



**LEBANON STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE
SEPTEMBER 1, 2026 - 8:30 AM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE**

1. Call to Order

The September 1, 2026, Strategic Plan Task Force Meeting is hereby called to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

A. August 18, 2026

3. Old Business

- A. Review of Existing Master Plan Vision and Purpose Statements
- B. Major Milestones and Timeline of Strategic Planning Committee
- C. Make-up of Strategic Planning Committee
- D. Connections to Master Plan Update Process/ Planning Board and Planning Department
- E. Availability of Public Data or Comments for Public Input

4. New Business

- A. Review and Discussion of Request for Proposals/ Qualifications (RFP/Q) Samples

5. Other Business

6. Adjournment

Meetings are open for in-person and remote attendance. Members of the public who 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 disrupt virtual or phone connection(s), the meeting will continue without remote access capabilities.

Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and needs additional accommodation, please contact the ADA coordinator at City Hall by calling 603-448-4220 at least 72 hours in advance so that the City can make any necessary arrangements.

DRAFT

**LEBANON STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE
AUGUST 18, 2026 8:30 AM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilor Lori Key (Chair), Councilor Timothy McNamara, Fire Chief James Wheatley, Deputy Finance Director Victoria Paquin (remote), Recreation, Arts, and Parks Director Paul Coats, George Blike (remote), and Fran Casale (Alternate)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilor Kellen Appleton

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Andrew Hosmer,
Deputy City Manager David Brooks

1 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

2
3 The August 18, 2026 Strategic Plan Task Force was called to order at 8:30AM.

4
5 **2. PREAMBLE:** Read by City Manager Hosmer

6
7 **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

8 A. *Councilor Key MOVED to approved the August 4, 2026, Minutes as written.*
9 *Seconded by Fire Chief James Wheatley*

10
11 **The MOTION was approved (7-0)*

12
13 **4. OLD BUSINESS**

14
15 Councilor Key opened the meeting by stating several items that this Task Force (TF) had reached
16 a consensus on at their August 4, initial meeting, including:

- 17
18
 - 19 • Design a process that enables public input and articulation of a vision
 - 20 • Provide a pathway for a practical and measurable strategic plan
 - 21 • Provide direction for the 2028 budget cycle priorities and work of the City
 - 22 • Review the assumptions made in the Master Plan for current relevancy
 - 23 • Establish various ways to conduct community outreach, including focus groups, large
24 forums, Farmers Market, to name a few
 - 25 • Consider an external source to assist this TF in the development of the outreach plan

26
27

1 A. Review of Existing Master Plan Vision and Purpose Statements

2
3 Members commented on the excellent quality of the 2008 Master Plan, and this result was
4 because of heavy public participation and hard work by all.

5
6 Members discussed several of the principles that came out of the 2008 policy and while some are
7 clearly still relevant such as housing, improvement of civic participation and transparency in
8 government, others, such as multimodal transportation have been addressed, and is in all
9 likelihood not a priority now.

10
11 Deputy City Manager Brooks commented on the importance of both documents aligning and
12 sharing the same vision statement along with the same goals, the Master Plan as well as the
13 Purpose Statements. The new Master Plan also needs to state the overall vision.

14
15 B. Review of Strategic Planning in Small Businesses article

16
17 Members had the opportunity to read this in advance of today's meeting. This was useful in
18 helping them understand the various phases of the work they are charged with.

19
20 Dover has an extensive plan (document is 175 pages) and was informative but would be
21 unmanageable for a City the size of Lebanon.

22
23 The pragmatic tone of the original Lebanon document offers a logical framework from which to
24 work from.

25
26 C. Scope of Strategic Planning Committee

27
28 The Strategic Plan will be an operational plan and will provide department leaders current
29 direction. Members will need to define what success looks like, and to this end City Manager
30 Hosmer shared a draft of his Definition of Project Success which includes key points such as:

- 31
32
 - Reflects meaningful community input
 - 33 • Establishes clear City Council strategy direction
 - 34 • Provides the City Manager and departments with an understandable framework for
 - 35 implementation.
 - 36 • Establishes a limited number of meaningful priorities
 - 37 • Identifies measurable desired outcomes
 - 38 • Informs annual operating budget recommendations
 - 39 • Informs capital improvement planning and prioritization
 - 40 • Guides departmental work plans and resource allocation
 - 41 • Creates transparent accountability for progress
 - 42 • Establishes an achievable process for annual review and adjustment, and;
 - 43 • Remains actively used throughout its 3 to 5 year planning horizon

44
45 The City's objective is to establish an enduring strategic management process – not simply to
46 publish a Strategic Plan.

1
2 The Task Force concurred that they will need to do extensive information gathering from the
3 community, to understand the *current* vision of our residents, what is it that they really want at
4 this time?

5
6 Consideration will need to be given to what questions they want answered, including how they
7 frame the questions along with providing information to help people make decisions on the
8 questions. They discussed bringing in an external consultant to help craft questions in a way that
9 encourages honest, informed responses. It was acknowledged that also allowing people to state
10 their priorities would be useful. Given frequently low engagement by the public, they will need
11 to find a way to proactively get residents involved so that people want to answer questions.
12

13 Setting priorities is important and even before they have any public meetings, this Task Force
14 will need to be zeroed in on this, as residents will respond to leadership. What are they actually
15 thinking about doing here; give residents some talking points and/or options, to frame the
16 discussions as far as possibilities, rather than presenting this as “the sky’s the limit”. They need
17 guardrails or it will be easy for people to say they want everything, but the budget is not there.
18

19 Currently, existing department leaders are all able to field complaints as well as the opportunities
20 to hear what is going well, what residents like.
21

22 The example of Randolph, Vermont was given about their library budget. The third go around
23 for voting including giving a basic budget and then adding a line item carve out for an additional
24 item to be voted on. The point was to give voters enough information so that they can make a
25 decision based on key factors. So in this example, voters were given the base budget needed and
26 then an additional amount needed for an additional service or maintenance.
27

28 A local example was also given on the ski jump here. It has history, and has been a tradition, but
29 it is in need of repair, and these repairs are very expensive. An alternative would be to use those
30 same funds and put them towards a tubing hill at Storrs Hill for example, something that would
31 be used more frequently and by many more people.
32

33 Another example was the downtown West Lebanon Vision Study; reviewing the process that is
34 outlined in that report could be worthwhile. Deputy City Manager Brooks will send the Task
35 Force a link to this.
36

37 D. Make-up of Strategic Planning Committee

38

39 No final committee composition was established. See August 4, 2026 Minutes
40

41 E. Public Input Opportunities for Strategic Planning Committee

42

43 Mr. Coats posed the idea of two different public meetings, one where the Task Force has done
44 the hard work of synthesizing each section and vision of the Master Plan and then share this with
45 the public so that they can weigh in on what is still relevant to them today. Together then, City
46 leadership and the public will be working towards shared priorities. He also acknowledged that

1 members would need to go to people, in living rooms, libraries, ball fields, different settings to
2 gather information from residents.

3
4 Given the change of demographics, including a much higher percentage of rental population
5 (frequently less engaged than homeowners), utilizing a consultant makes even more sense. The
6 Task Force is aware that residents are sensitive to increasing property taxes and discussed ideas
7 of how they can get people to come out and participate.

8
9 Many people who work in Lebanon and live outside of the City would like to live in Lebanon,
10 but through no fault of their own, are unable to, due to limited affordable housing options here. It
11 will therefore be imperative that this Task Force's work include input from these people as well
12 as current residents. "Residents first" is a guiding value though so both of these facts will need to
13 be considered in the work of this Task Force. Understanding peoples' values will need to be their
14 focus.

15
16 Members commented about limited resources and the fact that public outreach rather than a
17 retreat seems logical and productive.

18
19 Councilor McNamara would like to talk with Dover about their plan and learn more about what
20 worked for them versus what did not. It is known that they used a consultant that utilized a
21 survey, and they got substantial feedback from this.

22 23 **F. NEW BUSINESS**

24 25 **A. Discussion of Request for Qualification (RFQ) – Public engagement services and** 26 **qualifications**

27
28 City Manager Hosmer will send members some samples of RFPs (aka RFQs) and asked them to
29 review these before their next meeting on September 1, 2026.

30
31 They can utilize what they like from these as they start work on their document. City Manager
32 Hosmer cited a scoring matrix that he liked and seemed useful. One also asked the question how
33 they put their plan to work, versus having it simply sit on a shelf.

34 35 **G. OTHER BUSINESS**

36 37 **H. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

38
39 The Task Force will work on a firm timeline for January 1st through June 30, 2027. Also City
40 Manager Hosmer wants to be sure that someone specifically from Planning is attending these
41 meetings, so they are clear what the Master Plan is and to ensure they are not working in a silo.
42 This will need to be taken into consideration as they think about what the Committee will look
43 like. Mr. Mark Goodwin was mentioned as a knowledgeable resource with valuable and
44 extensive experience (+20 years) within the City.

1 Councilor Key ended by saying the vision of the Master Plan and the vision of the Strategic Plan
2 have to be the vision. She noted that it would be helpful to look at the individual visions within
3 the Master Plan and see what if anything overlaps.
4

5 **I. ADJOURNMENT**
6

7 Councilor Key adjourned the meeting at 9:57AM.
8

9 Respectfully Submitted,
10 Cinda Mersel
11 Recording Secretary
12
13

Master Plan Chapters: Chapter Visions

- [**Chapter 01: Introduction \(PDF\)**](#)
- [**Chapter 02: Land Use \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Promote balanced land use and development patterns
 - Maintain a high quality of life
 - Respect the rights of property owners
 - Protect open space while accommodating growth
 - Be guided by the City's sustainability principles
- [**Chapter 03: Lebanon Central Business District \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Enhance downtown's role as a vibrant community center
 - Preserve downtown's historic, small-town character
- [**Chapter 04: West Lebanon Central Business \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Enhance downtown West Lebanon's role as a vibrant village
 - Preserve West Lebanon's historic and small-town character
- [**Chapter 05: Natural Resources \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Recognize that conservation of the natural environment is essential to maintaining the City's quality of life and economic vitality
 - Conserve open space and maintain the functions of natural systems while respecting the rights of property owners
 - Establish a connected network of open spaces, conservation lands, greenbelts, and working farm and forest land
- [**Chapter 06: Economic Development \(PDF\)**](#)
 - 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

- [**Chapter 07: Housing \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Foster a diverse range of housing opportunities for all segments of the population
 - Promote development of diverse, sustainable neighborhoods that contribute to Lebanon's quality of life and small-town character
- [**Chapter 08: Community, Facilities, and Services \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Provide high quality community facilities and services.
 - Manage growth so that new development does not create a demand for community facilities and services that would place an excessive burden on City taxpayers.
- [**Chapter 09: Transportation \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Support regional growth and improve mobility, quality of life and neighborhood character through provision of a balanced, integrated multi-modal transportation system.
 - Promote compact, mixed-use development that will increase the efficiency of the City's transportation network
 - Reduce the City's carbon footprint, decrease traffic congestion and promote healthier lifestyles by increasing transit use, walking and bicycling.
- [**Chapter 10: Recreation \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Foster a high quality of life by offering residents a variety of recreation facilities and programs including organized sports, informal natural areas, cultural activities, etc.
 - Recognize the important role recreational activities play in creating social ties, fostering civic pride, attracting new businesses and residents to the City, promoting healthy lifestyles, and teaching positive values.
 - Link the City's residential neighborhoods, central business districts, schools, employment and service centers, and parks and open spaces through an interconnected multi-use path system.

- [**Chapter 11: Historic Resources \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Lebanon's historic structures and landscapes are among its most valuable resources. The City's rich history, made tangible through the built environment and through cultural artifacts, shall be protected, studied, and shared with the public.
- [**Chapter 12: Community Design and Civic Art \(PDF\)**](#)
 - Establish Lebanon as the arts and cultural center of the Upper Valley
 - Enhance the City's character and quality of life through civic art and activities.
 - Continue to expand Lebanon's creative economy.
- [**Chapter 13: Energy \(PDF\)**](#)
 - The long-term vision for Lebanon's energy future is to improve the quality of life in, and sustainability of the community for current and future generations, particularly by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and associated pollution that result from a fossil fuel-dependent economy.