

FINAL

**LEBANON CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
Thursday, April 24, 2025, 5:30PM
Council Chambers
Remote Via Microsoft Teams: LebanonNH.gov/Live**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Assistant Mayor Devin Wilkie, Erling Heistad, Nicole Ford Burley, Timothy McNamara, and Christian Simon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Douglas Whittlesey, Laurel Stavis, George Sykes, and Karen Zook

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Shaun Mulholland, Deputy City Manager David Brooks, Airport Manager Carol Gross

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Assistant Mayor Wilkie called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
 - City Manager Mulholland reviewed the meeting criteria for attendees.
2. Annual Work Session:
Included in the Agenda Packet:
 1. Presentation of Draft Strategic Plan Objectives
 - City of Lebanon DRAFT Strategic Plan in its entirety is available at LebanonNH.gov/StrategicPlanBoard
 - Strategic Plan information is available at LebanonNH.gov/StrategicPlan
- **ECONOMIC VITALITY** (NOTE: [The Strategic Plan Objectives and other supportive documents can be found on pages 2-8, Council agenda packet](#))

Deputy City Manager Brooks reviewed the Economic Vitality functional area. Economic vitality is to foster economic growth and business development. The Strategic Plan details the Council's goals and priorities and complements the long range Master Plan by concentrating on operational aspects of the City governance and specific objectives beyond the Master Plan scope. There have been numerous public engagement listening sessions since January and February.

VISION STATEMENT

The City is the economic hub of the Upper Valley. Most of the jobs in the region are located here in the City. The City is the host of a diversified and resilient economy. Traditionally the impacts of worldwide and national economic downturns impact the region to a lesser extent. The predominance of the medical sector, with Dartmouth Health being the largest employer in the region and the largest employer in the State, results in considerable supplemental and complimentary economic activity. The area has over 120 high-tech businesses, many of which are MedTech and biotech companies. Many of these companies have a direct relationship or lineage from Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Health.

The region has the highest average salaries in the State.

The Upper Valley economy is vibrant and resilient when it has the following:

- A trained workforce adequate to meet the needs of all employers;
- An innovative, creative, and entrepreneurial culture that drives and develops new ideas;
- A diversified commercial/industrial sector that includes small, medium, and large businesses that pay a living wage;
- High quality housing to meet the needs of the workforce needed for the economy;
- High quality childcare and early childcare development to allow parents to work in the economy;
- High quality public education and postsecondary education to develop and maintain a skilled workforce; and
- Vibrant and diversified retail, food, and general service sectors that meet the supporting needs of the Upper Valley.

The City's Master Plan addresses the larger vision statement relative to Economic Development located in Chapter 6.

Council/Staff Discussions:

There was discussion regarding Action Item 8.2.2. It was noted that there should be consideration regarding a second option for the \$1.6M grant raised from Congresswoman Kuster's office in terms of repurposing it for a childcare supporting initiative, if the facility does not move forward at this time. The language for action item 8.2.2. may need to be shifted.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie stated that the language for the Strategic Action Plan 4.2.5. for Westboro no longer applies in economic vitality and should be removed from the chapter.

- **ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY** (NOTE: [The Strategic Plan Objectives and other supportive documents can be found on pages 9--20, Council agenda packet](#))

Deputy City Manager Brooks reviewed the Environment & Sustainability Chapter. This theme focuses on environmental quality and sustainable practices in our community. He noted that the Vision Statement requires some improvements and reformatting.

VISION STATEMENT

The City is proactive in sustainable environmental stewardship. [Lebanon's Principles of Sustainability](#) focus on seven principles. Principle #3 is Environmental Responsibility and Energy Efficiency. **Principle #3 – Environmental Responsibility and Energy Efficiency** Does the action. . . A. Sustain and enhance a healthy natural environment: air, water, soil, and ecosystems. Promote and reinforce a network ("green infrastructure") of protected open space and natural areas. Improve energy efficiency and reduce the City's carbon footprint? D. Engage the Lebanon community to conserve energy and adopt more sustainable technologies for heating, cooling, lighting, transportation, and so forth? The functions of the City government will achieve the objective of reducing its greenhouse gas emission 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. The City supports the Paris Climate Accords and the implementation of the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. **Waste Management** The goal is to achieve zero waste. The City manages a number of waste materials from the City itself and the Upper Valley as a region. The goal is to recycle the materials where possible or dispose of the materials in an environmentally safe fashion that does not impair the public health. As technological solutions become available the City implements them to achieve the ultimate goal of eliminating waste. **Energy** The City's Master Plan outlines the City's policies regarding Energy in [Chapter 13](#). The City implements a number of strategies to reduce the amount of energy used in the community with

a shift from energy that produces greenhouse gas emissions. This includes a shift to the use of electric powered vehicles and electric powered building heating sources. The City shifts to energy produced by solar, landfill gas and other renewable sources. **Conservation and Natural Resources** The City's Master Plan outlines the City's policies regarding Natural Resources in [Chapter 5](#). The City has considerable conservation and natural resource assets that it continues to maintain and protect. **Sustainable Development** The City continues to take initiatives through collaboration with the community and its land use regulations, planning, zoning, codes, and other policies to encourage new development and redevelopment to be highly sustainable in terms of the health of our environment and economy and the livability and affordability of our neighborhoods and community.

Council/Staff Discussions:

Assistant Mayor Wilkie stated that he believes it is worth continuing to pursue these goals, noting that an immediate transition to non-fossil fuel vehicles is not proposed, but rather there is a goal to develop a plan in order for the City to be prepared when they are available and financially feasible.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie asked for more information on the doe harvest item in 5.6.3. City Manager Mulholland explained that there is an abundance of deer which are eating all of the middle growth. This State program is to reduce the number of deer.

- **PUBLIC SAFETY** (NOTE: [The Strategic Plan Objectives and other supportive documents can be found on pages 21-30, Council agenda packet](#))

City Manager Mullholland reviewed the Public Safety Chapter which looks to ensure community safety through effective police and emergency services.

VISION STATEMENT

Perceptions of public safety, whether they are real or perceived, impact the way people feel and interact in the community. Public safety is not just about injury prevention and crime prevention; it is about building a strong, cohesive, vibrant, participatory City. Individuals and families enjoy a sustained quality of life, participation in work, leisure, social, cultural, artistic and educational activities, and preservation of income and assets. A safe community embraces a methodology and infrastructure where all sectors of the community work together collaboratively to safeguard citizens' well-being and property.

Our vision of the City involves the following aspects.

Emergency Management: The City has a robust emergency management capability that adequately:

- foresees and plans for natural and human-made disasters;
- prepares for these events and provides advanced warning and guidance to residents, businesses, and other partners. This also includes training for, and having the necessary equipment, facilities, supplies, and partnerships available to respond to disasters;
- responds to disasters to effectively reduce the risk to life and property;
- Facilitates recovery from disasters such that the community is able to return to normal as soon as possible. This includes psychological recovery from the impacts of disasters;
- mitigation steps are taken in advance of and during disasters to reduce the impacts of known or disasters that are likely to impact the City.

Code Enforcement: The City has adequate life safety codes that reduce the risk of injury or death and protect property. The City effectively educates the public regarding these regulations and takes proactive steps to address violations.

Crime Prevention and Response: The City takes proactive steps to reduce the amount of, severity of, and the impacts of, crime. Residents and visitors in the City have a quality of life and can pursue and obtain the fullest benefits from their domestic, social, and economic lives without fear or hindrance from crime and disorder. The City is able to respond to criminal incidents proactively, quickly and effectively. The City is able to respond to hate crimes proactively, quickly, and effectively in coordination with the NH Department of Justice.

Domestic and Sexual Violence: The City in partnership with other entities leads efforts to protect and assist victims of sexual, domestic and gender based violence.

Cyber Security: The City's cyber infrastructure and protected information are secure from hacking, damage, or destruction, and other disruptions.

Traffic Safety: The City takes a multi-pronged approach to addressing safety on City streets, sidewalks, greenways, and rail trails. Proactive steps are taken to minimize motor vehicle accidents and accidents involving bicycles and other wheeled vehicles. A number of strategies are used to enhance pedestrian safety, with the goal of zero pedestrian accidents.

Fire Prevention and Suppression: The City implements strategies to prevent death, injuries and damage to property from the impacts of fire. The fire department has adequate resources and strategies to respond to fires to save lives and minimize damage to property

Council/Staff Discussions: NONE

- **TRANSPORTATION** (NOTE: [The Strategic Plan Objectives and other supportive documents can be found on pages 31--40, Council agenda packet](#))

Deputy City Manager Brooks reviewed the Transportation Chapter, which is to develop and maintain efficient transportation systems.

VISION STATEMENT

The City operates a multi-modal transportation system and partners with other entities to meet the transportation needs of the City within the context of the larger transportation network in the Upper Valley. The City's Master Plan further delineates the larger transportation goals located in Chapter 9. The City will continue to use innovative technologies and make infrastructure investments to ensure those systems are adequately maintained to ensure they function effectively and safely. The focus will be on the lifecycle maintenance of infrastructure and properly tracking the infrastructure through a fixed asset management system.

The City will continue with its Complete Streets strategy when reconstructing a street to include upgrading all of the assets within the street where appropriate.

Council/Staff Discussions:

Airport Manager Carl Gross explained that Cape Air intends to procure an electric aircraft. The manufacturer is seeking additional financing at this time. Deputy City Manager Brooks explained that the City has grant applications ready for the necessary infrastructure changes if this moves forward.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie asked about the City falling behind regarding its maintenance road work. He stated that he would like to make sure items 7.7 and 7.8 be interpreted to manage the existing surface areas of pavement instead of adding new surface areas.

- **PUBLIC HEALTH** (NOTE: The Strategic Plan Objectives and other supportive documents can be found on pages 41--46, Council agenda packet)

Deputy City Manager Brooks reviewed with Public Health chapter.

VISION STATEMENT

The goal of public health is to preserve the physical and mental health of those who reside in the City and those who visit it. Eliminating or minimizing the risk of disease and injury, as well as responding to and providing care to those who need it, are primary objectives of municipal governments. The City works in partnership with an array of state and federal agencies along with not-for-profit entities to meet the objectives of the Ten Essential Public Health Services as determined by the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services:

- Monitor Health
- Diagnose and Investigate
- Inform, Educate, and Empower
- Mobilize Community Partnerships
- Develop Policies
- Enforce Laws
- Link to Services
- Assure Competent Workforce
- Evaluate

Council/Staff Discussions:

Regarding Item 10.3.5, there was discussion to consider changing the language to reflect that the 90% goal may not be achievable at this time and that an alternative goal may be better suited.

Councilor McNamara asked that each section of the Strategic Plan speak to possible funding sources involved.

Assistant Mayor Wilkie noted that, under item 1.6.6., he requested more community engagement from the Council. The May 14th Council meeting on the Strategic Plan will likely be moved to the 16th due to quorum concerns.

3. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristan Patenaude

Recording Secretary

