



LEBANON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
JANUARY 22, 2025 - 4:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE

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- 1. Call to Order**
The January 22, 2025 Economic Development Commission meeting is hereby called to order.
 - 2. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. October 16, 2024
 - 3. New Business**
 - A. Update on 20 Spencer Street Redevelopment Project
 - B. Update on Downtown Parking Lot Redevelopment Study
 - C. Master Plan, Chapter 6, Economic Development, Review and Update
 - 4. Future Agenda Items**
 - 5. Next Meeting Date**
 - A. February 26, 2025
 - 6. Other Business**
 - 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 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

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
SMALL BUSINESS WORKSHOP
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024 – 4:00PM
Council Chambers – City Hall – or remote via Virtual Platform
MINUTES**

EDC MEMBERS PRESENT: David Newlove (Chair), Dan Nash, Chip Brown, Councilor Karen Liot Hill (Vice Chair), Andrew Key, and Dean Cashman

EDC MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilor Doug Whittlesey, Tracy Hutchins (Upper Valley Business Alliance),

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy City Manager David Brooks

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- The October 16, 2024, Economic Development Commission meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. September 25, 2024

Motion by Dan Nash to approve the minutes of September 25, 2024, as presented.

Second by Chip Brown.

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

3. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Small Business Workshop

- Anne Duncan Cooley, Chief Executive Officer, Grafton Regional Development Corporation (graftonrdc.org)

Ms. Duncan Cooley explained that the Grafton Regional Development Corporation (GRDC) is a non-profit organization which started out doing small business lending. In Grafton County, the focus is mostly on the micro loan program which focuses on starting businesses and making them bankable, and GAP financing. The organization also runs two business incubators. Most of the businesses involved are generally tech and lab space. The organization has funding available for low or moderate income individuals who wish to start a business. Referrals from partners who do business advising can be passed along in order to work collaboratively. The organization has a loan portfolio of approximately \$3M. Many of the loans are short-term to get people up and going. Some funding for the lending comes from donations and other funding comes from grants. Out of the approximately 20 loans that the organization issues each year, most are successful.

- Miguel Moralez, Economic Development Specialist & Veterans Business Development Specialist, U.S. Small Business Administration (sba.gov)

Mr. Moralez stated that one of the best programs that his organization has is the Harvest Program. The organization also has a Small Business Development Center. SCORE is a mentor group that can be used when people have questions about the process. The organization has a micro loan which can be used for businesses that cannot otherwise be bankable and helps them be ready to become bankable in the future. The organization offers online training 24/7 and workshops in various towns. Mr. Moralez stated that if someone is interested in starting a small business, they can speak to him, and he will help them find the appropriate resources.

- Bruce Butler, Upper Valley Manager for SCORE Business Mentorship Program (score.org/graniteregion)

Mr. Butler stated that SCORE is a nationwide nonprofit organization sponsored by the Small Business Administration. There are approximately 10,000 members nationwide and 85 mentors locally. The organization offers free hands-on mentoring and workshops, business plan development, assistance in obtaining a loan, and support and guidance overall. Local mentors can reach out beyond the Granite region in order to find someone the specific help that is needed. Those interested can go to score.org and enter information in order to find a best match mentor for them. The mentor will then contact the person. The mentor will help the interested party to fill out a one page business plan. The

1 client will then continue to work through the process to hopefully open a new business. Not every client is able to
2 open a business in the end.

3
4 *Councilor Liot Hill joined the meeting.*

5
6 Mr. Brooks asked about the normal turnaround time for the entire process. Mr. Butler stated that this is at least 3-4
7 months.

8
9 Ms. Duncan Cooley stated that there are other types of economic development consultations that can be used. Her
10 organization has also started considering how it can help in the housing crisis or with childcare work. Many
11 municipalities are members of GRDC. She stated that she has been considering if there is a role for GRDC in financing
12 housing construction for homeowners. However, the organization is not a residential lender, but there may be a gap
13 in the construction phase that could be filled.

14
15 Councilor Liot Hill stated that she believes financing may be one of the concerns for those trying to build ADUs. If
16 an institution could review an ADU project similar to a commercial loan based on the viability of the project, this may
17 be more helpful for homeowners.

18
19 Mr. Nash stated that there could be a market for someone who understands the land use laws for ADUs and
20 contracting/financing to work with homeowners through the process.

21
22 **4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

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24 The Commission stated that at its next meeting it will either be discussing the Master Plan, or it will meet with the
25 consultants for the back parking lot project regarding an interim plan presentation.

26
27 **5. NEXT MEETING DATE:**

28 A. December 11, 2024

29
30 **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

31 None at this time.

32
33 **7. ADJOURNMENT.**

34
35 *Motion by Dean Cashman to adjourn the meeting at 5:03PM.*

36 *Second by Chip Brown.*

37 ** The Vote on the MOTION was approved 6-0.*

38
39 Respectfully submitted,
40 Kristan Patenaude

6 | Economic Development

6 | A Vision & Purpose

The City of Lebanon shall promote high-quality economic development that provides safe, healthy working conditions, and rewarding careers and employment opportunities for residents of the City and region. In accordance with the “Residents-First” policy, economic development in Lebanon shall benefit our residents and enhance quality of life in the City. Our economic development strategy shall foster a vibrant and sustainable local economy by:

- Proactively encouraging and attracting enterprises that contribute to the total welfare of the City of Lebanon, while also recognizing Lebanon’s role as an employment center for the Upper Valley.
- Preserving and enhancing the natural and built environment of Lebanon, and promoting a high quality of life for those who live in, work in, or visit the City.
- Implementing economic development and redevelopment strategies that aim to avoid placing a greater tax burden on City residents.
- Striving to support a diverse mix of businesses from a variety of economic sectors to better protect our local economy from sudden shifts within a single industry, and to increase our resistance to and resilience from economic downturns and unsustained boom times.
- Adopting smart growth policies that encourage mixing synergistic uses (such as retail, residential, and office), redevelopment of existing non-residential sites, and infill development of existing lands zoned for non-residential use before extensively developing any additional lands for non-residential use.
- Maintaining and expanding the infrastructure needed to support economic development at high service levels, including fostering state-of-the-art communications infrastructure throughout the City.
- Encouraging new non-residential construction and renovation of existing non-residential structures to result in high-quality, flexible, and adaptable buildings.
- Supporting a full range of housing options, from affordable workforce units to market rate housing, for both rental and ownership, that will allow those working within the City at all income levels to also live in the City, while recognizing the impact on infrastructure and school budgets.
- Understanding that a strong economy requires a well-educated and skilled workforce and providing educational and workforce training opportunities for residents at all stages of life.
- Encouraging the retention and creation of adequate and affordable childcare opportunities to support employees, Lebanon residents, and employers.

6 | B Issues & Priorities

6 | B-1 Sustainable Economic Development

Sustainable economic development is more than just increasing the number of jobs, tax receipts and square footage of commercial/industrial space in the City. It means growth that is not driven by depleting our resources, but rather by renewing them. It means growing our economy while also enhancing quality of life in Lebanon and protecting environmental quality - making the City an even better place to live for the next generation. Sustainable economic development has a triple bottom line resulting in economic benefits, environmental benefits, and social benefits.

Top priorities for sustainable economic development in Lebanon include:

- Redevelopment of under-utilized commercial and industrial sites.
- A more diverse local economy that is not dependent on a single large employer or sector.
- Growth opportunities for existing businesses to maintain or allow for paying a livable wage.

Achieving sustainability will require a proactive approach to economic development. Given Lebanon's role as the economic center of the Upper Valley, the pressure for continued economic expansion will likely remain strong, and for this reason, the City must carefully plan for growth. The community must determine where and how much it will grow, and then it needs to implement strategies to appropriately guide economic and community development. If instead the City takes a passive approach, it may find itself overwhelmed with growth planning challenges and a division among City government, business, and residents that will stall proactive decision-making.

6 | B-2 Economic Diversity

As a former milling center, Lebanon needs only to look back to its own history to see the danger posed by a local economy dependent upon a single large employer or economic sector. During the past 60 years, the City's economy has become stronger and more diversified. Economic diversity means having both businesses from many different economic sectors and jobs of various levels and types.

The City needs to maintain and enhance economic diversity in order to be better insulated from contraction and downturns, whether within a particular industry or across all sectors. While the performance of a local economy will always be affected by the inevitable ups and downs of business cycles, a diversified economy will experience less dramatic change between the highs and lows.

A diverse economy also creates a variety of employment opportunities. This allows workers to more easily transition between jobs and change careers, remaining employed throughout their working lives without having to relocate to find work. A diverse economy requires a diverse workforce. Increased social diversity creates a more dynamic City and improves residents' quality of life.

Providing infrastructure, housing and educational opportunities can help support a diverse economy. In particular, an adequate supply of workforce housing and state-of-the-art communications infrastructure is necessary to continue to keep existing businesses and attract new employers.

6 | B-3 Quality of Life

Quality of life may seem a somewhat intangible concept, but for many companies it is a key consideration when deciding where to locate. Will the community be a place that employees will want to live? If not, the company may have difficulty attracting and retaining qualified workers or workers may be forced to commute from more distant communities, particularly if it must compete with other firms for highly skilled or educated employees.

The Upper Valley offers a quality of life that is very desirable - the region's communities have retained their small-town character while adding urban and cultural amenities. Lebanon benefits from the presence of DHMC and the associated health services it provides, as well as Dartmouth College next door in Hanover, which provides residents with access to world-class arts, culture and athletics. Within the City itself, the Opera House is a well-programmed entertainment venue and anchors a burgeoning downtown arts community. The City and neighboring communities have a thriving 'creative economy' that enriches the region. Additionally, the Upper Valley is only a short trip from major metropolitan areas, large tracts of wilderness, and a variety of recreation opportunities including ski slopes, hiking trails and ocean beaches.

6 | C Existing Conditions & Trends

6 | C-1 Role as Regional Center

Lebanon has historically been and continues to be a regional economic center for the Upper Valley due to:

- Transportation access (proximity to the junction of two interstate highways, a municipal airport and intercity bus service).
- Availability of land and supporting infrastructure for commercial and industrial development and redevelopment.
- A highly regarded medical center, community hospital, academic institutions and associated spin-off enterprises.
- Multiple decades of local and regional planning for community and economic development.
- Small-town feel with some urban amenities and conveniences.
- Abundant natural, scenic and historic resources of the City and region.
- Cultural and recreational attractions within the City and region.

Lebanon has remained a regional center while surviving financial panics, industrial collapse, fires, the Great Depression, and the flight of the cotton and woolen mills to the South. In each transition, new businesses have brought new opportunities and new residents. During the 1960s, the fortuitous routing of Interstate 89 and nearby Interstate 91 came just in time to breathe new life into the City after the collapse of the textile industry, making West Lebanon the retail center of the Upper Valley. The new highways also facilitated industrial and commercial business.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center's (DHMC) move to Lebanon in the early 1990s, combined with Dartmouth College's role as an innovator in the technological revolution, has resulted in spin-off businesses locating in Lebanon. This has brought a new wave of bright, technically savvy and entrepreneurial people to the City while fostering Lebanon's emergence as a biomedical and high-tech hub on the cutting edge of research, innovation and manufacturing.

Lebanon currently maintains a diversified economic base including a variety of retail enterprises, healthcare businesses ancillary to DHMC and Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital, and a vibrant high-tech / bio-tech base anchored by firms such as:

- Adimab (life science technology)
- Astronics / Luminescent Systems (aerospace industry manufacturing)
- Avitide (life science technology)
- Bio-X-Cell (life science technology)
- Creare / Edare (technology and product development)
- Fluent, Inc. / Ansys Inc. (fluid technology)
- Fujifilm Dimatix (printing technology)
- Hypertherm (plasma cutting technology)
- Mascoma Corporation (alternative fuels)
- Novo Nordisk (pharmaceutical manufacturing)
- Signal Quest (precision microsensors)
- Simbex (medical devices)
- Timken (aerospace industry manufacturing)

DHMC and other major employers in the region, such as Dartmouth College, United States Army Corps of Engineers' Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL), and the Veteran's Administrative Hospital have been relatively immune from economic recession. Having these industries in the region benefits the City immensely. They also contribute to the City's

economic well-being by attracting other businesses and service industries, which provide further employment opportunities.

6 | C-2 Land and Space for Non-Residential Uses

Lebanon's current zoning includes nine non-residential or mixed-use districts (Light Industrial, Industrial Rail Access, Heavy Industrial, General Commercial, General Commercial One, Central Business, Lebanon Downtown, Professional Business, and Medical Center). These districts provide opportunities for businesses of various types, sizes and intensities. Most of these districts have either land available for development, or sites suitable for redevelopment or infill.

Lebanon had about 900,000 square feet of non-residential space in 1959. In the six decades since, the space occupied by commercial, industrial, medical, government and other institutional uses has grown to more than 8.8 million square feet. The Lebanon Planning Board has approved, or is currently reviewing, approximately 2.5 million square feet of non-residential growth, which is projected to be built out during the coming years.

Commercial land uses make up a greater percentage of the tax base in Lebanon as compared to other Upper Valley municipalities. The City's broad tax base results in a reduced tax burden on residential property owners to fund local schools and municipal services.

6 | C-3 Employment and Wages

Roughly 20,000 people work in Lebanon. Approximately 47 percent of the City's resident workforce is employed in Lebanon (approximately 3,380 people) and more than 16,600 people commute into the City. Lebanon residents, and Upper Valley residents in general, enjoy relatively short commutes with an average travel distance to work less than 10 miles. The ability to live and work in close proximity is one of the factors that contributes to Lebanon's quality of life.

Lebanon has experienced job growth in the service sector, particularly education, healthcare, social services and retail, during the past 20 years similar to many communities across the country. However, the City has seen employment growth in management, professional and related occupations in recent decades as well. During the 2000s, employment in Lebanon grew by more than 2,600 jobs.

Lebanon's average annual unemployment rate was 2.5 percent in 2022. The unemployment rate in the City has consistently remained below four percent despite several intervening downturns in the U.S. economy. A four percent unemployment rate is usually considered "full employment." The unemployment rate in the Lebanon Labor Market Area (LMA) has been among the lowest in the state for some time.

Besides the unemployment rates, median household income provides another measure of economic health. The median household income in Lebanon in 2021 was \$80,619. Jobs in Lebanon are among the highest paying in the region and pay significantly better than the state average. Higher wages in Lebanon and the Upper Valley may be attributed in part to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and Dartmouth College, both of which directly pay relatively high wages and indirectly generate high-paying spin-off business and industry.

6 | C-4 Housing

Economic growth is dependent upon housing growth, particularly workforce housing. For more than a decade, several major employers in the Upper Valley have been expressing a need for additional workforce housing opportunities, and they have been working with organizations such as Vital Communities, Habitat for Humanity, and Twin Pines Housing Trust to find solutions. Although Lebanon has experienced approximately 16 percent housing unit growth during the 2000s, the City still may not be keeping pace with the demand resulting from both the continued

rate of growth in the non-residential sector, as well as past historical growth rate disparities between non-residential development and housing development.

Without an adequate supply of housing affordable for their workers, employers can experience challenges in both retention and attraction of employees. For employees, the shortage can result in the need to seek housing further away from the employment center, increasing commutes and associated adverse effects on the environment and transportation network.

In 2023, the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission published the Regional Housing Needs Assessment report, which documented a severe shortage of housing and the resulting repercussions for workforce and public health in the region. This study, and the associated 2020 Keys to the Valley report, provide a clearer picture of how well the region is doing in meeting the housing needs of its workforce and what actions are needed in the future to maintain an adequate supply of workforce housing.

There is also a shortage of affordable single-family homes in Lebanon, which is a barrier to hiring and retention of professional / highly-skilled workers.

6 | D **Future Challenges & Opportunities**

6 | D-1 Sustainable Economic Development Strategy

Lebanon should develop a proactive strategy, identifying the community's economic assets and what types of businesses to encourage locating in the City. With a strategy in place, the City should then selectively recruit and/or support new businesses that can help the City attain its goals. The City must evaluate how much growth is sustainable; certain levels and types of new development could cause unforeseen changes to community character, infrastructure requirements, and the tax base.

It is essential to maintain a coordinated, respectful and cooperative working relationship with current City and regional enterprises, area economic development agencies, regional planning commissions, chambers of commerce, state agencies, and other concerned private and public sector entities that encourage managed growth. The City could consider expanding its Planning Department's mission to include a more active role in decisions related to economic development.

Technological advances have become a driving force - possibly the driving force - in the economy. New jobs in the "thought ware" sector include computer software, education, engineering, telecommunications, medicine, and the entrepreneurial, creative economy realm. To foster new economic opportunities in this sector, Lebanon must support high-speed digital capability (see Section D-5), keep up with ongoing technological advances, and invest in the labor force through support for continuing education and training.

6 | D-2 Central Business Districts

In spite of competition from the Route 12A commercial area, both West Lebanon Central Business District and the Lebanon Downtown District continue to see reinvestment and revitalization.

Lebanon's downtown pedestrian mall is now the home to many small professional and service businesses, restaurants and retail shops. These businesses, in combination with River Valley Community College, Ledyard Charter School, and the New England School of the Arts have made the mall a thriving place to visit and shop. Colburn Park is an active place in the summer with the farmers' market and summer concerts. The downtown Opera House, AVA Gallery, and Upper Valley Music Center are cornerstones of the City's arts scene, bringing people downtown and supporting surrounding restaurants and shops. The CCBA and New England Sports Complex attract crowds of activity with a variety of sporting options that help foster healthy

lifestyles for citizens of the City. Better health of City residents will help support a strong local economy.

West Lebanon Village has also shown improvement in recent years. The anchor of the village is the Kilton Library built in 2010. New businesses have arrived, and current ones have expanded. Restaurants have continued to bring traffic to the area. The River Park project, just north of the village, will bring research labs, office space, and associated retail and housing.

The City should encourage mixed uses of structures in both downtowns, for instance combining ground floor storefronts with upper-story residential units. Collocating compatible professional, residential and commercial uses encourages people to live where they work, fostering a vibrant downtown and healthy local economy.

6 | D-3 Redevelopment

As Lebanon grows, public services and infrastructure must be expanded cost effectively. Many of the impacts of such growth can be reduced by directing development toward existing built-up areas, which are already served by existing municipal services and infrastructure.

Inefficiently developed or underutilized properties, for example, along Route 12A, the “Miracle Mile,” (Mechanic Street/Route 4) and Main Street in West Lebanon represent opportunities for redevelopment or infill in the City. Recent examples of such infill development include the construction of new retail stores and restaurants within existing plaza parking lots, and the renovation of empty retail spaces into multiple new storefronts.

Existing developments should be evaluated to determine creative solutions for potential redevelopment (the plans proposed by a Dartmouth College architectural class several years ago offer one potential scenario for redevelopment). Many developed parcels and parking lots could be more intensely redeveloped with multi-use structures, multi-story buildings, shared and structured parking, and shallow setbacks from the roadway to achieve a “town center” look instead of the existing suburban strip malls and shopping plazas. Implementing access management retrofit plans on Route 12A, Miracle Mile, Main Street and Mechanic Street, as discussed in the transportation chapter of this plan, would be a step toward redevelopment efforts and aesthetic upgrades along with allowing flexibility of the parking requirements to meet the needs of the applicant and the traveling public.

When businesses expand, contract or close, they leave behind commercial and industrial space that can be redeveloped. Although such properties are usually privately owned, it is in the interest of the City to see that these locations are redeveloped in ways that are compatible with Lebanon’s Master Plan. Among the desired features are the following:

- Reconfiguring space to maximum density, for example, building up (higher - to appropriate scale) when possible, using underground and shared parking, and reducing building setbacks.
- Integrating residential and workforce housing near commercial, office, educational, research, medical, and compatible light industrial facilities.
- Constructing sidewalks and bus stops and providing landscaping.
- At riverfront properties, observing setback and water quality requirements, while taking full advantage of the aesthetic potential, for example, siting restaurants, residential apartments, and offices to face the river, rather than backing onto the river.
- The upcoming redevelopment and beautification of Main Street in West Lebanon offers a fantastic opportunity for both businesses and housing developers. Generous height limits in the downtown areas provide a unique opportunity for developers to increase density and maximize the cost effectiveness of projects.

6 | D-4 Quality of Life

Numerous studies on business location decisions have indicated that quality of life plays a key role in corporate decision-making. One of the greatest strengths of Lebanon's economy is that people like to live and work here. If Lebanon's historic, educational, environmental, scenic, recreational, and cultural assets are diminished or lost, then the City could suffer economically in the long run.

Lebanon's economic development strategy should support and strengthen the City's role in the creative economy, cultural and heritage tourism, and recreational sectors. More importantly, it should seek to balance its growth and development with protection of natural, scenic, and historic resources. Recent work on Zoning Ordinance revisions has addressed many of these goals of compatibility and sustainability.

6 | D-5 Public Services and Infrastructure

As Lebanon continues to grow, City government will continue to experience pressure to expand and extend public services and infrastructure. When making those decisions, the City needs to consider the cost to current residents and the impact on the natural environment. In accordance with the "Residents-First" policy, growth and economic development must not degrade the City's quality of life. The City should be seeking economic development that does not increase City taxes. It must be recognized, however, that public services and infrastructure will have to be maintained and expanded as growth occurs. Many of the undesirable impacts of growth can be reduced by directing development toward existing built-up areas already served by public services and infrastructure.

One means of limiting the demand on the water supply and wastewater treatment systems would be to establish an urban services boundary, beyond which such utilities would not be expanded. The establishment of such a limitation would permit the City to focus development in a more concentrated area. The City should also consider expanding the use of impact fees to finance infrastructure associated with new development. To expand its ability to generate revenue, the City should evaluate any means that would help offset the impacts of commercial development without negatively influencing business or commerce or putting additional tax burden on private home owners.

6 | D-6 Technological Advancement

Residents, businesses, and institutions increasingly depend on the Internet and electronic communications. Businesses of all sizes find a digital presence valuable, if not essential. To ensure that businesses in Lebanon will remain competitive, they must have access to dependable, affordable, high-speed digital services. Such services should be available in all parts of the City to enable residents to conduct home-based businesses and to promote telecommuting. This increased digital presence will also serve to aid in the promotion of training and education through "webinars" and other professional development tools.

With current technology, wired broadband is faster and more reliable than wireless. The most significant impediment to bringing wired high-speed digital service to all corners of the City is ownership and control of the poles. Because the poles are privately owned, customers are limited to the providers currently on the poles. Moreover, private-sector companies often balk at providing high-speed digital service to rural areas because they cannot make back their return on investment within their typical three-year time frame. In the last several years, Lebanon worked proactively with Comcast to provide high-speed internet access to the remaining under-served residential properties in the City.

6 | D-7 Lebanon Municipal Airport

Lebanon Airport is a key transportation asset, valued by the region's many businesses and

institutions, as well as by area residents attracted by the recent efforts of the City and Cape Air to expand scheduled airline service. Passenger enplanements or “boardings” have stabilized in recent years after declining during the early 2000s in comparison with the 1990s, which has strained the ability of the airport to limit the financial support received from the City’s General Fund.

During the Master Plan process, residents expressed the desire that the current status of the Lebanon Municipal Airport should change in one direction or the other; either become self-sufficient as a commercial airport providing scheduled flights for the general public, or convert to a general aviation airport. The scheduled 2012 completion of the Airport Master Plan, including an “Airport Summit” event will further illuminate future options or direction for the airport.

6 | E Outcomes & Strategies

OUTCOME 1 Seek sustainable growth that is not dependent on exhausting local resources to fuel economic expansion.

STRATEGIES

1. Encourage City government to take a more organized and active role in promoting sustainable economic development.
2. Promote and retain high quality employment opportunities.
3. Continue the progress of revitalizing the City’s two Downtown Districts.
4. Work with civic associations to engage business owners and generate citizen interest and commitment to the downtown areas.
5. Support the revitalization, infill, and increased mix of uses in existing non-residential, locations.
6. Seek a way for Lebanon Airport to pay for itself while better serving the needs of residents and businesses, both in Lebanon and throughout the region.
7. Continue efforts to expand regional and national passenger connections to and from Lebanon Airport.

ACTIONS

1. Develop a proactive strategy for sustainable economic development that identifies the City’s economic assets and what types of businesses Lebanon wishes to encourage.
2. Recruit and support businesses in accordance with the City’s sustainable economic development strategy.
3. Explore innovative financing techniques for building additional public parking in the West Lebanon Central Business District.
4. Evaluate the boundaries of the Central Business and Lebanon Downtown Districts.
5. Examine existing non-residential areas to identify opportunities for more intensive redevelopment or infill.
6. Continue to work with the Regional Planning Commission to develop and maintain an updated inventory of non-residential sites and buildings to facilitate expansion and relocation of businesses.
7. Review and amend the City’s Zoning Ordinance as needed to encourage more intensive redevelopment of existing residential and non-residential areas and to discourage development in undeveloped areas.
8. Establish an urban services boundary for water and sewer.
9. Maintain an impact fee schedule to support expanded infrastructure associated with new development.
10. Evaluate the cost of ending commercial service and, if warranted, convert Lebanon Airport to serve general aviation only if passenger enplanements fail to increase significantly.

OUTCOME 2 Maintain a diverse economy that is not dependent on a single large employer or economic sector.

STRATEGIES

1. Continue to encourage private companies to add or expand high-speed digital lines to locations within the City or explore alternatives via regional efforts to bring broadband to the Upper Valley.
2. Encourage City government to coordinate with governing bodies of other nearby towns and digital services providers to improve high-speed digital services throughout the region.

ACTIONS

1. Ensure that zoning regulations maintain and enhance the mix of downtown businesses, including basic goods and services.

OUTCOME 3 Recognize the importance of quality of life in attracting new firms to locate in Lebanon and in retaining well-educated, skilled workers.

STRATEGIES

1. Seek growth and development that preserves or, ideally, enhances Lebanon's quality of life.
2. Support the arts and culture (creative economy) as a distinctive and significant component of the local and regional economy.
3. Promote Lebanon's historic, environmental, scenic, recreational, and cultural assets.
4. Continue to strive for excellence in public education and municipal services, taking into account the impact on taxes levied to City residents.
5. Encourage housing in the upper floors of downtown buildings.

ACTIONS

1. Implement the zoning revision recommendations outlined in the City's Natural Resources Inventory to protect and enhance the most critical natural resources and open spaces.

6 | Economic Development

6 | A Vision & Purpose

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- Proactively Encouraging and attracting enterprises that contribute to the total welfare of the City of Lebanon, while also recognizing Lebanon’s role as an employment center for the Upper Valley.
- Preserving and enhancing the natural and built environment of Lebanon, and promoting a high quality of life for those who live in, work in, or visit our the City.
- Implementing economic development and redevelopment strategies that ~~do not result in~~ aim to avoid placing a greater tax burden ~~for on~~ City residents.
- Striving to support a diverse mix of businesses from a variety of economic sectors to better protect our local economy from sudden shifts within a single industry, and to increase our resistance to and resilience from economic downturns and unsustained boom times.
- Adopting ~~land use~~ smart growth policies that encourage mixing synergistic uses (such as retail, residential, and office), redevelopment of existing non-residential sites, and infill development of existing lands zoned for non-residential use before extensively developing any additional lands for non-residential use.
- Maintaining and expanding the infrastructure needed to support economic development at high service levels, including fostering state-of-the-art communications infrastructure throughout the City.
- Encouraging new non-residential construction and renovation of existing non-residential structures to result in high-quality, flexible, and adaptable buildings ~~that can be reconfigured and adapted so that the same structure may serve different purposes over time.~~ [chip: understand how you could encourage renovations of existing not residential buildings but I am not sure how you can encourage design flexibility constraints on new construction.]
- Supporting a ~~variety of~~ full range of housing options, from affordable workforce units to market rate housing, for both rental and ownership, that will allow those working within the City, at all income levels, to also live in the City, while recognizing the impact on infrastructure and school budgets.
- Understanding that a strong economy requires a well-educated and skilled workforce, and providing educational and workforce training opportunities for residents at all stages of life.
- Encouraging the retention and creation of adequate and affordable childcare opportunities to support employees, Lebanon residents, and employers.

6 | B Issues & Priorities

6 | B-1 Sustainable Economic Development

Sustainable economic development is more than just increasing the number of jobs, tax receipts and square footage of commercial/industrial space in the City. It means growth that is not driven by depleting our resources, but rather by renewing them. It means growing our economy while also enhancing quality of life in Lebanon and protecting environmental quality - making the City an even better place to live for the next generation. Sustainable economic development has a triple bottom line resulting in economic benefits, environmental benefits, and social benefits.

Top priorities for sustainable economic development in Lebanon include:

- Redevelopment of under-utilized commercial and industrial sites.

- A more diverse local economy that is not dependent on a single large employer or sector.
- ~~Jobs that pay a livable wage.~~
- Growth opportunities for existing businesses ~~to maintain or allow for paying a livable wage.~~

Achieving sustainability will require a proactive approach to economic development. Given Lebanon's role as the economic center of the Upper Valley, the pressure for continued economic expansion will likely remain strong, and for this reason, the City must carefully plan for growth. The community must determine where and how much it will grow, and then it needs to implement strategies to appropriately guide economic and community development. If instead the City takes a passive approach, it may find itself overwhelmed with growth planning challenges and a division among City government, business, and residents that will stall proactive decision-making.

6 | B-2 Economic Diversity

As a former milling center, Lebanon needs only to look back ~~to~~ its own history to see the danger posed by a local economy dependent upon a single large employer or economic sector. During the past 60 years, the City's economy has become stronger and more diversified. Economic diversity means having both businesses from many different economic sectors and jobs of various levels and types.

The City needs to maintain and enhance economic diversity in order to be better insulated from contraction and downturns, whether within a particular industry or across all sectors. While the performance of a local economy will always be affected by the inevitable ups and downs of business cycles, a diversified economy will experience less dramatic change between the highs and lows.

A diverse economy also creates a variety of employment opportunities. This allows workers to more easily transition between jobs and change careers, remaining employed throughout their working lives without having to relocate to find work. A diverse economy requires a diverse workforce. Increased social diversity creates a more dynamic City and improves residents' quality of life.

Providing infrastructure, housing and educational opportunities can help support a diverse economy. In particular, ~~the City needs~~ an adequate supply of workforce housing and state-of-the-art communications infrastructure ~~if it wants~~ **is necessary** to continue to keep existing businesses and attract new employers.

6 | B-3 Quality of Life

Quality of life may seem a somewhat intangible concept, but for many companies it is a key consideration when deciding where to locate. Will the community be a place that employees will want to live? If not, the company may have difficulty attracting and retaining qualified workers or workers may be forced to commute from more distant communities, particularly if it must compete with other firms for highly skilled or educated employees.

The Upper Valley offers a quality of life that is very desirable - the region's communities have retained their small-town character while adding urban and cultural amenities. ~~Lebanon-The City~~ benefits from the presence of DHMC and the associated health services it provides, as well as Dartmouth College next door in Hanover, which provides residents with access to world-class arts, culture and athletics. Within the City itself, the Opera House is a well-programmed entertainment venue and anchors a burgeoning downtown arts community. ~~Lebanon-The City~~ and neighboring communities have a thriving 'creative economy' that enriches the region. Additionally, the Upper Valley is only a short trip from major metropolitan areas, large tracts of wilderness, and a variety of recreation opportunities including ski slopes, hiking trails and ocean beaches.

6 | C Existing Conditions & Trends

6 | C-1 Role as Regional Center

Lebanon has historically been and continues to be a regional economic center for the Upper Valley due to:

- Transportation access (proximity to the junction of two interstate highways, a municipal airport and rail intercity bus service).
- Availability of land and supporting infrastructure for commercial and industrial development and redevelopment.
- A highly regarded medical center, community hospital, academic institutions, and associated spin-off (DC – need to define) enterprises.
- Multiple decades of local and regional planning for community and economic development.
- Small-town feel with some urban amenities and conveniences.
- Abundant natural, scenic and historic resources of the City and region.
- Cultural and recreational attractions within the City and region.

Lebanon has remained a regional center while surviving financial panics, industrial collapse, fires, the Great Depression, and the flight of the cotton and woolen mills to the South. In each transition, new businesses have brought new opportunities and new residents. During the 1960s, the fortuitous routing of Interstate 89 and nearby Interstate 91 came just in time to breathe new life into the ~~town~~ City after the collapse of the textile industry, making West Lebanon the retail center of the Upper Valley. The new highways also facilitated industrial and commercial business.

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center's (DHMC) move to Lebanon in the early 1990s, combined with Dartmouth College's role as an innovator in the technological revolution, has resulted in spin-off businesses locating in Lebanon. This has brought a new wave of bright, technically savvy and entrepreneurial people to the City, ~~and is~~ while fostering ~~Lebanon's~~ the emergence as a biomedical and high-tech hub on the cutting edge of research, innovation and manufacturing.

Lebanon currently maintains a diversified economic base including a variety of retail enterprises, healthcare businesses ancillary to DHMC and Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital, and a vibrant ~~high-tech / bio-tech~~ industrial base anchored by firms such as:

- Timken (aerospace industry manufacturing ~~ball bearings and rollers~~)
- ~~TomTom (mapping data)~~
- Fluent, Inc. /Ansys Inc. (fluid technology)
- Mascoma Corporation (alternative fuels)
- Hypertherm (plasma cutting technology)
- Novo Nordisk (pharmaceutical manufacturing)
- Adimab (life science technology)
- Avitide
- Bio-X-Cell
- Fujifilm Dimatix
- Astronics/Luminescent Systems (aerospace industry manufacturing)
- Creare (Hanover) / Edare
- Signal Quest
- Simbex

DHMC and other major employers in the region, such as Dartmouth College, United States Army Corps of Engineers' Cold Regions Research and ~~Environmental~~ Engineering Laboratory (CRREL), and the Veteran's Administrative Hospital have been relatively immune from economic recession. Having these industries in the region benefits the City ~~of Lebanon~~ immensely. They also contribute to the City's economic well-being by attracting other businesses and service industries, which provide further employment opportunities.

6 | C-2 Land and Space for Non-Residential Uses

Lebanon's current zoning includes ~~eight~~nine non-residential or mixed-use districts (Light Industrial, Industrial Rail Access, Heavy Industrial, General Commercial, General Commercial One, Central Business, Lebanon Downtown, ~~neighborhood commercial~~, Professional Business, and Medical Center). These districts provide opportunities for businesses of various types, sizes and intensities. Most of these districts have either land available for development, or sites suitable for redevelopment or infill.

Lebanon had about 900,000 square feet of non-residential space in 1959. In the ~~five~~six decades since, the space occupied by commercial, industrial, medical, government and other institutional uses has grown to more than 8.8 million square feet. The Lebanon Planning Board has ~~recently~~ approved, or is currently reviewing, approximately 2.5 million square feet of non-residential growth, which is projected to be built out during the ~~next 20~~coming years.

Commercial land uses make up a greater percentage of the tax base in Lebanon as compared to other Upper Valley municipalities. The City's broad tax base results in a reduced tax burden on residential property owners to fund local schools and municipal services.

6 | C-3 Employment and Wages

~~More than 19,000~~Roughly 20,000 people work in Lebanon. Approximately ~~61~~47 percent of the City's resident workforce is employed in Lebanon (approximately ~~5,000~~3,380 people) and more than ~~13,000~~16,600 people commute into the City. Lebanon residents, and Upper Valley residents in general, enjoy relatively short commutes with an average travel ~~time~~distance to work ~~for City residents that is~~ less than ~~15 minutes~~10 miles. The ability to live and work in close proximity is one of the factors that contributes to Lebanon's quality of life.

Lebanon has experienced job growth in the service sector, particularly education, health~~care~~, social services, and retail, during the past 20 years similar to many communities across the country. However, the City has seen employment growth in management, professional and related occupations in recent decades as well. During the 2000s, employment in Lebanon grew by more than 2,600 jobs.

Lebanon's average annual unemployment rate was ~~3.8~~2.5 percent in ~~2009~~2022. The unemployment rate in the City has consistently remained below four percent ~~since 1994~~ despite several intervening downturns in the U.S. economy. A four percent unemployment rate is usually considered "full employment." The unemployment rate in the Lebanon Labor Market Area (LMA) has been among the lowest in the state for some time.

Besides the unemployment rates, ~~average weekly wages~~median household income provides another measure of economic health. The ~~average weekly wage for a private sector worker~~median household income in Lebanon in ~~2009~~2021 was \$1,04880,619. Jobs in Lebanon are among the highest paying in the region and pay significantly better than the state average. Higher wages in Lebanon and the Upper Valley may be attributed in part to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and Dartmouth College, both of which directly pay relatively high wages and indirectly generate high-paying spin-off business and industry.

6 | C-4 Housing

Economic growth is dependent upon housing growth, particularly workforce housing. For more than a decade, several major employers in the Upper Valley have been expressing a need for additional workforce housing opportunities, and they have been working with organizations such as ~~the~~Vital Communities, ~~Upper Valley Housing Coalition~~, Habitat for Humanity, and Twin Pines Housing Trust to find solutions. Although Lebanon has experienced approximately 16 percent housing unit growth during the 2000s, the City still may not be keeping pace with the demand resulting from both the continued rate of growth in the non-residential sector, as well as past historical growth rate disparities between non-residential development and housing development.

Without an adequate supply of housing affordable for their workers, employers can experience challenges in both retention and attraction of employees. For employees, the shortage can result in the need to seek housing further away from the employment center, increasing commutes and associated adverse ~~affects~~effects on the environment and transportation network.

In 2011~~2023~~, the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission initiated an effort to analyze housing availability in the Upper Valley, which will be an update to the 2002 Upper Valley Housing Needs Analysis report. When complete,published the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, which documented a severe shortage of housing and the resulting repercussions for workforce and public health in the region. ~~†~~This study, and the associated 2020 Keys to the Valley report, should provide a clearer picture of how well the region is doing in meeting the housing needs of its workforce and what actions ~~will be~~are needed in the future to maintain an adequate supply of workforce housing.

There is also a shortage of affordable single-family homes in Lebanon, which is a barrier to hiring and retention of professional / highly-skilled workers.

6 | D Future Challenges & Opportunities

6 | D-1 Sustainable Economic Development Strategy

Lebanon should develop a proactive strategy, identifying the community's economic assets and what types of businesses ~~it wishes~~ to encourage locating in the City. With a strategy in place, the City should then selectively recruit and/or support new businesses that can help the City attain its goals. The City of Lebanon must evaluate how much growth is sustainable; certain levels and types of new development could cause unforeseen changes to community character, infrastructure requirements, and the tax base.

It is essential to maintain a coordinated, respectful and cooperative working relationship with current City and regional enterprises, area economic development agencies, regional planning commissions, chambers of commerce, state agencies, and other concerned private and public sector entities that encourage managed growth. The City could consider expanding its Planning Department's mission to include a more active role in decisions related to economic development.

Technological advances have become a driving force - possibly the driving force - in the economy. New jobs in the "thought ware" sector include computer software, education, engineering, telecommunications, medicine, and the entrepreneurial, creative economy realm. In order to foster new economic opportunities in this sector, Lebanon must support high-speed digital capability (see Section D-5), keep up with ongoing technological advances, and invest in the labor force through support for continuing education and training.

6 | D-2 Central Business Districts

In spite of competition from the Route 12A commercial area, both West Lebanon Central Business District and the Lebanon ~~Central Business~~ Downtown District continue to see reinvestment and revitalization.

Lebanon's downtown pedestrian mall is now the home to many small professional and service businesses, restaurants and retail shops. These businesses, in combination with Lebanon River Valley Community College's downtown campus, Ledyard Charter School, and the New England School of the Arts have made the mall a thriving place to visit and shop. Colburn Park is an active place in the summer with the farmers' market and summer concerts, and is a great place for families to gather. The downtown Opera House, and AVA Gallery, and Upper Valley Music Center are cornerstones of the City's arts scene, bringing people downtown and supporting surrounding restaurants and shops. The CCBA and New England Sports Complex attract crowds of activity with a variety of sporting options that help foster healthy lifestyles for citizens of the City. Better health of City residents will help support a strong local economy.

West Lebanon Village has also shown improvement ~~over the~~ in recent years. The anchor of the village is the ~~new~~ Kilton Library built in 2010. New businesses have arrived, and current ones have expanded. Restaurants have continued to bring traffic to the area. The ~~recently approved~~ River Park project, just north of the village, will bring research labs, office space, and associated retail and housing.

The City should encourage mixed uses of structures in both ~~CBDs~~ downtowns, for instance combining ground floor storefronts with upper-story residential units. Collocating compatible professional, residential and commercial uses encourages people to live where they work, fostering a vibrant downtown and healthy local economy.

6 | D-3 Redevelopment

As Lebanon grows, public services and infrastructure must be expanded cost effectively. Many of the impacts of such growth can be reduced by directing development toward existing built-up areas, which are already served by existing municipal services and infrastructure.

Inefficiently developed or underutilized properties, for example, along Route 12A, the "Miracle Mile," (Mechanic Street/Route 4) and Main Street in West Lebanon represent opportunities for redevelopment or infill in the City. Recent examples of such infill development include the construction of new retail stores and restaurants within existing plaza parking lots, and the renovation of empty retail spaces into multiple new storefronts.

Existing developments should be evaluated to determine creative solutions for potential redevelopment (the plans proposed by a Dartmouth College architectural class several years ago offer one potential scenario for redevelopment). Many developed parcels and parking lots could be more intensely redeveloped with multi-use structures, multi-story buildings, shared and structured parking, and shallow setbacks from the roadway to achieve a "town center" look instead of the existing suburban strip malls and shopping plazas. Implementing access management retrofit plans on Route 12A, Miracle Mile, Main Street and Mechanic Street, as discussed in the transportation chapter of this plan, would be a step toward redevelopment efforts and aesthetic upgrades along with allowing flexibility of the parking requirements to meet the needs of the applicant and the traveling public.

When businesses expand, contract or close, they leave behind commercial and industrial space that can be redeveloped. Although such properties are usually privately owned, it is in the interest of the City to see that these locations are redeveloped in ways that are compatible with Lebanon's Master Plan. Among the desired features are the following:

- Reconfiguring space to maximum density, for example, building up (higher - to appropriate scale) when possible, using underground and shared parking, and reducing building setbacks.
- Integrating residential and workforce housing near commercial, office, educational, research, medical, and compatible light industrial facilities.
- Constructing sidewalks and bus stops and providing landscaping.
- At riverfront properties, observing setback and water quality requirements, while taking full advantage of the aesthetic potential, for example, siting restaurants, residential apartments, and offices to face the river, rather than backing onto the river.
- The upcoming redevelopment and beautification of Main Street in West Lebanon offers a fantastic opportunity for both businesses and housing developers. Generous height limits in the downtown areas provide a unique opportunity for developers to increase density and maximize the cost effectiveness of projects.

6 | D-3 Redevelopment

~~As Lebanon grows, public services and infrastructure must be expanded cost effectively. Many of the impacts of such growth can be reduced by directing development toward existing built-up areas, which are already served by existing municipal services and infrastructure.~~

~~Inefficiently developed properties, for example, on Route 12A [chip: I think you should take out~~

~~reference to 12A. 12a is vibrant.. it might need improved intersection lighting but there are no obvious redevelopment targets.. only real issue is vacant Pennys is in a flood plain] and the “Miracle Mile,” (Mechanic Street/Route 4) represent some of the best opportunities for redevelopment in the City. Existing developments should be evaluated to determine creative solutions for redevelopment (the plans proposed by a Dartmouth College architectural class several years ago could serve as a starting point). Many developed parcels and parking lots could be more intensely redeveloped with multi-use structures, multi-story buildings, shared and structured parking, and shallow setbacks from the roadway. Implementing access management retrofit plans on Route 12A [again I don’t think 12a has real redevelopment potential], Miracle Mile, and Mechanic Street, as discussed in the transportation chapter of this plan, would be the first step in redevelopment efforts along with allowing flexibility of the parking requirements to meet the needs of the applicant and the traveling public.~~

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- ~~• Constructing sidewalks and bus stops, and providing landscaping.~~
- ~~• At riverfront properties, observing setback and water quality requirements, while taking full advantage of the aesthetic potential, for example, siting restaurants, residential apartments, and offices to face the river, rather than backing onto the river.~~

6 | D-4 Quality of Life

Numerous studies on business location decisions have indicated that quality of life plays a key role in corporate decision-making. One of the greatest strengths of Lebanon’s economy is that people like to live and work here. If Lebanon’s historic, educational, environmental, scenic, recreational, and cultural assets are diminished or lost, then the City could suffer economically in the long run.

Lebanon’s economic development strategy should support and strengthen the City’s role in the creative economy, cultural and heritage tourism, and recreational sectors. More importantly, it should seek to balance its growth and development with protection of natural, scenic, and historic resources. ~~Current~~ Recent work towards a on Zoning Ordinance revisions ~~has~~ is addressed ~~ing many of~~ these goals of compatibility and sustainability.

6 | D-5 Public Services and Infrastructure

As Lebanon continues to grow, City government will continue to experience pressure to expand and extend public services and infrastructure. When making those decisions, the City needs to consider the cost to current residents and the impact on the natural environment. In accordance with the “Residents-First” policy, growth and economic development must not degrade the City’s quality of life. The City should be seeking economic development that does not increase City taxes. It must be recognized, however, that public services and infrastructure will have to be maintained and expanded as ~~growth occurs~~ Lebanon grows. Many of the undesirable impacts of growth can be reduced by directing development toward existing built-up areas already served by public services and infrastructure.

One means of limiting the demand on the water supply and wastewater treatment systems would be to establish an urban services boundary, beyond which such utilities would not be expanded. The establishment of such a limitation would permit the City to focus development in a more concentrated area. The City should also consider expanding the use of impact fees to finance infrastructure associated with new development ~~and consider working with the state legislature to~~

~~establish a City sales tax.~~ To expand its ability to generate revenue, the City should evaluate any means that would help offset the impacts of commercial development without negatively influencing business or commerce or putting additional tax burden on private home owners.

6 | D-6 Technological Advancement

Residents, businesses, and institutions increasingly depend on the Internet and electronic communications. Businesses of all sizes find a digital presence valuable, if not essential. In order to ensure that businesses in Lebanon will remain competitive, they must have access to dependable, affordable, high-speed digital services. Such services should be available in all parts of the City, to enable residents to conduct home-based businesses and to promote telecommuting. This increased digital presence will also serve to aid in the promotion of training and education through “webinars” and other professional development tools.

With current technology, wired broadband is faster and more reliable than wireless. The most significant impediment to bringing wired high-speed digital service to all corners of the City is ownership and control of the poles. Because the poles are privately owned, customers are limited to the providers currently on the poles. Moreover, private-sector companies often balk at providing high-speed digital service to rural areas because they cannot make back their return on investment within their typical three-year time frame. In the last several years, Lebanon worked proactively with Comcast to provide high-speed internet access to the remaining under-served residential properties in the City.

~~Lebanon should advocate that high speed digital services be available throughout the Upper Valley, so that residents of nearby towns who are employed in Lebanon have the option of telecommuting, which would reduce congestion on Lebanon's roads.~~

6 | D-7 Lebanon Municipal Airport

Lebanon Airport is a key transportation asset, valued by the region's many businesses and institutions, as well as by area residents attracted by the recent efforts of the City and Cape Air to expand scheduled airline service. ~~However,~~ Passenger enplanements or “boardings” have stabilized in recent years after declining during the early 2000s ~~declined~~ in comparison with the 1990s, which has strained ~~ing~~ the ability of the airport to limit the financial support received from the City's General Fund.

During the Master Plan process, residents expressed the desire that the current status of the Lebanon Municipal Airport should change in one direction or the other; either become self-sufficient as a commercial airport providing scheduled flights for the general public, or convert to a general aviation airport. The scheduled 2012 completion of the Airport Master Plan, including an “Airport Summit” event will further illuminate future options or direction for the airport.

6 | E Outcomes & Strategies

OUTCOME 1 Seek sustainable growth that is not dependent on exhausting local resources to fuel economic expansion.

STRATEGIES

1. Encourage City government to take a more organized and active role in promoting sustainable economic development.
(City has created 2 TIF districts; adopted 79-E program with districts in Lebanon and West Lebanon; nominated 6 ERZs for designation by NHBEA; constructed Airpark Road extension to enable new development in Airport Business Park 1-B and adjacent parcel; worked proactively with Comcast to provide high-speed internet access to remaining underserved residential properties)
2. Promote and retain high quality employment opportunities.
3. Continue the progress of revitalizing the City's two ~~Central Business~~ Downtown Districts.

- (Completed 2016 Downtown Visioning Study and 2020 West Lebanon Village Visioning Charrette; issued RFP for 20 Spencer Street redevelopment; issued RFI seeking interest and ideas for redevelopment of downtown surface parking lots; acquired 3 properties along Main Street and making them available for redevelopment; sought and obtained federal grant for WL Main Street improvements project; continuing to pursue potential acquisition of parts of Westboro Yard)
4. Work with civic associations to engage business owners and generate citizen interest and commitment to the downtown areas.
(City actively participates in UVBA to engage with local and regional businesses; created original WLRAC committee to spur citizen interest in WL revitalization)
 5. Support the revitalization, infill, and increased mix of uses in existing non-residential, locations.
(Updated zoning regulations to explicitly allow for mixed uses and multi-family residential uses in most non-residential districts; created new Lebanon Downtown zoning district based on results of 2016 Visioning Study; amended CBD zoning to mostly mirror downtown zoning in West Lebanon Village)
 6. Seek a way for Lebanon Airport to pay for itself while better serving the needs of residents and businesses, both in Lebanon and throughout the region.
(City has renegotiated tenant leases on airport property, including hangar space; established Airport-Tech Park TIF district and constructed Airpark Road extension to open up developable areas on airport property; actively marketing Airport 1B property for development opportunities with lease revenue accruing to airport; actively planning for construction of additional leasable hangar space; enacted higher landing fees as of 2024)
 7. Continue efforts to expand regional and national passenger connections to and from Lebanon Airport.
(City supported new ESA contract with Cape Air with service to Boston and NYC-Westchester)

ACTIONS

1. Develop a proactive strategy for sustainable economic development that identifies the City's economic assets and what types of businesses Lebanon wishes to encourage.
(EDC has discussed undertaking gap analysis in partnership with UVBA; UVBA has helped create and facilitate the UV Med-Tech Collaborative)
2. Recruit and support businesses in accordance with the City's sustainable economic development strategy.
3. Explore innovative financing techniques for building ~~structured~~ additional public parking in the West Lebanon Central Business District.
(Currently exploring potential for TIF district in WL Village; evaluated possibility of City designing and constructing parking areas behind Main Street properties with shared easements across multiple parcels)
4. Evaluate the boundaries of the Central Business and Lebanon Downtown Districts.
(Extended CBD/LD district along Spencer Street to facilitate sale of 4 Suzor Court to Geokon for parking; extended CBD district to 3 Seminary Hill to facilitate redevelopment of property; proposed expansion of CBD district along Bridge Street to facilitate redevelopment of property (not approved by Council))
5. Examine existing non-residential areas to identify opportunities for more intensive redevelopment or infill.
(Created new GC-1 district to facilitate development of new housing by D-H)
6. Continue to work with the Regional Planning Commission to develop and maintain an updated inventory of non-residential sites and buildings to facilitate expansion and relocation of businesses.
7. Review and amend the City's Zoning Ordinance as needed to encourage more intensive redevelopment of existing residential and non-residential areas and to discourage development in undeveloped areas.
(Created new Lebanon Downtown zoning district allowing taller and more intensive development based on results of 2016 Visioning Study; amended CBD zoning to mostly

- mirror downtown zoning in West Lebanon Village; amended zoning to require PUD-style for larger developments in Rural Lands areas;)
8. Establish an urban services boundary for water and sewer.
(Planning and DPW have evaluated potential for Urban Services District to focus intensive development into area already served by water and sewer)
 9. ~~Develop~~ Maintain an impact fee schedule to support expanded infrastructure associated with new development.
(Planning Department and Planning Board have established and regularly updated impact fee schedule and basis of assessment to support capital investment in infrastructure and facilities)
 10. Evaluate the cost of ending commercial service and, if warranted, convert Lebanon Airport to serve general aviation only if passenger enplanements fail to increase significantly.

OUTCOME 2 Maintain a diverse economy that is not dependent on a single large employer or economic sector.

STRATEGIES

1. ~~Make high-speed digital services available throughout Lebanon.~~
(Completed: City worked proactively with Comcast to provide high-speed internet access to remaining underserved residential properties)
21. Continue to encourage private companies to add or expand high-speed digital lines to ~~underserved~~ locations within the City or explore alternatives via regional efforts to bring broadband to the Upper Valley.
(City worked proactively with Comcast to provide high-speed internet access to remaining underserved residential properties)
32. Encourage City government to coordinate with governing bodies of other nearby towns and digital services providers to improve high-speed digital services throughout the region.

ACTIONS

1. Ensure that zoning regulations maintain and enhance the mix of downtown businesses, including basic goods and services.
(Updated zoning regulations to explicitly allow for mixed uses and multi-family residential uses in most non-residential districts; created new Lebanon Downtown zoning district based on results of 2016 Visioning Study; amended CBD zoning to mostly mirror downtown zoning in West Lebanon Village)
2. ~~Develop a long-range plan for digital high-speed telecommunications.~~

OUTCOME 3 Recognize the importance of quality of life in attracting new firms to locate in Lebanon and in retaining well-educated, skilled workers.

STRATEGIES

1. Seek growth and development that preserves or, ideally, enhances Lebanon's quality of life.
2. Support the arts and culture (creative economy) as a distinctive and significant component ~~(creative economy)~~ of the local and regional economy.
(2016 Downtown Visioning Study identified the arts community as a potential anchor for downtown revitalization; Arts & Culture Commission created as a result of 2016 Downtown Visioning Study)
3. Promote Lebanon's historic, environmental, scenic, recreational, and cultural assets.
4. Continue to strive for excellence in public education and municipal services, taking into account the impact on taxes levied to City residents.
5. Encourage housing in the upper floors of downtown buildings.

(Zoning ordinance amended to explicitly allow for mixed-use and upper story residential in downtown Lebanon and West Lebanon Village; need to address and resolve parking and building code requirements)

ACTIONS

1. Implement the zoning revision recommendations outlined in the City's Natural Resources Inventory to protect and enhance the most critical natural resources and open spaces.
(Amended zoning to require PUD-style for larger developments in Rural Lands areas, starting with identification and protection of most important/sensitive natural resources, and designing improvements around those)
2. ~~Explore seeking authority from the state legislature to implement a City sales tax.~~