MAP 91, LOT 245 (“UPPER LOT”)**

**Location:** Bordered to the north by a former railroad right-of-way retaining wall, the south by Flynn Street, the east by the edge of existing parking lot, and the crosswalk from Court Street.

**Ownership:** City of Lebanon

**Approximate Lot Size:** ~0.60 Acres or ~26,000 Square Feet

**Current Use:** Time-limited surface parking lot.

**Downtown Vision Plan:** Development concepts must include the relocation or incorporation of existing parking spaces. Mixed-use development is contemplated to enliven the downtown area. Opportunity to create an enhanced bike/pedestrian connectivity between the enhanced Mascoma River frontage and the downtown core.



## PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The City seeks to develop an implementation strategy for an enhanced downtown experience that rediscovers and restores the Mascoma River frontage, provides attractive multi-modal connections to and within the downtown area, and maximizes economic development potential, resulting in increased economic vitality. The development of these sites presents unique

challenges and opportunities that will require a thoughtful approach to balance existing uses with new development. Submissions must consider the following Key Concepts and planning principles that were developed through the Downtown Vision Plan process:

**Reconnect to the Mascoma River:** Create an enhanced and engaging green space along the Mascoma River to act as an attractive amenity for existing and future residents and visitors, and to provide opportunity for river access and for active and passive recreation.

**Placemaking:** Create a vibrant destination by enhancing the riverfront and building on the civic role of Downtown Lebanon and introducing a mix of symbiotic land uses focused on improving the pedestrian experience.

**Bike/Pedestrian Connectivity:** Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and connections to enhance non-motorized access to and along the Mascoma River and enhance connections to adjacent neighborhoods and the downtown core.

**Economic Development:** Develop a financially feasible plan that creates value and a variety of vibrant synergistic uses while balancing neighborhood impacts.

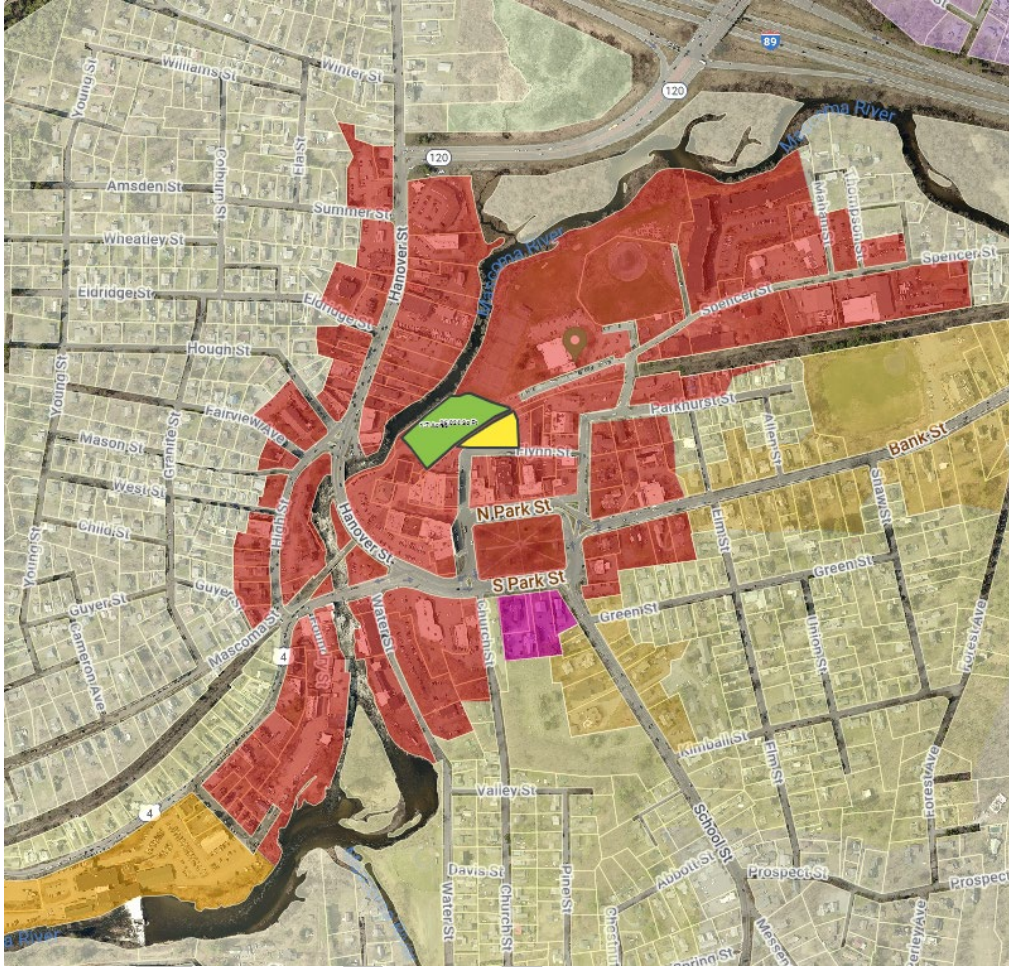
## EXISTING ZONING, UTILITIES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Development Sites are currently zoned LD (Lebanon Downtown), a high-density, mixed use district encompassing much of the City's downtown district. The LD District permits a combination of retail, office, government, business, service, cultural and entertainment uses, and high-density residential to be built on development sites. (<https://lebanonnh.gov/570/Zoning-Ordinance-Map>). As an outcome of the Downtown Vision Plan, the City has already adjusted the zoning regulations applicable to the Development Sites to increase allowed building height, incorporate design requirements, and to adjust the permitted uses of the street level story. However, modified zoning district concepts that clearly advance the stated goals and objectives of the Downtown Vision Plan may be considered. Modifications to existing zoning regulations needed to accommodate an appropriate development concept must:

1. Enhance the form and function for new transit-oriented development with particular attention to ground floor uses and the public realm, and;
2. Include standards for building height and mass that would define a clear transition between the Development Site and surrounding neighborhoods as indicated in the Vision Plan.

### Existing Utilities and Infrastructure

The existing sanitary sewer line that services the Development Site is a 36" diameter reinforced concrete pipe that leads directly to the City's main interceptor line. Existing potable water and storm water infrastructure capacity appears sufficient to accommodate new development under existing zoning regulations. The lower parking lot is considered to be part of Taylor Street and existing roadway connections to the east and west for general vehicular circulation should be accommodated into the project design.



## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Respondents must submit the following information:

### A. Respondent Information

Contact information for a primary and secondary contact including name, address, telephone number, and e-mail of the individual who will be authorized to act on behalf of the Respondent to answer questions or requests for additional information. Respondent's organizational structure, including relevant project experience, website, and CV for each team member is required.

### B. Detailed Development Concept Plan

A detailed conceptual development plan must consist of the following elements:

1. Narrative identifying how the conceptual development plan will advance the objectives set forth in this RFEI and the Downtown Vision Plan.
2. A schematic site plan depicting each land use proposed and how they relate to the entire Downtown, the Downtown Tunnel, the Mascoma River, and Taylor, Flynn and Court Streets.

3. Delineation of the bulk and size of each component of the conceptual development program relative to existing LD zoning regulations and/or discussion of any zoning modifications required to facilitate the conceptual development plan and further advance the goals and objectives of the Downtown Vision Plan.
4. Identification of the location, approximate size, and intended use of a park, or open space along the Mascoma River on the Development Site consistent with the goals and objectives of the Downtown Vision Plan.
5. Articulate how the conceptual development plan will enhance existing and future vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access from the Hanover Street, Spencer Street and the Park Streets, and specifically enhance pedestrian/bicycle access between the Mascoma River Greenway and the Northern Rail Trail.
6. A plan to maintain and maximize existing parking capacity utilizing district-wide solutions.
7. A description of sustainable building practices and energy efficiency improvements that will be incorporated into the project.
8. Estimate of the economic impact of the conceptual development project including but not limited to temporary and permanent job creation, increased municipal tax revenue, economic development multipliers, etc.
9. Visual photo simulation illustrating a scaled massing model or rendering of the conceptual development plan from various public vantage points as viewed from approximate eye level (6 feet from ground).

<Photo location map>

### **C. Financial Information**

1. Respondent must describe a general approach to financing development of the project site, specifically the development of infrastructure and assets through debt, equity, Public Private Partnership (PPP) including the possibility of outright sale, ground lease, payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT), value capture, or other innovative mechanisms to fund both sustainable development and improvements identified in the Downtown Vision Plan or other adopted plans.
2. The submission must include three (3) project examples in which the development team has utilized the financing strategies listed above including a clear overview of previous Public Private Partnership experience with municipal governments or other public entities. Include specific details on the role and financial commitment of both the development team and municipality/public entity for each project example.

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

### **A. Submission of Expression of Interest**

One (1) hard copy and one (1) electronic copy in the form of a flash drive/CD of the submission titled "City of Lebanon Downtown Development Opportunity RFEI Response" must be received by the City of Lebanon by **Month Date, Year at x:xx pm** EST at the following address:

City of Lebanon  
Planning & Development Department  
51 North Park Street  
Lebanon, NH 03766  
Attn: David Brooks  
Planning & Development Director  
Re: Lebanon Downtown District Development Opportunity RFEI

## B. RFEI Inquiries

The City of Lebanon will accept written questions via email only from prospective Respondents no later than **Month Date, Year**. Please submit questions to: [Planning@LebanonNH.gov](mailto:Planning@LebanonNH.gov)

Written questions must include the requestor's name, e-mail address and the Respondent represented. Responses to all timely and appropriate questions will be posted on the City's website (<https://lebanonnh.gov/682/Bids-RFPs-RFQs-and-RFIs>) by **Month Date, Year**.

The City of Lebanon reserves the right to conduct interviews with or pose questions in writing to Respondents in order to clarify the content and to ensure a full and complete understanding of each submission.

The City of Lebanon reserves the right to modify the RFEI schedule at its discretion. Notification of changes in connection with this RFEI will be made available via the City's website (<https://lebanonnh.gov/682/Bids-RFPs-RFQs-and-RFIs>).

## TERMS OF THIS RFEI

This RFEI is not a request for competitive proposals, and in no way obligates the City of Lebanon to enter into a relationship with any entity that responds to this RFEI or limits or restricts the City's right to enter into a relationship with an entity that does not respond to this RFEI. In its sole discretion, the City may pursue discussions with one or more entities responding to this RFEI or none at all. The City of Lebanon further reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel this RFEI at any time for any reason. To the extent that the City elects to enter into a relationship with an entity regarding a development proposal, such entity shall be required to comply with the City of Lebanon's policies.

Information provided in response to this RFEI will become the property of the City of Lebanon and will be subject to public disclosure. If an entity responding to this RFEI believes that a specific portion of its response is exempt from disclosure, the entity must clearly identify that specific information as a "confidential trade secret." Identification of information as a "confidential trade secret" does not necessarily mean that the information will be exempt from disclosure. The City of Lebanon will make that determination based on the nature of the information and the requirements of the New Hampshire Law.

The City of Lebanon is self-represented for this transaction and will not be paying any third-party brokerage fees.







DRAFT

**Agenda**  
**Economic Development Commission & Downtown Lebanon**  
**TIF Advisory Board**  
**April 27, 2022**

**Agenda Item #4A**  
**Other Business**

# **Benefits of Enhancing Riverfront Access and Amenities**

**April 1, 2022**

**TO:** Lebanon Economic Development Commission and  
Downtown Lebanon TIF Advisory Board

**FROM:** Kevin Purcell, EDC; Victoria Smith, TIF; Sarah Riley, Conservation  
Commission; Chet Clem, EDC

**RE: Benefits of enhancing riverfront access and amenities:**

Tasked with considering development of the lower parking lots behind city Hall, at our March 16, 2022, meeting, EDC Chair Bill Dunn observed that the only issue on which we have consensus, so far, is the need to improve access and amenities along the Mascoma River, starting next to the lower parking lot. To ensure that direction is in fact warranted, Bill asked that we pull together verifiable supporting information. The quantity of available research and data is extensive but we managed to condense a representative cross section into the following report covering what we felt were the three most important benefits.

The City's Master Plan, adopted in 2012, should remain a primary guide when considering any kind of improvement or development in town. The Plan states "All actions and policies of the government of the City of Lebanon shall be intended first and foremost to benefit the current residents of Lebanon," and recommends the following actions:

- Improvement of bikeways, walkways, and public transit systems (recreational-commuter corridors).
- Stewardship of natural and recreational areas.

Further justification for our discussions can be found in countless case studies and community reports. There is compelling evidence that economic and quality of life benefits can be realized by:

- enhancing access to the Mascoma riverfront
- making improvements to the Mascoma riverfront next to the lower parking lot and
- connecting the MRG to the Tunnel, and through to rail trail

**Public access, recreation & education opportunities**

The City's Master Plan recognizes "the important role recreational activities play in creating social ties, fostering civic pride, attracting new businesses and residents to the City, while promoting healthy lifestyles and teaching positive values."

New Hampshire has over 10,000 miles of river which historically were used from industrial and sewage waste disposal. We join many towns with rivers who, following years of cleanup efforts,

are now embracing the potential economic and recreational benefits their riverfronts can offer. Berlin was one of the earliest, initiating a Riverfire Festival in 2003 which was so successful that they have steadily continued to find funding to gradually expand the access to the Androscoggin River. Currently Dover and Nashua are in the process of creating large commercial mixed use and recreational developments along their riverfronts while Wilton is enjoying success of their more modest efforts. Franklin and Littleton have both already achieved noticeable success but continue to find opportunities for expansion.

Turning to our rail trail efforts, a 2020 UNH Extension survey found many trail users

- use the trails for multiple activities
- come with their families
- use the trail in more than one season.
- 34.5 % of respondents came to the area primarily for the trails
- 5.7% of respondents moved to the area because of our trail system

## **Economic impact/Return on Investment**

Outdoor recreation is a proven stimulus for community revitalization. In 2021 SOBAN, State Outdoor Business Alliance, reported outdoor recreation added \$459.8 billion to the US Economy, creating 5.2 million jobs and \$226 millions in earnings.

In 2019, NH confirmed that our largest industry is tourism, contributing \$5.6 billion to the state economy but in the summer of 2021, all previous records were broken:

- 21% increase in visitors
- \$2.1 billion spent in the summer months alone
- Total fiscal year 2021 ROI generated \$197 in visitor spending for each \$1 invested and
- \$12.08 in tax revenue for each \$1 invested.

According to another UNH report, 228,000 people spent 4.37 million days fishing in New Hampshire freshwater lakes and rivers, spending \$208.5 million on trip and equipment related expenditures.

As stated in the SOBAN report, following the recession of 2008, rural communities without recreation lost population but those rural communities with recreation actually grew.

## **Benefits for existing businesses**

A robust trail system and access to the river will bring people to area who will need goods and services, restaurants, recreation/outdoor equipment. That same 2020 UNH Extension survey found “respondents reported spending an average of \$141.92 each trip to an area of trails which included the following industries:

- food/drink(restaurants)
- food/drink(groceries)

- overnight lodging
- gifts/souvenirs
- equipment
- park/trail fees”

Connecting the Rail Trail to the MRG, and ultimately, to the West Lebanon Greenway will move the city one step closer to an attractive, end-to-end multi-use path.

#### **Sources cited :**

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