



LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
OCTOBER 10, 2024 - 6:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE

1. Call to Order

- A. To participate in this meeting, please [join live via Microsoft Teams](#) or call 929-229-5356 (access code: 289 090 905#). If you have trouble accessing this meeting, please [email mark.goodwin@lebanonnh.gov](mailto:mark.goodwin@lebanonnh.gov)

2. Approval of Minutes

- A. September 12, 2024

3. Open to the Public

4. Permit Review

- A. None

5. Study Items

- A. Discussion Re: Northern Lebanon Community Plan
B. Review of Proposed Con Com letter for the Lebanon Planning Board regarding the Densmore Brickyard Project
C. Status Update & Review - 2024 Con Com Goals

6. Committee Reports

- A. Biodiversity Group (Invasives)
B. Stewardship
- Ranger
-Trail Coordinator
-Monitors and Stewards
C. Wild about Lebanon
D. Amphibian Crossings
E. LUCT/Current Use
F. Other Subcommittees

7. Other Business

- A. FYIs
B. Follow Up
C. Workshops and Educational Opportunities

8. Future Agenda Items

9. Adjournment

The order of agenda items is subject to change.

Lebanon Conservation Commission Agenda
October 10, 2024

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 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.

DRAFT

**LEBANON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
6:30PM THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah Riley (Chair), Bruce James (Vice Chair), Barbara Hirai, Erling Heistad (City Council Rep.), Ernst Oidtmann, Donald Lacey, Chris Johnson (REMOTE), Brandon Hill (Alt), Susan Almy (Alt.)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sean Dittrich (Alt.)

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Goodwin (GIS Coordinator)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Mr. Johnson said he was attending remotely because he is feeling ill.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES May 09, 2024

A MOTION was made Don Lacey by to approve the August 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes as amended. The Motion was seconded by Erling Heistad.

Amendments:

Page 1 Header: add Alt to Susan Almy

Page 1 Header: Add Brandon Hill to Members Absent

Page 2 Line 7: Change “Mr. Barrows” to Barros Street

Page 3 Line 39: Strike Line 39

Page 3, Line 43: Change to read “There will be a Sustainable Lebanon Green the Ground Event at Baker’s Crossing on Saturday, September 14 from 10am to noon. This event will focus on meadow management and plant diversity.”

Page 3 Line 47: Change to read Howe Library

Page 3 Line 48: Change to “part of the Seeing the Forest for the Trees Program”

Page 4, Line 4: Edit to read “Hirai contacted people from Hypertherm.”

Page 4 Line 6: Change to “Point in Time Homeless Count”

Page 4, Line 30: Change “Barbara” to “Ms. Almy”; Add just before that sentence: “The authors were quite open to following up on this and issues of wetland and shale that make plans for trails along 120 rather difficult.”

Page 4, Line 33&41: Change LEAC to Con Com.

Page 4 Line 43: Change to read: “Mr. Goodwin mentioned that the City is looking for a Conservation Commission representative for the Housing Task Force that is being formed.”

Page 4 Line 46: Change to read “Ms. Almy said she will be the Con Com representative to the working group.”

Page 4 Line 50: Change “member” to “members”; Change “Saturdays” to “Fridays”

Page 5 Line 2: Change last paragraph to read: “Work was done on Northwest corner of Boston Lot on Friday. The team consisted of three Con Com members as well as 15 people from Hypertherm. They worked on the east side of the lake. They will do this work again with a team from Hypertherm on August 30.” Add a new paragraph: “Ernst said that the Mascoma River Cleanup on July 27 was sponsored by Con Com and the Rotary Club.

Page 5 Line 21: Change “Mr. Goodwin” to “Mr. Heistad”

Roll Call Vote:

Voting in Favor – Ms. Hirai, Mr. Heistad, Mr. Lacey, Ms. Riley, Dr. Oidtmann, Mr. Johnson, Mr. James

Voting Against – None

***The MOTION was approved (7-0).**

3. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No one from the public spoke.

4. PERMIT REVIEW – None

5. STUDY ITEMS

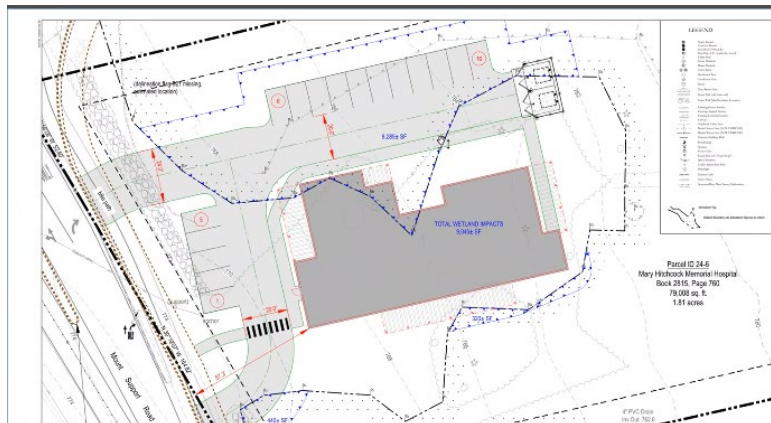
A. Conceptual Review of Potential Wetland Impacts of 424 Mount Support Road

Mr. Tom Sullivan (Family Flourish New England), Nik Fiore (Engineering Ventures), Sue Cobb (Red Bird Consulting), Mark Montany (Black River Design), and Jennifer Reardon (GM2) were present on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Sullivan said the intent of the proposed facility is as a place of recovery for women and children in association with Dartmouth Health. He gave a brief overview of the project.

Mr. Fiore said the purpose of this conceptual review is to get the Commission’s first impressions and feedback on the proposed site. He gave an overview of the potential wetland impacts on the proposed site on Mount Support Road.

He shared a map of the proposed project on the site, noting that the areas outside the blue dotted line are considered wetland areas. He said, in the proposed project design, the parking areas would cause the most impact to the wetlands.



1 Mr. James noted that the wetland area most impacted on the site is where the parking lots would
2 be located. He asked how to prevent permeable surfaces being placed on wetlands and asked if
3 the parking areas could be relocated on the site. The group discussed snow removal on permeable
4 surfaces and whether the project building could be elevated (for example, “on stilts”).
5

6 Mr. Lacey asked if any rare plant species are on the site. Ms. Reardon said there are some that
7 are similar to the plants growing near the nearby proposed roundabout project. She said most of
8 the plant population is near the rear of the parking area to the north of LeHaye Drive, but she
9 said a good portion of the population is not affected by the parking lot.
10

11 Ms. Hirai asked if off-site parking could be used. Mr. Fiore said off-site parking is not allowed in
12 the R-1 district, and a variance would be difficult to obtain.
13

14 Ms. Almy noted that it seems like water would run off the parking lot surface and to the east into
15 the wetlands. She said it is harder to treat once it is in the wetlands. Dr. Oidtmann asked if a roof
16 could be put over the parking lots to reduce the amount of snow that needs to be plowed and/or
17 treated with chemicals. He said he is concerned that 9,000 square feet of wetlands will be
18 impacted by this current design.
19

20 Mr. Hill asked if the parking area could be located directly against the building structure. Mr.
21 Fiore said that would require disturbing the wetlands to build the needed the stormwater
22 treatment for that. Mr. Hill asked if the parking area could be located to the south of the building
23 and Mr. Fiore said an outdoor open space/recreation area was planned for that area.
24

25 Mr. James suggested installing rain gardens for stormwater management and Mr. Fiore said they
26 were open to that idea, but DES doesn’t allow digging up wetlands to put in rain gardens, so they
27 would have to be located outside the wetlands.
28

29 The Commission made several suggestions to redesign the plans to reduce the impact to the
30 wetlands areas:
31

- 32 • Build a taller building with a smaller footprint
- 33 • Choose another site
- 34 • Rotate the building 90 degrees
- 35 • Locate office space at another site
- 36 • Redesign deck areas
37

38 Chair Riley said she shares the other Commission members’ concerns that projects like this one
39 would chip away at wetlands areas, which is costly to the City.
40

41 Mr. Fiore noted that the site is particularly ideal because of its proximity to DH, so they want to
42 try to use it for this project.
43

44 Mr. Sullivan said he and the team would research all of the Commission’s suggestions and come
45 back at a later date with information they have learned.
46

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Biodiversity Group (Invasives)

Mr. Lacey said he has been treating Japanese knotweed in the following locations:

- Baker's Crossing
- Ticknor
- Bill Parcel
- 2 Rivers

He said the ideal time to treat knotweed is the first few weeks after August 1.

Ms. Hirai said she and a team of volunteers pulled honeysuckle on August 30 at Honeysuckle Loop.

B. Stewardship

Mr. James said he has a new group of volunteer stewards, but has had some trouble contacting them. He said he has been out patrolling trails.

Mr. Hill said on August 30, a team of 6 Hypertherm volunteers and 3 Commission members gathered to work on the following:

- Pulling honeysuckle
- Moving lumber to northeast corner of Boston Lot Lake

He said now that the lumber has been located on the site, the wood will be cut and assembled into bridges.

Ms. Hirai said a good short-term project for volunteers could be clearing areas of 2 Rivers. Chair Riley noted that the mowing that Mr. Lacey has done has transformed the property and made trails more accessible.

Ms. Almy noted that, on August 27, she noted that there were two tree falls on the lower part of Linelle Loop on the Goodwin Trail.

Mr. Hill said he has spoken with the Upper Valley Mountain Bike Club about one trail on Burnt Mountain that is half owned by the City and half by the UVMBC. He said they were in agreement that the trail could be closed.

He said he also discussed the installation of signs (that Ranger Tietjen has been creating) for the following:

- Burnt Mountain Trail
- Burnt Mountain Bypass
- Burnt Mountain Cutoff (sign has not yet been made)

He said the UVMBC is upgrading all of its signage and agreed to take down old signs to put up new ones. He said one sign that indicates the start of Boston Lot property is actually located on the Club's land, but he said they were okay with it remaining.

1 Mr. Hill noted one sign with information about camping and permits is located in an
2 unusual place. He said he would like to make these rules, as well as the rules about
3 fishing, clearer on signs on the trails.
4

5 Mr. Hill said that the tent that has been on Boston Lot for about six weeks is still there
6 but seems to be abandoned. Chair Riley said it can be removed.
7

8 **C. Wild About Lebanon**

9

10 **D. Amphibian Crossing**

11

12 **E. LUCT/Current Use**

13

14 **F. Other Subcommittees**

15

16 Chair Riley said the Tree Advisory Board is compiling a list of locations for street trees
17 and has indicated initial sites are the Advance Transit bus stops. She said there will be a
18 Tree Walk this Saturday at Pine Knoll Cemetery.
19

20 She said the Chair of the Environmental Justice Task Force asked if Ms. Almy could
21 discuss applications that have been received at the state level.
22

23 Ms. Hirai said she and Mr. Heistad will attend the Class VI Roads meeting on Thursday.
24 She said the discussion will be about signage on trails/roads.
25

26 Ms. Almy said she joined the Housing Task Force.
27

28 **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

29

30 **A. FYIs**

31 Chair Riley said the Commission received a letter from two residents expressing concerns
32 about the residential housing project proposed near the Densmore Brickyard site. The group
33 discussed the project at length and discussed with Mr. Goodwin ways to express the
34 Commission's concerns to the Planning Board.
35

36 Mr. James volunteered to write a draft of a letter to provide to the Planning Board. Mr. Hill
37 said the Planning Board has found that letters or requests that ask them to take particular
38 action (for example, to ask the developer to provide specific information to allay concerns) to
39 be most helpful. Mr. James said he would try to have a draft of the letter ready by the next
40 Conservation Commission meeting.
41

42 The group discussed if they should create a subcommittee to work on reviewing the letter.
43 Mr. Hill said he can advise the Commission of when the project will next be on the Planning
44 Board Meeting agenda and Commission members can plan to attend as citizens to express the
45 Commission's concerns.
46

A. Follow Ups

Chair Riley said she sent the Commission members a link to a video on the Wilder Dam water quality.

Chair Riley said she was sent a Permit by Notification that DES approved for the City to install monitoring wells for alternative drinking water at these locations:

- The Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 2 Rivers

Chair Riley asked if the Conservation Commission and/or Upper Valley Land Trust should be notified when actions are happening on Conservation Land. Mr. Goodwin said he would look into this notification about the wells.

Chair Riley said the Wetland Permit was approved for the Barros Street project.

B. Workshops and Educational Opportunities

Chair Riley said the Sustainable Lebanon Green workshop will be on Saturday at 10am at Baker's Crossing. She said Jim Kennedy will talk about meadows.

She reminded the group that the Tree Advisory Board would hold a tree walk at the Pine Knoll Cemetery at 1:00pm with Liz McKinley

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**9. ADJOURNMENT**

A MOTION was made by Erling Heistad to adjourn the meeting to 8:45pm. The Motion was seconded by Susan Almy.

Roll Call Vote:

Voting in Favor – Ms. Hirai, Mr. Heistad, Mr. Lacey, Ms. Riley, Dr. Oidtmann, Mr. Johnson, Mr. James

Voting Against – None

**The MOTION was approved (7-0).*

The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Paula Roux
Recording Secretary

Northern Lebanon Community Plan

City of Lebanon, New Hampshire

September 2024 - **DRAFT**

PREPARED FOR



City of Lebanon
51 N. Park Street
Lebanon, NH 03766
603.448.1524

PREPARED BY



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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	3
	Purpose	3
	Executive Summary	5
2	Existing Conditions.....	6
	Property Ownership	7
	Transportation and Connectivity	9
	Land Use and Zoning	12
	Natural Resources	15
	Previous Planning Efforts	18
3	Public Engagement	23
	Online Survey.....	23
	Stakeholder Interviews.....	24
	Public Workshop No. 1	26
	Public Engagement Findings	27
	Public Workshop No. 2	28
4	Vision Statement, Strategic Goals and Recommendations.....	29
	Vision Statement	29
	Strategic Goals and Recommendations.....	30
	Strategy 1. Preservation of and Enhanced Access to Natural Resources.....	30
	Strategy 2. Connectivity Improvements	32
	Strategy 3. Zoning Modifications.....	34
	Appendix.....	A1

List of Tables

Table No.	Description	Page
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No table of figures entries found.

List of Figures

Figure No.	Description	Page
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1

Introduction

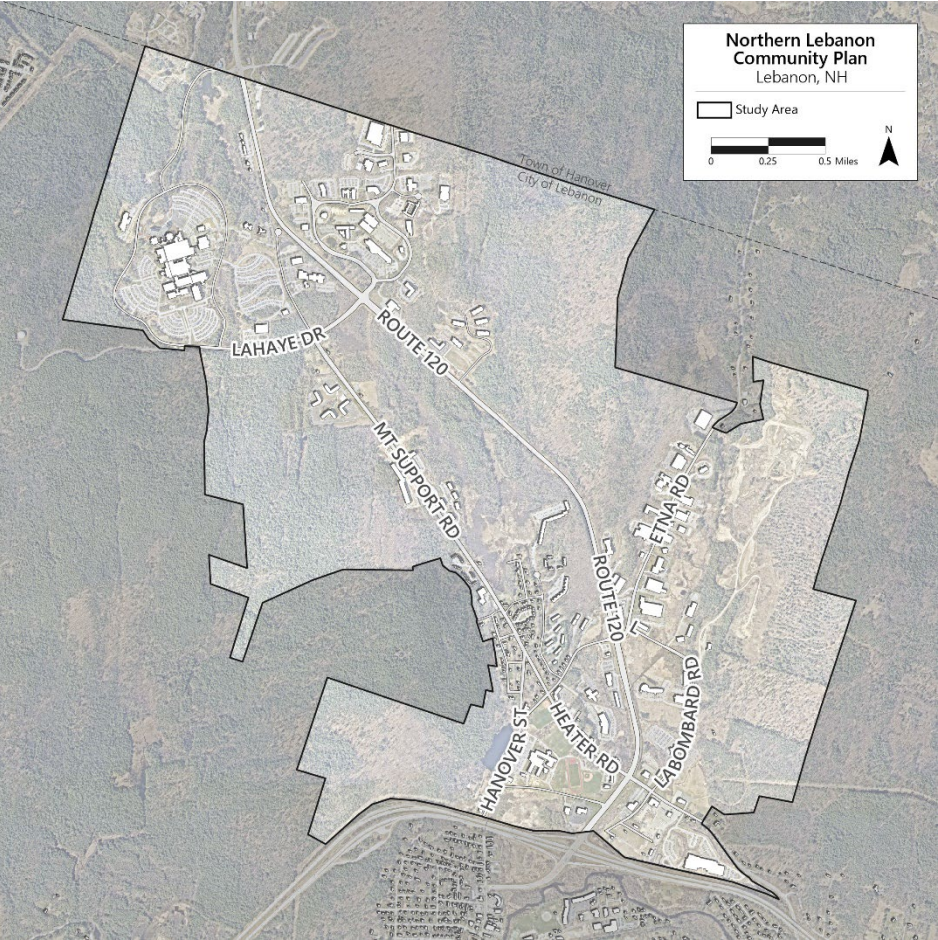
Purpose

The City of Lebanon has led a planning process to prepare the Northern Lebanon Community Plan (the Plan), which considers the neighborhood in Lebanon situated north of downtown and adjacent to Interstate 89's Exit 18, directly east of the Boston Lot Conservation Area and south of the Hanover town line, and just to the west of the Signal Hill Conservation Area (the Study Area), as shown below in **Figure 1**. The need for this study was first identified during the development of the City of Lebanon's Master Plan in 2012. As part of the recommendations of Section 2: Land Use of the Master Plan, the Study Area was identified as part of the Heater Road Land Use Planning Area in Section 2: Land Use, Recommendation D-2j:

"For the Heater Road area, the general recommendation is to determine the appropriate level and type of future development. The area surrounding the Hanover Street School and Lebanon High School would be appropriate for mixed-use development, including small-scale commercial, light industrial, Office, and residential uses. Because of the proximity to schools and residential areas, surrounding wetlands, and difficult access for traffic from Route 120 onto Evans Drive, development must meet well-defined performance standards for traffic, hours of operation, impervious surface, and parking. A study of the entire Route 120 corridor is needed to address traffic patterns, land uses, and aesthetic concerns."

The purpose and intent of the Plan is to develop and establish a cohesive vision, strategic goals, and recommendations to guide future development of the Study Area with respect to several areas of need as identified through a public engagement effort, including the analysis of land use and zoning, natural resources, and transportation and connectivity. This document builds upon previous years of planning and analysis conducted by the city to determine the appropriate uses and needs of the community within the Study Area.

Figure 1 Study Area



Executive Summary

(to be drafted following review by the City)

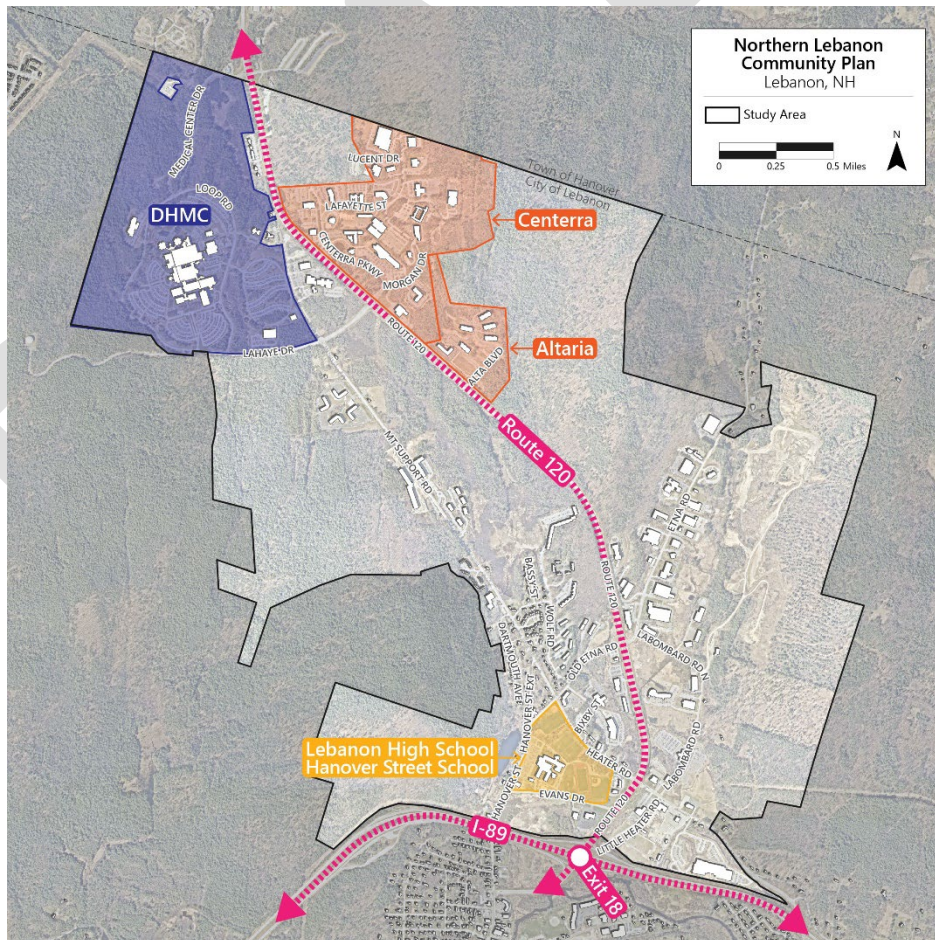
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2

Existing Conditions

The Study Area consists of approximately 2,400 acres and is situated north of downtown and Interstate 89's Exit 18, east of the Boston Lot Conservation Area, south of the Hanover town line, and west of the Signal Hill Conservation Area, as shown below in **Figure 2**. It is located in the northern portion of the City of Lebanon and is home to existing assets such as the Hanover Street School, Lebanon High School, the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC), and the developments of Centerra and Altaria. As the region's top employer – and the second largest employer in the state of New Hampshire – DHMC is a three-million square foot facility inclusive of the Geisel Medical School and employs over 10,000 staff. DHMC anchors the northern portion of the Study Area and serves as one of the primary providers of healthcare services for all of New England.

Figure 2 Major Landmarks in the Study Area



Property Ownership

Properties within the Study Area consist of several large parcels, with 20 parcels greater than 20 acres in size, as shown in **Figure 3 and Table 1**. Additionally, more than half of the total land within the Study Area (53%) is owned by just five landowners, including Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital, Dartmouth College Trustees, Upper Valley Land Trust Inc., Choice Storage LLC, and Lane NH Holdings LLC as shown in **Figure 4**. This underscores the need for close coordination with the landowners within the Study Area with regards to future development.

Figure 3 Existing Landowners

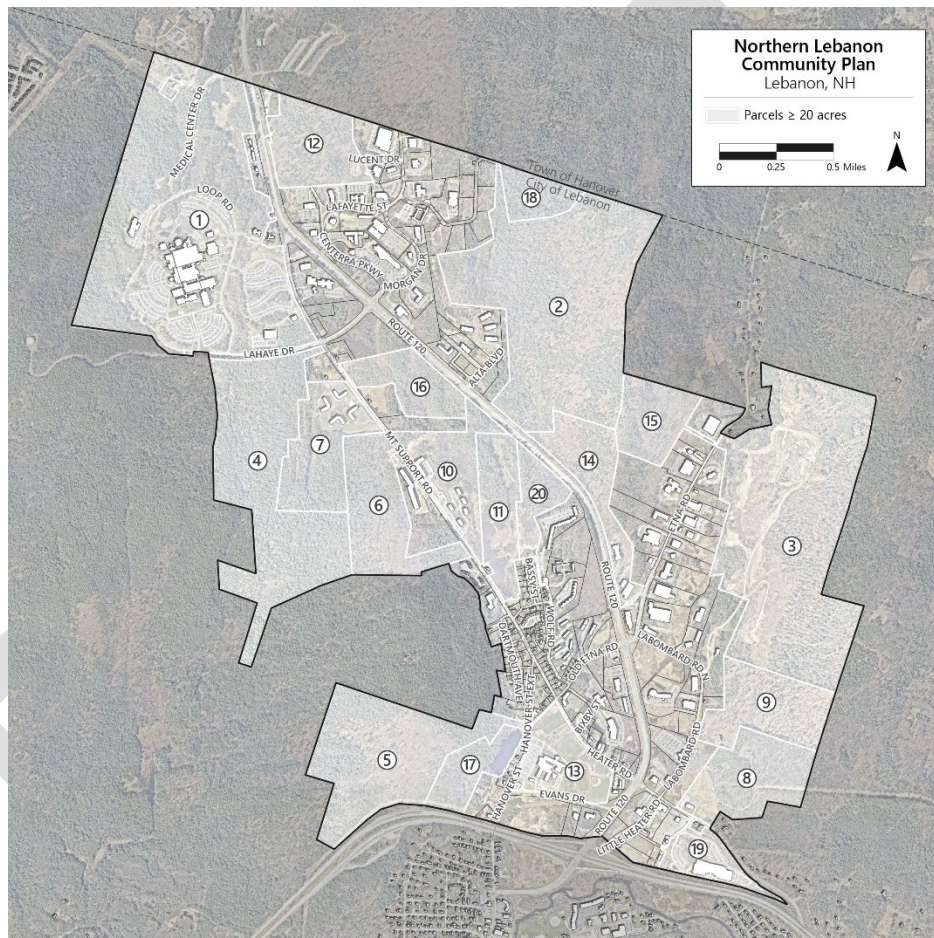
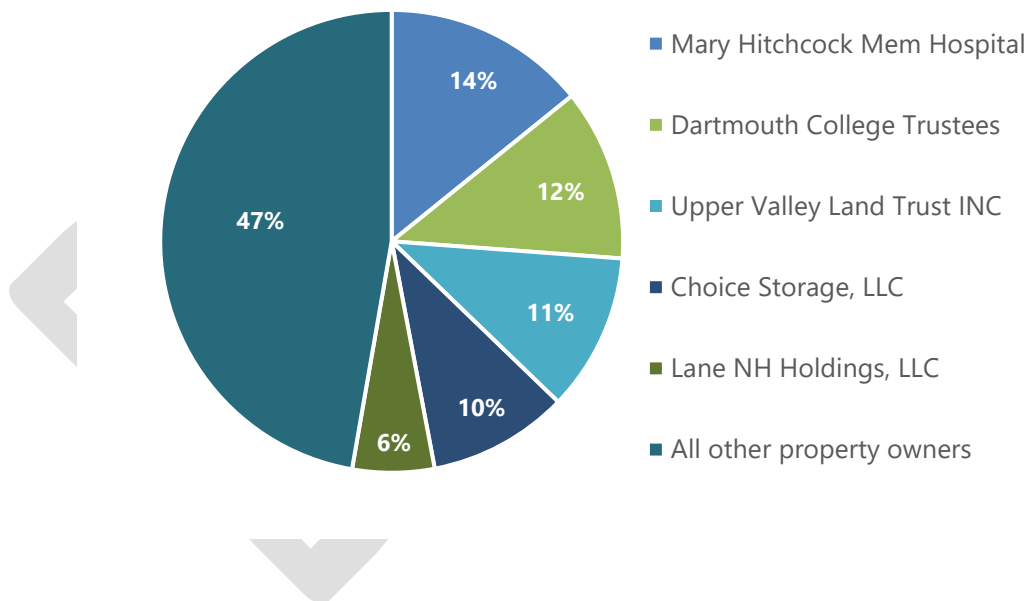


Table 1 Parcels 20 Acres in Size or Greater

Site ID	Acreage	Parcel ID	Site Address	Owner	Zoning
1	287	10-8-701	1 Medical Center Dr	Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital	MC
2	205	24-15	0 NH Route 120	Upper Valley Land Trust Inc	INDL
3	182	26-17	0 Etna Rd	Choice Storage, LLC	INDL
4	140	24-4	0 Mt Support Rd	Dartmouth College Trustees	R1
5	101	48-1	0 Hanover St Ext	Lane NH Holdings, LLC	R3

Site ID	Acreage	Parcel ID	Site Address	Owner	Zoning
6	57	-	Mt Support Rd	SPNH Mount Support, LLC	R1
7	53	24-2	401 Mt Support	Dartmouth College Trustees	R1
8	51	51-13	150 Heater Rd	Benevolent & Protective Order	RL1
9	51	51-12	24 Labombard Rd	Frederic Hatch	INDL
10	43	24-11	2 Timberwood Dr	Audubon Timberwood LLC	R1
11	41	24-13	0 Mt Support Rd	Sharon Tice Brown	R1
12	39	10-10	0 NH Route 120	The Hitchcock Clinic	GC1
13	38	64-33	195 Hanover St Ext	Lebanon School District	R3
14	37	26-2	67 Etna Rd	ICV Holdings Of NH LLC	INDL
15	34	26-7	0 Etna Rd	Upper Valley Land Trust Inc	RL3
16	31	24-8	0 Mt Support Rd	Dartmouth College Trustees	R1
17	26	48-2	0 Hanover St Ext	Lane NH Holdings, LLC	R3
18	26	12-3	0 Lafayette St	Upper Valley Land Trust Inc	RL3
19	23	78-43	71 Heater Rd	Hypertherm, Inc	INDL
20	20	26-1-100	0 Wolf Rd	City of Lebanon	R1

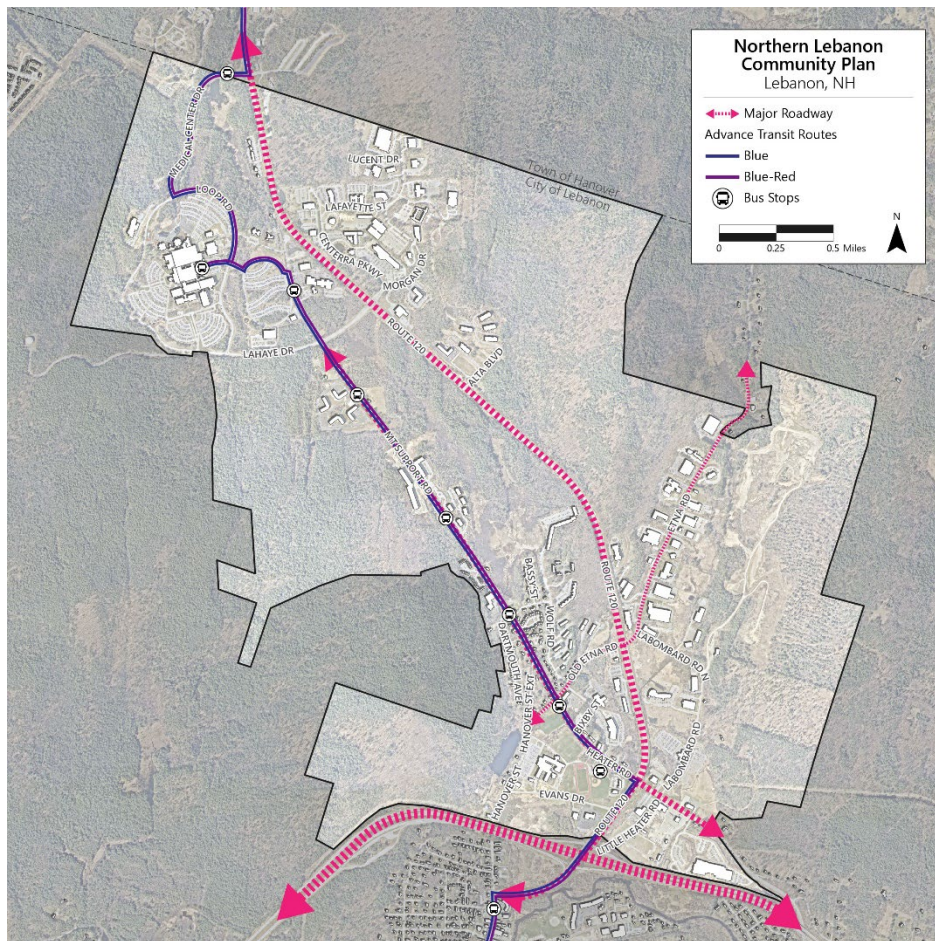
Figure 4 Largest Landowners by Share of Study Area



Transportation and Connectivity

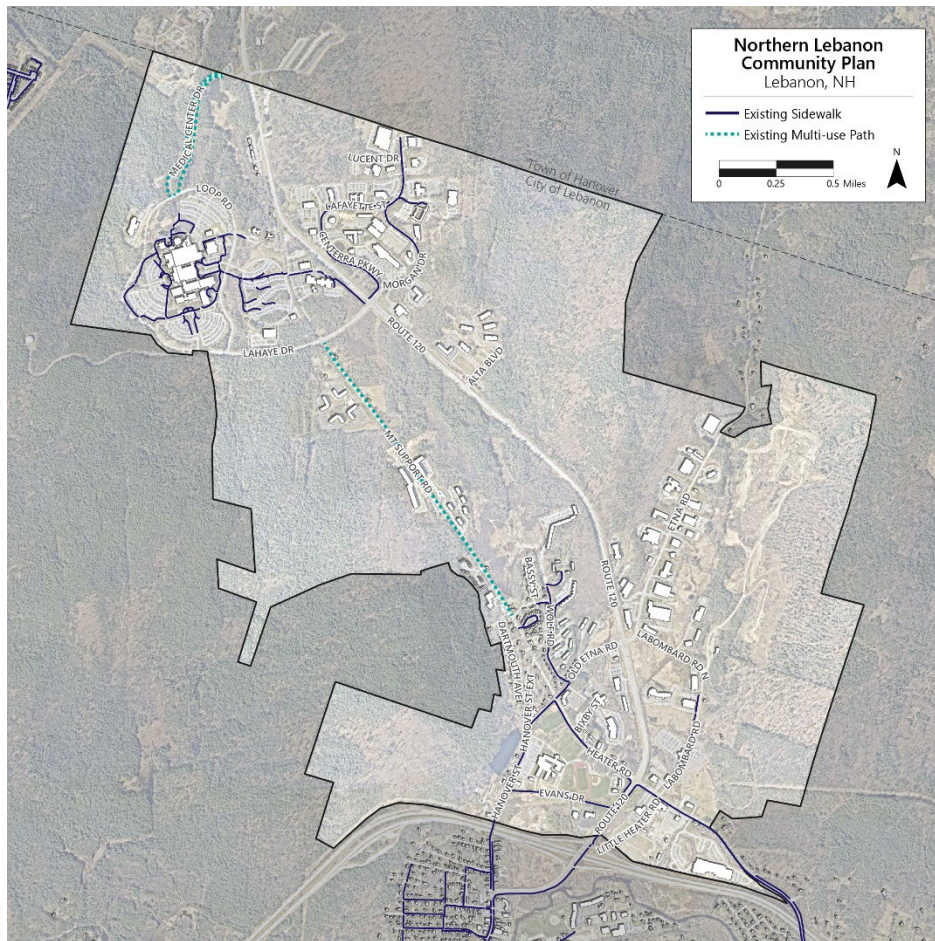
The Study Area is situated north of Interstate 89, directly across the highway from Downtown Lebanon to the south. Leading north from Exit 18, Route 120 bisects the Study Area as the primary north-south roadway that connects the Town of Hanover in the north to I-89 and downtown Lebanon to the south. The majority of Route 120 is four lanes wide, consisting of two travel lanes in either direction. Exceptions include isolated turning lanes as the roadway approaches intersections with Lahaye Drive, Centerra Parkway, Alta Boulevard, Old Etna Road and Etna Road, Heater Road, and I-89. Supporting north-south arterial roadways include Mt. Support Road, Hanover Street, and Etna Road, all of which are two lanes apart from isolated third and fourth turning lanes at intersections. While there are limited east-west arterial roadways, once Mt. Support Road crosses its intersection with the Hanover Street Extension, its name changes to Heater Road and its direction pivots east-west once it crosses over Old Etna Road.

The Study Area is served by Advance Transit public bus service which serves eastern Windsor County and southwestern Grafton County throughout southeastern Vermont and western New Hampshire, respectively, the latter of which includes the City of Lebanon. Advance Transit has two north-south lines, the Blue and Blue-Red, that serve the Study Area via Mt. Support Road running parallel to Route 120. Within the Study Area, bus stops are located along Mt. Support Road and Heater Road, as well as DHMC and Medical Center Drive. The Blue and Blue-Red lines continue to run north to Hanover and south to downtown Lebanon. Roadways and Advance Transit routes and bus stops are shown in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5 Transportation Network

The presence of and conditions of sidewalks vary greatly throughout the Study Area. As shown in **Figure 6**, sidewalks are concentrated in the north serving DHMC and Centerra, as well as the south surrounding the two schools and residential area. Very few instances of sidewalks exist outside of these two areas. Sidewalk connectivity is limited throughout the Study Area. Missing links and connections are prevalent throughout, making it difficult for pedestrians to navigate the Study Area safely and efficiently. Marked, safe pedestrian crosswalks are rare along the length of Route 120, despite its many intersections with arterial roadways. Similarly, cyclists have limited safe, connected options to traverse the Study Area. A multi-use path exists on Mt. Support Road beginning at its intersection with the established residential district surrounding Memorial Drive to the south, terminating at Lahaye Drive to the north, just south of DHMC. This connection is frequently used by residents of the adjacent residential developments, particularly those who work at DHMC. However, the missing final linkage to DHMC from Lahaye Drive prevents users from directly connecting to the hospital campus via the multi-use path.

Figure 6 Sidewalks and Multi-use Paths



Land Use and Zoning

Several zoning districts are present within the Study Area, as shown in **Figure 7**. These zoning districts are defined as follows:

- › Rural Land 1 (RL1): Provides a transition between rural and residential zoning.
- › Rural Land 2 (RL2): Provides land for low density rural living.
- › Residential 1 (R1): Provides areas for all types of housing at relatively high densities.
- › Residential 3 (R3): Provides areas for single family residential housing.
- › Residential Office 1 (RO1): Provides for the combination of multi-residential housing as well as office uses at higher densities.
- › General Commercial (GC): Provides for the development of general commercial uses.
- › General Commercial One District (GC1): Provides opportunities for a mix of commercial and residential uses within close proximity to regional employers, public transportation routes, and pedestrian and biking trails.
- › Industrial Light (IND-L): Provides for manufacturing and business development to strengthen the economics of the city.
- › Medical Center (MC): Provides for the development of inpatient and outpatient healthcare.

The largest zoning districts present in the Study Area include 736 acres (31%) of Rural Land 3 (RL3), 558 acres (23%) of Industrial Light (IND-L), 376 acres (16%) of Residential 1 (R1), and 295 acres (12%) of Medical Center (MC). Smaller shares of the Study Area include 142 acres (6%) of right-of-way (ROW), 131 acres (5%) of General Commercial 1 (GC-1), and 75 acres (3%) of Residential 3 (R3). The remaining zoning districts present within the Study Area are either one-percent or less of the total acreage. A full breakdown of zoning districts by proportion of the Study Area and associated acreages are shown in **Figure 8**.

Figure 7 Zoning

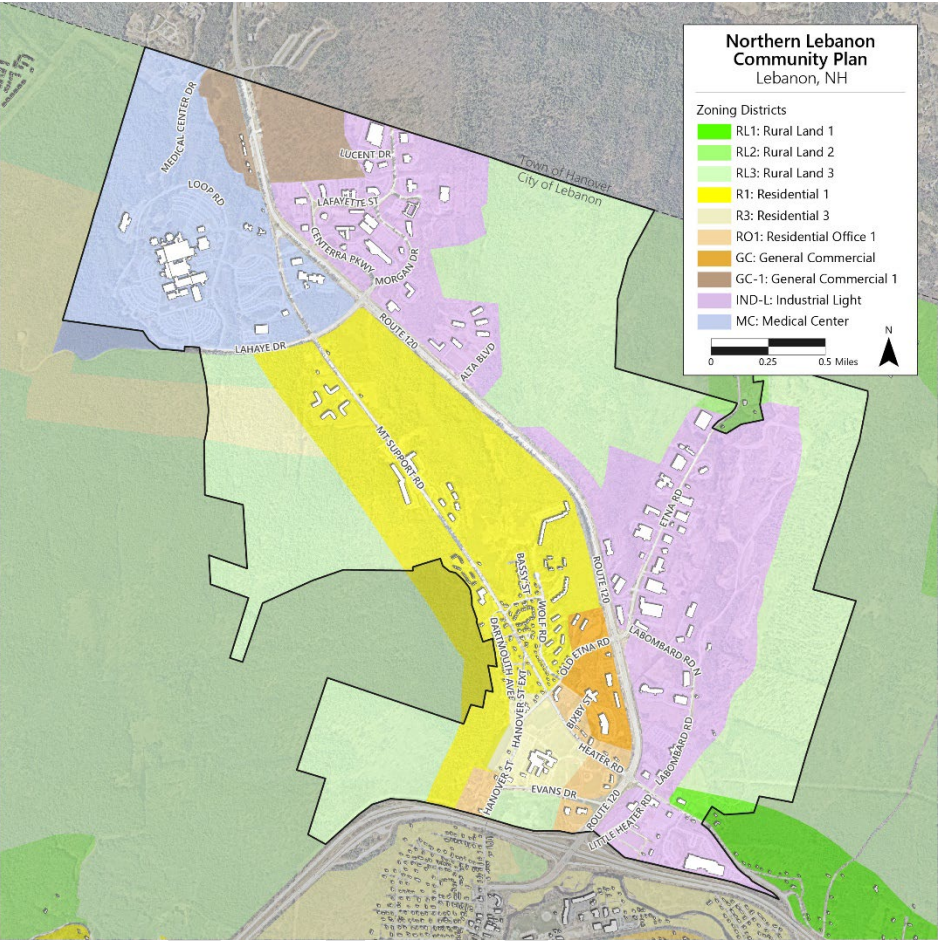
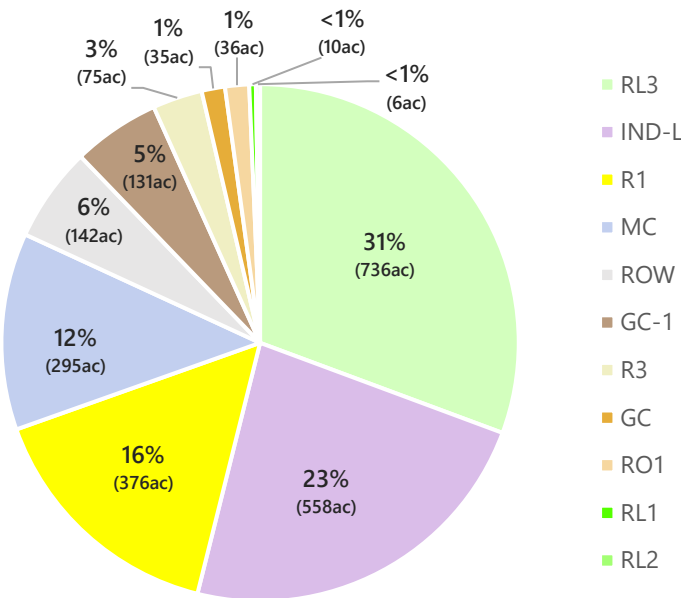
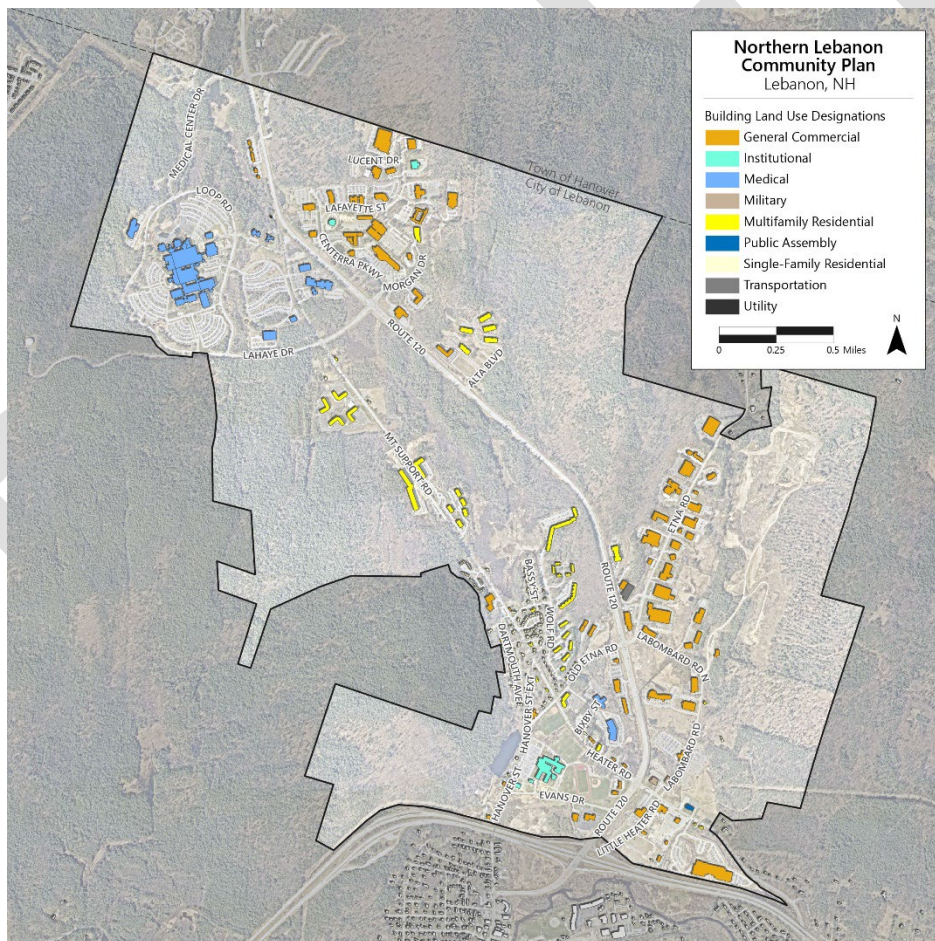


Figure 8 Share of Study Area by Zoning District



Existing development patterns within the Study Area primarily follow the hydrography and topography of the land, as described further in the following section covering Natural Resources. A majority of the existing development is located in the two valleys that converge on the Study Area as a result of the hills to the north, east, and west. Single-family residences are concentrated in the southern portion of the Study Area north of the schools along Mt. Support Road, Hanover Street Extension, Wolf Road, Dartmouth Avenue, Memorial Drive, and Bassy Street. A variety of multifamily housing developments are located in several pockets throughout the Study Area, including Mt. Support Road between Lahaye Drive and Memorial Drive, the eastern portion of Wolf Road to the north of Etna Road, west of Route 120, and in Altaria along Alta Boulevard to the east of its intersection with Route 120. A single multifamily building is located outside of these three areas within Centerra off Morgan Drive. Retail and commercial uses are fairly concentrated in three separate clusters within the Study Area including Centerra, along Etna Road, and in the southern portion surrounding Route 120 and Heater Road. Land uses within the Study Area are shown in **Figure 9**.

Figure 9 Land Use



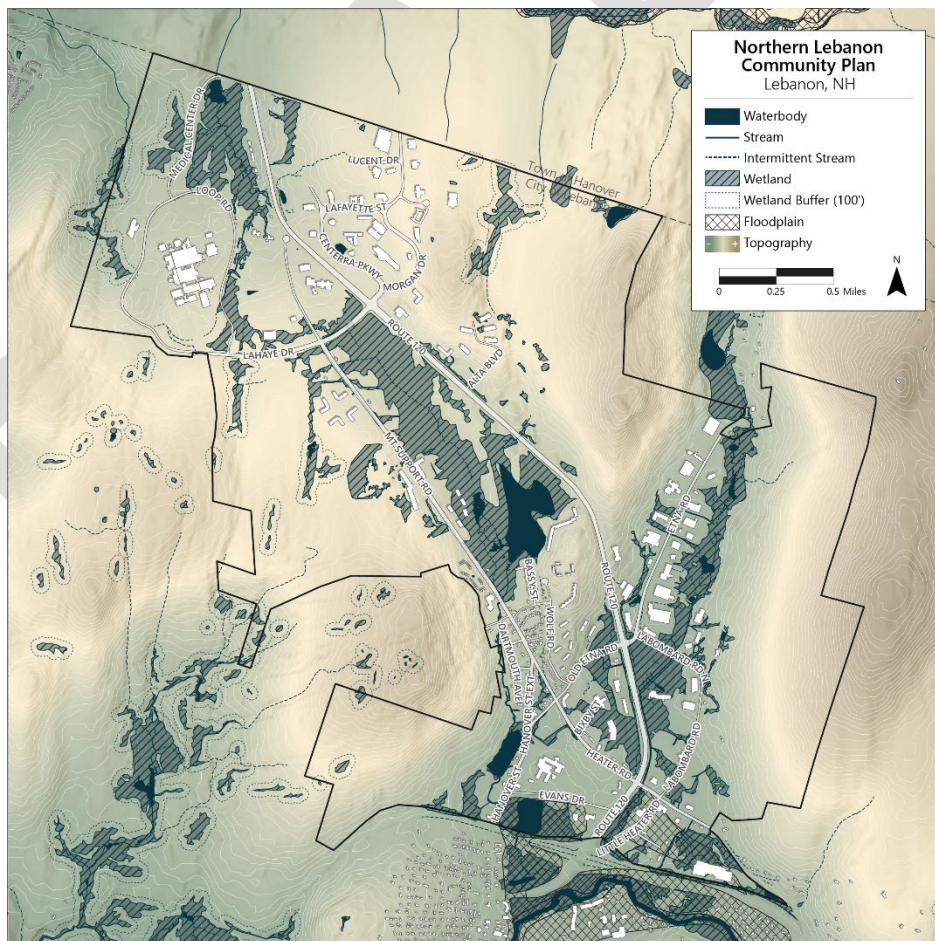
Natural Resources

The Study Area is home to a large number of protected wetlands, with most located in the center of the Study Area on land between Route 120 and Mt. Support Road, as shown in **Figure 10**.

Additionally, wetlands run parallel to Etna Road to the west, with additional wetlands interspersed in both the southern portion of the Study Area around I-89 and the northern portion to the north of Medical Center Drive. Several of the Study Area's wetlands are designated as Prime Wetlands under Title L: Water Management and Protection, § 482-A:15. These wetlands are municipally-designated and have a 100-foot Prime Wetland buffer zone with restrictions on the placement of built structures.

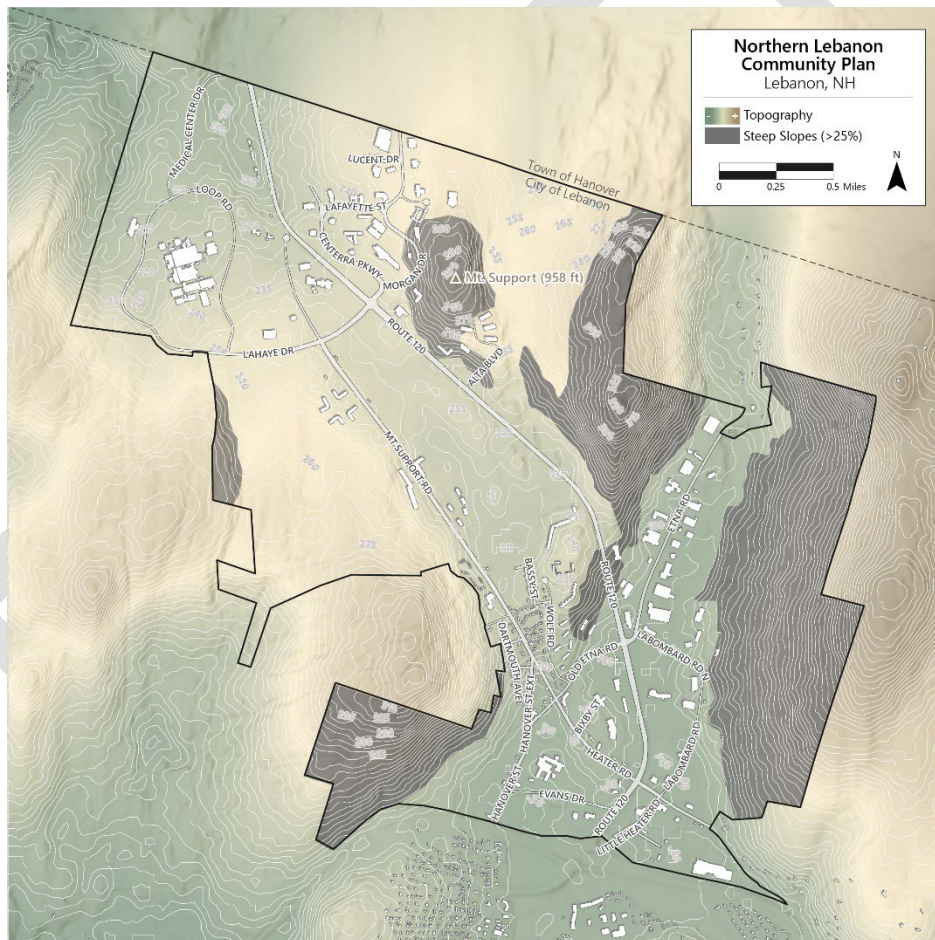
Several waterbodies, streams, and intermittent streams are present within the Study Area, and typically overlap with the presence of wetlands. All streams within the Study Area are located in the Mascoma River Watershed and feed into the Mascoma River to the south, which in turn drains into much larger Connecticut River to the west. The only presence of floodplains in the Study Area are located in the southern portion surrounding the Mascoma River, stretching north to Evans Drive, I-89, and the southern portion of Heater Road.

Figure 10 Hydrography



Wetlands, waterbodies, and streams within the Study Area are directly reflective of the topography of the area. Several hills and sloped, protected conservation lands are located throughout the Study Area including Quarry Hill to the southwest, Boston Lot to the west, Mount Support and Rix Ledges to the north-northeast, and Signal Hill to the east. The topography of the Study Area has not only shaped the natural environment, but the built environment as well. Aside from the isolated developments that have heavily graded the topography in order to develop the land, most of the built environment in the Study Area falls between these hills in two valleys. Route 120 and Mt. Support Road run north-south along the spine of the western valley. Similarly, the spine of the eastern valley is home to Etna Road, which serves as a north-south artery. Steep slopes are present in several locations throughout the Study Area, as shown in **Figure 11**. These areas should be carefully considered for preservation in order to protect the natural character of the area.

Figure 11 Topography and Steep Slopes



The Study Area is home to a number of protected conservation lands, wildlife corridors, and sensitive ecological habitats, as shown in **Figure 12**. Conservation lands include over seven parcels, totaling approximately 369 acres (16%) of the total Study Area. Three existing wildlife corridors bisect the Study Area at Mt. Support Road, Route 120, and Etna Road, the Study Area's three major north-south roadways. These designated wildlife corridors contain existing culverts and under-road passages that help to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. These protected corridors allow for the safe passage of

small animals between the Study Area's handful of sensitive ecological habitats. The Mt. Support Road and Route 120 wildlife corridors connect the Mt. Support Road wetland sensitive ecological habitat, while the Etna Road wildlife corridor allows for connectivity to the Rix Ledges Conservation Area.

Figure 12 Conservation Lands, Sensitive Ecological Habitats, and Wildlife Corridors



Previous Planning Efforts

This section provides a summary of recent, relevant planning studies and reports that contain pertinent information that has helped inform the key takeaways and recommendations of this plan alongside the input and feedback gathered during public engagement efforts.

[City of Lebanon Master Plan \(2012\)](#)

The City of Lebanon's Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Board in March 2012, and prioritizes the needs and preferences of its residents. In particular, the plan emphasizes the stewardship of natural and recreational areas and endorses principles of smart growth. The plan aims to balance direct feedback from the community with the projected goals for future development while addressing several key aspects such as land use, economic development, housing, transportation, and energy, among others. Essential areas of focus within the plan include DHMC and the Mt. Support Road Corridor, encompassing the Study Area. DHMC is specifically noted for its surrounding natural features like wetlands, slopes, and crucial wildlife habitats. The plan stresses the importance of managing development in a manner that does not jeopardize these vital resources.

The Mt. Support Road Corridor has seen recent multifamily housing developments that enhance community living conditions by improving walkability, providing job opportunities, and increasing access to downtown resources to the south. Maintaining the existing natural and wildlife corridors in this area continues to be of critical concern. Overall, the plan underlines the importance of protecting and appreciating the town's natural resources and wild spaces, recognizing their role in driving the local economy while also promoting sustainable growth and environmental preservation.

[Lebanon Open Space Plan \(2021\)](#)

The Lebanon Open Space Plan outlines the city's strategy to conserve and manage its natural landscapes. The plan emphasizes the importance of open spaces for ecological integrity, recreation, and community well-being. It includes goals such as protecting water quality, preserving wildlife habitats, and maintaining scenic and cultural resources. The plan sets a benchmark for Lebanon's open space to be 78% with 22% developed areas, emphasizing the importance of infill and redevelopment over sprawl. The plan details several strategies to achieve Lebanon's open space objectives, including public education, partnerships, regulatory protections, and property acquisition. Relevant recommendations including the following:

- › Current zoning contains provisions for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) or Cluster Subdivisions that are intended to preserve significant natural land features and/or open space by providing greater development flexibility. In return for setting aside a percentage of a property as permanent open space, landowners would receive the allowed density for the entire parcel and may also benefit from reduced development costs.
- › Lebanon should consider developing and incorporating a maximum lot coverage limitation to ensure that a portion of all lots remains as greenspace. In addition, because a significant amount of lot coverage is typically associated with parking, the City should develop Maximum Parking Requirements and allow for reductions in parking provided on site. Encouraging adjoining properties to share parking may also help reduce impervious surface in the City.

- › Increasing the maximum height of buildings should be evaluated and incorporated within appropriate zoning districts as that measure could support reducing the overall footprint of development projects.
- › Incorporating additional innovative land use planning techniques, including lot size averaging, density transfer credit, and urban service districts.
- › The City should review the advisability of incorporating additional Overlay Districts, where warranted, to protect additional resources deemed important by the community. Examples include a steep slope, a source water, aquifer, and ridgeline overlay protection district.
- › When high-value open space lands are available for purchase from a willing seller, the City and its partners should make a reasonable effort to conserve these lands through direct acquisition, easement, or another established protection mechanism.

Housing in Lebanon (2021)

Recent changes to the City's zoning regulations over the past years reflects a trend towards increased flexibility and density in various districts as listed below:

- › 2013: Permitted multifamily dwellings and mixed-use buildings in the GC district. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) became a Special Exception use in residential and mixed-use districts.
- › 2014: Allowed multifamily dwellings in the PB district with density determined through Site Plan Review.
- › 2016: Adopted shared parking provisions for mixed-use developments.
- › 2018: Removed the minimum size threshold for ADUs, allowed multiple principal structures on residential lots with Planning Board approval, and changed ADUs to permitted uses in all districts.
- › 2019: Increased maximum building height in the Central Business District (CBD), added PURD as a permitted use in RO/RO1 districts, and expanded the definition of "family."
- › 2020: Continued enabling ADUs as permitted uses in all districts.
- › 2021: Expanded allowed residential dwelling types in Commercial and Industrial Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and Business Parks, relaxed off-street parking requirements for one and two-family dwellings and ADUs, and permitted increased building height in R1 district to include parking underneath the building.

To streamline the review process of smaller projects, a new Minor Site Plan Review process was implemented. This process impacts housing developments, including the conversion of existing structures to residential or mixed-use and minor expansions of existing multifamily uses. In addition, provisions have been made to exempt multi-building residential developments from the Subdivision Review process to make development easier. Together, these updates have contributed to a rapidly evolving housing market in Lebanon. It was estimated that 667 dwelling units were created between the years 2010 and 2019 in Lebanon, of which, 609 were from new construction (551 multi-family, 58 single-family) and 59 were created by conversion (includes ADUs, single-family to duplex, or multi-family conversions).

Lebanon fosters equity in the competitive housing market by incentivizing the creation of affordable units through the 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Program. This program allows city council to grant temporary tax relief for owners who undertake substantial rehabilitation of a qualifying structure that provides at least one public benefit as defined in the statute. The tax relief period can extend up to five years for compliant projects, with possible extensions of up to two years for residential units and up to four years for affordable housing. Additionally, projects involving the rehabilitation of historic structures that follow the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards may receive up to four more years of relief. Since 2016, two 79-E districts have been designated under the program. More recent provisions under 79-E have led to two new provisions that impact housing:

- › HB154: Establishes a "Housing Opportunity Zone" for new construction, which does not have to be limited to downtown or town center areas and can instead be designated by city council. At least one-third of the units must be for households earning 80-percent or less of Area Median Income (AMI) or meeting RSA 204-C:57 criteria. Tax relief can be granted for up to ten 10 years upon the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
- › SB102: Proposes "Residential Property Revitalization Zones" for rehabilitating existing structures. Tax relief is offered to owners of one- or two-family or attached multifamily properties (up to four units) that are at least 40 years old and undergo significant improvements in quality, condition, and/or use.

[City of Lebanon Housing and Community Development Plan \(2022\)](#)

The City of Lebanon Housing and Community Development Plan, amended and readopted in July 2022, builds upon [Lebanon's Principles for a Sustainable Community](#) adopted in September 2009, further revised and readopted in March 2015. Lebanon is actively managing its growth, focusing on increasing housing options while preserving its small-town charm. From 2010 to 2020, they added 552 housing units, and since 2020, over 900 units have been approved, signifying a strong upward trend in residential development. However, this growth has been accompanied by a sharp increase in rental rates, with a 28.9% rise since 2016 and a significant 61% jump since 2011, pointing to an escalating affordability issue. In response to these challenges, the city council has implemented measures aimed at promoting affordable housing. These measures have encouraged town management to work collaboratively with agencies like the Lebanon Housing Authority and the Twin Pines Housing Trust to develop and expand housing solutions that cater to varying income levels.

Economically, Lebanon has witnessed substantial growth, particularly through expanding sectors like healthcare, social assistance, retail, and education, primarily around the Route 12A and Route 120 corridors. To support this economic development and enhance the quality of life, the City has updated zoning regulations to foster mixed-use developments, allowing for the creation of conditions where residents can live, shop, and engage with the community, reducing the need for prolonged commutes.

[Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission Regional Corridor Transportation Plan \(2022\)](#)

The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission Regional Corridor Transportation Plan studied existing conditions and developed an action plan to implement several public improvements to the region's transportation network to increase safety, accessibility, resiliency, and

equity and health outcomes, all while balancing mobility, aligning transportation with community planning to create livable communities, managing existing demand, and prioritizing maintenance. In addition, the plan developed performance measures that will be used to track progress towards implementation of the overall plan and its components. Specific regional transportation goals were developed for the Route 120 north corridor between Lebanon and Hanover, including:

- › Manage Demand – Reduce need/demand for single-occupant vehicle travel in the corridor, particularly during peak commuting times.
- › DHMC/Centerra Access – Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit access to and from Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Centerra Park, downtown Hanover and downtown Lebanon.
- › Bus Connections – Increase frequency of public transit services in the corridor and improve pedestrian access to bus stops.

In addition to currently funded regional transportation projections, additional multimodal needs and opportunities for this corridor include the following:

- › The need for a comprehensive plan for ped-bike access between downtown Lebanon, DHMC, and Hanover; and
- › Addressing the lack of pedestrian and bicycle connections from the Mt. Support Road multi-use path to DHMC.

[Walk, Bike, Ride Leb \(2023\)](#)

This report highlights the City's ongoing efforts in transportation planning, recognizing the necessity for a comprehensive multimodal transportation plan. The plan identifies specific actions to develop a safe, connected network for walking, biking, and public transportation, with a focus on adapting to changing funding sources, public input, and mobility trends. Its primary goal is to incorporate public input received throughout the planning process with a combination of existing recommendations to improve pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit safety and mobility. Key objectives include assessing the needs for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, ensuring equitable network connectivity, organizing and prioritizing improvements, preparing for funding and implementation of key projects, guiding committee and public decisions, and progressing towards Vision Zero goals to eliminate traffic fatalities. This comprehensive approach integrates feedback from various stakeholders and aims to build a modern, safe, and comfortable multimodal transportation network for Lebanon. Specific planned, funded, and proposed strategies for the New Hampshire Route 120-DHMC Corridor include the following:

- › Advance Transit Blue Route Expansion – increasing Blue Route to 15-minute service between downtown Lebanon and Hanover, partially funded via the Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program.
- › Mt. Support Road/LaHaye Drive Intersection Improvement – Upgrade Mt. Support/LaHaye Drive intersection, currently in the pre-construction phase.
- › Route 120 corridor improvements from Hanover St to Etna Road – Improve vehicular operations and ped. bike, and transit access along Route 120 corridor from Hanover St to Etna Road, including I-89 Exit 18, with an additional \$11 million in funds proposed in the draft New Hampshire (NH) Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan.

- › Lahaye Drive multi-use path - Construct multi-use path from Mt. Support Road to Centerra Parkway, including improved crossing of Route 120, potentially delayed by three years in the NH Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan.
- › Route 120/Etna Road pedestrian crossing – Construct pedestrian crossing of Route 120 at Etna Road, as identified through the public engagement process.
- › Advance Transit new Purple Line – Create a new Purple Line to serve additional destinations in Lebanon, including Mascoma St, Labombard, Centerra/Altaria.
- › Pedestrian access to Advance Transit stop at Heater Road/Old Etna Road – Add sidewalk to Advance Transit stop at Heater Road/Old Etna Road.

Lebanon Community Resilience Building (2024)

Ahead of the 2025 rezoning ballot initiative, Lebanon collaborated with The Nature Conservancy and the University of New Hampshire Extension to complete this report. The process highlighted the City's strengths and areas for improvement concerning resilience, sustainability, and equity. Key partners were identified, including the Public Health Council of the Upper Valley, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC), Upper Valley Adaptation Working Group, and The Nature Conservancy. These partnerships will be integral to balancing the protection of open spaces with new development requirements, safeguarding critical natural resources, and addressing the impacts of climate change and invasive species.

The report identifies mobility challenges due to steep slopes, traffic congestion at Exit 18, and frequent road closures from falling trees as issues that require continued investments in infrastructure improvements. Future goals outlined in the report include formalizing Lebanon's urban growth boundaries in zoning maps to help ensure development remains compact and walkable while preserving the City's forested lands. This strategic approach aims to balance infrastructure needs with conservation efforts, increasing open space, and supporting the Tree Advisory Board to address heat island concerns and enhanced wildlife passages.

3

Public Engagement

As part of the development of the Plan, a robust public engagement effort was undertaken. This included an online engagement survey, three sets of interview sessions with various targeted stakeholders that took place over the course of three hours on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, and two public workshops. Public Workshop No. 1 was held on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, following the stakeholder interviews and included a presentation of the existing conditions of the Study Area. Members of the public and the community were invited to participate in two interactive exercises during Public Workshop No. 1 that identified the Study Area's strengths and weaknesses and prioritized opportunities for its future. Public Workshop No. 2 was held on Tuesday, July 23, 2024 and included a presentation of the initial draft findings of the Plan, as well as the draft strategies for implementation and associated recommendations. Participants were broken out into small groups to discuss the draft findings, strategies, and recommendations and solicit feedback from the public.

Online Survey

A five-question online survey was developed in order to solicit initial feedback and input on the Study Area's existing conditions, as well as gauge the community's appetite for specific changes that should be explored further during the planning effort. With over 150 responses recorded, a summary of key takeaways are listed below:

- › When asked about their relationship to the Study Area, most respondents either frequented the Study Area for shopping trips or personal appointments or passed through enroute to other destinations, indicating that the Study Area is used for a combination of mixed travel, including both local traffic and through traffic. In addition, almost half of all respondents work within the Study Area, indicating that many frequent the Study Area on a routine daily basis.
- › When asked about what improvements needed to be made to the Study Area, the top three most popular answers were pedestrian connectivity, the need for bike routes, and additional parks and recreational areas, listed in order of importance. These responses highlight the need for multimodal connectivity improvements outside of vehicular traffic and additional opportunities to access existing natural areas and provide more formalized parks and open space areas.
- › When asked about their views on mixed-use development in the Study Area, respondents generally expressed support for this development type, with almost half either strongly agreeing or agreeing that more mixed-use development is needed within the Study Area.
- › When asked about what types of new housing could be most successful in the Study Area, the housing types with the most support included townhouses, smaller two or three-bedroom single family homes, condos, and multifamily apartments.

- › When considering the most suitable locations for new housing in the Study Area, respondents were most supportive of areas near existing or future transit services, job centers. Respondents also noted that the design of any new housing developments should be compatible with the existing developments in the surrounding area.

A copy of the full survey, including questions and results, can be found in **Appendix A**.

Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews are a fundamental component of the public engagement process as part of a community-based planning study. These interviews helped shape the basis of the Plan, leading to more informed planning by establishing context, defining a vision, and laying the groundwork for consensus-building. The purpose and intent of the stakeholder interview sessions were to aid in the gathering of information through local knowledge and identifying and understanding the needs and concerns of different community members and organizations.

Through these stakeholder interviews, challenges and opportunities were identified that may not have been presented through traditional data gathering and analyses. These sessions fostered inclusivity amongst various community representatives and yielded diverse perspectives on issues and opportunities affecting the Study Area. Three stakeholder sessions were conducted and included the following groups:

- › Session 1: Large Employers within the Study Area
- › Session 2: Local and Regional Real Estate Developers and Property Owners in the Study Area
- › Session 3: Lebanon Public School District (SAU#88) and Local Community-based Organizations that serve the Study Area

Each set of stakeholders were asked a series of identical base questions to better understand their relationship to the Study Area, in addition to several unique questions based on the underlying makeup of the individual groups. Stakeholder interview session questions can be found in **Appendix B**. Outcomes and key takeaways from each of the three sessions are organized into categories as summarized below:

Housing

- › Issues:
 - Residents and workers are quickly getting priced out of this area of Lebanon due to rising housing costs;
 - Current housing supply is not meeting the demand and is not diverse enough;
 - There is a lack of home ownership opportunities; and
 - There is demand for smaller single-family homes and larger bedroom counts for apartments in multifamily buildings.
- › Opportunities:
 - New developments should be thoughtful infill that includes a mix of uses and housing types; and

- New housing should be co-located proximate to existing development and community amenities.

Zoning

- › Issues:
 - There is a lack of office and industrial tenants, leaving vacant buildings and undeveloped sites in these zones;
 - The existing zoning regulations are restrictive, leading to developers having to come up with creative solutions to use the existing code, hindering redevelopment due to added time and funding;
 - The variance process is the same for single-family homeowners as it is for a developer proposing a mixed-use or multifamily development, adding time and resources to the approvals process for new developments;
 - Increasing density in the PUDs leads to additional requirements and stipulations; and
 - Multifamily zoning exists within Lebanon, but it is not abundant in the Study Area.
- › Opportunities:
 - Allow for multifamily and mixed-use zoning by-right within the Study Area;
 - Streamline the site application review process.

Connectivity

- › Issues:
 - The existing multi-use path on Mt. Support Road has no connection to Route 120 or the Town of Hanover;
 - There is either limited or a lack of pedestrian infrastructure on streets that bisect Route 120, making walkability unsafe and difficult;
 - There is a lack of cohesion amongst developments, with limited or no connectivity between existing developments; and
 - I-89 is a barrier between the Study Area and downtown Lebanon.
- › Opportunities:
 - Any future community amenities should be co-located near existing development or existing community amenities; and
 - Improve pedestrian, multimodal, and public transit connectivity throughout the Study Area, particularly across Route 120, between existing developments, and across the existing pedestrian bridge across I-89 to downtown.

Natural Resources

- › Issues:
 - There are limited connections to the existing trail network; and
 - There is a lack of formalized parks and open space outside of the conservation lands.
- › Opportunities:

- Preserve all wildlife crossings, conservation lands, sensitive ecological habitats, and protected wetland areas; and
- Any future developments should incorporate sustainability and resiliency components to preserve and enhance the existing natural character of the Study Area.

Public Workshop No. 1

During Public Workshop No. 1, participants were given a presentation on the Study Area's existing conditions, including property ownership, transportation networks, land use and zoning, and natural resources. Members of the public had the opportunity to share their ideas, express their concerns, and participate in the development of a cohesive vision for the Study Area. Two interactive exercises were conducted during the workshop:

Activity 1: Strengths and Weaknesses

Attendees were given 20 minutes to review and mark up five maps of the Study Area that highlighted existing: housing, retail and commercial, community amenities, transportation networks, and natural resources. Participants wrote what they thought were existing "strengths" of the Study Area on yellow post-it notes, and existing "weaknesses" of the Study Area on pink post-it notes. The outcome was a summary of strengths and weaknesses of the Study Area as follows:

- › Housing:
 - There is a high demand for single-family homes;
 - There is a lack of diverse housing types; and
 - New development is typically not located near existing retail and commercial areas, forcing people to use vehicles as their primary mode of transport.
- › Retail and Commercial:
 - Existing retail and commercial developments are difficult to access by foot or bicycle; and
 - There is a need for neighborhood-serving retail options within walking distance to existing residential areas.
- › Community Features:
 - The Town should increase the safety and preserve the character of the area surrounding the schools; and
 - The Study Area lacks a sense of place and would benefit from a more cohesive identity.
- › Transportation:
 - There is a need to expand the multi-use path and install bike infrastructure throughout the area;
 - Pedestrian safety is a major concern; and
 - Connectivity should be enhanced between all modes of non-vehicular transportation, including additional public transportation via Advance Transit.
- › Natural Resources:

- Need to protect existing wildlife crossings, conservation lands, and sensitive ecological habitats;
- Consider buffers to protect and preserve existing open spaces; and
- New development should be sustainable and consider its placement within the greater context of the area.

Activity 2: Priorities

Attendees were broken out into two groups with one dedicated facilitator. The group was instructed to develop a list of priorities they would like to see considered in the Plan in 15 minutes. During the last five minutes of the activity, each member of the two groups were given three sticker dots and had to use all of them to vote for which priorities they preferred. Individuals were not allowed to vote for the same priority more than once. The outcome was a list of priorities for the two separate groups for what each would like to see considered in the Plan as follows:

- Group 1 Priorities:
 - 1) More housing in a cohesive, sustainable way
 - 2) Better, safer pedestrian connections
 - 3) Tie between:
 - More 3-bedroom apartments
 - Incorporate climate resiliency measures in new developments
 - 4) Preserve the wildlife corridors
- Group 2 Priorities:
 - 1) Rezone Etna Road from IND-L to more residential friendly [zoning]
 - 2) Tie between:
 - Keep historic nature of the brickyard site, connect to the schools, incorporate community use, retail, or commercial
 - Quality of life values: more green space and protect current values
 - Mixed-uses and adaptive reuse
 - Establish housing partnership with DHMC

Boards and comments from Public Workshop No. 1 can be found in **Appendix C**.

Public Engagement Findings

Using input and feedback from the online survey, stakeholder interviews, and Public Workshop No. 1, in addition to the existing conditions analysis and previous planning efforts, the following findings and key takeaways were identified:

- › Concerns over pedestrian and bicyclist safety, combined with the lack of contiguous sidewalks and the existing multi-use path, result in unsafe and fragmented non-vehicular circulation patterns within the Study Area.

- › Recent developments occur in isolation from one another and lack interconnectivity, resulting in a built environment that can be cumbersome to navigate.
- › The rise of multifamily developments within the Study Area have sparked concerns over the preservation and protection of wetlands, the wildlife corridors, and protected open space assets such as conservation lands and sensitive ecological habitats.
- › The Study Area lacks a sense of place and would likely benefit from additional community amenities, neighborhood-serving retail, and a neighborhood branding campaign.
- › Limited housing options within the Study Area have led to either employee turnover or long commute times at several large employers within the Study Area, indicating the need for additional, locally concentrated housing opportunities of varying types.

Public Workshop No. 2

During Public Workshop No. 2, participants were given a presentation on the Plan's findings and draft strategies and recommendations. Members of the public were broken out into small groups to encourage discussion and solicit input and feedback on the draft strategies and recommendations. A summary of public input from the second public workshop is as follows:

- › Promote multi-use transportation: develop paths for bikes and scooters, expand pedestrian infrastructure, and maintain sidewalks.
- › Support sustainable development: encourage rezoning for residential growth, reduce parking requirements, and focus on height flexibility in new developments.
- › Enhance housing and infrastructure: address future housing needs, prioritize diverse ownership options, and ensure new developments support public transit expansion.
- › Improve traffic and connectivity: evaluate housing impacts on traffic, maintain Route 120 as a high-speed route, and enhance east-west connections and access in key areas.
- › Preserve natural resources and wildlife: preserve wildlife corridors, enhance culverts for animal crossings, and balance development with environmental protection, including wetland areas.
- › Revise land use and zoning: develop community parks, update current zoning, and explore targeted rezoning.

Additional comments received following Public Workshop No. 2 can be found in **Appendix D**.

4

Vision Statement, Strategic Goals and Recommendations

Vision Statement

Forming a vision statement is a crucial step in the community planning process as it provides a clear, shared sense of direction and purpose. It encapsulates the collective aspirations and long-term goals of the community, serving as a guiding strategy for all future planning and development efforts. A well-crafted vision statement fosters unity, aligning stakeholders, residents, and policymakers around a common objective. It acts as a benchmark against which progress can be measured, fostering accountability and continuous improvement. By engaging the community in the creation of the vision statement, the resulting vision promotes inclusivity and ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to more holistic and sustainable planning outcomes.

Building upon the existing conditions analysis, the public engagement efforts, and the findings and key takeaways, the following vision statement was created for the Study Area:

Transform the area within the City of Lebanon north of Exit 18 on Interstate 89 into a more complete, walkable neighborhood with easy, safe access to and preservation of natural resources and existing amenities, while providing opportunities for thoughtful, sustainable growth in the form of diverse new housing, community facilities, and enhanced multimodal connections.

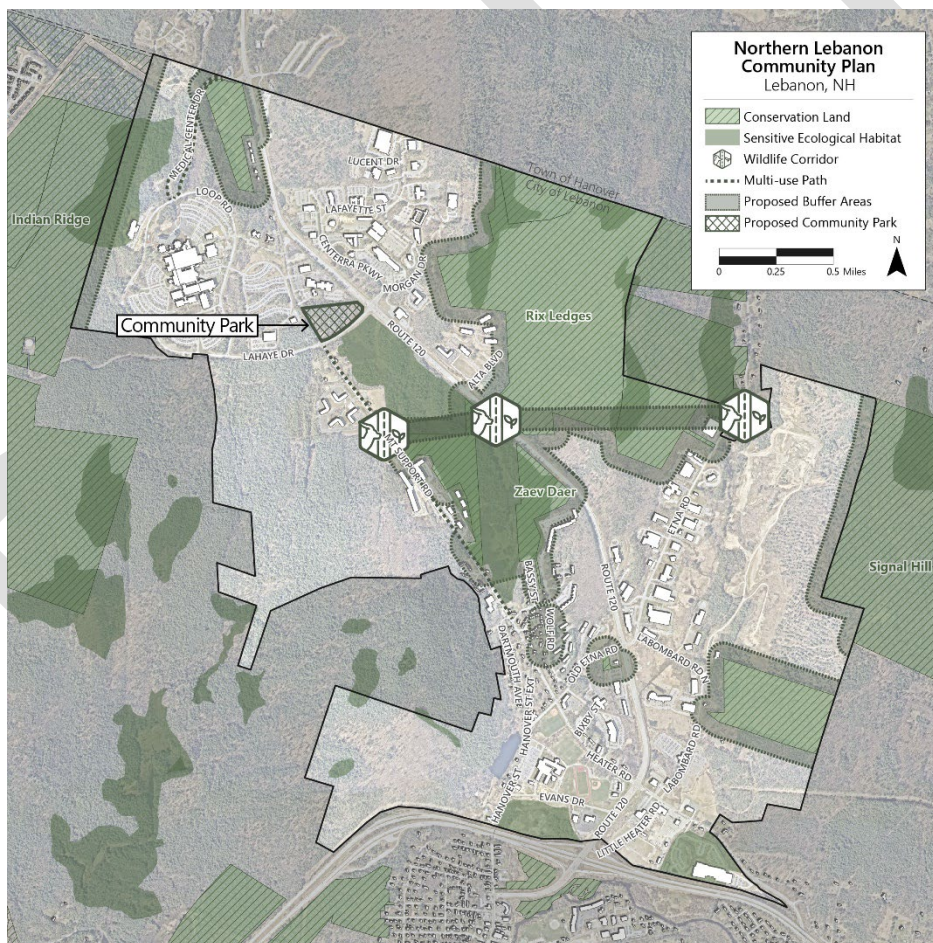
Strategic Goals and Recommendations

Building upon the vision statement are a set of strategic goals and actionable recommendations centered around the preservation of natural resources, enhanced connectivity and mobility, and modifications to the existing zoning of the Study Area that will allow the City of Lebanon to realize its vision.

Strategy 1. Preservation of and Enhanced Access to Natural Resources

Preserve and enhance the Study Area's existing natural character by protecting existing conservation areas, wildlife corridors, and ecosystems, while providing additional recreational opportunities and enhanced connections to existing natural assets for residents, visitors, and employees that frequent the Study Area.

Figure 13 Preservation of and Enhanced Access to Natural Resources



- › Recommendation 1.1. Formalize and map a 100-ft wide Wildlife Corridor Passage Overlay District that connects the three existing wildlife corridors, preserving the existing natural features and landscape to allow for the safe passage of wildlife, and require the

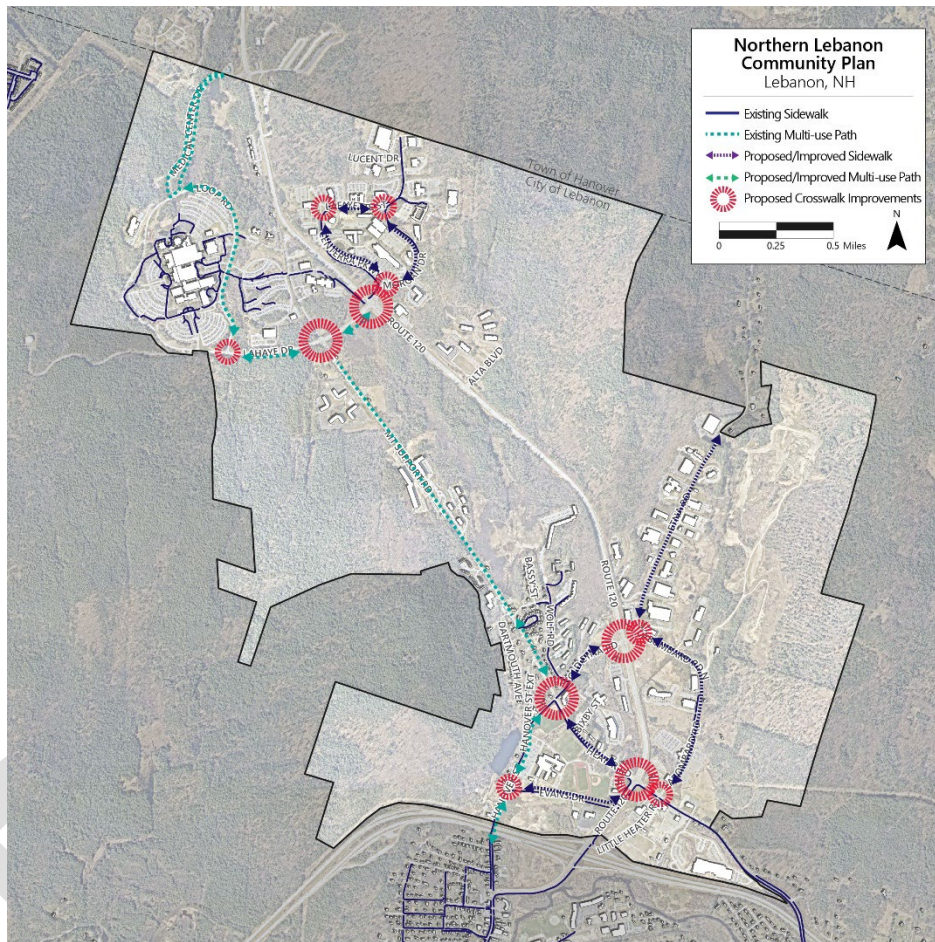
installation of signage at all existing and new multi-use path and roadway crossings that bisect the overlay district boundary.

- › Recommendation 1.2. Study the feasibility of decreasing traffic speeds and upsizing the existing culverts for all three existing wildlife corridors within the Study Area.
- › Recommendation 1.3. In partnership with the Lebanon Conservation Commission and the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, develop public-facing educational materials on the importance of the wildlife corridors and make them available at key City facilities.
- › Recommendation 1.4. If a parcel of developable land borders conservation lands, consider requiring a 100-foot, wooded or landscaped buffer between the property line and any new development to maintain a natural buffered area between existing preserved lands and any new developments.
- › Recommendation 1.5. Install signed and directional trailheads throughout the Study Area to promote the use of the extensive network of trails through existing conservation lands in and around the Study Area.
- › Recommendation 1.6. Mandate a percentage of new developments require dedicated public open space in the form of a landscaped plaza, pocket park, or a community garden.
- › Recommendation 1.7. Approach DHMC regarding their three parcel assemblage north of Lahaye Drive (Parcel IDs 10-23, 10-24-200, and 10-25 for a total of approximately 9 acres) to gauge their willingness to dedicate the land to the City for the purposes of creating a community park inclusive of amenities and programming of appropriate scale and size to reflect the land's existing natural features.
- › Recommendation 1.8. Require that any future development within 250-feet of wetlands include a certain percentage of total site land cover as permeable surfaces.
- › Recommendation 1.9. Expand the coverage area of the Steep Slopes District to cover the entirety of the Study Area where slopes greater than or equal to 25-percent are located in order to preserve the natural character of neighboring conservation lands, ridgelines, and rock formations. Consider special exceptions upon review and approval by the Conservation Commission.

Strategy 2. Connectivity Improvements

Identify and prioritize the completion or enhancement of missing, incomplete, or unsafe pedestrian, bicycle, and multimodal connections to facilitate improved local and regional connectivity between existing neighborhoods, community amenities and facilities, and job centers.

Figure 14 Proposed Connectivity Improvements



- › **Recommendation 2.1.** Identify gaps in sidewalk connectivity and portions in need of repair or expansion and construct adequately sized sidewalks and associated infrastructure to accommodate the safe passage of pedestrians and wheelchair users along and across Route 120 between its intersections with Evans Drive, Heater Road, and Old Etna Road, and Lahaye Drive and Centerra Parkway.
- › **Recommendation 2.2.** Apply for the Fiscal Year 2025 Recreational Trails Program grant round through the New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation’s Bureau of Trails to extend the multi-use path on Mt. Support Road south to the Hanover Street pedestrian bridge.
- › **Recommendation 2.3.** Coordinate with the Town of Hanover and DHMC to leverage private funding from DHMC to extend the Mt. Support Road multi-use trail north

through DHMC's campus, tying into Medical Center Drive north of the campus before connecting across the town line with Hanover.

- › Recommendation 2.4. Enhance the existing pedestrian bridge over I-89 through the addition of wayfinding signage throughout the southern portion of the Study Area inviting users to the bridge, remove overgrown plant species, install native landscaping, and commission a public art installation from a local artist to showcase the bridge.
- › Recommendation 2.5. Commission a branding, signage, and wayfinding study to identify locations for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular wayfinding signage north of Exit 18.
- › Recommendation 2.6. Prioritize pedestrian and streetscape improvements around the Hanover Street School and Lebanon High School in Lebanon's Capital Plan.
- › Recommendation 2.7. Coordinate with Advance Transit to identify additional routing options or bus stops for the Blue and Blue-Red lines based on existing demand and areas of projected future development.
- › Recommendation 2.8. Coordinate with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) on their Lebanon 29612 project that is currently evaluating alternatives for Route 120 from the Hanover Street intersection through Exit 18 and north to Etna Road. Any zoning changes as a result of the Northern Lebanon Community Plan should be shared with NHDOT's District 2's Bureau of Traffic.

Strategy 3. Zoning Modifications

Propose changes to the existing Zoning Ordinance and Map to allow for by right mixed-use development and a range of housing choices to support the diverse needs of the community and its current and future residents.

Figure 15 Future Zoning Conditions

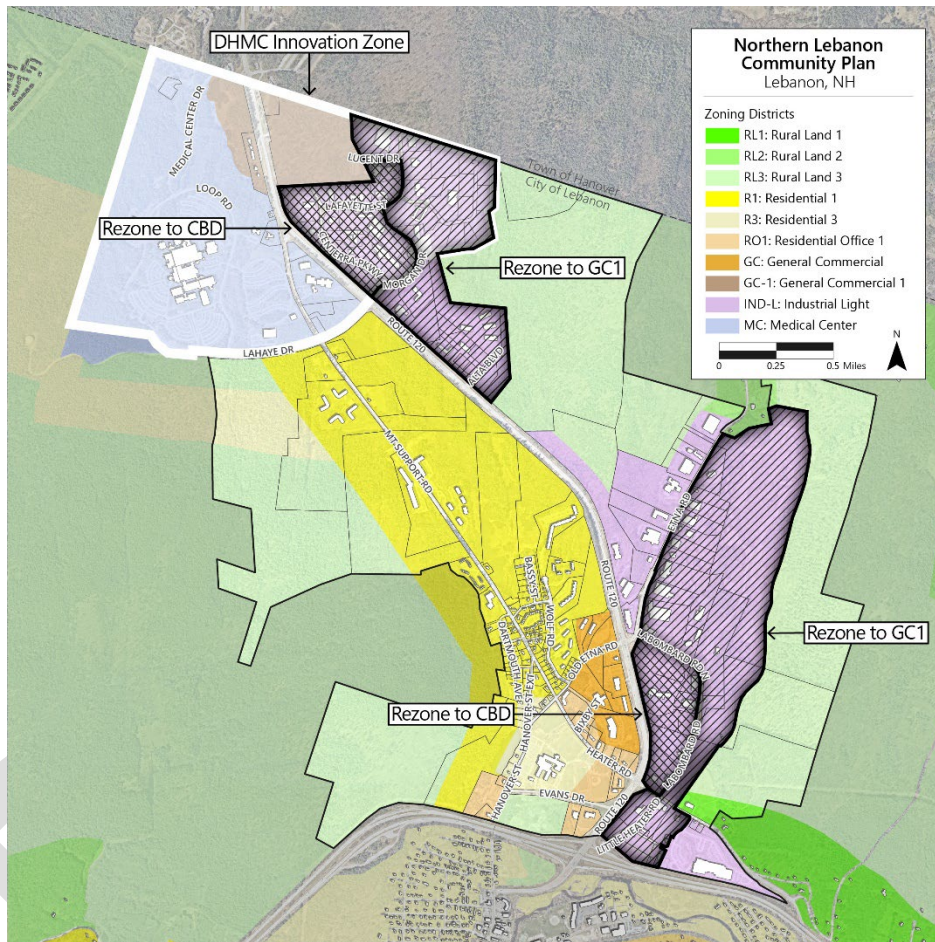
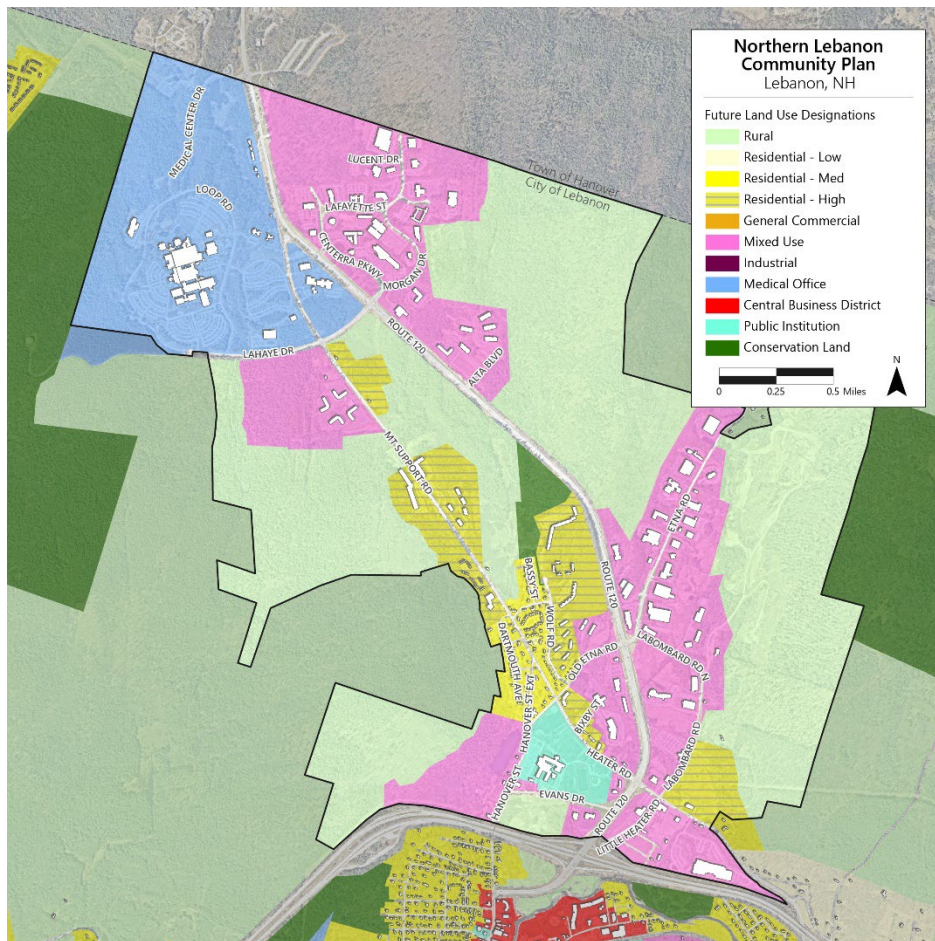


Figure 16 Future Land Use Map



- › **Recommendation 3.1.** Rezone the following existing INDL districts:
 - South of Heater Road, north and east of Labombard Road, and east of Etna Road; and
 - North of Lafayette Street and south and west of Morgan Drive
 to General Commercial One District (GC1) to allow for multifamily dwelling units by-right in close proximity to larger employers, community assets, and existing transportation infrastructure.
- › **Recommendation 3.2.** Rezone the following existing INDL districts:
 - East of Route 120 in Centerra to the southern edge of Lafayette Street and northern and western edge of Morgan Drive; and
 - East of Route 120, south of Etna Road and west of Labombard Road
 to Central Business District (CBD) to allow for the construction of dwellings above first floor retail/commercial and multifamily dwellings by-right to begin to develop a new mixed-use neighborhood to anchor the northern end of the Study Area, and to create a critical mass of new development in the southern portion of the Study Area northeast of Exit 18 that has already experienced significant redevelopment.

- › Recommendation 3.3. Amend the permitted uses in the General Commercial One District (GC-1) to include retail stores and restaurants.
- › Recommendation 3.4. Upon the completion of the City's public residential single and multi-family construction projects on City-owned land at Barrows Street, Hanover Street Extension, Seminary Hill, and South Main Street, consider using these projects as a model to guide future development in the Study Area by providing a mix of housing types in future private development, including cottage courts, smaller single-family homes, townhomes, duplexes, and triplexes. This could include updating the Residential 1 (R1) district to include these housing types under permitted uses, and amending minimum lot size and dimensional requirements in R1 to encourage these housing types.
- › Recommendation 3.5. Require all new developments to install sidewalks, designated bicycle parking, and make streetscape improvements that extend and connect to the next nearest existing sidewalk.
- › Recommendation 3.6. As recommended in the Lebanon Open Space Plan (2021), consider implementing the following measures:
 - Develop and incorporate a maximum lot coverage limitation to ensure that a portion of all lots remains as greenspace;
 - Develop maximum parking requirements and allow for reductions in parking provided on site, in addition to encouraging adjoining properties to share parking to reduce the creation of new or expanded impervious surfaces; and
 - Conduct a feasibility assessment of increasing the maximum height of buildings within the GC-1 and CBD district to help reduce the overall footprint of development projects.
- › Recommendation 3.7. Facilitate a partnership between the City of Lebanon, Twin Pines Housing, the Lebanon Housing Authority, and DHMC to leverage funding resources, existing housing subsidies for DHMC employees, and DHMC's relocation office to assist in the creation and preservation of affordable housing units.
- › Recommendation 3.8. Designate DHMC and the portion of Centerra north of Morgan Drive as an "Innovation Zone" and leverage the resources of Lebanon's Economic Development Commission, the New Hampshire Division of Economic Development, the Upper Valley Business Alliance, and DHMC to promote the area and attract startups and develop an incubator space in vacant structures, with an emphasis on companies that can benefit from the existing synergies and research occurring at DHMC.
- › Recommendation 3.9. Given NHDOT's existing moratorium on new curb cuts along Route 120, north of I-89's Exit 18, require all new developments on the eastern portion of Route 120 to provide adequate internal road network connections to existing developments to facilitate improved circulation amongst existing and future developments.

Appendices

Title Placeholder

DRAFT



October 10, 2024

City of Lebanon Planning Board

51 North Park St.

Lebanon, NH 03766

RE: Effects on Natural Resources by the proposed development by Brickyard One Nominee Trust, 174 Hanover St. Ext (Tax Map 48, Lot 4), 0 Hanover St. Ext (Tax Map 48, Lot 2), 0 Hanover St. Ext (Tax Map 48, Lot 1) and 238 Hanover St (Tax Map 63, Lot 1) zoned R-1, R-0-1 & R-3

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

At the September 12 meeting of the Lebanon Conservation Commission, the members discussed the proposed development of housing units by the Brickyard One Nominee Trust, referenced above. We are sending this letter to encourage the Planning Board to consider carefully a number of natural resource issues pertinent to this proposed development off Hanover St. Ext.

The Conservation Commission's principal concerns pertain to the following natural resource changes:

1. Alteration of the terrain
2. Disturbance of wetlands
3. Changes in soil properties
4. Transformations of groundwater flows and hydrology
5. Maintenance of wildlife habitat and forest ecosystem integrity

We have reviewed the materials submitted to the Planning Board related to the above topics, and we commend the applicant for generally presenting a thorough discussion of them. Based on our collective knowledge and experience related to terrestrial and aquatic resources and ecosystems, we present here our suggestions, questions, and thoughts on each of these topics for the use and consideration by the Planning Board:

1. Alteration of the terrain

The proposed development will significantly change the slope of the land and its geology (principally glacial till and associated rock), and it will be important to ask further questions related to how the alteration of the terrain will affect permeability of the slopes and flow of upslope water through to the wetland to the southern margin of the development. The site visit sponsored by the developer revealed remarkable numbers of large boulders, probably derived from glacial activity 10,000 or more years ago. How will removing these boulders affect normal soil and hydrological functions above, within, and below the development site? We recommend a careful and thorough review of the Alteration of Terrain application, and the Conservation Commission's input should be helpful.

2. Disturbance of wetlands

Wetlands on the site will be disturbed and filled, and water flow patterns will likely be changed dramatically by alteration of the terrain and creation of impermeable surfaces by buildings and driveways. The Conservation Commission will welcome the opportunity to review the NHDES wetland impact permit application, when available. We encourage the Planning Board to consider the bigger issue of how this development at the base of Quarry Hill and the Mt. Support upland will affect flood mitigation benefits now provided by wetlands and related forested ecosystems on flood water flow to the Mascoma River and downtown Lebanon. Given the ever-changing nature and frequency of extreme weather events in our region associated with climate disruption, this concern takes on increasing importance each year.

3. Changes in soil properties

The application has provided soils information, including soil series names and basic properties, which is helpful in the review process. Given the nature of the proposed alteration of terrain, the nature and properties of the natural soils on the site will be dramatically changed. To what extent can these changes be quantified and predicted ahead of time? Are the likely changes acceptable, in light of functions and values associated with the soils of the hillside above and environment of Densmore Pond.

4. Transformations of groundwater flows and hydrology

The applicant has designed and quantified how stormwater will be channeled and treated on site before it dumps into the City drainage system on Hanover St. But quantifying groundwater flow rates, paths, and volumes is complex and difficult, and this may complicate the success of the designed stormwater management system for surface waters.

We encourage the Planning Board to give special consideration to this issue, given its challenges and importance for ecosystem function, wastewater management, and possibly drinking water supplies.

5. Maintenance of wildlife habitat and forest ecosystem integrity

Disturbance of the riparian forest buffers around Densmore Pond, the wetlands on the south end of the proposed development, and the forest ecosystem upslope from the pond and building area could have major effects on wildlife habitat and movement during different times of the year. Given its location at the base of Quarry Hill to the west and the Mt. Support uplands to the north of the site, we encourage the Planning Board to request considerable detail on ecological and wildlife impacts of the proposed development. This may require more study and evaluation than is currently available in New Hampshire and Lebanon reports on the issue.

The Conservation Commission brings to the Planning Board considerable expertise and historical/institutional memory on numerous issues related to soil science, hydrology, ecology, wildlife biology, open space, land use change, and conservation in the City of Lebanon. We hope that our questions and suggestions are helpful in your deliberations and decision-making on this proposed housing development. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Bruce R James

Vice Chair, on behalf of the Conservation Commission

Goals for 2024

The Commission engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding desired goals for the coming year, as summarized via the following outline:

Property Stewardship

- Forest Management Plans (review existing and determine gaps) and more engagement related to recommended action/activities (MP 5.4b.2) (2024 focus on Boston Lot)
- Review gaps and needs for infrastructure, e.g., footbridges, etc. (MP 5.4b.2)
- Signage/Kiosks/Map resources (MP 5.4b.2) (SP 5.7.2)
- Trail Maintenance (ongoing care of existing trails) (MP 5.4b.2 & MP 5.4b.5) (SP 5.7.3)

~ Collaborate with the Nature Conservancy on the Elm Tree Restoration project (SP 5.6.1)

New 2024yr: Pursue Alana Cole trail for compliance with ADA access (an existing MP action item; possible Strategic Plan item)

Education / Outreach

- Workshop for ConCom to increase awareness of aquifer/water resource status, including future plans. (MP 5.6a.7) (SP 5.8.1) *The who/when/what?*
- Increased ConCom knowledge of general topic of water resource (internal education for ConCom members) *The who/when/what?*
- Develop and disseminate public education materials regarding the importance of protecting our water supply sources (SP 5.8.1) (DES soak up rain, etc)
- Continued support for Wild About Lebanon (MP 5.6a.5) (SP 5.7.1)
- Host Amphibian Crossing Program (SP5.9.4)
- ~ Host annual Mascoma River clean-up (SP 5.8.3)
- Propose the creation of a **River Keeper position** to the City, including assigning role to an existing staff position; perhaps a contracted (consultant) position or volunteer position **New 2024 SP Item?**
- **New 2024yr** Participation with the pending Upper Valley Working Forest group

- Increased awareness and encouragement for land protection (MP 5.6a.4) *The who/when/what?*

Land Conservation

- Add to the conservation portfolio of conservation land within the City of Lebanon (MP 5.4a.1) (SP 5.6.2)
- Review and modify as needed existing regulations related to OS protection (e.g., ridgeline, aquifer, steep slopes, etc.) (MP 5.2b.2 & MP 5.5a.4) *Steep slopes* (SP 5.9.1)
- As part of the Wetland Permit process, have mitigation projects in the hopper to offer
- Work with the Upper Valley Land Trust regarding permanently protecting Baker's Crossing (SP 5.6.2)
- Implement recommendations from the wildlife corridor plans (SP 5.9.3)
- Examine the applicability of a vernal pool overlay district (SP 5.9.2)
- ~ Conduct review of existing steep slope regulations (SP 5.9.1)

Miscellaneous

- Increased communication regarding DPW maintenance activities, future well plans, stormwater initiatives (e.g., LID techniques, water quality protection, etc.) ??
- LOST Fund Investment Strategies *who/when/what?*
- Collaboration / Communication between ConCom and proposed redevelopment plans for West Lebanon *who/when/what?*
- ~ Evaluate Lebanon participation in the NH F&G doe harvest program (SP 5.6.3)
- ~ Innovative stormwater regulations existing in the Site Plan regulations to be migrated to the sub-division regulations as appropriate (SP 5.8.2)

~ **New 2024yr**: Incorporate green infrastructure to the max extent possible for the pending Exit 18 project.....MP action item **Request that it be put in the Strategic Plan.**

~ New 2024yr incorporate aquatic passage design within the CoL Culvert replacement program. 5.2.22 MP....does it get to SP ~ Incorporate **aquatic organism passage** and **wildlife friendly designs** into **culvert replacement projects** city-wide in line with NH Stream Crossing Initiative. (MP 5.2.22) does it get to SP

~ New 2024yr Work with DPW to **reduce road salt use** near sensitive habitat areas. SP Action Item?